

The Cave of Remembrance

HOW GLENDOWER GRANT, INSTRUCTOR IN MATHEMATICS,
PROVED THAT HE INHERITED FIGHTING BLOOD

By William Holloway

SLATER cut the last of the fore rigging clear, and the wreck of the foremast ceased to batter at the side of the *Daphne*. Then, spent with the toil of the hideous night that had passed, he flung himself upon the wet deck and fell fast asleep.

Conklin aroused him an hour later, and he opened his eyes to find Grant, Conklin, and the schooner's negro captain in a ring about him.

"Bad news, Bob," said Grant.

The captain of the *Daphne* looked soberly at the two stumps that had once been masts. Then he stared from his three white passengers to the men at the pumps, and back again.

"Her seams opened," he said with an air of finality.

His three passengers on the run from Nassau to Havana were skilled enough in the ways of the sea to understand. Had they not been, one look at the dusky crew, sailormen all, would have given them sufficient wisdom.

Even in the hell of the hurricane there had been something care-free, unconquerable, about those negroes from Nassau. Now their dejected attitudes were eloquent testimony to the force of the blow that fate had dealt them. The schooner's seams had opened—that meant the end. Yet still, with the dogged courage of the born sailor, they stuck to the pumps. They stuck, although the water from the well ran ominously clear.

"Got to take to the boats?" asked Conklin cheerfully.

The captain, who had been educated in a mission school, and who prided himself upon his English, pointed to empty davits.

"The boat," he corrected.

"Shucks, man! We can't all go in that

one boat," cried Slater, with a frown. "She would swamp in two seconds!"

The captain helped himself to a fresh chew and outlined his plans. They would draw lots, and the three losers could have a raft. The sea was going down. There was no danger.

"No danger?" asked Grant hesitatingly, as he looked about him in a vain attempt to descry land. "Where are we, then?"

"West of Andros," said the captain. "We'll head due east. You can't miss the Bahamas noways."

"All right, then!" cried Slater cheerfully. "Give us plenty of food and water, and we'll take the raft—won't we, boys?"

The others nodded assent. Big Bob Slater, courageous to recklessness, was the unquestioned leader of the trio. It was his suggestion that had brought them to Nassau at a time when most Americans are turning toward the Adirondacks and Canada, and now it was his suggestion that embarked them on a raft in the Atlantic Ocean.

It wanted an hour to sunset when the building of the raft, and its launching and provisioning, were completed, and the schooner's boat towed the ungainly structure from the side of the *Daphne*. The negro crew rowed silently, their eyes upon the schooner, now fighting her last fight for a place in the sun. Presently she seemed to quiver, her bow raised, she went down stern first, and raft and boat were alone upon the water.

A strange silence fell. The captain, who had loved his schooner as a mother loves her child, buried his face in his hands, while his shoulders shook with emotion. The crew, awed by the sudden loneliness of the ocean, rested upon their oars.

Slater was the first to spring to action

by unloosing the small bit of hawser that united the two crafts.

"We don't need you any further," he called cheerfully.

The boat was to go ahead at full speed and send back help. This was the arrangement that had been made upon the deck of the *Daphne*; yet now that the time of parting had come, the captain hesitated.

"Say the word, and we'll stand by," he offered.

The three white men shook their heads in disapproval. Good-byes were exchanged, and the boat drew ahead, the negro skipper, every inch a man, waving his tattered panama in token of farewell.

Slater filled his pipe and took his position by the steering gear of oar and rowlock arranged by the captain of the *Daphne*. A strong mast had been stepped just abaft the center of the raft, and the cumbersome structure, under the influence of a favorable wind, was making steady progress eastward.

"We'll work this thing by watches," he announced. "Each man stands his trick at the wheel in turn."

Bert Conklin, who had taken charge of the boxes of provisions, lifted his head.

"Put me down as cook, boys!" he cried cheerfully. "Let Grant be the crew!"

Glendower Grant, short, insignificant, with mild blue eyes that saw deeper into mathematical problems than did those of most people, made no protest at his assignment. He was quite accustomed to taking third place in their joint plans, and entirely indifferent to the glamour of leadership. Besides, a new problem had presented itself to his attention.

That evening, in the moonlight, he gave an inkling of it to his friends.

"Did you fellows notice how relieved those sailors looked when we cast loose from their boat?" he asked.

"I did," averred Conklin. "They looked downright glad to see us go."

"Why shouldn't they?" questioned Slater. "They will make their landfall—Andros, isn't it?—all the sooner."

"Those birds will never touch Andros—at least, not on this side," declared Grant confidently. "Do you remember what they told us about Andros at Nassau—that it is practically unexplored? I heard that the negroes believe it to be haunted by Indian devils, and that no negro will set foot on the island if he can help it."

Conklin laughed with scornful amusement. Naturally incredulous, he had been rendered still more so by the practice of his profession. A dramatic critic, who gave promise of some day being a headliner, he had, in the course of his daily toil, seen and heard things calculated to shatter confidence in the spoken word. Now he ended his laugh with the single word:

"Rubbish!"

Grant received an unexpected ally in Slater.

"I'm not so sure about that," the big man broke in. "Everybody knows that the Spaniards exterminated the Lucayans, the native Indian tribe, but there is a story that some of them escaped to Andros, and that their descendants live there to the present day. Take an island ninety miles long and from twenty to forty miles wide, cover it with an impenetrable forest, let it have no white inhabitants except a sprinkling on the western shore, cut off from the interior by jungles"—he waved his pipe in air—"and anything might happen there!"

"I didn't know it was so big," remarked Conklin.

"There was a funny thing happened there years ago," Slater went on. "A Lucayan canoe, exactly like those described by the early explorers, was actually found on Andros. Fyfe, the Scottish bootlegger that we met at Nassau, told me the same story about the negroes and Andros. They are superstitious about it."

"It does seem odd," agreed Conklin. He lit a cigar and puffed silently. "I see what Glen means," he presently went on; "but I don't interpret it just the same. The captain probably reasoned that it would take longer to tow us to Andros than for the boat to reach Nassau. From there they can send aid to us on Andros. The captain knew we were in no danger. Yes—I guess they are heading for Nassau, after all."

II

THE MOON sank low as they sat talking, and the mysterious tropic night infolded them in its embrace as if it was a living thing. An odd sense of hushed expectancy grew upon them. To Grant it was as if they were moving steadily forward in the grip of forces of which they knew nothing. He mentioned his feeling to the others, and Slater laughed outright.

"I'll tell you what I feel," cried the big man, as he resigned the steering oar to

Grant. "We are buccaneers making a night raid on the Spanish garrison. We have no weapons. We'll get them from the dons!" He stretched himself as he hummed a chantey. "The buccaneers, you know, were not pirates. They were shipwrecked English and French sailors, who banded together against the power of Spain. Spain closed the Caribbean against all nations, and the buccaneers fought Spain. Tough birds, those! It was a tough age; and some of them, so they say, were ancestors of ours. I shouldn't wonder if I had a buccaneer or two in my family tree."

Conklin yawned openly.

"All right, Bob! Here's one buccaneer who is going to turn in right now," he said with decision.

Two hours later, as Grant sat at the steering oar, the vague expectancy of the night fulfilled itself. One of the small tidal waves, which sometimes rise in the Bahamas without warning, broke over the raft in sudden fury, tearing the sail free from its sheets, drenching the three to the skin, and playing havoc with their supplies. Half of their provisions were swept overboard, and some of the remainder was damaged by sea water. Worst of all, because unnoticed at the time, their water cask was flung against the iron stanchion into which the mast was stepped, causing a slight split, through which their drinking water ebbed steadily during the night.

It was not until sunrise, when Slater tried to help himself to a drink, that the loss of the water was discovered. Slater, tall, dark, incredibly powerful, aroused them with an oath.

"Not a drop of water left!" he cried angrily.

Glendower Grant was the only one who took the loss calmly.

"That means we are real buccaneers now, boys!" he cried. "They often went without food or drink for days, and then fought a winning fight."

Slater, his fists clenched, looked scowlingly about him, a very different figure from the pleasant-faced broker whom Wall Street knew.

"I don't like this at all, boys," he said slowly. "Look at that red sun coming up there! That means heat."

"And look at Andros over there," cried Grant, with a wave of his hand toward a dim blur on the eastern horizon. "Why, we are almost there!"

"Almost there?" was Conklin's sarcastic comment. "That land is a million miles away, by the looks of it; and we can't be making more than a mile an hour with this breeze. Do either of you know if Andros is hilly? If it is, we are probably two million miles away, and we stand a good chance of dying of thirst."

"There's an extra oar fastened here, and a second rowlock," said Grant suddenly. "Suppose we shift the steering gear to one side of the raft, put the second rowlock on the opposite side, and row!" He fairly hurled the last word at his companions. "The breeze is dying out. We've got to lower the sail and row."

"All right, kiddo," said Slater coolly. "Don't get excited. We'll do it; and remember that I'm captain of this crew of buccaneers."

"Till Bert and I slip you the black spot," was Grant's quick reply.

He was busy with the sail as he spoke, handling the heavy canvas with unexpected ease, and he did not notice the look the others interchanged.

"Never knew you went in for fiction, Glen," remarked Conklin; "and here you are quoting from 'Treasure Island.'"

"What's that?" asked Grant blankly. "A book?"

"Stevenson," explained Conklin.

"Oh, Stevenson!" repeated Grant. "Never read a line of him. Fiction is silly bunk, anyway. The real romance is partly in science, but most of all in mathematics. You boys who end your math with calculus don't know the wonderful world that lies beyond!"

"Hell!" was Slater's comment, as he settled himself at the port oar. "Then where did you get that stuff about the black spot?"

"From a family diary, seven or eight generations old. The Grants all went to sea in the old days, and there were some queer Glendowers among them. Glendower has been a family name for ten generations."

He took his place at the starboard oar, pressed his heels into a rift in the planking, and began to row. Slater, who, four years before, had stroked a college crew to victory, pulled with one hand to the smaller man's two, and the raft crept sluggishly toward far-off Andros.

The sun shot up with amazing speed, and hung in the sky like a flaming gage of

battle. It grew so hot that the planking became unendurable unless frequently drenched with water. The hands of all three blistered. The blisters broke, and blood flecked the oars, and still the raft drew sluggishly forward under the brazen sky.

Thirst, which had been dogging them since the morning, now struck boldly at their throats. Their tongues grew parched and thickened, so that their voices sounded hoarse. Their lips began to swell as the resistless heat sucked moisture from every inch of their bodies.

Finally, at three o'clock in the afternoon, Slater unexpectedly weakened under the awful strain.

"I'm going to call it a day," he declared thickly. "That damned island is no nearer than it was at sunrise!" He pulled in his oar and huddled down upon the deck. "God, but I'm thirsty!"

Very quickly Glen Grant drew in his oar in turn. Just as quickly he picked up a monkey wrench lying beside him, and stepped toward Slater.

"You a buccaneer!" he said scornfully. "Why, you false alarm, you are nothing! Now, get to work at that oar, or I'll let you have this over the head. Get up!"

There was a vibrant ring in his voice that startled Slater into activity. He staggered to his feet and raised his hand, prepared to strike. Then he hesitated.

"What's the matter with you, Glen?" he asked weakly. "Has the heat got you?"

Grant's usually good-humored eyes were now hard points of steel that held Slater's face without a tremor.

"Maybe I'm not a quitter, Bob," he answered quietly. "I'd hate to think you were. We're thirsty. All right—there's plenty of water on Andros. Now get busy and pull. We're not more than twenty miles from shore."

Slater settled himself at his oar without a word, and Conklin took Grant's place, while the latter, as it was now his watch below, flung himself pantingly upon the wet planking of the raft.

He was thirsty and tired, and yet in spite of all he was conscious of a strange elation. Circumstances, more imperious than those which had often overmatched him at home, had tried to gain a victory over him; but he had struggled and won. This of itself was enough to account for his elation but there was something addi-

tional—something which he could not quite explain.

It was as if he had unexpectedly returned to a familiar scene. In a confused way he seemed to have viewed it all before—this bland sea in which the fiery furnace of the heavens was mirrored, these thirsty shipwrecked men, the far-off island toward which they so toilsomely made their way.

Of course, he hastened to assure himself, he never really had seen it before. The fancied familiarity was due solely to the fact that his attention had been fixed so earnestly upon his surroundings that they had unconsciously become part of his mental state. They dominated him. It was, indeed, just as if the three of them had been pulling the raft across that glassy sea through all eternity.

The hours lagged slowly on to sunset, and then a blessed darkness enveloped the world. A westerly breeze had sprung up, the sail had been set, the steering gear replaced, and the raft was forging steadily eastward. Grant, lying on his back on the wet planking, was conscious of a release from the day's inferno that made him for a moment forget his thirst.

But it was only for a moment that this was possible. Then the agony of throat and tongue reasserted itself overpoweringly, an enemy from whom there was no escape.

At eleven o'clock the raft grounded sluggishly on hidden shoals, but it was pushed off without much difficulty. A few minutes later it grounded again, this time more solidly. As the wind had suddenly shifted until it was directly offshore, the only thing to be done was to lower the sail and wait for morning.

III

THE night wore away with intervals of feverish sleep. A dozen times each of the three awoke, their parched throats calling for water, and a dozen times each sank back upon the rude deck unsatisfied.

At daybreak Grant summoned them to action. Andros rose clear in the morning light, seven or eight miles away. The breeze had died away and the water was glassy in its smoothness, save where, at intervals, it creamed over a surface rock.

Slater, shielding his sunken eyes from the rising sun, looked long and anxiously toward the island.

"All shoals between us and shore," he said hoarsely. "Are we going to walk?"

"Maybe, at a pinch," Grant assured him in a voice as hoarse and broken as his own. "The western approach to Andros is all shoals. That's why this side of the island is uninhabited. No boat can run inshore."

He had scarcely finished the sentence when the raft floated free of the coral that had held her, and the row toward the island recommenced. This time, with their objective so close at hand, Slater bent to his task cheerfully, despite the condition of his hands. It was not until the raft had grounded several times, and he had been compelled to leap upon the shoals to push it free again, that he began to complain. Conklin, who was rowing with him, followed his example, and for a time progress was at an end.

It was then that Glendower Grant, erstwhile a meek and mild instructor in mathematics, showed the inner fiber of his manhood. Inferior to either of his friends in physical strength, he was vastly superior to them in a certain indomitable courage that refused to admit defeat, and that kept the weaker spirits at their work even while they reviled him. The monkey wrench, which had helped in the stepping of the mast, proved a convenient aid to discipline. With it, he felt himself master of the clumsy craft. Without it, he would just as surely have ruled his companions.

Both of them eyed him appraisingly from time to time. This was a new Glen Grant, they told themselves, and even in their suffering they marveled at the change—marveled and obeyed.

The morning wore away as they struggled shoreward through a labyrinth of shoals. The sun was an incandescent ball now, with rays of fire. Both Slater and Conklin more than once sank exhausted to the deck, but Grant, his face horribly distorted from thirst, his blackened tongue protruding from swollen lips, drove them to their task with savage curses.

Then, suddenly, when the strength of all three was almost spent, the raft drew into clear water two hundred yards from a white beach. A few minutes later they had leaped from their clumsy craft and were wading ashore. They landed weary, bedraggled, beaten to their knees with thirst.

Beneath their feet the beach was dotted with delicate shells of exquisite beauty. Before them the forest flaunted itself in a medley of green and gold, flecked everywhere with tropical vines of startling hue;

but not one of them gave the beauty of this lonely isle a passing thought. For them all existence had become subordinated to the intense, overpowering clamor of thirst.

It was Grant who first heard the trickle of water in a patch of lush green, not fifty yards from the beach. He called harshly, through swollen jaws, to his companions, and pointed to his find. Then he flung himself down and felt the blessed touch of water on his fevered tongue.

He drank sparingly and painfully for an instant, then resolutely rose to his feet as Slater and Conklin crashed through the brush to his side. No words were spoken. The two flung themselves upon the water as a wild beast upon its prey, and reveled in it.

"God!" cried Slater thickly, when he at length lifted his head. "God!"

Conklin, his tongue hanging blackly from between his lips, drew back from the spring without a word, rolled over on his side, and fell fast asleep. Slater presently followed his example.

Grant, his head still singing from the heat, drank more freely now, and bathed his lips in the little stream that marked the overflow of the spring. Then, giving a glance at the green wall that hemmed them from sight of either sky or shore, he, too, flung himself beside the spring and slept.

When he awoke, it was pitch dark. The fever had partially left him, and he was able to move his tongue freely; but he was still intolerably thirsty. Rolling over, he dipped his lips in the cool water of the spring and drank deeply. Then once more he slept.

It was broad daylight when he again awoke. Slater and Conklin, seated on the other side of the spring, were eying him oddly. Their faces still showed traces of the ordeal through which they had passed, and their glances were the reverse of friendly.

"Got any monkey wrenches on you?" was Slater's gruff question.

Grant shook his head.

"All I have is an appetite. Have you fellows any breakfast suggestions?"

"We left it to you, you being a buccaneer and knowing all about this place," remarked the big man.

Grant looked gravely at his companions.

"For one thing, if we expect to be rescued, we must stick where we are—by the shore. We must have a fire on the beach

always. In the daytime we'll put green stuff on it, so it will give off smoke; at night we want a clear flame. As for grub, we have some tins of biscuits, and there's plenty of fish and fruit and turtles' eggs, if we look about. Now let's get busy!"

"Look here!" cried Slater roughly. "I plan to give all the orders necessary. I'm the buccaneer chief from now on!"

Glendower Grant stared at him for a moment with steady but disapproving eyes.

"You're a good fellow, Bob," he said gently, "and you played the man that night on the Daphne; but on the raft you were yellow." He repeated the word in a low tone: "Yellow!"

Slater was on his feet in an instant, brandishing in his fist the missing monkey wrench. He took a step forward, then halted in his tracks. Grant had caught up a jagged piece of coral rock and stood waiting, ready for battle, a calm smile upon his face.

"What has come over you, Glen?" cried Slater, drawing back at the sight. "What ails you, man? Are you sick?"

His hand still gripping the rock, Grant slowly shook his head.

"A buccaneer recognizes a leader only as long as he shows himself one. You didn't do that on the raft, and I took your place."

"Hell!" broke in Conklin. "We were only kidding about that buccaneer stuff, Glen. This is the twentieth century. Can't you take a joke?"

Silencing him with a wave of his hand, Grant advanced upon Slater, rock in hand.

"Are you going to start that fire, Bob?" he gritted. "Are you?"

Slater's eyes fell before the cold flame of the other's gaze. He shuffled aimlessly from one foot to another.

"Oh, all right, Glen!" he stammered.

Turning on his heel, he made his way to the beach, followed an instant later by Conklin.

The final deposal of Slater as leader had happened so swiftly that both Slater and Conklin were partially dazed. As they gathered driftwood on the beach, they maintained a constrained silence. After the episode that had just passed, conversation seemed hopelessly inadequate. From time to time they glanced at each other as men will glance at companions with whom they have shared a strange experience. Then they turned again to their task.

Meanwhile Grant, conscious of a raging fever that was running riot through his veins, had set about exploring the neighborhood. He was anxious to find a safe shelter for the night. Recollection of their exposed position of the night before rendered him vaguely uneasy. If only they had a cave!

Cave! The word kindled a thousand thoughts within him. It seemed odd that he had not thought of it before, for the Bahamas was a region of caves, of rocky hiding places whence the buccaneers of old sallied forth to match their puny strength against the might of Spain.

A cave! He looked carefully about him, wrinkling his forehead, as does a man who tries to remember. Surely there ought to be a cave not far away!

He found one not thirty yards from the spring, its entrance masked by stunted cedars, across the trunks of which vines had so interlaced that afterward he wondered how he had chanced upon it at all. A hasty glance showed him that it was of good size, and dry; after which he rejoined his companions on the beach.

"A cave, boys!" he called in a friendly voice. "A real bang-up cave!"

Slater and Conklin brightened up at the announcement, and some of the tension vanished. There is something in the very mention of the word "cave" that stirs men's pulses.

"A cave?" cried Slater. "Lead me to it, then!"

They walked toward the entrance, once more on a footing of friendship. Conklin, staring through the interlacing vines, expressed his own and Slater's thought.

"How did you ever find it, Glen?"

"Pure chance," replied Grant.

He pushed aside the vines, and the three entered a dry, airy cavern, the farther recesses of which were lost in darkness.

"We'll make up three comfortable beds here," said Conklin, as he stared about him.

"And have a fire right in the entrance, to broil fish," suggested Slater, with some of his old enthusiasm.

"And feel perfectly safe at night," added Grant.

"Safe at night?" Slater's tone was frankly one of astonishment. "What's to bother us?"

Glendower Grant stood peering about him in silence. There had come over his face a look which the others could not un-

derstand. It was as if he were watching an impending danger—a danger, moreover, which it was beyond his power to avert.

"It seems to me—" he began, and stopped. He turned to his companions. "Don't you feel it, too?" he demanded.

Both shook their heads.

"I don't know what you are driving at," commented Slater frankly.

Grant again stared searchingly into the shadowy recesses of the cave.

"Then you fellows don't feel anything queer about this place?" he asked.

"Not a thing," said Slater.

"Not a thing," repeated Conklin.

"It seems to me—" Grant began, and once more he paused. "Of course, if you fellows—"

"I'll tell you what is the matter, Glen," said Slater kindly. "You've been pretty well used up by the heat, and by the job of bossing the two of us when we tried to quit on the raft, and you're getting wheels." He stepped forward and laid his fingers on the other's wrist. "I knew it—a pulse of about a thousand a minute!" He turned to Conklin. "Let me have those quinine tablets."

Grant swallowed the allotted tablets in silence; then he looked at them with a smile. The strange feeling that had obsessed him had passed away, and he had begun to feel drowsy.

"I'll turn in for a while, if you fellows don't mind," he suggested. "I'm pretty well fagged out."

IV

TEN minutes later, Slater entered the cave with a huge armful of dry leaves for bedding.

"Have it in the middle of the cave, cap'n?" he inquired cheerfully.

Grant aroused himself from the weariness that was slowly overpowering him. His voice held a note of alarm.

"Not in the middle, Bob—it isn't safe. By the side! By the side!"

Slater placed the heap of leaves as Grant directed, watched him sink almost immediately to sleep upon it, and then sought out Conklin. He found the other on the beach, beside a fire that was already sending up a black plume.

The two talked for a few minutes of the chances of early rescue, each conscious of the while of an insistent undercurrent of thought that would not be denied. Pres-

ently the big man broached the subject that underlay their spoken words.

"Do you understand about Glen?"

Conklin shook his head.

"He's a sick boy, if you ask me—that's all I can say."

"Maybe the strain of going so long without water told on him more than we thought," suggested Slater. "There was something strange about the way he went after me on the raft. For a while it looked as if he really was a buccaneer. His eyes—did you notice his eyes?"

Conklin nodded expressively.

"Ugh!"

"Me, too! And I've a theory about it. Suppose he actually had a buccaneer ancestor of the same name. Suppose, too, that the man had sailed these very seas, and had suffered as we did from lack of water. Would it be possible for Glen to—no, of course it wouldn't. Tommyrot, eh?"

"I'll say so," was Conklin's comment. "That sort of stuff never gets very far with me. Guess I'm too level-headed. He'll be all right after a sleep." He hesitated an instant. "Or else he's going to be a whole lot worse."

There was a pause, which both filled by tossing fragments of wood upon the fire. Finally Slater spoke.

"Suppose we get out of the heat and sit in the cave a bit. It's the only cool spot on the island."

The two strolled slowly to the cave, and found Grant sleeping soundly, his head pillowed on his arm. Passing noiselessly by him, they made their way into the cavern and seated themselves on a flat shelf of rock.

For a minute or two everything about them seemed blurred and indistinct. Then, gradually, the outlines of the walls, the white, sanded floor, the occasional stalactites pendent from the roof, swam softly into view. It was a wide cavern, evidently capable of affording shelter to more than one ship's crew. That it had served some such purpose in bygone days a rusted cutlass, half buried in the sand, gave silent witness.

Both men gazed thoughtfully at this mute reminder of ancient quarrels.

"I wonder," said Slater presently, "if they ever buried any treasure on this island! If they did—"

"Never heard of it," rejoined Conklin promptly. "If they did, you can bet somebody has lifted it long ago."

"I'm not so sure of that. This is a big island, remember." Slater was examining his pocket flash light as he spoke. "Got a new battery at Nassau, and I haven't used it yet. Some light that, eh?"

The light, which was one of unusual power, shot a white flame into the darkness. Rocks ancient beyond all telling sprang to view, then passed from vision as the light swept on its way.

"See that!" cried Slater quickly, holding the light stationary over a dark stain upon the wall some yards away. "Soot! They had a camp fire here."

He ran the light down the rocky wall to the floor of the cave. No trace of fire appeared.

"That's queer!" he muttered.

He swung the light inward again, then held it at what seemed a crevice in the wall.

"Their fire was around a turn there, Bert," he said.

As the two made their way inward, the crevice in the wall gradually took shape as the mouth of a branch cave of some width. Around the corner from the main cave lay the blackened débris of an old camp fire, a tongue of flame from which, in some far-off time, had made the mark that first caught Slater's attention.

There was something strangely interesting in the blackness of that dead camp fire. The joys, the hopes, the swift current of life that had had their place there, seemed to call to both Slater and Conklin from the cold ashes.

"You can almost fancy you see them sitting here, examining the priming of their muskets, sharpening their cutlasses, or dividing the plunder of a Spanish galleon," said Conklin. "Notice how fresh the air is. That means an opening big enough to carry off the smoke." He slapped Slater upon the shoulder. "Bob, it must have been a gorgeous life!"

"I'll say so," agreed Slater. "Though, after all, it was a rocky trail—hunger and thirst, plunder and battle, all mixed up together. You and I can stand here without being afraid of anybody coming, but they—"

He broke off as the soft pad of footsteps on the sand struck their ears. For a moment they gazed at each other inquiringly; then Glendower Grant came around the corner, bearing an armful of brushwood.

Conklin would have spoken had Slater

not motioned him to be silent. Together the two watched Grant throw the brushwood upon the ashes, light it, and stand back with a chuckle of satisfaction. His eyes were gleaming with fever, and he was evidently oblivious of their presence.

The fire caught with a rush, and the cave took on an air of rosy illumination. Grant watched the flame intently for a minute or two, and then looked restlessly about him, as if in search of something. Presently, with a look of remembrance on his face, he stepped to the wall and lifted from a slight recess a long contraption of rusted iron, which he proceeded to set up near the fire.

"A spit!" whispered Slater. "By the Lord, a spit! Wonder how we missed it!"

Grant, meanwhile, was regarding the result of his labor with a critical eye. First he moved one of the supporting legs, then the other, until he had the ancient piece of metal in a satisfactory position, after which he took several uncertain steps toward the interior of the cave.

"He's about at the end of his rope," whispered Slater. "Be ready to catch him if he falls."

Grant's hesitation, however, proved only momentary. In another minute he had plucked a brand from the fire, had turned to the left, and was hidden by an outcropping of the rocky wall.

"Some of these Bahama caves run all ways from the jack," said Conklin uneasily. "They wind in and out for miles, and some of them are full of holes. We ought to see where he is."

But Grant was not far away—not, as it turned out, more than thirty feet from the fire. They found him in a small, oblong chamber of the cave, lit fitfully by the blazing stick of cedar in his hand. Once more he was peering about him as if in search of something.

His two companions paused, spellbound, in what had clearly been, in some older time, a rudely fitted storehouse. Fastened to the wall by spikes were the remnants of several shelves, now worm-eaten and rotten. On a broad slab of stone an earthenware pipkin stood amid rusty iron kettles. There were battered pewter spoons and a rusted knife beside them, and, not far away, an empty tin box bearing the legend "flour" scored across it.

Grant's actions were now slow and hesitating. At intervals he paused altogether, and passed his hand across his forehead

with a puzzled gesture. Presently, shaking his head in disappointment, he swung on his heel and began to stagger back by the way he had come. The two followed in silence.

As Grant neared the camp fire, he threw down his torch and turned in the direction of the mouth of the cave. Here he flung himself upon the untidy remnants of his bed of leaves, and fell fast asleep.

Slater knelt beside him, and carefully examined his face.

"His fever is beginning to break," the big man whispered, as he rose to his feet. "When a fever comes to a climax, people do queer things. I don't think we should tell him about it when he comes around."

"No use to bother him," Conklin assented with averted eyes.

V

It was noon when Glendower Grant awoke from a refreshing sleep. A fire had been kindled in the mouth of the cave, and fish was being broiled on a homemade wooden spit. Slater and Conklin looked up as Grant stretched himself yawningly.

"Feeling better?" asked the big man casually.

"And then some!"

The meal, which constituted their first attempt at a formal repast, passed off without a hitch. The quarrel that had marred the earlier part of the day seemed ended, but there was no mistaking the relative positions of the three castaways. Glendower Grant was now unquestioned leader.

The meal ended, he rose, a trifle unsteadily, to his feet.

"One thing we must do at once, boys," he began briskly. "We must explore the cave. I have a queer feeling about it. Suppose we look!"

Slater produced his flash light, Grant and Conklin lit torches of cedar, and the march into the interior of the cave began.

They reached the first turning and stood by the ashes of the ancient camp fire in silence—in silence, because Grant was staring dumbly about him and the others were eagerly watching. Presently he drew a long breath.

"I seem to have seen all this before. Of course, I haven't, but—"

With no word more he went on his way, treading, as if by instinct, the trail leading to the buccaneers' storehouse. Here again he looked about him with a puzzled air.

"What do you fellows make of this?" he questioned.

"Looks like buccaneer headquarters to me," remarked Conklin.

"There were hundreds of these caves used from time to time and abandoned when another served the turn better," said Grant. "But there is something about this—"

He moved quickly to the stone slab, peered into the pipkin and rusty kettles that stood upon it, and then, bending down, lifted upon the slab two oblong pieces of dark metal.

"Silver?" asked Conklin eagerly.

The finder scratched the surface of the metal with his thumb nail.

"Lead!" he answered. "Do you boys know what that means?"

"They molded bullets with it, I suppose, and it got lost in the shuffle," argued Slater.

"It's for bullets, all right," Grant agreed; "but this lead wasn't lost. I'll tell you why. A buccaneer crew didn't have a general store of food or powder or lead. Pirates may have had, but not buccaneers. The buccaneers worked on a different principle. Each man carried with him his own supplies, his own lead, his own musket. He never parted from them. Now put two and two together, and what do you get?"

"Something happened, between expeditions, to the chap who owned this lead," said Slater. "If so, where—"

"Maybe he was drowned," conjectured Conklin.

"Most probably he died in the cave," was Grant's verdict. "He certainly never left on an expedition, or the lead would not be here. In that case we ought to find—"

He flashed the rays of his torch at the base of the wall, stepped forward, and moved with his foot a rusted iron cylinder that had been entirely buried in the sand.

"Here is what is left of his flintlock musket," he said quietly.

Slater turned his flash light upon the rusted relic. His face was a veritable study in surprise.

"How did you guess that?" he asked suspiciously.

"Guess it?" cried Grant. "Where would he be likely to set his musket, except against the wall in the corner where he kept his lead? I didn't see the musket, so I knew it had slipped down by the wall and was buried in the sand. A westerly gale will drift this fine sand like snow in a

blizzard. That part was easy. The real question is, what became of the man himself? At first I thought he might have gone out hunting and met with an accident; but the musket disproves that, for he wouldn't have gone hunting without it. Therefore he is here."

"Here?" cried Conklin, looking nervously about him.

"Don't worry, Bert—the man is dead," said Slater roughly.

Meanwhile Grant had flashed the light of his blazing torch into the corners of the cave, without result.

"This place may wind in and out for miles, boys," he said presently; "but I sure would like to know what happened to that man!"

He began to reexamine the kettles, which were partially filled with rust flakes and drifted sand, running his fingers through the débris with methodical exactness. Suddenly Conklin, who was next to him, saw his face light up. In another instant he had drawn from one of the kettles a twisted and discolored bit of what was unquestionably parchment, and had begun carefully to unfold it.

There was a profound silence as Glendower Grant unrolled that crumpled parchment and read it aloud. "The Cave on Espiritu Santo" was the heading. That was the old name for Andros, Grant explained. He read hastily. A buccaneer chief, deserted by his companions and mortally wounded by his successful rival, had here written a last message, even while he awaited the return of his enemy.

"Am in farr worse state to-day," the parchment ended. "Worne with fevere. Have drawne upp plan to treasure of the Osprey, and hidd it in my doublet. I lack powdere for my musket. An Dustan come, I claime the buccaneer right to fight with my knife." At this point the writing faltered, as if from weakness, and below was scrawled: "Glendower Grant, from the Providence Plantations."

The reader's voice died away in the lonely recesses of the empty cave, and the three stood silent, touched by the quiet bravery with which the old-time Glendower Grant had faced his fate. Finally Slater spoke.

"Your people have lived in Rhode Island for generations, haven't they, Glen?" he inquired.

"'Rhode Island and Providence Plantations' is the correct name. There have al-

ways been Glendower Grants there. This one died in this cave—I am certain of it now. If he had left the cave, he would have destroyed the parchment mentioning his treasure."

"You mean that the other buccaneer, Dustan, came back to the cave, killed him, and took away the plan of the hidden treasure?" asked Slater harshly. "The damned rascal!"

"That's about the way I figure it," agreed Grant. "Now, suppose we have a look around!"

VI

It was Conklin who made the discovery in a right-hand winding of the cave, not twenty yards from where they stood. The others came running at his call. The sand had not drifted much in that part of the cavern, and two skeletons lay amid the faded tatters of what once were clothes.

"Two of them!" cried Grant, with odd elation. "Then Dustan came back, after all, and—stayed!"

He looked at the trampled sand, where deep footprints still gave token of a terrific struggle. Then his gaze passed to the quiet sleepers, as oblivious now of earthly turmoil as a far-off star.

"I wonder which was Glendower Grant," he said.

Slater flashed his searchlight upon a heavy knife, the rusted blade of which was still sticking between skeleton ribs.

"There are initials on the blade!" he cried excitedly. He dropped to his knees beside the ancient enemies and read aloud: "G. G.!"

"God! What a man he must have been, Glen!" was his comment. "God!"

"They were both good men," was Conklin's decision. "Dustan needn't have fought with a knife, for of course he came here armed to the teeth. I think it's his cutlass that lies in the outer cave, and no doubt his musket is there, buried in the sand. He gave the other man a chance; but that ancestor of yours, Glen—say, he was a pippin!"

"We'll pile sand over their bones and leave them to rest side by side," suggested Grant gently. "But before that—"

He dropped to his knees and fumbled in the loose sand in which the buccaneer Grant reposed. His hand presently reappeared with a strip of parchment, the corner of which was stained a faded red.

"'Plan of the treasure in the cave of Espiritu Santo,'" he read aloud. "'The fifth turn from the entrance, counting from the left side—ten paces to larbourde—one fathom downe.'"

The loose sand had been spread in an oblong mound above the sleeping foemen ere the three gave further thought to the treasure. Retracing their steps to the entrance of the cave, they speedily reached one of the many chambers opening from the main cave, which corresponded to the details given.

"Larboard?" questioned Slater. "That means the same as 'port,' doesn't it? Left, I suppose."

Grant nodded.

"Here we are! Now ten paces to the left."

The three stepped off the paces, and halted on the sandy floor.

"Can't be anything here," said Conklin, with evident disappointment. "The floor of the cave is solid rock, and a fathom is six feet."

"Every once in a while a man goes hunting in the Bahamas and never shows up again," interjected Grant. "Do you know why? The islands are of coral formation, and there are many deep cavities in the rocks. In the woods they are often covered with brushwood, and you can see what that might mean to a hunter. There might be such a cavity in the floor of this cave."

"Let's get busy!" cried Slater hoarsely.

He fell on his knees, and began burrowing with his bare hands in the sand. The others followed suit, and in a few minutes had succeeded in making three large holes.

Presently Conklin came upon the solid rock of the cave floor. A few minutes later Slater did the same, but Grant had already reached a lower level without encountering any obstacle.

Effort, therefore, was centered upon the hole that Grant had begun. The earthenware pipkin, brought from the buccaneers' storehouse, rendered yeoman service, as did two of the least damaged iron kettles. Minute by minute the excavation deepened. Torches, stuck in the sand, flung a flickering light upon the scene, and tossed fantastic shadows on the walls as the workers moved to and fro. They had reached a depth of nearly six feet when Grant's hands suddenly touched cold iron.

He fairly choked on the words: "It's here, boys!"

The few minutes necessary to clear the sand from the box that lay beneath seemed a separate eternity to each. Finally there was lifted to the floor of the cave an oblong box about two feet in length, the same in width, and a foot in height. Fashioned by a cunning artificer generations before, it had been secured by a ponderous lock, the complicated mechanism of which had been so shattered by musket fire that the lid offered no resistance to Grant's hand. He flung it open to three pairs of startled eyes.

Dim splendor lit by sparks of fire—that was the first impression of the wonderful diamond necklace that lay coiled at one end. Drops of blood run into bubbles and crystallized—these were the pigeon's-blood rubies that lorded it in the center. The torches flamed upon emeralds in the other end so large as to seem unreal.

"Specimen stones!" cried Slater, whose uncle was a famous collector. "The Osprey culled those from more than one rich Spanish galleon, I'll be bound!"

"Suppose you have a look at the beach fire, while Bert and I fill in the hole," Grant broke in. "We mustn't let that fire die down."

Slater flashed him a quick glance of annoyance and then, without a word, strode from the cave.

Emptying the jewels upon the sand some feet away, Grant tossed the useless box into the yawning pit, and began hurriedly to fill in the sand. Conklin and he had scarcely finished their task—a foolish labor over which they were destined to laugh in days to come—when Slater ran into the cave.

"A launch far out and a couple of canoes half a mile from shore! The captain of the Daphne is in one of them. He's waving his panama." He looked glumly at the jewels, now gleaming in barbaric splendor as the torchlight fell across them. "I congratulate you on recovering the family treasure, Glen!" he said with clumsy sarcasm.

Glendower Grant leaped to his feet and faced him with a wide smile.

"You imitation buccaneers don't know much about real buccaneer law, Bob. Man alive! It was share and share alike then, and it's share and share alike now. Fill up your pockets, boys, and keep a still tongue in your head till we can sort over the stones in Nassau!"

The Discard

A ROMANCE OF INDIA—THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A MAN
WHOM CIVILIZATION CAST OUT

By Kenneth Perkins

Author of "Queen of the Night," etc.

XXIV

THE Hindu servant anticipated Ross's murderous mood. He fell to his knees, and, taking advantage of the white man's first dazed reaction, began to wail out for mercy.

"Twice-born! Son of heaven! Son of the sun! Cherisher of the poor!" he howled. "There has been witchcraft here in the jungles to-night! May the gods be thanked that you, a white man, have come to us! Grimsby Sahib is possessed of devils, for lo, I beheld him firing into the shadows of the banyan without reason! Furthermore, one of my companions—he who guarded the mem-sahib's tent—was attacked by devils, for he was foully slain, and with no marks of violence upon him, save only a harmless, necessary turban. And this mem-sahib likewise, son of heaven, was found dead in the tent!"

Upon the very point of firing into the native's mouth as he howled, Ross glanced across the pitiable kneeling figure to his mahout, who stood just behind. Muhutma Daj was not wearing the turban with which he started out that night, but a different one—merely a strip of cloth that might have been torn from his dhoti, or loin cloth. Ross remembered that undeniably eloquent wink.

"Do not kill this son of pigs, sahib," the mahout counseled. "Do not destroy life in this moment of your great defeat, of your chagrin, of your frenzied anger. And indeed of what avail is that you should attempt to destroy life? For mark you this eternal truth"—he raised his voice to a cracked but exultant cry—"there—is—no—death!"

Ross heard these words as if the waterfalls were thundering them forth from the jungle.

"There is no death?" he cried.

What a hideous lie, when in his arms he held the most beautiful of forms—a woman's—inert and lifeless! Again he brought the muzzle of the gun which he held underneath the girl's body to bear upon the mouth of the gibbering native. He would kill the fellow. He would lay his burden down, then pursue Grimsby, and kill him likewise.

But before he could bring himself to pull his trigger—a difficult gesture, even when a man is trying to shoot a dog—he remembered that wink again; and still in his ear were the words:

"Of what avail is it that you should attempt to destroy life? *There is no death!*"

He looked at the mahout again. Muhutma Daj kicked the kneeling Hindu.

"Get up from your hunkers, son of filth, offspring of swine, body louse!" he said. "Take this amulet to your master!"

To the utter astonishment of Ross, he surrendered the precious amulet—even though to all appearances Grimsby had tricked them unconscionably, unmercifully.

When the servant took the stone, the mahout turned to Ross, beckoned to him, and then turned toward the jungle. Ross followed him into the black scrub. He bore the girl in his arms, but went away with his head raised high, as if he could not bear to look down at that tragic burden—or, rather, as if he was afraid to look down.

Grimsby, meanwhile, received the amulet, clutched it to his breast with an exultant cry, and ran out into the open.