

ROBINSON CRUSOE.

WONDER-STORY
SERIES



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THE STORY OF ROBINSON CRUSOE.



I was born in the city of York, in England, in the year 1632. My father was a man of some wealth, able to give me a good home, and send me to school. It was his wish that I should be a lawyer; but my head began to be filled very early with thoughts of rambling, and I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea. My father gave me strong and earnest counsel against it, but with little effect. One day, being at Hall, I met a school-fellow, who was about to sail for London in his father's ship, and he prompted me to go with him, and in an evil hour, without asking God's blessing, or my father's, I went on board.

On the way to London, a storm arose, the ship was wrecked, and we barely escaped with our lives. I went on foot to London, where I met with the master of a vessel which traded to the coast of Africa. He took a fancy to me, and offered me a chance to go with him on his voyages, which I gladly accepted.

A great storm came up, and the ship was tossed about for many days, until we did not know where we were. Suddenly we struck a bank of sand, and the



sea broke over the ship in such a way that we could not hope to have her hold many moments without breaking into pieces. In this distress we launched a boat. After we had been driven four or five miles, a raging wave struck us so furiously that it overset the boat at once. Though I swam well, the waves were so strong that I was dashed against a rock with such force that it left me senseless. But I recovered a little before the waves returned, and running forward, got to the mainland in safety.

Then I began to look about to see if any of my comrades had escaped, but I could see no sign of any of them.

The night coming on, I climbed into a thick, bushy tree to sleep, not knowing but that there might be ravenous beasts there. When I awoke, next morning, the sea was calm, and I could see the ship about a mile from the shore; and when the tide ebbed, I swam out to her. I found that all the provisions were dry, and being very hungry, I filled my pockets with biscuit, and eat as I went about other things; for I saw that I must lose no time in getting ashore all that I could from the ship. I first threw overboard several spare yards and spars. Then I went down the ship's side and tied them together, and laying a few short

pieces of plank upon them, I had a raft strong enough to bear a moderate weight. Next I lowered upon it three seamen's chests, and filled them with provisions. After a long search I found the carpenter's chest, which was a great prize to me. I lowered it upon the raft, and then secured a supply of guns and gunpowder. With this cargo I started for the shore, and, with a great deal of trouble, succeeded in landing it safe.

My next work was to view the country, and seek a proper place to stow my goods. I knew not yet where I was, whether on the continent or an island. There was a hill not over a mile away, very steep and high; and I climbed to the top of it, and saw that I was on an island, barren, and as I saw good reason to believe, uninhabited except by wild animals. When I realized the lonely, desperate situation that I was in, my heart sank, and I almost wished that I had perished with the others. But soon perceiving the ingratitude of this state of mind, I fell upon my knees to thank God for saving my life,—mine alone among so many,—and a feeling of confidence arose in my breast that He would still protect me in the midst of the perils by which I was surrounded.

Every day, for twelve days, I made a trip to the vessel, bringing ashore all





ROBINSON CRUSOE SAILING IN HIS BOAT.



THE FOOT-PRINTS IN THE SAND.

that I thought would be useful to me. The night of the twelfth day there was a violent wind, and when I awoke in the morning the ship was nowhere to be seen.

Then I gave my thoughts to providing myself with a safe habitation. I found a little plain, on the side of a hill whose front towards the plain was very steep, and had in it a hollow place like the door of a cave. Here I resolved to pitch my tent, which I made of sails that I had brought from the ship. Around it I drew a half circle, and drove two rows of piles into the ground, making a kind of fortress. I left no entrance, but used a short ladder to go over the top, and when I was in, lifted it over after me. Then I enlarged the hollow place I have spoken of until I had made quite a cave that served as a cellar for my house, which I called my castle.

I had found aboard a dog and two cats. I carried the cats ashore with me on the raft, but as for the dog he swam ashore himself,



and was a trusty servant to me for many years. Besides the company of these pets, I had that of a parrot which I caught and taught to speak; and it often gave me much amusement.

I went out every day with my gun to hunt for food. I found that there were goats running wild on the island, and often succeeded in shooting one. But I saw that my ammunition would, in time, all be gone, and that to have a steady supply of goat's flesh, I must breed them in flocks. So I set a trap to take some alive, and succeeded in catching several. I enclosed a piece of ground for them to run in; and in course of time had a large flock which furnished me with all the meat I needed.

I saved the skins of all the creatures I shot, and dried them, and when my clothes were worn out, replaced them with garments made of these. Then, at the expense of a great deal of time and trouble, I made an umbrella, also of skins, which I needed much to keep off both sun and rain.

For a long time I brooded over the idea of making a canoe of the trunk of a tree, as the Indians do, and at last set to work at the task. I cut a large tree and spent over three months shaping it into the form of a boat. Then I found it too large to move to the water. I afterwards made a smaller one, and succeeded in launching it, and set out to make a tour around the island in it. But when I had been out three days, such a storm arose that I was near being lost. At last I was able to bring my boat to the shore, in a little cove; and there I left it, and went across the island on foot to my castle, not caring to go to sea again in such an unsafe vessel.

Thus years and years passed away. Although I had, to some extent, become contented with my solitary lot, yet at times a terrible sense of loneliness and desolation would come over me. Many times I would go to the top of a hill where I could look out to sea, in hopes of catching sight of a ship. Then I would fancy that, at a vast distance, I spied a sail. I would please myself with the hopes of it, and after looking at it steadily till I was almost blind, would lose it quite, and sit down and weep like a child, and thus increase my misery by my folly.

But one day I saw a sight which turned my thoughts in a new channel. It was the print of a naked foot upon the sand near the shore. It filled me with fear, for it showed that the island must sometimes be visited by savages.

One morning, going out quite early, I could see the light of a fire about two miles away. I went to the top of the hill, and looked in the direction of the fire. I saw that five canoes were drawn up on the shore, while a swarm of naked savages were dancing about the fire. Presently they dragged two poor wretches from the boats. One of them was knocked down at once, and several of the savages set to work to cut him up. They were evidently cannibals, and were going to hold one of their horrible feasts on their captives. The other captive was left standing for a moment, and seeing a chance to escape, started





WATCHING THE SAVAGES.



FRIDAY'S LIFE IS SAVED.

to run. I was greatly alarmed when I saw that he was coming directly toward me, but when I saw that only two pursued him, and that he gained upon them. I made up my mind to help him. When they were near enough, I took a short cut down the hill, and placed myself between pursuers and pursued. Then I advanced on the foremost, and knocked him down with the stock of my gun. The other took his bow and was going to shoot me, when I fired at him and killed him. Then I made signs to the poor runaway to come to me, and he did so in fear and trembling, kneeling at my feet, and setting my foot upon his head, as a sign that he was my slave. I took him home to my castle and gave him something to eat. He was a handsome, well-shaped fellow, with good features and a pleasant smile, and he had very bright, sparkling eyes.

I had now a companion, and in a short time I began to teach him to speak to me. First I let him know that his name was to be Friday, for that was the day I saved his life. Then I taught him everything that I thought would make him useful, handy, and helpful. I clothed him in a suit made of goat-skins, and he seemed to be greatly pleased to be dressed like myself.

After some time had passed over, Friday came running to me one morning to say that there was a ship in sight. Welcome as this news was, I thought I would not show myself until I could learn what had brought the ship there, and it was well that I did not. I watched in concealment and saw a boat leave the ship and make for the shore.



Eleven men landed, and I saw that while most of them dispersed about the island, three kept by themselves and appeared to be much dejected. When the others were out of hearing, I approached these three and questioned them, and found that they were English, that one was the captain of the ship, and the others were the mate and a passenger, that there had been a mutiny on board, and that the men, as a favor, instead of killing them, were going to leave them on the island.



I offered to aid them to recover the ship, and going back to the castle, I brought guns and gave them to them. When the men returned to the boat we shot two, who the captain said were the leaders, and the rest, taken by surprise, yielded to us. The captain made them swear that they would obey him faithfully, and then returned with them to the ship. Those on board were equally surprised at the turn affairs had taken, and when one of the worst was killed, were glad to return to their duty.

Then the captain came back to the island, and told me that the ship and all that he had was at my service, in return for what I had done for him. I told him that all I asked was a free passage for Friday and myself back to England. To this he gladly assented. He provided me with clothing from his wardrobe, and after I had arranged all my affairs, Friday and I went aboard. Thus, I left the island, twenty-eight years, two months, and nineteen days after I had landed upon it.

Three days after we set sail, we saw a great fleet of small boats, full of savages, come paddling toward us as if to attack us. I told Friday to go on deck and speak to them in his own language; but he had no sooner spoken than they let fly a cloud of arrows at him, three of which hit him, and the poor fellow fell dead. In a rage, I ordered the ship's guns to be fired into the fleet. Half of the canoes were destroyed, while the rest speeded away so fast that in a short time none of them could be seen. Poor honest Friday we buried in the sea, with all the honor possible. So ended the life of the most faithful, and affectionate servant that ever man had.

And now there is little more to tell. I arrived safe in England, glad to be back in my old home once more, and desiring nothing but to spend the rest of my days in peace and quietness.





The End.

