

SPANISH DOUBLOONS

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BY CAMILLA KENYON

"MY LASSIE"

Synopsis—Jane Harding, respectable and conservative old maid, but never too old to think of marriage—with more money than mind—planned, Miss Hargrave, Browne, into financing an expedition to hunt for buried treasure on Leeward Island. Her niece, Virginia Harding, undertaking to stop her, gets on the canal and is unwillingly carried along. By no means controlling her destiny for the expedition and her content for its members, Virginia makes the acquaintance of the remarkable Cuthbert Vane. Talking with Duval Shaw, leader of the expedition, Virginia very frankly expresses her views, practically accusing Shaw and the other members of the party, including a somewhat uncertain personage Captain Magnus, and a "maniac," Hamilton H. Tubbs, of being in a conspiracy to defraud Jane Harding. Leading on the island is a matter of some difficulty. Virginia being carried ashore in the arms of Cuthbert Vane. The party gets settled. Miss Browne tells about the treasure. Virginia declares herself out of it. The dead sailor's map is produced. Virginia finds a mysterious door. The island is a matter of some difficulty. Virginia being carried ashore in the arms of Cuthbert Vane. The party gets settled. Miss Browne tells about the treasure. Virginia declares herself out of it. The dead sailor's map is produced. Virginia finds a mysterious door.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Lassie, Lassie!"

Two or three days later occurred a painful episode. The small unexpected term of it had into ambushed in a discourse of Mr. Shaw's, delivered shortly after our arrival on the island, on the multifarious uses of the coconuts. He told how the juice from the unopened flower-spikes in drawn off to form a potent toddy, so that where every prospect pleases man may well be vile. Cookie, experimentally disposed, set to work. Mr. Vane, also experimentally, sampled the results of Cookie's efforts. The liquor had merely been allowed to ferment, whereas a complicated process is necessary for the manufacture of the true arrack, but enough had been achieved to bring about dire consequences for Cuthbert Vane, who had found the liquid cool and refreshing, and was skeptical about its potency.

Aunt Jane took the matter very hard, and rebuked the ribald mirth of Mr. Tubbs. He had to shed tears over a devastating poem called "The Drunkard's Home," before she would forgive him. Cookie, too, was forgiven by engaging to vote the prohibition ticket at the next election.

Mr. Shaw was disturbed over Cuthbert, who was not at all bad, only queer and sleepy, and had to be led away to slumber in retirement. Also, it was exceptionally low tide and Mr. Shaw had counted on taking advantage of it to work in the cave. Now Cuthbert was laid up.

"You and I will have to manage by ourselves, Magnus."

"Nothing doing—boat got to be patched up—go to there without it and get caught!" growled the captain. "Well, lend a hand, then. We can be ready with the boat inside an hour."

The captain hesitated queerly. His wandering eyes seemed to be searching in every quarter for something they did not find. At last he mumbled that he thought he felt a touch of the sun, and had decided to lay off for the afternoon and make his way across the island. He said he wanted to shoot water-fowl and that they had all been frightened away from the cave, but that with the glass he had seen them from Lookout thickly about the bay.

"Very well," said the Scotchman coldly. "I suppose you must suit your self. I can get the boat in shape without help, I dare say." I saw him presently looking in an annoyed and puzzled fashion after the vanishing figure of the sailor.

Mr. Tubbs and the umbrella soon disappeared into the woods. I believe the search for Bill Halliwell's tombstone was no longer very actively pursued, and that he and Aunt Jane and Violet spent their time once more in using little books with hammocks and cushions. I more than suspected Mr. Tubbs of feeling that such a bird in the hand as Aunt Jane was worth many doubloons in the bush. But in spite of uneasiness about the future, for the present I rested secure in the certainty that they could not elope from the island, and that there was no one on it with authority to metamorphose Aunt Jane into Mrs. Hamilton H. Tubbs.

was the opportunity of all others to explore it, unhampered by any one, just Crusee and I alone, in the fashion that left me freest to indulge my dreams.

I waited until the Scotchman's back was safely turned, because if he saw me setting forth on this excursion he was quite certain to command me to return, and I had no intention of submitting to his dictatorial ways and yet was not quite sure how I was successfully to defy him.

The retreating tide had left deep pools behind, each a little corner of the fairy sea-world, with tiny scuttling crabs and rich and wonderful forms of life which were strange to me. Crusee and I were very much interested, and lingered a good deal on the way. But at last we reached the great archway, and passed with a suddenness which was like a plunge into cool water from the hot glare of the tropic sunshine into the green shadow of the cave.

At the lower end, between two arches, a black, water-worn rock paving rang under one's feet. Further in under the point the floor of the cave was covered with white sand. All the great shadowy place was murmuring like a vast sea-shell.

I wished I could visit the place in darkness. It would be thrice as mysterious, filled with its hollow whispering eddies, as in the day. From the ledge far above my head led off those narrow, twisting crevices in which the three explorers did their unrequited burrowing. I could see the strands of a rope ladder lying coiled at the edge of the shaft, where it was secured by spikes. The men dragged down the ladder with a boat-hook when they wanted to ascend. I looked about with a hope that perhaps they had left the boat-hook somewhere.

I found no boat-hook, but instead a spade, which had been driven deep into the sand and left, too firmly imbedded for the tide to bear away. At once a burning hope that I, alone and unaided, might bring to light the treasure of the Boony Lass seethed in my veins. I jerked the spade loose and felt it.

I now discovered the great truth that digging for treasure is the most thrilling and absorbing occupation known to man. Time ceased to be, and the weight of the damp and close-packed sand seemed that of feathers. This temporary state of exaltation passed, to be sure, and the sand got very heavy, and my back ached, but still I dug. Crusee began to fuss about and bark. He came and tugged at my skirt, uttering an uneasy whine.

"Be quiet, Crusee!" I commanded, threatening him with my spade. The madness of the treasure-lust possessed me. I was panting now, and my hands began to feel like baseball mitts.

"Of course I came!" he said huskily. "There, don't tremble—so you are safe—safe in my arm!"

After a while he lifted me into the stern and began to maneuver the boat out of the cave. I suppose at another time I should have realized the peril of it. The fierce flow through the archway all but swamped us, the current threatened to hurl us against the rocks, but I felt no fear. He had come to save me, and he would. All at once the dreadful shadow of the cavern was left behind, and the sunshine immersed my chilled body like a draught of wine. I lay huddled in the stern, my cheek upon my hand, as he rowed swiftly across the cove and drove the boat upon the beach.

Everybody but Captain Magnus was assembled there, including Crusee. Crusee it was who had given warning of my danger. Like a wise little dog, when I ignored his admonitions he had run home. At first his uneasiness and troubled barking had got no notice. Once or twice the Scotchman, worried by his fretfulness, had ordered him away. Then across his preoccupied mind there flashed a doubt. He laid down his tools and spoke to the animal. Instantly Crusee dashed for the rocks, barking and crying with eagerness.

Then Mr. Shaw understood. He snatched the painter of the boat and dragged it down the beach. He was shouting off as Cookie, roused by Crusee's barking, appeared from the seclusion of his afternoon siesta. To him were borne the Scotchman's parting words:

"Virginia Harding—in the cave—hot black—may be drowning—"

"And at that," said Cookie, relating his part in the near tragedy with unction, "I jes' natchally plumped right down on mah bones and wrestled with de Lord in prayin'."

For was, I had no thought but that somehow I could escape. That those waters were for me the very face of death, sure and relentless, terrible and slow, did not at once seize hold upon my heart.

Frantically I sprang for the entrance on the cove. The floor of the cave was sloping, and the water deepened swiftly as I advanced. Soon I was floundering to my knees, and on the instant a great wave rushed in, drenching me to the waist, dazing me with its spray and uproar, and driving me back to the far end of the cave.

With a dreadful hollow sucking sound the surge retreated. I staggered toward the archway that was my only door to life. The water was deeper now, and swiftly came another fierce rush of the sea that drove me back.

I fled to the far end of the cave, but the sea pursued me. Swiftly the water climbed—it flung me against the wall, then dragged me back. I clutched at the naked rock with bleeding fingers.

Again, after a paroxysm during which I had seemed to stand a great way off and listen to the sea, I was come to me a moment of calm. I knew that my one tenuous thread of hope lay in launching myself into that wild flood that was tearing through the cove. I was not a strong swimmer, but I had tried once. I might find refuge on some half-submerged rock on the shores of the cove—at least I should perish in the open, in the sunlight, not trapped like a desperate man in a cave, and I might try my way toward the opening.

And then a dreadful vision flashed across my mind, weighted down my feet like lead, choked back even the cry from my frozen lips. Sharks! The black cutting fin, the vivid belly, the dreadful jaws opening—no, no, better to die here, better the clean embrace of the waters—it indeed the sharks did not come into the cave.

And then I think I went quite mad. I remember trying to hang to the ledge which hung heaving fifteen feet above. Afterward my poor hands showed how desperately. And I remember that once I slipped and went clear under, and how I choked and struggled in the salt water. For my mouth was always open, screaming, screaming continually.

And when I saw the boat fighting its way inch by inch into the cave I was sure that it was a vision, and that only my own wild teasing of him to save me had made the face of Duval Shaw arise before my dying eyes. Duval Shaw was still mending the boat on the shore of the cove, and this was a mocking phantasm.

Only the warm human clasp of the arms that drew me into the boat made me believe in him.

The boat bobbed quietly in the eddy at the far end of the cave, while a wet, shivering, shivering heap clung to Duval Shaw. I clasped him about the neck and would not let him go, for fear that I should find myself alone again, perishing in the dark water. My head, on his breast, and his arms pressing back my wet hair with strong and tender hands.

What was this he was saying? "My lassie, my little, little lassie!" And no less incredible than this it was to feel his cheek pressed, very gently, against my hair—

Against a little self-control came back to me. I stopped my senseless childish crying, lifted my head and tried to speak. I could only whisper: "You came, you came!"

"Of course I came!" he said huskily. "There, don't tremble—so you are safe—safe in my arm!"

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And yet at first, wild as my tale

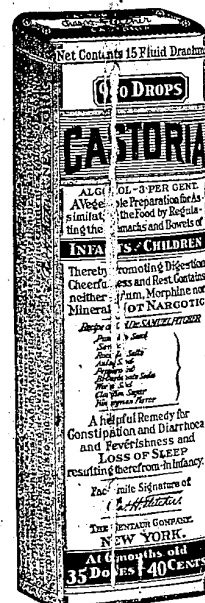
More Than Ever Then, Beware of the man who knows it all, especially if it happens to be your self.—Boston Transcript

Why Castoria?

YEARS ago Castor Oil, Paregoric, Drops and Soothing Syrups were the remedies in common use for Infants and Children; Castor Oil so nauseating as to be almost impossible and the others all containing Opium in one form or another, but so disguised as to make them pleasant to the taste, yet really to stupefy the child and give the appearance of relief from pain.

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Babe and Bebe.

A teacher was giving a lesson in grammar. On the blackboard she placed the words "he" and "she." She then said, "He is masculine and 'she' is feminine. Now, can any of you pupils give me a similar example?" Soon a hand shot up, and she nodded to the boy and said: "Come to the blackboard and write your example."

He wrote "Babe" and "Bebe." "Babe" is masculine, and "Bebe" is feminine."

"Spoiled her?" "No." "Maids says she did. Have a good time at the reception?" "What was the truth?"

"She'd heard a whole lot of gossip about a girl who was there, and the girl kept within heart's distance all the time, so that Maids didn't have a chance to tell it."—Boston Transcript.

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