

ADVENTURE AND SPORT.

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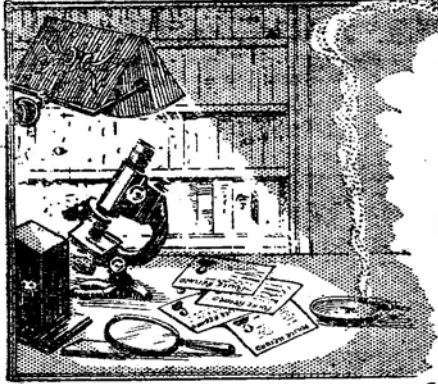
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THE MUTINY SHIP!

A Thrilling Incident From Our Long Complete Naval Story Inside.

COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.



PASSENGERS OF THE PELICAN!

A Grand, Long Complete Detective Story introducing Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake.

BY OWEN CONQUEST.

Ferrers Locke, the Up-to-Date Detective with New Methods.

Caught Napping!

JACK DRAKE leaned on the rail and looked out over the starry sea. It was a dark night; but the stars gleamed like points of fire in the velvety sky.

The tramp-steamer Pelican was plunging through the waters of the Bay of Biscay, outward bound to the West Coast of Africa. Jack Drake, in his rough trousers and jersey, looked like anything but the assistant of Ferrers Locke, the famous Baker Street detective. On the ship's books he was Jack Jackson; in the forecastle of the Pelican he was "ship's boy"—that and nothing more.

The rough hands who foregathered in the forecastle of the Pelican certainly did not think that he was anything else, and they certainly did not dream that Mr. Ferrers, the chief mate of the Pelican, was no other than the celebrated detective of Baker Street, Ferrers Locke.

The secret had been well kept. Even Captain Brown, the skipper of the Pelican, did not know the identity of his chief mate. He had received "Mr. Ferrers" on board at the request of his owners—which was good enough for him—and he had never troubled to ask questions.

But Jack Drake, as he looked out over the starry sea towards the Spanish coast, wondered whether anyone else suspected what was hidden from captain and crew.

He glanced round as he heard a steady, firm step on the planks behind him.

The red end of a cigar glimmered, and a scent of Havana tobacco came to him, as a tall figure paced past.

Drake's eyes lingered curiously upon the rather handsome, though hard, face of Captain St. Leger.

It was to watch this man that he and his chief were on board the tramp-steamer; and George St. Leger had never given a hint that he guessed that he was being watched.

But Drake did not trust him. He knew that in St. Leger, Ferrers Locke had a foeman worthy of his steel, and he was very much on his guard.

Captain St. Leger passed him, pacing on as far as the bridge, and then swung round and paced back.

He walked with a firm, vigorous military tread. Again he passed Jack Drake, and this time his glance rested upon the boy—only for a fleeting moment, but with a keen, penetrating gaze that seemed to pierce him. Jack Drake's eyes met his for that fleeting moment. The captain passed on, leaving a trail of blue cigar-smoke behind him.

Drake felt a quiver. Why had St. Leger given him that penetrating, searching glance? Was he suspected?

The boy moved away towards the bridge. On the bridge he could see Mr. Ferrers, the chief mate, in talk with Captain Brown of the Pelican. He would have been glad of a word with his chief, but it was impossible then. On board the tramp-steamer, the detective and his assistant were as strangers, and it was only with the greatest care that they met on rare occasions to compare notes.

"Boy!"
Drake started a little as Captain St. Leger called to him. He looked round.

"Did you call, sir?"
St. Leger beckoned him to approach.

"Go down to Sir Randal Shandon's cabin and ask him if he would care to step on deck. Tell him it's a fine evening."

"Ay, ay, sir!"
Drake went below to the baronet's state-room. The Pelican had no cabin-boy, but Drake had been called upon a good many times to act in that capacity to serve the two passengers who were going out to Lagos on the cargo-tramp.

Drake tapped at the door of Sir Randal Shandon's state-room, and opened it.

An odour of strong liquor greeted him.

The lamp was burning, but for the moment he did not see Shandon. He looked round, however, and found the young man stretched in the bunk.

Evidently he had been drinking.

A look of strong disgust came over Drake's face.

The weak and wretched vice of drunkenness was the one that aroused his scorn and disgust most strongly; and since Sir Randal Shandon had been on board the Pelican, he had seldom been seen quite sober.

Drake spoke to him, but there was no answer from the bunk. He approached the sleeper and shook him by the shoulder.

The baronet's dull eyes opened. He blinked at Drake.

"Captain St. Leger wishes to know if you'd care to step on deck sir?" said Drake.

"Go to b-b-blazes!" mumbled Sir Randal. And he closed his eyes and went to sleep again. Drake stepped back towards the a-way on which the state-room opened. Rather to his surprise, he found the tall figure of Captain St. Leger standing before him.

The captain eyed him.
"Have you told him?"
"He's asleep, sir," said Drake quietly.

Captain St. Leger laughed.
"Take this coat into my cabin, boy, and leave it on the bunk." He handed a light overcoat to Drake as he spoke.

"Certainly, sir."
Drake went on to St. Leger's state-room and went in. It was dark in the room, but he felt his way to the bunk and threw down the coat.

There was a footstep behind him, and he heard the door close. Drake swung back from the bunk.

In the dark of the cabin he could see nothing, but he knew that he was not alone, and he realised that Captain St. Leger had followed him in.

"Light the lamp, boy."
The captain's voice came quietly and clearly.

"Ay, ay, sir!"
Drake fumbled for matches, trying to still the rapid beating of his heart.

It flashed into his mind that Captain St. Leger had deliberately tricked him into the cabin—the message to Sir Randal Shandon had been a "dodge" to get him below without suspicion. Did the man, after all, know that he was being watched—did he suspect that Drake was watching him? If so, what were his intentions now? Only too well Jack Drake knew the desperate character of the man he had to deal with.

The lamp glimmered out in the cabin. In the light, Drake looked at Captain St. Leger's face. It looked harder and grimmer, and there was a glitter in St. Leger's eyes like cold steel.

Drake made a movement towards the door. Captain St. Leger raised his hand.

"Stand where you are!" he said sharply.
"I have to be on deck, sir—"

"You will do as I tell you!"
"I must return to my duty, sir," said Drake quietly.

Captain St. Leger's hand went to his hip. Drake started back, as a revolver glimmered in the lamplight.

"Stand where you are!" said the captain grimly. "Don't call out, Master Jack Jackson—and don't move! It is doubtful whether you will leave this cabin alive! But if you want a chance of your life, stand still!"

Drake stood still.

At The Pistol's Point.

CAPTAIN ST. LEGER sat down, and laid the revolver on his knee. Still with his keen eyes fastened on the boy detective, he snipped the end from a cigar, and lighted it. He blew out a curl of smoke, thoughtfully, watching Drake's face.

"I have a few questions to put to you, my boy," he remarked, in casual tones. "You have interested me for some time. I do not think you are quite the ordinary kind of a ship's boy."

"Indeed, sir," said Drake.

"Indeed!" said St. Leger, with a nod. "You, young cub, tell me the truth. Who sent you on board the Pelican to watch me?"

Drake drew a quick, deep breath.

The adventurer's question told him two things—that he was suspected, and that Ferrers Locke was not suspected. If the captain had guessed that the mate of the tramp-steamer was the famous Baker Street detective, he would not have needed to question Jack Drake.

"Are you surprised that I have spotted you?" asked the captain, contemptuously. "You young fool, I have had my eye on you for a week or more. You have almost haunted me about the Pelican—especially when I have been in company with Sir Randal Shandon. You are young to be playing the detective. But I have made a mistake—perhaps you are older than you look, too. Have you ever heard of the Wide World Insurance Company?"

Drake did not answer.

"Did they send you on board?"
No reply.

"You will answer me, if you know what is for your good," said Captain St. Leger, in low, quiet tones of menace. "I have long known that there was suspicion on the side of the insurance company. Gad! they do not want to pay out twenty thousand pounds

on the life of Sir Randal Shandon—and they know I hold the policy. Someone has interfered with me already—in London—and I was not unprepared to find a spy on board the Pelican. You are the spy, Master Jack Jackson.

Still Drake was silent.

The rascal was throwing off the mask now, with a vengeance, and Drake's glance lingered on the revolver.

A shot in the state-room would be heard all over the ship, and Drake could hardly believe that even this reckless scoundrel would proceed to such a desperate length to rid himself of a shadower. Perhaps he had planned a story of an accident with the revolver!

Drake did not lose his nerve.

He knew that his life was in danger; but danger and he had become old acquaintances since he had taken service with Ferrers Locke.

"I expected to find another passenger, or a pretended supercargo, or something of the sort," resumed St. Leger. "I have found you. Do you deny that you were shipped on board the Pelican to watch me?"

No answer.

Captain St. Leger raised the revolver again. "You dare not shoot me!" said Drake calmly, though his heart was beating hard. "It would be murder, and—"

The captain smiled.

"I was showing you the revolver, and it went off by accident," he explained. "A lamentable accident—and you will be buried at sea. I do not think that Captain Brown or his crew will be greatly concerned about the fate of a ship's boy, Master Jack Jackson."

Drake breathed hard.

"You had the one way of saving your life," continued the captain, "and that is by making a clean breast of it. Tell me who sent you on board the Pelican, and exactly what they suspect."

"I think you know what the insurance company suspects," said Drake, with a curl of the lip. "They know that you have insured Sir Randal Shandon's life for twenty thousand pounds, and that there was a shooting accident in Scotland that nearly cost him his life. They do not need telling, I imagine, why you are taking him on a sea trip to a lonely and dangerous coast."

Captain St. Leger nodded.

"And you are on board to see that he does not disappear on a dark night?" he said, in bantering tones.

Drake did not answer.

"Have you any associates on board?" Captain St. Leger eyed the boy keenly as he put the question. "Any other member of the crew?"

"Find out!"

"That is what I am going to do. Tell me all, and leave the cabin—refuse, and there will be a sad accident with this revolver. I think that you have learned that I am a man of my word."

Drake clenched his fists hard. He was utterly at the villain's mercy; but death itself would not have wrung from him a betrayal of his chief. The captain's eyes glittered over the revolver.

"I am not a patient man," he said, "and you are trying my patience very hard, Master Jack Jackson. I warn you not to try it too far."

There was a fumbling step in the alley-way, and the door of the state-room was flung suddenly open.

Captain St. Leger started to his feet, with a muttered oath, and the revolver disappeared into his pocket as if by magic.

The dishevelled figure of Sir Randal Shandon appeared in the doorway, standing there unsteadily, his hands clutching at the doorway for support on either side.

The half-intoxicated man stood leering and blinking into the cabin, little dreaming of the strange scene he had interrupted.

"Lookin' for you, George, old pal," he numbed. "Come an' have a drink."

"Get out, you drunken fool!"

For once the captain's self-command had left him. Sir Randal stared at him dizzily.

"Callin' me names!" he stammered. "Wharrer marrer with you, George? Come and have a drink."

Jack Drake made a quick side-movement towards the door. In the presence of the baronet—the hapless wretch he had marked down for his victim—Captain St. Leger dared not use the revolver.

He made a movement towards Drake, but stepped back, and the boy detective quitted the cabin.

He heard the quarrelsome voice of Sir Randal, ragging his companion, as he hurried on deck.

The boy detective breathed more freely as he found himself in the open air, under the glimmer of the stars, again. He had had a narrow escape—and he knew now the danger he ran on board the Pelican. But he was not thinking of that. He was thinking of how to report what had happened to his chief, to let Ferrers Locke know that St. Leger had discovered that he was watched. A few minutes later Captain St. Leger came on deck, and he glanced at Drake as he passed him. But it was a careless, casual glance, and he passed on without a word.

Drake Takes A Hand!

A TROPICAL sun blazed down upon the decks of the Pelican as she plunged on through the South Atlantic. Far away to the East, glimpses could be had of the headlands of the African coast.

It was many days since the strange scene in Captain St. Leger's cabin; and the life of the tramp-steamer had been uneventful since. Drake had found an opportunity of acquainting Ferrers Locke with all that had occurred, and the Baker Street detective had bidden him to be more than ever upon his guard.

But Captain St. Leger had shown no sign of hostility since. Probably he was aware that Drake would not easily be caught napping a second time, and he did not renew the attempt.

But Drake knew that he was watched by the man he was there himself to watch. Doubtless the captain hoped to discover whether he was alone on the Pelican, or whether he had a confederate in his task. And for that reason Drake was very careful not to approach his chief. As yet, the captain's suspicions had not turned towards

Mr. Ferrers.

The even tenor of life on the tramp-steamer was broken chiefly by Sir Randal Shandon.

The baronet had evidently brought a large supply of drink on board the Pelican with him, and as Captain Brown, the skipper, did

not interfere with him in any way, he was seen intoxicated at least once a day. Many a time Drake was called upon to assist the wretched man below to his bunk.

On such occasions Sir Randal would sometimes thank him in maudlin tones, and at other times would treat him to a volley of curses and imprecations, according to his mood.

Drake and his chief were there to save the wretched man's life, but Drake had never met any man that he despised and disliked so thoroughly. Even the gloomy, ruthless St. Leger appeared to him more admirable than this weak, besotted victim of his own vices.

Sometimes, under the influence of drink, the wretched man would stagger on the deck when the Pelican was rolling in a rough sea, in imminent danger of going overboard, and saving St. Leger the trouble and guilt of compassing his death. But he had a drunken man's luck. And Drake wondered whether the captain's discovery that there was a detective on board, was the reason why he refrained from taking active measures. Certainly, by the time the Pelican was plunging the sunny waters of the Gulf of Guinea, Captain St. Leger had had many opportunities. Perhaps he was trusting to fortune to do his work for him, or, perhaps, he considered it safer to leave the deed till after the Pelican reached her destination. Both Drake and Ferrers Locke were watchful; but from Captain St. Leger there came no sign.

In the fore-castle Drake heard a good deal of discussion among the crew on the subject of the two passengers of the Pelican.

Captain St. Leger was regarded with some awe by the rough deck hands; but Sir Randal Shandon they looked upon with open contempt. More than once Drake heard the opinion expressed over the fore-castle that the sooner the wretched man tumbled overboard, the better for him and for all concerned. And the seamen were puzzled that the degraded man had a friend in the tall, aristocratic-looking military gentleman. Drake wondered what they would have thought if they had known that the military gentleman held a life policy of twenty thousand pounds on the life of the wretched drunkard. In the fore-castle, too, it was considered that if Sir Randal continued his drunken habits now that the Pelican was in the tropics, he would never reach Lagos alive. It occurred then to Drake that it would not be necessary for Captain St. Leger to help his "friend" over the side. Drink and the tropical heat would do his work for him, more slowly but none the less surely.

But against his own brutal vices no one could guard the baronet. The skipper did not interfere with his passenger, probably being well paid to leave him alone; and once when he had remonstrated, Sir Randal had answered with a torrent of abuse, after which Captain Brown made it a point to take no notice of his antics.

In the Gulf of Guinea trouble came at last, the wretched man falling in a fit on the deck, in the blazing sun. Drake and a seaman carried him below to his bunk, and by Captain Brown's order, Drake stayed in charge of him there to watch over him.

It was not in a comfortable frame of mind that Drake sat by the bunk on which lay the baronet, breathing stertorously.

Drake wondered whether Captain St. Leger would take that opportunity of dealing with him again. But now that Ferrers Locke knew what had happened on the previous occasion, Drake realised that the Baker Street detective would not leave him unguarded.

While the wretched man lay asleep, Drake fanned the flies away from him with contemptuous compassion. And he was thinking. He knew that what remained of Shandon's supply of strong liquor was in a trunk in the cabin. After a time Drake left the bunk side, and opened the lid of the big trunk. Within it were stacked the bottles—a large number yet remaining, after all Sir Randal's orgies during the voyage. Drake looked at them, and at the wretched figure snoring and snorting in the bunk. The man was killing himself with his vice—playing the game of the ruthless adventurer who had brought him to the tropics to compass his death. And Drake made up his mind.

One by one he picked the bottles from the trunk and dropped them from the open port-hole.



From the side of the Pelican a figure suddenly dived into the sea. Help was coming! Was it Ferrers Locke? Who else on board the Pelican would dive into the deadly shark-infested water to save him? "Help." The shark had turned and was coming back.

Sir Randal was still sleeping when the last bottle disappeared into the sea.

Drake closed the trunk again.

Unless Sir Randal could obtain a fresh supply of liquor from the skipper, he was doomed to sobriety for the remainder of the voyage.

It would probably be the means of saving his life—the means of defeating the man who had planned his death. But Drake could picture the rage and fury of the wretch when he discovered that he had been robbed of his poison.

He sat down by the bunk again, and waited for the baronet to wake. It was stiflingly hot in the cabin, and the flies buzzed incessantly. There was a stir from the sleeper at last.

He rolled over in the bunk, and turned his glassy eyes on the ship's boy watching him.

His mouth was open and parched.

"Something to drink!" he whispered feebly.

Drake placed a glass of water to his lips.

Sir Randal sipped it, and then, with a savage gesture, knocked the glass out of the boy's hand. It smashed on the planks.

"Brandy, you fool!" he snarled.

Drake shook his head.

"Captain Brown told me to give you nothing but water," he answered.

"Hang Captain Brown! Hang you! Do as I tell you!"

Drake smiled slightly. There was not a drop of intoxicating liquor left in the cabin, if the baronet had only known it.

"Will you give me a drink?" hissed Shandon.

"No."

Sir Randal raised himself in the bunk, and aimed a blow at Drake. The boy drew back quickly.

The wretched man almost overbalanced himself, and very nearly fell out of the bunk. Drake jumped forward, caught him, and pushed him back. As he did so, the enraged man struck him in the face.

"Now give me a drink, you cub!"

Drake stepped back quietly.

"St. Leger!" shouted Sir Randal. "Where are you, St. Leger?"

There was a step in the alley-way without, and the door opened. The tall figure of Captain St. Leger stepped in.

Sir Randal gave him a savage look.

"Can't you look after a pal who's down on his luck?" he snarled.

"Give me a drink, George."

"Certainly."

Captain St. Leger glanced round the cabin, stepped to the trunk, and threw back the lid. Drake quietly slipped from the cabin.

Captain St. Leger started as he saw that the roomy trunk was quite empty. He stared into it, and then stared at Sir Randal.

"There's nothing here," he said. "What have you done with it, Randal?"

A savage oath came from the bunk.

"You dashed fool, there's twenty or thirty bottles left."

"There's not a single one."

"Liar!"

"Look for yourself," said St. Leger, shrugging his shoulders.

Shandon staggered from the bunk, and looked. A string of oaths left his twitching lips.

"I've been robbed!" he panted. "I'll swear there were two dozen left, at least—enough to see me through to Lagos. That boy—he must have taken them. Go after him, George!"

Captain St. Leger's lips closed in a tight line. In an instant he realised what must have happened.

"The boy!" he muttered. "You are right!"

"Get me something to drink."

"I'll speak to the skipper."

St. Leger left the cabin, and returned in a few minutes with a glass of liquor. Sir Randal guzzled it greedily. Then St. Leger went on deck, with a glitter in his eyes, and looked for Drake. He found the boy swabbing the deck. Drake's grasp closed rather tightly on the handle of the mop as St. Leger came up to him.

"You cub!" muttered St. Leger. "What trick have you been playing in Sir Randal Shandon's cabin?"

Drake looked at him coolly.

"I've been stopping your little game, Captain St. Leger," he answered quietly. "Sir Randal Shandon is not going to kill himself on this voyage."

"I shall report this to the skipper."

"You can do as you like."

"You impudent young hound!"

St. Leger strode at the boy, raising his clenched hand. Drake swung up the mop.

"You'd better stand back!" he said.

Mr. Ferrers' chief mate came up rather quickly.

"Now, then," he said, "what's the trouble here? What do you mean by threatening this gentleman, boy?"

"He threatened me, sir," said Drake.

Captain St. Leger, in choking tones, explained to the chief mate of the Pelican. Ferrers Locke listened quietly. Not a sign passed between the Baker Street detective and his boy assistant. To all eyes on board the Pelican, they were mate and ship's boy, and nothing else!

"So you have taken Sir Randal Shandon's business into your own hands, Jackson," said Mr. Ferrers. "I have never heard of such cheek in a deck-hand. I shall report this to Captain Brown, and you may be sure that the value of what you have destroyed will be deducted from your pay."

"Oh, sir!" murmured Drake.

"Now get forrard, and mind your own business in future."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

But as Drake turned respectfully away, he caught an approving glance from his chief, and he knew that the Baker Street detective was satisfied with him.

Man Overboard!

SIR RANDAL SHANDON was certainly the most miserable man on board the Pelican the following day.

On Captain Brown, whose disgust at his passengers was strong and un concealed, gruffly refused him access to the cabin stores. Sir Randal was forcibly cut off from his favourite vice, and his enforced sobriety, good as it was for him, certainly did not make him happy.

His loss was treated as a joke on the Pelican—the seamen chuckled over it, and Captain Brown, though he rated Drake severely for what he had done, stopped at that. Sir Randal, with a ghastly face and aching head, wandered about the ship like a wild animal in a cage, in a savage temper. He sought out Drake continually to heap abuse and threats upon him, to which the ship's boy listened in silence. Once, when the baronet was proceeding from words to actions, a heavy grasp on his arm stopped him, and Sir Randal spun round to find himself looking at Mr. Ferrers, the chief mate.

"Let go my arm!" he spluttered.

"Leave the boy alone," said Mr. Ferrers quietly. "It is for Captain Brown to deal with him, not you, Sir Randal."

"Mind your own business!"

Mr. Ferrers gave him a grim look.

"Keep your hands off the boy, or I shall interfere!" he said quietly, and he walked back to the bridge.

There was something in the mate's look and tone that daunted the baronet, and he did not attempt to touch Drake again. He stood on the deck and abused him for a good five minutes, and then, breathless from his tirade, went sulkily below.

Sir Randal's chief occupation after that was counting the hours before the Pelican should drop her anchor in the harbour at Lagos. But the old tramp-steamer was a slow sailer. Sir Randal watched the horizon with savage eyes, and found relaxation in seeking out Drake to heap abuse upon him, and quarrelling with his friend Captain St. Leger. More than once Drake observed St. Leger turn pale under the bitter tongue-lashings he received from his friend, and almost every hour he expected to see matters come to a head at last. But St. Leger was patient—the discovery that he was watched had evidently made him cautious.

Drake was almost as anxious as the baronet for the voyage to be over. In all the cases in which he had worked with Ferrers Locke, there was none that he had liked less than this case. And success seemed very problematic now. Captain St. Leger had evidently deferred action till he should be ashore with his victim on the Dark Continent, and the plan of catching him in the act of attempting his companion's life was futile now. And once ashore in Africa, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to keep the passengers of the Pelican under surveillance. Drake wondered what thoughts were passing in Ferrers Locke's mind; but there came no word from his chief.

Drake was cleaning paint, and thinking over the affair, in the sultry afternoon, when there came a sudden crashing and whirring from below. The Pelican immediately lost way.

"Them engines agin!" Drake heard the boatswain remark, with a shrug of his burly shoulders.

The Scotch engineer put up a tousled red head into view, and called to the skipper. Captain Brown went below with him. From the companion-way, Sir Randal Shandon suddenly emerged. He shouted to St. Leger, who was standing aft gloomily watching the sea.

"What's happened, George?"

"Apparently the engines have broken down," answered St. Leger, without turning his head.

"Does that mean that we're hung up?"

"I suppose so."

The baronet uttered a loud curse.

"How long?"

"Better ask the engineer."

With another curse the baronet shambled away to the engine-room. He came back rather quickly, with a flushed face. Neither the captain nor the engineer was in a mood to be bothered by Sir Randal Shandon just then, and his reception had evidently been gruff.

The tramp-steamer lay idle on the sunny sea.

She was still idle when the sun set, and the work of repair was still going on in the baking heat below. The crew sweated and cursed the heat, and Sir Randal Shandon looked more like a wild animal in a cage than ever. He seemed unable to keep still, and more than once he went below to inquire of the engineer—on the last occasion his voice was heard in a loud, angry tirade, and he came back on deck in a startling fashion, his collar and the slack of his trousers in the grasp of the Scotch engineer, who was plainly "fed up" with him. The engineer slammed him down on the planks with a heavy bump, and went below again, without a word.

Sir Randal staggered to his feet, and scowled furiously at the grinning seamen.

His eye fell on Drake, and he volleyed curses at the ship's boy.

Drake slipped away quietly.

He went forward, to keep out of the furious man's way; but the Scotch engineer's drastic handling had infuriated the baronet, and he wanted a victim on whom to wreak his wrath. He followed Drake forward.

"You cub—"

Drake turned round.

"Stand back, you fool!" he snapped, as the angry man closed in on him, with flaming eyes and clenched fists.

Sir Randal came on with a rush.

Drake struck out, and the baronet staggered for a moment. Then he rushed on the boy savagely. His grasp closed on Drake, and Ferrers Locke's assistant struggled in the furious grip, but he struggled in vain. There was a shout from the deck, as a splash rang on the water.

"Man overboard!"

Sir Randal staggered, clutching at the rail. Whether, in his fury, he had intended to fling the boy into the sea could hardly be told—but now he stood alone by the rail, and Jack Drake was struggling in the water below.

Villain or Hero?

"MAN overboard!"

The shout rang along the deck of the Pelican. Drake's heavy plunge carried him far below the surface of the sea, but he shot up again quickly, and struck out.

Over the sea glistened the stars of the tropic sky. The Pelican lay almost without motion; but the current of the water was dragging Drake away from the ship.

He was a good swimmer, and he swam strongly, and shouted for help as he swam.

He caught one glimpse of the white face of Sir Randal Shandon, staring over the rail—terrified by what he had done.

Drake was feeling little alarm, however. As the Pelican was not under way, he had only to swim till a boat could be lowered to pick him up, and the sea was calm. But there was another danger that had not occurred to his mind. The knowledge of it came suddenly. On the starry water, a dozen yards away, a black fin showed suddenly, and vanished again. Drake caught sight of it, and understood. He knew—he remembered—that the Gulf of Guinea was alive with sharks. A shudder ran through him from head to foot. He had no weapon—not that a weapon would have served him much against so fearful an assailant. He could see, in the starlight, that a boat was being lowered. But the tackle of the Pelican, like everything else about the old ocean tramp, was old and worn. Drake saw the boat drop end-wise to the water. Help was not coming. He swam towards the ship, his fearful glance watching the starry water about him. The black fin showed again, nearer. His heart beat quickly. The shark had seen him, or scented him, and was swimming rapidly towards its prey. As the hideous fish loomed nearer him, Drake instinctively dived, and he felt something brush against him in the water. The shark had made its rush, and missed. He came up to the surface almost choking. His despairing glance turned on the ship, which seemed far, far away on the sea. Where was Ferrers Locke? Locke had been below when the accident happened, but— From the side of the Pelican a figure suddenly dived into the sea. Help was coming! Was it Ferrers Locke? Who else on board the Pelican would dive into the deadly shark-infested water to save him? "Help!" The shark had shot far past his victim, but he had turned, and was coming back. Drake almost gave himself up for lost. In the starlight on the sea, he saw the dark head of the approaching swimmer—the man who had dived in to save him. He caught a glimpse of the face—a white, set face, with a long knife gripped between the teeth. He wondered for a dizzy moment whether he was dreaming. For the face was the face of Captain St. Leger! St. Leger! Had the villain chosen that terrible moment to finish accounts with him, and rid himself of a spy? The shark was still at some distance when Captain St. Leger reached the swimming boy. Drake, treading water, watched him. He expected an attack, and for the moment he forgot even the shark. St. Leger did not speak. He threw up one hand and pointed to the ship, and then swam between Drake and the returning shark. Drake remained where he was, treading water. He could not understand, but he knew now that Captain St. Leger had dived into the sea to save him—taking the fearful risk of the shark to save his life. It was past understanding, but he knew that it was so. Only a few yards from the boy, Captain St. Leger was facing

the rush of the shark. The fearful brute had turned its attention to the nearer victim, and Drake caught a gleam of a white belly as the giant fish turned over to tear at its victim. Like one in a dream, Drake watched. A boat had dropped from the side of the Pelican now, and was pulling towards the scene. Ferrers Locke was standing up in it, a rifle in his hands, his face white and grim. But Drake knew that the boat could never reach the spot in time. He watch the captain—he saw the open jaws of the shark, the terrible rows of teeth. For an instant it seemed certain that St. Leger would be torn in pieces under his eyes. He saw him strike—he saw the long knife buried to the hilt in the white belly of the shark! Then St. Leger vanished from sight. The knife remained where it had been driven, and the shark thrashed the sea in a furry of agony. Where was St. Leger? A grasp on his arm dragged Drake further from the thrashing monster. The captain had risen after his dive, close at the boy's side. Crack! The report of the rifle rang out over the starlit waters. Ferrers Locke was firing, with deadly aim, from the boat. The furry of the wounded shark ceased, and the monster sank below the water. Drake, almost fainting with horror, was conscious of being supported in the water by a powerful grasp. The boat surged up. Ferrers Locke bent over the gunwale, his face white and strained. It was the Baker Street detective who received Drake from the hands of Captain St. Leger. "Is he hurt?" Locke's voice was husky. "I think not." Drake panted. "I'm not hurt, sir—safe and sound. But—but—but it—it was—" He choked, and sank back in the boat. Captain St. Leger clambered into the boat without assistance. He sat down, dripping with water, as the seamen pulled back to the ship. There was a curious expression on his face as he glanced at Jack Drake. Schemer, villain, ruthless adventurer, George St. Leger certainly was, but he had saved Jack Drake's life at the risk of his own. As they came on board the Pelican again, the white scared face of Sir Randal Shandon was seen. Captain St. Leger gave him a bitter look. "You've saved him," muttered the baronet. "I—I never meant—" Captain Brown's voice rang out sharply. "Boatswain! Put that man in irons!" "Ay, ay, sir!" There was a yell of protest from Sir Randal Shandon as he was seized. But his protests did not avail him. "Help me, George! Help, you rotter!" shrieked Sir Randal, as he was seized by the boatswain and a seaman. Captain St. Leger glanced at him with a sardonic smile, and went below without a word.

(Continued on next page.)

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PASSENGERS OF THE PELICAN!

(Continued from previous page.)

Ferrers Locke helped Drake to his bunk in the fore-castle.
 "Thank Heaven you came through safely," whispered the Baker Street detective.
 "It was St. Leger who saved me," breathed Drake. "That villain—an intended murderer—he saved me! He saved my life!"
 Locke nodded.

A Brave Man.

CAPTAIN ST. LEGER came on deck. His thrilling experience in the waters of the Gulf of Guinea did not seem to have told on him. He had changed his clothes, and looked as cool, and debonair, as usual. He lighted a cigar as he strolled on the deck. The Pelican was under way again now, her engines throbbing in the still tropic night. Ferrers Locke, on the bridge, glanced down at the tall figure pacing the deck, curiously.

St. Leger glanced up and caught his eyes, and smiled. He came up the steps on the bridge.

"Am I allowed here—for a few moments conversation, Mr. Ferrers?" he asked lightly.

"Certainly."

The captain had laid a certain emphasis on the name. Locke knew that he was discovered now, but his face gave no sign.

"Quite a little comedy on board the rusty old tramp," said St. Leger, in the same light tone. "I have been thinking, my dear Ferrers—Your anxiety for the boy rather gave you away, don't you think? I have tumbled at last."

"Indeed!"

"I think I should not be far wrong in assuming that you have another name as well as Ferrers," smiled the captain. "I think, probably, I should hit the right nail on the head in guessing that the other name is Locke, and that Jack Jackson is a fairly well-known boy assistant of a famous detective, by name Jack Drake."

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In short, my dear fellow, the Wild World Insurance Company placed their case in very able hands."

He laughed, and blew out a cloud of smoke. Ferrers Locke remained silent.

"Curious, is it not?" resumed St. Leger. "You know why I came out here with Sir Randal Shandon. Someone, at the night club in London, interposed to save his life. I think I can guess whom, now. I have been shadowed by two on board this tramp, when I suspected, at first, only one. Sir Randal will not drink himself to death on this voyage, and he will not fall overboard—there are too many witnesses." The captain laughed again. "Why did you not warn him of his danger at my hands?"

"He would not have believed it."
 "True. It would have been useless—as useless as your attempts to save him, if I pursued my project. I do not think I should fear defeat at the hands even of Ferrers Locke. But—why do you think I jumped into the sea to save that boy?"

"Because you are not so great a scoundrel as you have believed yourself," said Ferrers Locke quietly. "Because you are a brave man, and a brave man is never wholly bad."

"I wonder!" said the captain musingly.

He was silent for some moments.

"I saved the boy's life," he said, at last. "I am glad of it. If the shark had taken me, I don't know that it would have mattered much. I was pretty close to death, and being close to death puts strange thoughts into a man's mind." He yawned slightly.

"To-morrow we drop anchor at Lagos, Mr. Locke. I am going ashore—without Sir Randal Shandon, and without prospects. The policy I hold will lapse; and Sir Randal will live, as long as the drink will let him. I, at all events, shall not benefit by his death. I shall be glad to be rid of the brute. You can report to the Wide World Insurance Company that they have nothing to fear. You can tell them also, if you like, that a man with all the cards in his hand, threw up his game at the last moment, because—"

"Because?" said Ferrers Locke.

"Because he was a fool!" said the captain lightly.

And he quitted the bridge before the Baker Street detective could reply.

Sir Randal Shandon lost his friend at Lagos. Without a word to him, without another word to Ferrers Locke or Jack Drake, Captain St. Leger went ashore—and disappeared. Ferrers Locke and his boy assistant left the Pelican at the coast town, their work on board was done. But in Lagos they did not see Captain St. Leger again.

Sir Randal Shandon returned to England in the tramp, furious at the desertion of his friend, which he was very far from understanding.

THE END.

Another grand long detective story next week. Don't Miss It!

RESULT OF FOOTBALL COMPETITION No. 7.

In this competition one competitor sent in a correct solution of the pictures, and the FIRST PRIZE OF £5 has been awarded to:

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