

The morning dawned abruptly, as Jess had noticed it always did in equatorial waters, the sun leaping up above the horizon as regular as a ticking clock. Mists rose off the shimmering sea, and the brig popped into view, so much closer and more piratical than Jess had expected.

There was an arrogant thrust to her long jibboom, and a flamboyant sheer to her stern, and the two masts were raked ... just so. The country traders Jerusha had seen were like draft-horses, built to take as much load as possible, while this brig was built like a greyhound. She looked *swift*, as if she often needed to escape from something. And she had gunports that looked as if there were real cannon behind them, instead of being squares of black paint in a white streak on the hull.

If anything, the hint of danger made Jess feel even more eager to go on board this flamboyant craft. The wait for the third mate to arrive on deck seemed endless, but when Mr. Huggins finally hove into sight Jerusha had no trouble in smiling radiantly, as he immediately gave orders to lower his boat.

She sat perched in the stern sheets, facing forward to watch the brig bob toward them as the crew pulled at their oars. The gunports were definitely real — she could see the hinges at the top of each lid. Above and behind her, Mr. Huggins said nothing, but she could hear him chew his tobacco, and twice he shot a stream of spit into the water. Then, the chewing slowed, and he ordered the men to pull the boat around the stern.

Even the supremely self-confident Mr. Huggins, it seemed, wished to study the territory before making his presence known. The shadow of the stern fell upon them, seeming to swoop overhead like the wing of some enormous crow, the shiny raven black beautifully dappled with dancing green and gold water reflections. Then the boat drifted into the light again, and Jerusha could read the name.

*Haklyt*. The letters flourished in gilt. She wondered what it meant, and how it was pronounced. Above the name there was an expanse of many-paned windows, gleaming greenish in the sun. The panes were swirled, reminding her of the windows of Gunter's tea shop in Berkeley Square. Though the windows seemed very old, like casements in a story book, the black pitch varnish of the hull was thick and shiny, and the rails and masts and yards were trim and neat.

It was very quiet. She could hear the men at the oars breathing, and the small movements they made as everyone looked at the brig and waited. Water rippled silkily about the sides of the whaleboat, and bright little fish nibbled at the blades of the oars. The sun was growing warm. When an American voice suddenly hailed from right above, Jerusha nearly jumped out of her skin.

"Hulloa there!"

And such a figure was leaning over the rail — a very tall and very thin gentleman with jet-black hair that grew down his cheeks, wearing a green waistcoat with a matching bow tie at the throat of his white ruffled shirt.

This apparition exclaimed, "Good gracious, a lady?"

Jerusha giggled. "I'm not a lady," she said. "I'm Jerusha, the captain's daughter."

"And a lovely name, too, Miss Jerusha! Captain Rochester of the brig *Haklyt*, at your service, ma'am!"

He pronounced the brig's name "*Huk-lee-oot*." Utterly charmed, Jess clambered up the side of the brig, saying this strange and fascinating word in her head.

When she got over the rail, she was surprised even further, for Captain Rochester wore regular cotton trousers below the ruffled shirt and waistcoat. Also, now that she was close up to him, he was much older than he had first appeared, for his hair and side-whiskers were most definitely dyed. In fact, they looked as if they'd been painted.

Remembering her father's strict instructions, she made her best bob, and recited, "Jerusha Gardiner, of the whaling bark *Huntress*, thirty-five months from London. My father Captain Gardiner greatly regrets not being able to present his compliments in person, being indisposed."

"Indisposed? Oh dear! May I be of assistance?"

"I don't think so," Jess candidly said. "That is, not without you have a magical cure for the rheumatism. What we have really come for is to inquire whether you have provisions to sell, for we find ourselves uncommon short of vegetables. And this is our third mate, Mr. Huggins," she added. Mr. Huggins heaved himself up onto deck, and touched his forehead to their host, but said nothing, darting bright little looks about the brig instead.

"Provisions, eh?" quoth Captain Rochester, regarding Jerusha thoughtfully. "We are running a little short ourselves," he mused, "but I feel sure — for a polite and pretty girl whose paternal parent is suffering from the painful and particular malady that afflicts those who spend long years at sea — we will be able to make a sacrifice. How much spending capacity has your father Captain Gardiner entrusted to you, I wonder?"

Then he roused himself and said, "But come, Miss Gardiner, Mr. Huggins, I'm amiss in my hospitality. Come down to the cabin, pray, where we can bargain a little at our leisure, and my steward can serve us with coffee."

Jerusha looked around eagerly as she followed him. The brig *Haklyt* (*Huk-lee-oot*, *Huk-lee-oot*) might be just half the capacity of the *Huntress*, but the uncluttered decks made her seem a lot more spacious. There was no tryworks furnace bulking aft of the foremast, and no skids built over the after deck for extra boats; the brig had none of the massive practicality of a whaler. Instead, there was a forward house set into a well in the deck near the foremast, with a trace of aromatic smoke issuing from a galley stove, and at the sternward end of the deck there was a high poop, almost like a

galleon's. In the front of this there was a double door that opened onto a short set of companionway stairs.

At the bottom, Captain Rochester opened another set of double doors with a flourish, and Jess stopped short, utterly enraptured. The room beyond was well illuminated, partly by a big skylight, but mostly by the many-paned windows across the stern, which sent a dancing watery green-gold-blue light into the cabin, so it was almost like being under the sea.

A horseshoe-shaped settee was built under the windows, upholstered in silk brocade, and on the starboard side the cushions were green, and on the larboard side they were red. In the ceiling, directly over a pretty round rosewood table, hung two hanging racks holding crystal glasses and decanters, and these threw little rainbows all about the walls. The massive, ornately carved bookcases on the fore-and-aft bulkheads had glass doors, which shone mysteriously, half-revealing tropical shells and jars of preserved animals, as well as many books. There was a desk just like Captain Gardiner's, but it was set out of the way against the forward bulkhead, right alongside the pantry door, and so the magical effect was not diminished in the slightest.

"Oh!" cried Jerusha. "It's wonderful!"

Captain Rochester seemed highly gratified. "You like my little ship?"

Before she could stop herself, she exclaimed, "She's truly yours?" Then she blushed, knowing she had made a dreadful blunder, for her father would have been very angry if anyone had ever asked him if he owned the *Huntress*, since the barky belonged to Mr. Curling and Mr. Young, and certainly not to him.

Captain Rochester was amused, however. "Oh yes," he said with a laugh, "the *Hakluyt* is indeed all mine."

*Hak-lee-oot*, Jerusha recited in her head, and was just about to try to say the name, when they were interrupted by a man who came in from the pantry with coffee on a tray. Somewhat disappointingly, he was a scrawny European fellow, dressed in old breeches and waistcoat with an apron over the top. When she bobbed him a nervous curtsey he delivered her a look of utter contempt.

But then she cheered up immensely, as there was coffee for her, as well as for the two men. Captain Rochester ushered her to the larboard end of the sofa, where there was a little end table to take the beautiful little cup and saucer she was given, both in the palest shade of duck egg blue. Mr. Huggins sat opposite, still shooting looks all about, saying nothing. He had a cup and saucer just like hers, but they looked awkward in his big, scarred hands, and when he set them down, he left them alone.

Forgetting him, Jerusha turned her sparkling eyes on her host. "Did you give the *Hakluyt* her name?" she asked, pronouncing the word very carefully.

"Why, what a curious girl you are," said Captain Rochester, balancing his own dainty cup and saucer with an ineffable grace. "For no one, ever, has thought to ask me that — and so yes, for the first time ever, I say yes to that, and amen to that, as well. I myself named her after Richard Hakluyt."

"You know him? Is he famous? Is he a friend of yours?"

"Ah, bless you, what better friend could an old voyager have than Dick Hakluyt himself? But no, regretfully," said he, looking regretful indeed with his long eloquent face, "I have to tell you that I do not have the pleasure, for the good Hakluyt was cronies with Sir Walter Raleigh, not I — and Sir Francis Drake and Sir Richard Hawkins, the dear creatures."

Which, as Jerusha knew from her studies with Mr. O'Cain, meant that they were Elizabethans and had been dead for quite a long time. But, if Captain Rochester had assured her that he had been to school with Dick Hakluyt, she would have been perfectly happy to believe him.

"And," said Captain Rochester, setting down his cup with a neat little clink, "he was a geographer — he made maps, my dear Miss Gardiner, wonderful maps. He wrote books as well, books of travel and voyages and ships, of fantastic lands and privateers and entrancing tales of treasure. Tell me, would you like to see one?"

Feeling not at all sure what he meant, Jerusha simply nodded. He bounded up, and went to a bookcase at the back of his desk, but instead of opening a door, he pushed a knothole in the wood. There was a click, and part of the carving slid out, revealing a broad drawer. A secret compartment! When Jess looked at Mr. Huggins, his eyes were bright, and he was tugging at his beard.

Captain Rochester returned with a tall book, with marbled covers. When he opened it, and showed a page to Jerusha, she saw a beautifully detailed map.

"Take it," he invited. "Is it not wonderful?"

It was wonderful indeed. The map, and other maps on the following pages, were intricate drawings of continents and islands, and charts of coasts and seas. The oceans were full of fabulous monsters, and dolphins drawing chariots, and the lands were full of equally legendary beasts, lions and bears and unicorns, all with friendly expressions. There were men as well, but not nearly as amiable, beating or eating each other, and the empty corners were filled with several kinds of dragons.

Not all of the book was maps, Jerusha noticed, for most of the pages were either empty or filled with small, neat writing, but it was the charts that held her attention.

"Did Mr. Hakluyt draw these?"

"Oh, no," said Captain Rochester, looking amused again. "I myself, I drew them — or copied them, I should more truthfully say. Yes, I must admit in all honesty that I am nothing more than a copyist. Some I copied from Hakluyt, while this one — this one, here, this I copied from Le Testu the Pirate. Tell me your age," he said.

Jerusha blinked in surprise. "Nine."

"And your birthday?" She told him that, too, and he gave her another book to hold, which turned out to be a regular logbook. "Turn to the same date as your birthday," he said. "Read it out, and see if it is a lucky entry."

Jerusha thought that this was the strangest reading task she had ever been given, but followed instructions. The neat writing was very easy to decipher.

*At 4 P.M. saw a sail on the lee bow, instantly made all necessary sail in chase. At 5 nearing the chase very fast. At half past 9 lighted our side lanterns and called all hands to quarters. At 10 within gunshot of him, took him with very little fight, no casualties. She proved to be the British ship Lion, with a very valuable cargo. Put on board Mr. Smith as prize master with 12 hands.*

"See," Captain Rochester cried. "A lucky entry indeed — I well remember taking that prize! It's a great sign — a wonderful sign that you are going to be a fortunate girl."

"I am?" Jess was more enchanted than ever.

"I guarantee it," he said solemnly, and then went on, "Tell me, have you ever heard of pirate treasure?"

"But of course! Did Mr. Hakluyt write about pirates, too?"

"Indeed he did, Miss Gardiner."

"And the map you copied — does it show where the treasure was buried?"

Captain Rochester smiled mysteriously, and put his finger alongside his nose. "We live in hope, Miss Gardiner. One day my collection of maps and stories of pirate treasure will make me very rich. I live in perfect expectation."

"Because of your collections?"

"Where other people collect old bottles with notes inside them, albatross feathers and flying-fish wings, I collect stories of buried treasure and wrecked treasure ships. Do you find that strange, Miss Gardiner?"

Jess shook her head. Prismatic rainbows flickered and danced in the green-gold wavering undersea light. Mr. Huggins's eyebrows were in his hair, but she did not find it strange at all. "You should talk to my father," she impulsively confided. "He found a treasure ship, once — only he calls it the money ship. At a beach near his home at Sleepy Hollow in Massachusetts in America."

"Goodness me, is that so?" said her host, looking riveted. "Tell me more!"