

There all the men of the clachan were assembled to watch the burning of the ship. The Spaniards were still jumping from one death to another. Many clung to the vessel until their clothes were ablaze, or the heat drove them into the water. Already the waves were bringing scores of bodies ashore. One man was alive and he was brought before the laird. Black Jamie looked at his swarthy face and his rich garb for a while.

"Who are ye?" he asked, in his best Lowland English.

The man threw out his hands, meaning, I suppose, that he did not understand the words. The laird tried him with a few more questions. Failing to get answer, save in a strange tongue, Black Jamie suddenly lost his temper and shouted:

"Hang the blackamoor!"

The poor soul was led away, while another was brought up from the shore. The result was the same. The laird girmed and snarled at the men of the clachan.

"Is there not a man among ye can speak their tongue?" he said in his own. "Fine would I like to know whence these men come and where the rest of the breed will be."

None could help until a sudden commotion thrust one, Alan Urquhart, into the circle. Alan Urquhart was the lad who plied the ferry-boat between Kilellan and Cloch Point, on the Lowland shore. Alan brought great news.