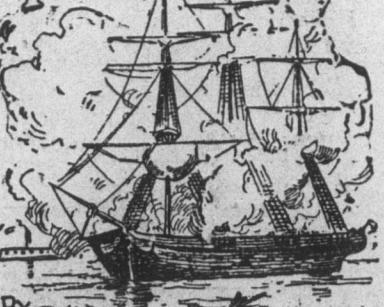


# In Sheep's Clothing.



By Capt. Ormond Steele

## CHAPTER XXV.—Continued.

The sound of gnawing, which had stopped while the officer was present, was again resumed, and Ralph Denham was on the floor, close to the place from which the sound came.

Outside the bustle and noise of boats being lowered, and the deep, gruff orders of the sailors, and the heard, Captain Fox was preparing to conceal much of his treasure on shore.

Tired of his position on the floor, Captain Denham went back, and was talking in a whisper with one of his men, his eyes still bent in the direction of the partition, when he saw a light that almost seemed dazzling after the darkness.

Out from the opening, as if carried by this stream of light, came Don said eagerly:

"I've loosed the plank, and you can come through. Oh, I am so glad that you're in your danger, for my heart has been sore for you."

"We came with a full understanding of the danger. We do not want to get on deck now, but when the time comes we desire you to be near to guide us," said Captain Denham.

"How shall I know the time?"

"When you hear a gun fired on board the Sea Hawk. She will be close by soon after daylight."

"I'll try, sir," said Don, who recognized in the voice of the man addressing him a ring of command, such as he could not associate with an ordinary sailor. "But I'll go back all the same, for the cabin, and if I am not near when the signal is given, go through and turn to the right; there will be plenty of daylight then. You will pass through the store-room and armory, where you can get arms if you'll need them. To the left are the steps leading to the deck."

"God bless you, Don. We'll find the place, and reach the deck. Now go, go!" The Captain's voice was nervously imperative; for in the distance he could hear a vigorous knocking, accompanied by the call:

"Don! Don! What the blazes are you sleeping for when the Captain wants you?"

Don darted through the opening, and put out the light. As he pushed the plank into place, he called out with admirable presence of mind, for his voice sounded like that of a sleepy boy:

"Aye, aye, sir! Coming!" and the next instant the banging of a door could be heard:

As Don ran out, a man shouted to him:

"The Cap'n's been a callin' for you, youngster; you'll be mighty lucky if you don't get a right good lashin' with a rope end."

Don heard, but made no inquiry till he stood before Captain Fox on the deck.

With a savage oath the captain demanded:

"Where have you been, you dog?"

"I was about to turn in, sir," replied Don.

"Did I tell you to?"

"I thought you did, sir."

"You have no right to think. Next time you are not on hand, you dog, I'll keelhaul you. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. Leap into that boat and bear a hand," said Fox, pointing over the side, where in the darkness the dim outline of a longboat could be seen, with a number of men in it.

Don leaped into the boat and took the post of coxswain.

All night long Lea and Ellen, who occupied the same stateroom, could hear the boats coming and going. To say they were frightened would be weakly to express the state of their feelings. Could they have seen their own white faces, a common sympathy would have increased their terror.

But they knew that Ralph Denham and his gallant men were on board, and when they tried to cheer each other by relating their knowledge of this fact.

Had they known Ralph Denham's actual condition they might not have drawn so much comfort from his proximity.

At length the boats took their last load to the shore, and Captain Fox, who had been superintending the concealment of the booty, came back with them.

Day dawned, and the distant headlands and the island under the sea seemed to lift from the dark waters by the power of light.

Two of the boats were left alongside; and now Fox and Frenaud entered the cabin and called in excited tones to their visitors to come out.

Lea and Ellen tried to obey, but they forgot their horror that they were locked in.

They raised their voices, but amid the din and uproar outside they could not be heard.

Doctor Hedges, supposing that his daughter and Ellen Condit had preceeded him, was about to descend to the boat, when an eager glance told him they were not there.

Turking to Frenaud, who stood near, he asked:

"Where is my daughter and Ellen Condit?"

"They will follow you. Hurry up. Captain Kidd is in sight!"

A number of sailors on hearing this burst into a loud roar of laughter. The Doctor, now completely beside himself, was seized bodily by strong hands and lowered into the boat.

"Pull away, my lads," shouted Frenaud to the men in the boat.

"But my daughter. Oh, heaven, my child!" cried the Doctor. Seeing Captain Fox, he continued: "Send down my child and Ellen! I can see no sign of the pirate!"

"Then I will show him to you," laughed Fox. "Look well at me, my old man."

The Doctor raised his white face and imploring eyes, and the outlaw shouted:

"I am Captain Kidd, and your daughter's in my keeping!"

Again Frenaud shouted for the men to pull away. And as they did so, Doctor Hedges fell back in the boat and looked to be dead.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SEA HAWK COMES UP AND THE SIGNAL GUN IS FIRED.

The town of Sag Harbor was excited to its center by the conduct of Captain Fox.

All the families in the place were related by blood, or connected by marriage, or united by those ties of friendship, equally strong, which they had in-

herited from their sturdy ancestors. The people carried off by the Wanderer were among the very best in the place, the flower of its society.

No reason could be given for Fox's conduct. It was evident to the most simple-minded that the act was deliberate and therefore malicious.

The people gathered in excited groups, and their spirits rose for a while, when they saw the help coming to try to beat up the harbor. But their relief from anxiety was only temporary, for again the Wanderer tacked and headed for the open water.

In the midst of the excitement a coach and four, guarded by a number of horsemen, drew up before the inn, and from it, aided by a provincial officer, descended a stately lady in black.

She was about five and forty, and the face still retained its nobility of form, though lines of care had seriously marred a countenance that must once have been surpassing loveliness.

The landlord came out and the young officer addressing him, said:

"Can you tell me if Lord Pal—I mean one Colonel Graham, is stopping here?"

"He is, my lady," said the landlord.

"And a gentleman named Captain Ralph Denham lives here?"

"Yes, my lady, but he is not here now. He is in New York."

The lady looked at the landlord sharply, as if going to deny this, but, changing her mind, she motioned for him to show her the way.

As the party entered the inn, old Eliza amazed the crowd by raising her hands above her head and crying aloud:

"Oh, praise on bress de Lor! She libby, my lady libby!"

"What do you mean, Dinah?" asked one of the bystanders.

"Conscious that she had been hasty, the old woman seized her staff, and muttered, as she turned away:

"I can't talk en 'spain at de same time."

The Squire shook hands with Valentine, told him to keep a brave front for God would preserve Ellen, and then left the ship as suddenly as he had come.

"The wind and tide are in our favor," said Lieutenant Hedges, addressing Valentine, "and they may not be if we wait for light, so we'll up anchor and drop down, and beat about till daylight shows us the pirate."

"May I ask, sir, if you will fight at long range or close quarters?" asked Valentine.

"We can't use the Montauks at long range. No, sir; we shall run alongside, grapple, and drop anchor. Muzzle to muzzle, hand to hand, eye to eye. We must get to our Captain, lad, and you know where he is?"

"On the deck of the Wanderer," replied Valentine, catching his uncle's spirit.

"Up rose the anchors, and the loosened sails came down and fluttered in the wind. So well did the sailors know what was wanted that they anticipated orders before they were given.

Every light on board the Sea Hawk was extinguished, and she turned in obedience to the helm and shot down the harbor, the courier of a righteous vengeance.

**TO BE CONTINUED.]**

**AT THE 'PHONE.**

She Was a Nervous Woman and Wanted to See Her Husband.

"Hello!" said Mrs. Van Smith sweetly as she took down the telephone receiver without thinking to ring. "Hello! [A pause.] Oh, dear! Hello!—Why don't they answer? [Another pause.] Oh, I forgot to ring. How absurd! [Rings again.] O, that's them at last. Well, say, is this Mr. Van—Oh, hello! [Sundry rings and pauses.] Is this Mr. Van Smith? [Another pause.] Is this Mr. Van—Why don't you answer? Oh, hello, hello! Who—is this? [Pause.] Oh, central office! Why, I don't want any central office. I want the Van Smith Consolidated Cheese Company. I want Mr. Van Smith. V-a-n-s-m-i-t—[Interruption and pause.] What number? How do I know what—Directory? Telephone directory? Where? Tied to this 'phone? Oh! All right! [Espies telephone directory at right of transmitter and opens it.] Let's see; Van, v—p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w—comes between u and w. Oh, here it is; the Van Smith Consol.—Main number 4022. [Into the 'phone.] Say, hello! Oh, my good gracious! I've got to ring again! [Sundry wild rings and subsequent pauses.] At last! Is that you? [A pause.] My, what impudence! I mean, who is this? Well, give me—[Aside]—where is that telephone book? Wait a minute! [Conversations directory.] Give me main number four thousand and twenty-four. Four, yes, four, that's it." [Long pause, varied by moaned and muttered "Hello's."] "Say, who is this? Is this Mr. Van Smith?—Well, say, why—is this? [Pause.] Oh, central office! Why, I yet take it from the offerees. I want the Van Smith Consolidated Cheese Company. I want Mr. Van Smith. V-a-n-s-m-i-t—[Interruption and pause.] What number? How do I know what—Directory? Telephone directory? Where? Tied to this 'phone? Oh! All right! [Espies telephone directory at right of transmitter and opens it.] Let's see; Van, v—p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w—comes between u and w. Oh, here it is; the Van Smith Consol.—Main number 4022. [Into the 'phone.] Say, hello! Oh, my good gracious! I've got to ring again! 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