

The ISLAND of REGENERATION

By
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SYNOPSIS.

A young woman cast ashore on a lonely island, finds a solitary inhabitant, a young white man, dressed like a savage, and not able to speak in any known language. She decides to educate him. She finds him in an attitude of prayer, babbling an incoherent jargon. She finds a human skeleton and the skeleton of a dog. She finds a Bible and a silver box bearing the name of John Revell Charnock, with a date 25 years before her landing.

CHAPTER III—Continued.

It was not long before she reached the barrier reef. It stood up a foot or two above the water now, the tide being low, and she clambered upon it. The sharp rocks cut her naked and tender feet, unused to such exertions and unfitted to such demands, but she persevered. The boat had been beaten to pieces. It had been forced over the reef by the hurl of the sea. The stern had been wedged in between some projecting rocks. The rest of it had been torn away and had fallen into the lagoon. There was no wind, the sea was unrippled. She could see as if through a glass the wrecked remains of the boat. There was nothing in it except the battered motor, useless for days before she landed, since her supply of gasoline had been exhausted. Everything else had been washed out of it and carried into the deeper recesses of the lagoon where they were inaccessible to the human vision.

Stop! Under what remained of a piece of thwart she caught a little gleam of metal. Calculating the distance nicely, she plunged in and dove. Keeping her eyes open, she easily found the piece of metal, dislodged it from the place where it had fallen and came to the surface with it. It was a sailor's sheath knife with a bit of lanyard fastened to it. She had had a fancy to wear it in her sailor's blouse and she had missed it since she had come ashore.

But there was nothing else in the boat, not a thing; nothing on the barrier reef. She tried to pull the stern away where it had been wedged, but found that impossible. She tugged at it valiantly, but could not move it. In despair she turned to the man who had watched silently as usual and pointed. He seemed to understand, for he came and with great effort lifted the torn part of the boat from the rocks and laid it down at her feet. She threw it into the water, where, of course, as it was wood, it floated easily. Then, with a nod to him she plunged in and together they guided it to the shore, he taking his cue from her action.

She had a fancy to test his strength and she managed to convey to him by signs, mainly by trying herself in vain to pull it apart, what she wished him to do. The impossible to her was child's play to him, and in a moment the several pieces of the boat which made up the stern were scattered on the beach. There was one straight piece which went across the stern of the boat and made a little box for the coxswain to sit in, which would do for a shovel. It was too wide, but she broke it against a big stone and was possessed of what she wanted. The ends were rough and serrated and unfit for her hands, but these she smoothed by the aid of her knife. She sharpened the other end and soon had a rude semblance of a shovel. She intended to use that on the boat on the sand the next day.

Finished with this, she looked at the man and sighed in despair. Could she ever get rid of him? Instantly there flashed into her mind that which she had before overlooked as of no moment. A long, heavy boat rope, the boat's painter, she had noticed when she dove lay floating by the side of the boat from which it had not been severed. An idea came to her. Dropping the shovel and followed by her satellite, she plunged in once more and again swam to the boat. Wasting no time, she dove as before, found the rope and having previously opened her knife, cut it quickly and came to the surface gasping.

There were perhaps 10 or 12 feet of it. It was a stout piece of rope, of unusual quality, as had been everything on board the yacht. The very best of stuff had gone into it and she did not believe any man on earth could break it. She had amused herself on the cruise by learning the rudiments of seamanship and she could tie knots like any sailor. This little accomplishment was to stand her in good stead. She wrapped the rope around her neck, plunged in the lagoon for the third time, and swam once more to the shore.

She led the way up the sands to the palm grove. Then she tied the rope around the man's neck, not in a slip noose, of course, but in a hard circle, and quickly made a running bowline around the nearest tree. He had not made the slightest resistance. He had no idea evidently of what she was doing or the purport of her motions. Then she turned and went away from him quickly. He started for her at once and was nearly jerked from his feet by the tautening of the rope. It was a new situation for him, yet his hands instinctively went to his throat, and he strove to tear away the noose,

putting forth such a prodigious amount of strength that she stood in horror lest he should part the lashing. But it was made of stout stuff and he had no purchase; although he pulled until the sweat stood out on his forehead from the violence of his efforts, they were of no avail. She had not dared to interfere or to say a word, but when she saw his efforts slacken, she pointed to the sands to indicate to him that he was to sit down, and then she went away conscious that while the rope held she was free. She was conscious of another thing, too, and that was that he was learning a sad and bitter lesson of physical restraint to which he had never before been subjected.

She had rejoiced in his companionship, of course. It had given her something to do, her mind something to work upon, and would do more in the future, but she never enjoyed a moment's freedom more. She ran to the little amphitheater formed by the cliffs where the cave was and throwing aside her blouse and skirt, she luxuriated in a bath in the fresh, cool, delightful waters of the pool at the base of the fall. There was a certain amount of apprehension, for, of course, he might break his tether at any time, but she was sufficiently confident not to let this take away the pleasure she felt in the bath of fresh water after the long experience with the salt seas. If she had had a cake of soap she would have been completely happy.

She had much to do and she could not linger. For one thing, she had to face the problems of clothes. She had absolutely nothing when she landed except what she wore. Besides the usual underwear these consisted of her blue serge blouse and skirt—a short skirt at that—and a silk petticoat. She left the blouse and skirt outside on the rocks where they would soon dry in the sun. They had been wetted so often that there was no possibility of their shrinking further. Then she took stock of the rest. With needles and thread, of which she possessed some store in the housewife which had been saved from her bag, she thought she could make shift to manufacture three or four garments, open at the neck, without sleeves and with skirts that came to the knee, garments just sufficient for modesty. There was no other need for clothes, so far as that went, in that balmy island.

Naturally she shrank from this, but unless she resorted to this expedient her clothes would wear out all at once. Indeed, they were in none too good a condition as it was, and when they were worn out she would have nothing. She would not have hesitated a moment had it not been for the man, but man or not, the decision in her mind was one to which she must come.

Unlike most overeducated women, she was still expert with her needle, and as her garments were to be of the simplest she had not much difficulty in making over her silk skirt in the way she fancied. Belted in at the waist, it would do. She would use the rope that bound the man for that purpose, keeping it always about her. She had, of course, but one pair of stockings and one pair of light canvas boating shoes, which were almost cut to pieces. She would have to go barefoot.

Putting her blue serge dress and the rest of her clothing carefully away, including her shoes and stockings, she stepped out on the sands, bare armed, bare footed, a gleaming figure like to an Olympian goddess. She was a woman naturally dark in complexion, and while the sun would probably burn her cruelly and burn her young flesh, never exposed to its intensity, darker, she would not grow red or blister. She was thankful for that with unconscious femininity. At any rate, she must get used to going out in the sun without a hat, too. People, natives who were born and lived in this latitude, did become accustomed to such things, she knew, so undoubtedly could she.

With these thoughts, she stepped around the headland and walked across the beach toward the palm tree where she could see in the fading light of the afternoon her prisoner was still tied. Modesty is a negative term. That which is indecent exposure in a ballroom is the height of convention on a sea shore. Certainly this man had no concept of such a quality. He had not noticed before when she had come out barefoot to swim to the barrier reef, and yet somehow she fancied as she stared at her approaching that this time he marked the difference. And a slow, fiery blush flamed over her from her bare feet to her bare head, extended along her bare arms. She stopped under the persuasion of impulse to turn and go back to the cave and resume her clothing, at least so long as it might last. But she was a woman of strong will. She reasoned that all the emotions to which she was subject were in her own bosom; that the man before her neither knew nor cared as to the things which vexed her. So she went on.

She had in her hand the sailor's knife, with the blade open. She could not tell exactly in what mood her prisoner might be. Indeed, she approached him with a certain terror, accounted for partly by the situation and partly by the fact that in making this change in her garments she had, as it were, cut herself off from civilization and brought herself in some degree at least nearer his physical level. But she could not leave him there all night. Summoning her cour-

age, therefore, and with a bold front before him, she advanced to the tree and untied the rope from the trunk and untied it from his neck as well. He stood silent, unresisting through it all, a rather pitiful figure she thought at first, until he was freed from the degrading halter.

Then she waited in intense and eager curiosity as to what he should do next. The iron in his situation had eaten into his soul. He had been mastered by force. He could not understand it. He did not love the mastery. Still, without the knowledge of his own powers, there occurred to him no way to resent the ignominy to which he had been subjected. He turned and walked away from her. She stood amazed, staring after him. It was the first time he had withdrawn himself from her presence. Where was he going? Was this a declaration of war? Was there to be enmity between them? In vague terror, moved by a sudden impulse again, she called him. "Man!" she said.

He stopped, hesitated, looked back, turned and went on again. He was deeply hurt. She could not see him go. It was unthinkable that he should go. He was dangerous away from her. By her side she could control him. "Man!" she called again.

But this time he did not heed. An idea sprang to her brain, working quickly under the pressure. She lifted up her voice, for he was far from her now and plodding steadily, doggedly toward the trees. "John!" she cried. "John Revell Charnock!"

And at that sound the man stopped. He turned and looked at her again. "John!" she repeated. "John!"

She approached him. As she did so and when she could get near enough to him, she observed that wrinkling of the brow, that look of amazement which she had noticed before. It was as if some latent memory, some recollection of the past, were struggling against the obscurity of years, as if something were endeavoring to thrust itself through a sea of oblivion and forgetfulness that overwhelmed his mind, as if she were a voice which



A Gleaming Figure Like an Olympian Goddess.

brought back things he could neither understand nor utter, and yet which meant something to him.

"John!" she cried again, coming nearer to him.

She thrust out her hand; she touched him. Again she noticed that strange emotion consequent upon her touch. She laid her hand upon his shoulder. There was amity, confidence, reassurance. She patted him as she might a dog.

"John!" she said, and then she turned away and walked toward the shore.

Obediently he followed her. She thrust the knife between her waist and the rope which she had rapidly twisted about her middle and walked on in triumph. If he had learned something, so had she. Some one else had called this man John in days gone by. The sound was not unfamiliar to him. He answered to his name. That was he, John Revell Charnock! She felt as if she were entering upon the solution of the mystery of his presence. Perhaps the morrow would tell. She would examine that boat and those decaying evidences of humanity on the farther shore.

She felt elated that night ere she went to sleep in the cave. The clew

to the mystery she fancied was in her hand. She had such occupation before her as she had never hoped to come upon in a desert island, at least. The rope added to her security. By piling stones before the entrance to the cave and reinforcing them with the boards from the wreck of the boat and some fallen tree branches on the shore, she made a sort of a barrier to it, not a barrier that would have kept out of the cave any one who desired to enter, but one which would have to be removed before one could enter. And she so arranged matters, tying the end of the rope to her wrist, that any attempt to remove it would immediately waken her. That night she slept secure and unmolested.

CHAPTER IV.

Lesson and Labor.

The task to which she set herself in the morning would have been an impossible one to many women, and indeed it was a hard one to her. The buried boat lay in the sand some rods distant from the nearest tree. There was absolutely no shelter from the fierce heat of the tropic sun. She was not yet fully accustomed to it, and indeed perhaps she never would be able to endure it without some sort of a head covering. She improvised a bonnet from the leaf of a low springing palm tree, which, with her remaining handkerchief, she tied about her head. And then with her watchful friend by her side she descended the beach to the boat and began to dig.

It was hard and very tedious work. With the flat make-shift shovel in the shape of the rough piece of board it was almost impossible to lift the sand. Yet she attacked the task resolutely and persevered sturdily for a long time until the sweat beaded her forehead, her back ached, her hands, unused to manual toil of any kind, were almost blistered. She realized at last that she would have to give it over.

She wondered as she ceased her labors whether the constant observation which the man had subjected her to would enable him to continue the work. As an experiment she handed

val development would keep pace with the practical, she would be thoroughly satisfied with her educational processes.

She mused on the problem as he labored silently and vigorously. He stopped once or twice, but she kept him to it, a feat vastly greater than she realized, until the interior of the boat, which was a small ship's boat, a dinghy, had been entirely cleared out. She had watched carefully every spadeful of sand which had been tossed over the buried gunwales and now she searched eagerly the boat itself. Her inspection revealed nothing. There were lockers at either end. These she opened, finding nothing therein but mouldering remains of cloth, bags of some sort which she surmised might have contained ship's bread, and a little barrel or keg, which had probably carried water for the voyagers.

The boat appeared to be in an excellent state of preservation. There were even a pair of oars lying on the thwarts. If she could have dug it out of the sand entirely, she fancied she could have launched it and used it. But such a task was utterly beyond her. Besides there would have been no gain in having the boat afloat. She would not dare to take it out beyond the barrier reef and there was nothing to row for in the lagoon.

She easily broke the rotting lines with which the oars were secured and took them out. They would be useful perhaps in some way. And then after a long look at the boat and with a feeling that her labor had been mainly wasted, she was about to turn away when the thought struck her that sometimes boats carried the names of the ships to which they belonged on their bows or across their sterns. She had recourse to the shovel once more, and after some deliberation essayed the stern of the boat.

It was not so hard to shovel the sand away from it and here she did make a discovery, for although the letters had been almost obliterated by the action of the sand, she could still make them out. After some study she decided that the name of the boat, or of the ship to which it had belonged, had been Nansémond of Norfolk, Virginia. That was the net result of the hard labors of a long morning. It told her something, but not much. Assuming that the man with her was John Revell Charnock and assuming that he had come to the island in the past on that boat, it indicated that he was at least an American and a Virginian. It identified him, if her suppositions were correct, and whether there was warrant for them or not, instinctively and naturally she concluded that she was correct.

Admitting all this, however, it gave her no clew from which to build a history. The testimony of the boat was interesting, that was all. Her first thought was to leave it where it was, but her second thought was better. With the aid of the stout piece of board which had served her for a shovel, she hammered away at the stern piece until she broke it off. She saw now that the boat must have lain there in the sand for many years, for the wood was brittle and the fastenings largely destroyed, for the stern piece came easily away. She laid it aside for a moment intending to preserve it with the Bible. Heaven knows what dream of future usefulness in the way of evidence establishing identity these might be, entered her mind.

Then she threw herself down under the trees and rested. She had left her watch, her precious watch, back in the cave with the book. She did not dare to carry it around with her. She had no way of carrying it in the thin, single garment which she wore, but she judged from the height of the sun that it must be noon time. They made their meal off the fruits of the island, this time with a rich and juicy cocoanut added, which the man got for her at her suggestion in the sign language at which she was becoming expert, by climbing with wonderful agility, ape-like agility almost, one of the tall cocoanut palms with which the island abounded. There were fruits of various sorts in great plenty on the island and she was becoming accustomed to the diet by degrees.

She passed the noon hour in trying to add to the mental equipment of her companion. He could say a number of words now and had some idea of their meaning, although he had not yet attempted to frame sentences nor had she yet tried to teach him so to do. It was pleasant under the shade of the trees. She found herself marveling at times as to the contentment that possessed her, a product of the age suddenly plunged into the Eden-like existence which her forebears might have enjoyed ten thousand years before.

The hours ran on until the declining sun and the coolness that came with the late afternoon warned her that if she were to continue her explorations she must be about it immediately. So she rose and nerving herself to her task went toward the coppice where lay the ghastly remains of what had been a human being. Forcing herself to the duty with her knife she carefully cut away the rubbish, being particular not to disturb the bones of the skeletons. As before she did all this in the face of a vigorous remonstrance from the man. In some way, she could not tell how, the place was horrible to him. He would never have come near it evidently of his own will, and although the power of mem-



ory in him was but latent, the impression that had been produced upon him by what she found there at some period in his life was strong enough to make him avoid it forever.

She did not ask him for assistance, indeed, she would not have trusted him with the knife under any circumstances, and he made no attempt to keep close to her. He stood on the outskirts of the coppice in a



She Watched Carefully Every Spade-ful of Sand.

great state of excitement, uttering without sequence or reason such words as she had taught him. To him, in this instance, she gave no heed.

Presently she had completely uncovered the two skeletons. She had studied anatomy, but was not a specialist in that department of human learning. She thought that the skeleton before her was that of a woman. She measured its length with a piece of tall grass and compared it with her own. They were both of a size. The soil in which the bones lay was soft and porous. Every vestige of clothing had long since rotted away and disappeared with the flesh it covered. If the person whose bones lay there had worn any article of gold or silver, which, being rustless would have survived the long exposure, they were probably buried in the earth beneath the bones. She would attend to that later.

Then she looked toward the bones at the feet of the human remains and decided instantly that they were the bones of a dog. Across the vertebrae lay a piece of metal. She picked it up, recognizing it instantly as a plate which had probably belonged to a dog collar. There was an inscription on it which she did not take the trouble at the moment to read. Slipping it into the bosom of her tunic and making sure that the confining rope would keep it from falling out, she stooped down and gathered the bones of the human being up in her arms, repulsive as the task was, and carried them down to the boat on the beach. She laid them in the bottom of the boat carefully and then moved by a sudden impulse, she went back and gathered up those of the dog which she put in the boat also. It was an easy matter to tumble a few spadefuls of sand over the bones. Then she left them in that rude Viking sepulchre, knowing that time would soon refill the empty dinghy and the bones would be safely buried unless some other investigator should uncover them.

The man had assisted her in no way in this process, but his excitement was very great. While she stood looking down at the little heap of sand which covered all that remained of this forlorn and forgotten visitor to this island, wondering if the fate of that trespasser upon these silent shores would some day be hers, the man suddenly dropped on his knees as she had seen him do on her first night on the island. He put his hands together and began that mumbled jargon which she had not been able to understand, but which had seemed to her more like language than anything to which he had given vent. She was surprised beyond measure, yet she listened with every faculty on the alert if possible to comprehend what he had been saying, and presently a familiar sound or two flashed into her mind that he was making use of a prayer which she herself had used in childhood; that, absurd, fantastic, impossible though the conclusion was, he was saying the childish petition, "Now I lay me down to sleep!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Plenty to Do.

"You seem to be doing a good business," said the meter reader to the druggist.

"It's unusually good to-night," replied the cheerful druggist. "I've had seven patrons who asked to see the city directory, five who used the telephone, 11 who bought postage stamps, and one who wanted me to remove his porous plaster. It's a rush of business like this that makes a druggist wish he had been brought up a motor-car or a truck driver."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.