

### Chapter 3: Fight With Cannibals

But not to crowd this part with an account of the lesser part of the rogueries with which they plagued them continually, night and day, it forced the two men to such a desperation that they resolved to fight them all three, the first time they had a fair opportunity. In order to do this they resolved to go to the castle (as they called my old dwelling), where the three rogues and the Spaniards all lived together at that time, intending to have a fair battle, and the Spaniards should stand by to see fair play: so they got up in the morning before day, and came to the place, and called the Englishmen by their names telling a Spaniard that answered that they wanted to speak with them.

It happened that the day before two of the Spaniards, having been in the woods, had seen one of the two Englishmen, whom, for distinction, I called the honest man, and he had made a sad complaint to the Spaniards of the barbarous usage they had met with from their three countrymen, and how they had ruined their plantation, and destroyed their corn, that they had laboured so hard to bring forward, and killed the milch-goat and their three kids, which was all they had provided for their sustenance, and that if he and his friends, meaning the Spaniards, did not assist them again, they should be starved. When the Spaniards came home at night, and they were all at supper, one of them took the freedom to reprove the three Englishmen, though in very gentle and mannerly terms, and asked them how they could

be so cruel, they being harmless, inoffensive fellows: that they were putting themselves in a way to subsist by their labour, and that it had cost them a great deal of pains to bring things to such perfection as they were then in.

One of the Englishmen returned very briskly, "What had they to do there? that they came on shore without leave; and that they should not plant or build upon the island; it was none of their ground."

"Why," says the Spaniard, very calmly, "Seignior Inglese, they must not starve."

The Englishman replied, like a rough tarpaulin, "They might starve; they should not plant nor build in that place."

"But what must they do then, seignior?" said the Spaniard.

Another of the brutes returned, "Do? they should be servants, and work for them."

"But how can you expect that of them?" says the Spaniard; "they are not bought with your money; you have no right to make them servants."

The Englishman answered, "The island was theirs; the governor had given it to them, and no man had anything to do there but themselves;" and with

that he swore that he would go and burn all their new huts; they should build none upon their land.

"Why, seignior," says the Spaniard, "by the same rule, we must be your servants, too."

"Ay," returned the bold dog, "and so you shall, too, before we have done with you;" mixing two or three oaths in the proper intervals of his speech.

The Spaniard only smiled at that, and made him no answer. However, this little discourse had heated them; and starting up, one says to the other. (I think it was he they called Will Atkins), "Come, Jack, let's go and have t'other brush with them; we'll demolish their castle, I'll warrant you; they shall plant no colony in our dominions."

Upon this they were all trooping away, with every man a gun, a pistol, and a sword, and muttered some insolent things among themselves of what they would do to the Spaniards, too, when opportunity offered; but the Spaniards, it seems, did not so perfectly understand them as to know all the particulars, only that in general they threatened them hard for taking the two Englishmen's part. Whither they went, or how they bestowed their time that evening, the Spaniards said they did not know; but it seems they wandered about the country part of the night, and them lying down in the place which I used to call my bower, they were weary and overslept

themselves. The case was this: they had resolved to stay till midnight, and so take the two poor men when they were asleep, and as they acknowledged afterwards, intended to set fire to their huts while they were in them, and either burn them there or murder them as they came out. As malice seldom sleeps very sound, it was very strange they should not have been kept awake. However, as the two men had also a design upon them, as I have said, though a much fairer one than that of burning and murdering, it happened, and very luckily for them all, that they were up and gone abroad before the bloody-minded rogues came to their huts.

When they came there, and found the men gone, Atkins, who it seems was the forwardest man, called out to his comrade, "Ha, Jack, here's the nest, but the birds are flown." They mused a while, to think what should be the occasion of their being gone abroad so soon, and suggested presently that the Spaniards had given them notice of it; and with that they shook hands, and swore to one another that they would be revenged of the Spaniards. As soon as they had made this bloody bargain they fell to work with the poor men's habitation; they did not set fire, indeed, to anything, but they pulled down both their houses, and left not the least stick standing, or scarce any sign on the ground where they stood; they tore all their household stuff in pieces, and threw everything about in such a manner, that the poor men afterwards found some of their things a mile off. When they had done this, they pulled up all the young trees which the poor men had planted; broke down an enclosure they had made to secure their cattle and their corn; and,

in a word, sacked and plundered everything as completely as a horde of Tartars would have done.

The two men were at this juncture gone to find them out, and had resolved to fight them wherever they had been, though they were but two to three; so that, had they met, there certainly would have been blood shed among them, for they were all very stout, resolute fellows, to give them their due.

But Providence took more care to keep them asunder than they themselves could do to meet; for, as if they had dogged one another, when the three were gone thither, the two were here; and afterwards, when the two went back to find them, the three were come to the old habitation again: we shall see their different conduct presently. When the three came back like furious creatures, flushed with the rage which the work they had been about had put them into, they came up to the Spaniards, and told them what they had done, by way of scoff and bravado; and one of them stepping up to one of the Spaniards, as if they had been a couple of boys at play, takes hold of his hat as it was upon his head, and giving it a twirl about, fleering in his face, says to him, "And you, Seignior Jack Spaniard, shall have the same sauce if you do not mend your manners." The Spaniard, who, though a quiet civil man, was as brave a man as could be, and withal a strong, well-made man, looked at him for a good while, and then, having no weapon in his hand, stepped gravely up to him, and, with one blow of his fist, knocked him down, as an ox is felled with a pole-axe; at which one of the rogues, as

insolent as the first, fired his pistol at the Spaniard immediately; he missed his body, indeed, for the bullets went through his hair, but one of them touched the tip of his ear, and he bled pretty much. The blood made the Spaniard believe he was more hurt than he really was, and that put him into some heat, for before he acted all in a perfect calm; but now resolving to go through with his work, he stooped, and taking the fellow's musket whom he had knocked down, was just going to shoot the man who had fired at him, when the rest of the Spaniards, being in the cave, came out, and calling to him not to shoot, they stepped in, secured the other two, and took their arms from them.

When they were thus disarmed, and found they had made all the Spaniards their enemies, as well as their own countrymen, they began to cool, and giving the Spaniards better words, would have their arms again; but the Spaniards, considering the feud that was between them and the other two Englishmen, and that it would be the best method they could take to keep them from killing one another, told them they would do them no harm, and if they would live peaceably, they would be very willing to assist and associate with them as they did before; but that they could not think of giving them their arms again, while they appeared so resolved to do mischief with them to their own countrymen, and had even threatened them all to make them their servants.

The rogues were now quite deaf to all reason, and being refused their arms,

they raved away like madmen, threatening what they would do, though they had no firearms. But the Spaniards, despising their threatening, told them they should take care how they offered any injury to their plantation or cattle; for if they did they would shoot them as they would ravenous beasts, wherever they found them; and if they fell into their hands alive, they should certainly be hanged. However, this was far from cooling them, but away they went, raging and swearing like furies. As soon as they were gone, the two men came back, in passion and rage enough also, though of another kind; for having been at their plantation, and finding it all demolished and destroyed, as above mentioned, it will easily be supposed they had provocation enough. They could scarce have room to tell their tale, the Spaniards were so eager to tell them theirs: and it was strange enough to find that three men should thus bully nineteen, and receive no punishment at all.

The Spaniards, indeed, despised them, and especially, having thus disarmed them, made light of their threatenings; but the two Englishmen resolved to have their remedy against them, what pains soever it cost to find them out. But the Spaniards interposed here too, and told them that as they had disarmed them, they could not consent that they (the two) should pursue them with firearms, and perhaps kill them.

But," said the grave Spaniard, who was their governor, "we will endeavour to make them do you justice, if you will leave it to us: for there is no doubt but

they will come to us again, when their passion is over, being not able to subsist without our assistance. We promise you to make no peace with them without having full satisfaction for you; and upon this condition we hope you will promise to use no violence with them, other than in your own defence." The two Englishmen yielded to this very awkwardly, and with great reluctance; but the Spaniards protested that they did it only to keep them from bloodshed, and to make them all easy at last.

For," said they, "we are not so many of us; here is room enough for us all, and it is a great pity that we should not be all good friends." At length they did consent, and waited for the issue of the thing, living for some days with the Spaniards; for their own habitation was destroyed.

In about five days' time the vagrants, tired with wandering, and almost starved with hunger, having chiefly lived on turtles' eggs all that while, came back to the grove; and finding my Spaniard, who, as I have said, was the governor, and two more with him, walking by the side of the creek, they came up in a very submissive, humble manner, and begged to be received again into the society. The Spaniards used them civilly, but told them they had acted so unnaturally to their countrymen, and so very grossly to themselves, that they could not come to any conclusion without consulting the two Englishmen and the rest; but, however, they would go to them and discourse about it, and they should know in half-an-hour. It may be guessed that they were very hard put to it; for, as they were to wait this half-



hour for an answer, they begged they would send them out some bread in the meantime, which they did, sending at the same time a large piece of goat's flesh and a boiled parrot, which they ate very eagerly.

After half-an-hour's consultation they were called in, and a long debate ensued, their two countrymen charging them with the ruin of all their labour, and a design to murder them; all which they owned before, and therefore could not deny now. Upon the whole, the Spaniards acted the moderators between them; and as they had obliged the two Englishmen not to hurt the three while they were naked and unarmed, so they now obliged the three to go and rebuild their fellows' two huts, one to be of the same and the other of larger dimensions than they were before; to fence their ground again, plant trees in the room of those pulled up, dig up the land again for planting corn, and, in a word, to restore everything to the same state as they found it, that is, as near as they could.

Well, they submitted to all this; and as they had plenty of provisions given them all the while, they grew very orderly, and the whole society began to live pleasantly and agreeably together again; only that these three fellows could never be persuaded to work - I mean for themselves - except now and then a little, just as they pleased. However, the Spaniards told them plainly that if they would but live sociably and friendly together, and study the good of the whole plantation, they would be content to work for them, and let them walk about and be as idle as they pleased; and thus, having lived

pretty well together for a month or two, the Spaniards let them have arms again, and gave them liberty to go abroad with them as before.

It was not above a week after they had these arms, and went abroad, before the ungrateful creatures began to be as insolent and troublesome as ever. However, an accident happened presently upon this, which endangered the safety of them all, and they were obliged to lay by all private resentments, and look to the preservation of their lives.

It happened one night that the governor, the Spaniard whose life I had saved, who was now the governor of the rest, found himself very uneasy in the night, and could by no means get any sleep: he was perfectly well in body, only found his thoughts tumultuous; his mind ran upon men fighting and killing one another; but he was broad awake, and could not by any means get any sleep; in short, he lay a great while, but growing more and more uneasy, he resolved to rise. As they lay, being so many of them, on goat-skins laid thick upon such couches and pads as they made for themselves, so they had little to do, when they were willing to rise, but to get upon their feet, and perhaps put on a coat, such as it was, and their pumps, and they were ready for going any way that their thoughts guided them. Being thus got up, he looked out; but being dark, he could see little or nothing, and besides, the trees which I had planted, and which were now grown tall, intercepted his sight, so that he could only look up, and see that it was a starlight night, and hearing no noise, he returned and lay down

again; but to no purpose; he could not compose himself to anything like rest; but his thoughts were to the last degree uneasy, and he knew not for what. Having made some noise with rising and walking about, going out and coming in, another of them waked, and asked who it was that was up. The governor told him how it had been with him.

Say you so?" says the other Spaniard; "such things are not to be slighted, I assure you; there is certainly some mischief working near us;" and presently he asked him, "Where are the Englishmen?"

They are all in their huts," says he, "safe enough." It seems the Spaniards had kept possession of the main apartment, and had made a place for the three Englishmen, who, since their last mutiny, were always quartered by themselves, and could not come at the rest.

Well," says the Spaniard, "there is something in it, I am persuaded, from my own experience. I am satisfied that our spirits embodied have a converse with and receive intelligence from the spirits unembodied, and inhabiting the invisible world; and this friendly notice is given for our advantage, if we knew how to make use of it. Come, let us go and look abroad; and if we find nothing at all in it to justify the trouble, I'll tell you a story to the purpose, that shall convince you of the justice of my proposing it."

They went out presently to go up to the top of the hill, where I used to go;

but they being strong, and a good company, nor alone, as I was, used none of my cautions to go up by the ladder, and pulling it up after them, to go up a second stage to the top, but were going round through the grove unwarily, when they were surprised with seeing a light as of fire, a very little way from them, and hearing the voices of men, not of one or two, but of a great number.

Among the precautions I used to take on the savages landing on the island, it was my constant care to prevent them making the least discovery of there being any inhabitant upon the place: and when by any occasion they came to know it, they felt it so effectually that they that got away were scarce able to give any account of it; for we disappeared as soon as possible, nor did ever any that had seen me escape to tell any one else, except it was the three savages in our last encounter who jumped into the boat; of whom, I mentioned, I was afraid they should go home and bring more help. Whether it was the consequence of the escape of those men that so great a number came now together, or whether they came ignorantly, and by accident, on their usual bloody errand, the Spaniards could not understand; but whatever it was, it was their business either to have concealed themselves or not to have seen them at all, much less to have let the savages have seen there were any inhabitants in the place; or to have fallen upon them so effectually as not a man of them should have escaped, which could only have been by getting in between them and their boats; but this presence of mind was wanting to them, which was the ruin of their tranquillity for a

great while.

We need not doubt but that the governor and the man with him, surprised with this sight, ran back immediately and raised their fellows, giving them an account of the imminent danger they were all in, and they again as readily took the alarm; but it was impossible to persuade them to stay close within where they were, but they must all run out to see how things stood. While it was dark, indeed, they were safe, and they had opportunity enough for some hours to view the savages by the light of three fires they had made at a distance from one another; what they were doing they knew not, neither did they know what to do themselves. For, first, the enemy were too many; and secondly, they did not keep together, but were divided into several parties, and were on shore in several places.

The Spaniards were in no small consternation at this sight; and, as they found that the fellows went straggling all over the shore, they made no doubt but, first or last, some of them would chop in upon their habitation, or upon some other place where they would see the token of inhabitants; and they were in great perplexity also for fear of their flock of goats, which, if they should be destroyed, would have been little less than starving them. So the first thing they resolved upon was to despatch three men away before it was light, two Spaniards and one Englishman, to drive away all the goats to the great valley where the cave was, and, if need were, to drive them into the very cave itself. Could they have seen the savages all together in one body,

and at a distance from their canoes, they were resolved, if there had been a hundred of them, to attack them; but that could not be done, for they were some of them two miles off from the other, and, as it appeared afterwards, were of two different nations.

After having mused a great while on the course they should take, they resolved at last, while it was still dark, to send the old savage, Friday's father, out as a spy, to learn, if possible, something concerning them, as what they came for, what they intended to do, and the like. The old man readily undertook it; and stripping himself quite naked, as most of the savages were, away he went. After he had been gone an hour or two, he brings word that he had been among them undiscovered, that he found they were two parties, and of two several nations, who had war with one another, and had a great battle in their own country; and that both sides having had several prisoners taken in the fight, they were, by mere chance, landed all on the same island, for the devouring their prisoners and making merry; but their coming so by chance to the same place had spoiled all their mirth - that they were in a great rage at one another, and were so near that he believed they would fight again as soon as daylight began to appear; but he did not perceive that they had any notion of anybody being on the island but themselves. He had hardly made an end of telling his story, when they could perceive, by the unusual noise they made, that the two little armies were engaged in a bloody fight. Friday's father used all the arguments he could to persuade our people to lie close, and not be seen; he told them their safety

consisted in it, and that they had nothing to do but lie still, and the savages would kill one another to their hands, and then the rest would go away; and it was so to a tittle. But it was impossible to prevail, especially upon the Englishmen; their curiosity was so importunate that they must run out and see the battle. However, they used some caution too: they did not go openly, just by their own dwelling, but went farther into the woods, and placed themselves to advantage, where they might securely see them manage the fight, and, as they thought, not be seen by them; but the savages did see them, as we shall find hereafter.

The battle was very fierce, and, if I might believe the Englishmen, one of them said he could perceive that some of them were men of great bravery, of invincible spirit, and of great policy in guiding the fight. The battle, they said, held two hours before they could guess which party would be beaten; but then that party which was nearest our people's habitation began to appear weakest, and after some time more some of them began to fly; and this put our men again into a great consternation, lest any one of those that fled should run into the grove before their dwelling for shelter, and thereby involuntarily discover the place; and that, by consequence, the pursuers would also do the like in search of them. Upon this, they resolved that they would stand armed within the wall, and whoever came into the grove, they resolved to sally out over the wall and kill them, so that, if possible, not one should return to give an account of it; they ordered also that it should be done with their swords, or by knocking them down with the stocks of their

muskets, but not by shooting them, for fear of raising an alarm by the noise.

As they expected it fell out; three of the routed army fled for life, and crossing the creek, ran directly into the place, not in the least knowing whither they went, but running as into a thick wood for shelter. The scout they kept to look abroad gave notice of this within, with this comforting addition, that the conquerors had not pursued them, or seen which way they were gone; upon this the Spanish governor, a man of humanity, would not suffer them to kill the three fugitives, but sending three men out by the top of the hill, ordered them to go round, come in behind them, and surprise and take them prisoners, which was done. The residue of the conquered people fled to their canoes, and got off to sea; the victors retired, made no pursuit, or very little, but drawing themselves into a body together, gave two great screaming shouts, most likely by way of triumph, and so the fight ended; the same day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, they also marched to their canoes. And thus the Spaniards had the island again free to themselves, their fright was over, and they saw no savages for several years after.

After they were all gone, the Spaniards came out of their den, and viewing the field of battle, they found about two-and-thirty men dead on the spot; some were killed with long arrows, which were found sticking in their bodies; but most of them were killed with great wooden swords, sixteen or seventeen of which they found in the field of battle, and as many bows, with



a great many arrows. These swords were strange, unwieldy things, and they must be very strong men that used them; most of those that were killed with them had their heads smashed to pieces, as we may say, or, as we call it in English, their brains knocked out, and several their arms and legs broken; so that it is evident they fight with inexpressible rage and fury. We found not one man that was not stone dead; for either they stay by their enemy till they have killed him, or they carry all the wounded men that are not quite dead away with them.

This deliverance tamed our ill-disposed Englishmen for a great while; the sight had filled them with horror, and the consequences appeared terrible to the last degree, especially upon supposing that some time or other they should fall into the hands of those creatures, who would not only kill them as enemies, but for food, as we kill our cattle; and they professed to me that the thoughts of being eaten up like beef and mutton, though it was supposed it was not to be till they were dead, had something in it so horrible that it nauseated their very stomachs, made them sick when they thought of it, and filled their minds with such unusual terror, that they were not themselves for some weeks after. This, as I said, tamed even the three English brutes I have been speaking of; and for a great while after they were tractable, and went about the common business of the whole society well enough - planted, sowed, reaped, and began to be all naturalised to the country. But some time after this they fell into such simple measures again as brought them into a great deal of trouble.

They had taken three prisoners, as I observed; and these three being stout young fellows, they made them servants, and taught them to work for them, and as slaves they did well enough; but they did not take their measures as I did by my man Friday, viz. to begin with them upon the principle of having saved their lives, and then instruct them in the rational principles of life; much less did they think of teaching them religion, or attempt civilising and reducing them by kind usage and affectionate arguments. As they gave them their food every day, so they gave them their work too, and kept them fully employed in drudgery enough; but they failed in this by it, that they never had them to assist them and fight for them as I had my man Friday, who was as true to me as the very flesh upon my bones.

But to come to the family part. Being all now good friends - for common danger, as I said above, had effectually reconciled them - they began to consider their general circumstances; and the first thing that came under consideration was whether, seeing the savages particularly haunted that side of the island, and that there were more remote and retired parts of it equally adapted to their way of living, and manifestly to their advantage, they should not rather move their habitation, and plant in some more proper place for their safety, and especially for the security of their cattle and corn.

Upon this, after long debate, it was concluded that they would not remove

their habitation; because that, some time or other, they thought they might hear from their governor again, meaning me; and if I should send any one to seek them, I should be sure to direct them to that side, where, if they should find the place demolished, they would conclude the savages had killed us all, and we were gone, and so our supply would go too. But as to their corn and cattle, they agreed to remove them into the valley where my cave was, where the land was as proper for both, and where indeed there was land enough. However, upon second thoughts they altered one part of their resolution too, and resolved only to remove part of their cattle thither, and part of their corn there; so that if one part was destroyed the other might be saved. And one part of prudence they luckily used: they never trusted those three savages which they had taken prisoners with knowing anything of the plantation they had made in that valley, or of any cattle they had there, much less of the cave at that place, which they kept, in case of necessity, as a safe retreat; and thither they carried also the two barrels of powder which I had sent them at my coming away. They resolved, however, not to change their habitation; yet, as I had carefully covered it first with a wall or fortification, and then with a grove of trees, and as they were now fully convinced their safety consisted entirely in their being concealed, they set to work to cover and conceal the place yet more effectually than before. For this purpose, as I planted trees, or rather thrust in stakes, which in time all grew up to be trees, for some good distance before the entrance into my apartments, they went on in the same manner, and filled up the rest of that whole space of ground from the trees I had set quite down to the side of the

creek, where I landed my floats, and even into the very ooze where the tide flowed, not so much as leaving any place to land, or any sign that there had been any landing thereabouts: these stakes also being of a wood very forward to grow, they took care to have them generally much larger and taller than those which I had planted. As they grew apace, they planted them so very thick and close together, that when they had been three or four years grown there was no piercing with the eye any considerable way into the plantation. As for that part which I had planted, the trees were grown as thick as a man's thigh, and among them they had placed so many other short ones, and so thick, that it stood like a palisado a quarter of a mile thick, and it was next to impossible to penetrate it, for a little dog could hardly get between the trees, they stood so close.

But this was not all; for they did the same by all the ground to the right hand and to the left, and round even to the side of the hill, leaving no way, not so much as for themselves, to come out but by the ladder placed up to the side of the hill, and then lifted up, and placed again from the first stage up to the top: so that when the ladder was taken down, nothing but what had wings or witchcraft to assist it could come at them. This was excellently well contrived: nor was it less than what they afterwards found occasion for, which served to convince me, that as human prudence has the authority of Providence to justify it, so it has doubtless the direction of Providence to set it to work; and if we listened carefully to the voice of it, I am persuaded we might prevent many of the disasters which our lives are now, by our own

negligence, subjected to.

They lived two years after this in perfect retirement, and had no more visits from the savages. They had, indeed, an alarm given them one morning, which put them into a great consternation; for some of the Spaniards being out early one morning on the west side or end of the island (which was that end where I never went, for fear of being discovered), they were surprised with seeing about twenty canoes of Indians just coming on shore. They made the best of their way home in hurry enough; and giving the alarm to their comrades, they kept close all that day and the next, going out only at night to make their observation: but they had the good luck to be undiscovered, for wherever the savages went, they did not land that time on the island, but pursued some other design.