

ST. JOHN STAR, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2, 1905

SIR HENRY MORGAN, BUCCANEER

By CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY.

Author of "The Southerners," "For Love of Country," "The Grip of Honor," Etc.

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These men and a few others were veterans like Hornigold himself. They were the best of the lot, but for the most part the assemblage was made up of the sweepings of the town, men who had the willingness to do anything, no matter how infamous it might be, for the only deterrent being lack of courage. Hornigold's single eye swept over them with a fierce gleam of contempt, yet these were they with whom he must work in case of necessity.

One or two others in whom he reposed confidence, men who composed the crew of his own pinnace, he had put off early in the evening to Spanish Town to gather what news they could. One of them came in and reported that the squadron of horse which had gone up with the officers to bring back Morgan had come back without him and without the officers. The spy's insignificance prevented him from learning why this was, but he instantly repeated it in Hornigold's breast upon receipt of this news. Knowing Morgan as he did, he was convinced that he had found some means to dispose of the two officers and send away the cavalry. He was not unprepared, therefore, when he saw the tall form of the maroon appearing in the doorway through the smoke. No one else noticed the silent entry, and he stood upon him. Then by an imperceptible move of his head he indicated a desire to speak with him without the room. The one eyed nodded slightly in token that he understood, and the maroon vanished as silently as he had come. Waiting a few moments, Hornigold rose from his seat and began threading his way through the boisterous crowd toward the door. Thrusting aside deploring hands and answering rude queries with an old sailor's ready banter, bidding them on no account to disturb the festivities because of his departure and, in fact, ordering a second draft of rum for all hands, he succeeded in breaking away under cover of the cheers which greeted this announcement.

It was pitch dark outside, and he stopped a moment, hesitating as to what he should do. He had no doubt that the maroon had a message for him from his master. But a second had elapsed when he felt a light touch on his shoulder. His hand went instantly to the seaman's hanger at his side, and he faced about promptly. A ready man was Master Hornigold.

"It's I, bo'n," whispered a familiar voice.

"You, Black Dog? Where's your master?"

"Tender."

"Let me see him."

A tall, slender figure muffled in a heavy riding coat sat in the stern sheath of a small boat in the deepest shadow of one of the silent and deserted piers.

"Captain Morgan?" whispered Hornigold softly, as, followed by the maroon, he descended the landing stairs toward the boat.

"Tis you, Master Hornigold," answered the man, with an accent of relief in his voice, thrusting the pistol back into his belt as he spoke. He, too, was a ready man with his weapons and one not to be caught napping in any emergency.

"Me it is, sir," answered the boat-swain, "and ready to serve my old captain."

"You heard the news?"

"I heard it on the frigate this afternoon."

"Why did you not send me warning?"

"I had no chance. I'd a done it, sir, if I could have fetched away."

"Well, all's one. I've laid these two landlubbers by the heels. Eh, Carib?"

"Where are they, sir?"

"I might make a guess, for I left them bound and the house blazing."

"Tis like old times, eh, Carib?"

"Aye, I've not forgot the old tricks."

"No, sir. And what's to do now?"

"Why, the old game once more."

"What? Do you mean?"

"I do. What was I there left for me? Scuttle me, if I don't take it out of the donal! It's their doing. They've had a rest for nigh twenty years. We'll let it slip out quietly among the islands that Harry Morgan's eldest son and more and the pickings to be had on the Spanish main—wine and women and pieces of eight. Art with me?"

"Aye, of course. But we lack a ship."

"There's one yonder, man," cried Morgan, pointing up the harbor, where the lights of the Mary Rose twinkled in the blackness.

"To be sure the ship is there, but—"

"But what?"

"We've no force. The old men are gone."

"I am here," answered Morgan, "and you and Black Dog. And there are a few others left. Teach is new, but will serve. I heard his bull voice roar out from the tavern. And De Lussan and Velsers and the rest. I've kept sight of ye. Curse it all, I let you live when I might have hanged you."

"You did, captain, you did. You didn't hang anybody, but you didn't spare either."

"Listen," said Morgan quickly. "This is my plan. In the morning when I saw the new governor will send more men. They will find the house burned down. No one saw us come hither. There will be in the ruins the remains of three bodies."

"Three?"

"Yes. My Lady Morgan's."

"Did you kill her?"

"I didn't have to. They'll think that one of them is mine. No line or cord will be raised."

me. Do you arrange that the crew of the Mary Rose be given liberty for the evening yonder at the Blue Anchor. They've not been ashore yet, I take it?"

"No, but they will go tomorrow."

"That's well. Meanwhile gather together the bold fellows who have stomach for a cruise and are willing to put their heads through the halter provided there are pieces of eight on the other side, and then we'll take the frigate tomorrow night and away for the Spanish main. That will give us a start. We'll pick up what we can along the coast first, then scuttle the ship, cross the isthmus, seize another and have the whole south seas before us—Peru, Manila, wherever we will."

"The king has a long arm."

"Yes, and other kings have had long arms, too, I take it, but they have not caught Harry Morgan nor ever shall. Come, man, will you go with me?"

"Never fear," answered Hornigold promptly. "I've been itching for a chance to cut somebody's throat. Where will you lay him until tomorrow night?"

"I have thought of that," said Morgan promptly. "I think the best place will be the cabin of your pinnace. I'll just get aboard, Black Dog here and I, and put to sea. Tomorrow night at this hour we'll come back again, and you will find us here at the wharf."

"A good plan, Master Morgan," cried Hornigold, forgetting the title as the scheme unfolded itself to him.

"What's o'clock, I wonder?"

As he spoke the sound of a bell tapped softly came floating over the quiet water from the Mary Rose.

"Four bells," answered Morgan, leaning out of the cabin door, "then, I shall be here."

"Leave the rest to me, sir," answered Hornigold.

"I shall. That will be your boat yonder."

"Aye. Just beyond the point."

"Is anybody aboard of her?"

"No one."

"Is there rum and water enough for one day?"

"Plenty. In the locker in the cuddy."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Hornigold, leaning over the pier and watching the ship's mince."

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post fade into a black blur on the water as it drew away toward the pinnace.

"He's mine, by heaven, he's mine!" he whispered under his breath as he turned and walked slowly up to the house.

It was late when Hornigold returned to the parlor of the Blue Anchor Inn. Half the company were drunk on the floor under the tables. The rest were singing or shouting or cursing in accordance with their several moods.

By his orders the inn servants at once cleared the room of the vainly protesting revelers. Those whose appearance indicated a degree of respectability which promised payment for their accommodation were put to bed. The common sort were bundled unceremoniously out on the strand before the door and left to sober up as best they might in the soft tropic night. Teach, Raveau and the Brazilian were detained for conference with the vice-governor. To these worthies, therefore, Hornigold unfolded Morgan's plan, which they embraced with alacrity, promising each to do his share. Velsers was too stupidly drunk to be told anything, but they knew they could count upon him without fail.

CHAPTER III.

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