

Dr. Jack's Wife.

By ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

Author of "Dr. Jack," "Captain Tom," "Miss Caprice," etc., etc.

(Continued.)

He turns and leaves the earth behind. The ones whom he seeks to disable are on deck, and there the battle must be fought that will decide the question as to who will have possession of Doctor Jack's wife.

A minute later and Larry's head pushes above the deck as he ascends the companion-way, having made his passage forward.

Voices sound near him, and he can distinguish every word. Lord Rackett and the captain of the yacht are talking. The British lord is in a towering passion because half the crew are ashore, when they should be aboard every night at nine. He even threatens to clap on sail, and, taking advantage of the favorable breeze, desert the sailors on shore.

Larry can guess whence his eagerness to quit Valparaiso arises. Lord Rackett fears the vengeance of an outraged husband; he dreads lest at any moment the figure of Doctor Jack may rise up in front of him, calling to account the man who stole his wife.

Using his eyes to advantage, Larry counts the figures on the deck as seen by the light of the lanterns and the heavenly bodies. He makes out six still—that is, just two apiece all around.

"Well, here goes," mutters the dude, shutting his teeth hard, for Larry has never been a soldier, and is not accustomed to shooting down men on sight.

It requires a thought of the rascality which has been influencing these men to steel his nerves and render him fit for duty.

"They deserve death," he mutters, but all the same he aims low down, seeking to give a flesh wound that will place his victim hors de combat, which is all Larry asks.

The silence of the night is suddenly broken by the sharp report of a revolver. A jet of flame flashes up from the companion-way, and the fellow at whom the leaden messenger is sent, rolls upon the deck, hugging his leg, and almost delirious from the shock, for pain he certainly does not yet feel.

Of course, at this abrupt outbreak there is the utmost consternation on deck. Men call out and rush this way and that with a vague idea as to the source of the attack. Some have seen the flash of the weapon, and advance to overwhelm the marksman.

Larry is ready for business, and cal-

culates that he can cut the number of their mess short when he fires again, as he will do just as soon as he can get the hammer of his fire-arm into position, for the weapon does not appear to work as well as it should.

That single shot has served as a signal. Two human forms come tumbling on deck, clambering over the side of the yacht near the stern. As they gain their feet, the fact is established that these new-comers are above the medium in height, and possessed of extraordinary powers of locomotion to judge from the manner in which they advance.

This advent brings new cause for astonishment, since it has been so unexpected. The sailors seem to be between two fires, so to speak, and hardly know whether to turn upon those who rush down the deck with the fury of a mountain avalanche, or face the spot where

belched forth the spiteful flash of flame that accompanied the telling shot.

When men are thus undecided, and caught in a trap, they are in a good condition to be easily beaten. It is almost as if they are already on the run.

Larry again comes to time—Larry, who has made up his mind to keep snapping the hammer of his faithless weapon until the revolving cylinder brings a cartridge within reach that will do its duty.

There is another report, and this time a bullet enters the arm of a British sailor man, who, armed with a belaying-pin or marline-spike, has rushed up to demolish the enemy lurking in the companion-way. It at least renders him less aggressive, since the arm that is stricken chances to be his right.

By this time the two flying figures have cleared the deck, and are upon the party. The stentorian voice of the English lord is heard calling upon his men to rally and repel boarders. He is at least a man, though far from being a credit to his nation.

What will it avail? The man who dashes upon them has his iron arm doubly strengthened by the knowledge of his wrongs. He is like a tigress robbed of her whelps, and in her native jungle—a wounded lion at bay. A score of men would not dismay him now—might not overcome this young giant from the great republic of the north.

Besides, he is ably seconded by the man from Texas, Kirke Smith, who has tamed horses, chased Apaches and Mexican cattle-thieves, and lived a wild life on the great plains of the Southwest.

CHAPTER XIX.

By this time Lord Rackett begins to realize something of the truth, which staggers him. He has taken note of the flying figures before now, but supposed they were some of his own men—that the boat from the Mole had returned with the delayed seamen.

It suddenly flashes upon him that this is not the case. Perhaps the rapidity of Doctor Jack's advance has something to do with this revelation, for not one of the yacht's sailors cares enough for the master of the vessel to thus approach with lion-like bounds.

Plympton realizes that his situation is inclined to be desperate, with enemies on both sides. He does not know what to make of the attack from the companion-way—whether it proceeds from one or more foes. He believes Larry to be still safe in the state-room, and here are more foes advancing.

No wonder he feels bewildered with danger from so many sources around him. He endeavors to turn the attention of his men to the new seat of war, and succeeds, in a measure, as they face that way.

Another instant and Doctor Jack is upon them. He comes with business in his frame and the determination to succeed in his eye. Who can resist such impetuosity?

Already two of the sailor men have been wounded by the bullets of Larry Kennedy, and can hardly be called in the ring, which reduces the number of the enemy considerably. Larry does not jump up and show himself, for he believes such a small man would not figure in a hand-to-hand contest. Better leave it with those who know how to deal with such matters, and lying where he is, await the turn of events philosophically.

(To be Continued.)

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