



Thief of the Ocean

By
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Pirate Lords and their Territories

Territory	Pirate Lord	Flagship
The Oceans and Beyond	Eldred Zale	The Sea King
Dersce Ocean	Silver Rynith	The Fear Hunter
Aelmer Ocean		The Ebony Thunder
Mewia Ocean	Galois Criras	The Sea Wolf
Saeveh Ocean		The Devil's Poison
Haiebel Ocean	Rhovia Nyda	The Red Mermaid
Oldyn Ocean		The Rogue Storm
Lield Ocean	Dwiral Reryl	The Night Bay Serpent
Glolyn Ocean	Cale Sererin	The Red Blade
Thieviel Ocean		The Dreaming Siren
Keder Ocean		The Hell Raider
Kigon Ocean	Ladiel Vedelr	The Demon's Lust
Ethiev Ocean	Aydy Lothay	The Nightingale



Chapter 1

It wasn't something I had expected. In actual fact, it had never even crossed my mind. Not even when I was first offered the job. After all, walking into a highly secure facility and stealing something precious from hundreds of armed guards is what I do for a living. Yes, I was stealing from the main force of peacekeepers and the governmental watch dogs, but honestly, what I saw before me hardly looked worth stealing. Somewhere in my head a voice was telling me that I should know better than to judge a book by its cover, but seriously, what were the creators thinking when they created a precious artefact in the form of a half drowned book.

It looked like it had spent most of its life on the bottom of the ocean, providing food for the resident fish, and recently pulled out by some poor fisher who had been looking for a decent meal and instead was disappointed. I know I would have thrown it right back into the ocean, but who knows what kind of person would come up with the idea of selling it to the navy.

I cast a glance around the room; it looked, in all shape and form, like a vault. But a vault that seemed like it should be the home of mounds of gold and jewellery. If the pay-out for this job wasn't worth the effort, I would have gone straight back out of the room, which I had spent the last hour sneaking into without being discovered, and complained to the dozens of guards outside. I mean, seriously, the book would have been a lot safer in a book case where no one would look for it. My opinion of the navy, low as it already is, went down a few more notches. All muscle and no brains I guess.

A slight peak through the pages of the book confirmed that suspicious feeling, that this was either a huge set up, or a prank. The words, or whatever they were before their time in water, were blurred beyond recognition. I wondered if my employer had any knowledge of the condition of the book. The instructions she gave me were after all, slightly vague; get whatever is in the most heavily guarded room the navy headquarters. I wondered if she was doing this just to piss them off. But then again, thinking back to my employer, definitely not the joking type. I had dealt with her before, and humorous she was not, not even the slightest bit emotional. But I had known her since I was a child, and even though she scared the crap out of me, I trusted her. Well, mostly anyway. But at least she always kept her side of the bargain, and never cheated me a Reale.

I glanced back at the book, and somehow I found that I really didn't want to pick it up. I mean if they really wanted to keep it safe, why not have the guards inside the room. No doubt a job boring as hell, but then again, superiors rarely gave a crap about how their foot soldiers feel. With a shrug I picked up the book. Nothing happened. A note of disappointment made itself known to me. I mean, just like any thief, I felt satisfied knowing that the owner didn't even know that anything was stolen, but this whole job had been a tad boring.

Then the door crashed open. So much for nothing happening. I spun around and broke into a run before I even saw what had come through the door. Experience had taught me that surprise was the best tactic for a thief when discovered and that hesitation did nobody any good. Half way across the room, my mind caught up with my body. In the door stood the soldiers, the complete look of surprise on their faces, and a lot more confusion. I guess they couldn't fathom how anyone had passed them by without them noticing. Pride and a huge ego also didn't do anyone any good. I slipped passed them and dodged their grips easily, and was out and running down the corridor



before I heard the first shout of alarm. The corridor was long, but I was fast, they didn't have a chance.

"Catch him!" They shouted, and I growled. Girl dammit, I'm a girl! Why did they always miss that, I asked myself as I rounded the corner and ran straight into something heavy blocking the way. We went down in a heap.

I had only seconds to register the man I had gone down with before I rolled off him and continued running. But I recognised him, and I know he had recognised me too. Bounty hunter. Best there was, and blood hound for the navy. We had run into each other before, except he never really saw me, only the results I left behind. Or the empty void where something precious had been only seconds ago. I am good at what I do, and I have a record of never being caught. But this was a slip up, and I was not happy with myself.

While my pride as a thief was berating me for being so clumsy, my instincts and experiences were yelling at me to get lost and run. I was listening to my instinct; it had, after all, saved my ass more than a dozen times. Even the best thief couldn't control their luck, but I was trying, and I was pretty damn close. Screw reality and the hundreds of armed soldiers with a collective pride bigger than the ocean, I was getting out of here and no one was going to be able to do a damn thing to stop me. Especially since I had a backup plan, and it didn't require me to get by the whole garrison, but simply avoid them completely. I knew they would be insulted, but I was a thief, my morals didn't go that far.

I had an ace up my sleeve, which was one of the reasons why I never got caught. My pride thought that it was a minor reason, but I've sent it to hell so many times it's got a seasonal ticket. My ace was my gang. The navy was looking out for a master thief, they had no idea of the five little helpers that watched my back and provided me with my escape. I was not like other thieves, and it was not my fault if the navy assumes that, because I'm a thief I work alone. Then I again, I wasn't going to tell them.

So instead of doing what the navy once again assumed I would do, I went up, up a couple of floors to where the officers had their rooms, and straight through the window. Yes, it was a fifty feet drop, but straight into a mound of hay that my helpers had laid out for me. Yes, it would be a hell of an uncomfortable landing, but at least I would be alive to complain about it. I had fallen before, it was nothing new to me, and yelling like a crazy idiot would do nothing but ruin my perfect escape.

Three of my crew were waiting for me, their reaction to seeing me plummet from the fourth floor of the navy headquarters varied.

Rowena was giggling, highly likely at my most undignified flight. She was an enthusiastic girl, with almond-shaped chocolate-coloured eyes and thick curly brown hair, which complemented her tanned skin. She hadn't quite grown out of childhood yet, and her wardrobe choice was everything you would expect from a girl like her, strange and risqué, with an all too festive colour scheme for someone who was working with a thief. But I guess that was her charm, no one would even consider her to be anything but innocent.

Charity was beside her, shaking her head in frustration, and giving me a look that said I told you so. She was a couple of years older than me and as different from Rowena as could be. She was tall, with a slender build that would attract the attention of any sane man in the area, a beauty that any girl would be jealous of, including me, on occasion. Her long luxurious dark hair, that was held back from her face with pins and jewels and dark eyes like steel, stood out from her paler skin, but in a way that complemented her in every way. She was wearing her typical flattering and revealing



clothing, she wouldn't let the fact that she was committing a crime prevent her from being stylish.

"So much for not needing a backup plan." Rubin remarked, with a voice that said everything that he didn't put to words. From all of my gang, he was the one who was actually normal, well except for the fact that he was actually part of my gang. He was in all ways average, with brown hair, almond eyes and slightly tanned skin, with a hint of stubble. He looked like every other man in the street, and that's the way he liked it. It made him a master of his skills, which was scamming you out of everything you had. That's how we had first met, and I think that one of the reasons why he joined my gang was because he was trying to figure out why his cons ran dry on me. And I wasn't going to tell him that common sense played a big part. But he was a good person to have on your side, and if leaving him guessing, kept him working with me, I was fine with that.

"Everything always goes more smoothly in your head than in real life. At least this time you set up the backup plan right." I told him with a pointed expression, to his credit he didn't look the slightest embarrassed, even though his last backup plan sent me falling into a dumpster full of stuff that I really didn't want to think of. Rowena chuckled, and even Charity cracked a smile, but Rubin kept his snazzy laid back expression. Needless to say the thought of violence just crossed my mind, and I wasn't an unnecessary violent person. I was also a liar, it came with the job, but somehow I didn't think that starting a fight next to a battalion of trigger happy soldiers who just had been slapped in the face was a good idea.

"Let's go" I simply said, and headed off, away from the potential disaster and towards the cluster of alleys and the rest of the town's population.

"Did you get what you were looking for?" Rowena asked.

"No, I left it in there, and just broke in to a highly secure facility with who knows how many soldiers breathing down my neck." I answered sarcastically. Another one of my priceless skills, although weirdly enough not all of my clients appreciated it, I have no idea why.

"So, what is it?" she asked. I showed them the book and their reactions were pretty much the same as mine had been. We had been working together for a while and they were used to see priceless jewels and bags of money, or on the other side, some hilarious and embarrassing documents that my clients didn't want the rest of the world to see. This drowned old book was beyond disappointing.

"What's the payment on this again?" Rubin asked sceptically.

"700 doubloons." I answered and Rubin whistled, as he had the first time I had told him. He really didn't care what the job was, the first thing and only thing he wanted to know was the reward. I swear he had an obsession with money. If it wasn't for his strong sense of right and wrong he would have handed himself over to the navy just so he could get the reward, and us with it. Although knowing him, he would be able to pull it off and still be able to spend his winnings after. You really had to watch him and his sneaking tongue; he could cheat a man out of his fortune and leaving feeling like the happiest man in the world.

And the women he would actually leave that way, because for all his ordinary appearance, he could flatter anyone, and I still thought he was way too young to have that many tales of conquest. Not that he cared if anyone wanted to hear them, and I had made it clear to him when he joined the group that if he even tried anything in that direction with my gang he would not like the results, not that he cared. At least he knew to keep his own in a brawl, which he ended up more than often. Especially when he tried to seduce Charity, and she fought dirty, one of the reasons why I recruited her for



my gang. Although she was worse than he was when it came to using charms to extort others, and I swear she enjoyed misleading him and then beating him up. Oh yeah, my team and one heck of a harmony.

We were heading through the maze of town alleys which, I am pretty sure, had been built by a drunk, at a brisk pace. I was pretty sure that no one saw how we left and that the soldiers were most probably still searching the building frantically for a thief who was no longer there, but I wasn't one to tempt fate. Or a bounty hunter. That son of a bitch was going to bring nothing but trouble, I swear.

Theron Roe was perhaps not the most famous bounty hunter but most probably the most hated. And not just by criminals, or more notably, pirates, no, even civilians hated him. He was ruthless, selfish, and greedy as could be, and his reputation is well known as someone who will do anything if the price is right. Whether that is capturing a criminal or offing someone that the navy or commanding government didn't agree with. Whether they were guilty or not, didn't seem to faze him at all. And although he was the top bounty hunter around, he too was on the top of a lot of hit lists.

The fact that he was still alive was just another proof of his ruthlessness and willingness to do whatever he needed to do. And I swear, if I wasn't strictly against killing I would be tempted by the huge bounty on his head, and because he had gotten rid of a few of my clients. Although I considered myself strictly apart from any good and evil, or criminal and lawful, either way you wanted to look at it, I knew the navy didn't agree with my opinion. It always surprised me though how both sides could forget me being a criminal if they need me to steal something for them. I had high hopes that Roe would have an accident in his foreseeable future I wasn't going to bet my riches on it, and I had enough to spare for idle gambling.

We stopped under an inn sign with a parrot on it. It was a smaller inn, hidden in the maze of alleys, and unless you knew of it you would never find it. And that was just what the innkeeper intended, as not all of his patrons were people who could show their faces anywhere else without risking someone recognising them on a wanted poster. Me included, although the last I had seen my picture had no resemblance what so ever to me. That and they still thought I was a guy.

I had cut my hair short at the beginning of my career seeing as it had no use what so ever and only got in the way. Charity was appalled at my lack of femininity. I had told her, in not a few words, how much I cared. And yet she never left the chance to chastise me. What can I say, I don't have the beauty that she has, my hair is a mess of colour that might look like red wine on good days and my eyes were the colour of a depressingly cloudy sky. I am slim enough to fit in her clothes but I have none of the curves to fill them out and I was shorter than her which left me looking like a child trying on their parent's clothes. All in all I didn't pride myself with beauty but then again I really didn't care, and even though half of the time I was mistaken for a boy, I really didn't care. I lived an exciting life and had enough money for me to go into early retirement, and knowledge of that let any remarks slip right by me.

The inn was everything you might expect a bar for criminals in hiding to look like, and even the traces of the innkeeper trying to make the place look respectable were lost in the common brawls. We headed to our table which we had been frequenting for the last couple of weeks in which we planned and staked out our target. A target which was now sitting snugly under my jacket. I couldn't help but smile at a job well done, well, mostly well done anyway.

Dylan and Elwyn were waiting for us at our table and sensing our success had already brought out the drinks, typical. Those two were the exact opposite of each



other, and yet they were best of friends, more even. And the rest of us were still betting on when they would finally get together, not that they knew, where would be the fun in that. Dylan's skin was pale with wheat coloured hair and ocean blue eyes in which a girl could lose herself. He had the whole bad boy charm going on and dressed accordingly. Elwyn on the other had the appearance of a dark foreign beauty, with black hair and a pair of onyx eyes and a fair figure. And that's not even where the differences ended.

Elwyn was a people's person, and I let her deal with my clients, well, at least the clients on the right side of the law. The more backstabbing and ruthless clients, I let Dylan deal with. He fit right in with that crowd, the same way that Elwyn fit in with those that walk in the light, no pun intended. The fact that they had right away clicked, had been a surprise to me, and the fact that it was so painstakingly obvious made it even more painful to know that they were clueless. Or at least she was clueless, I was pretty sure Dylan's intentions weren't as innocent as just a friendship.

I slid into the chair next to Elwyn and grabbed a mug and drowned its contents before sliding the book over to her. Dylan, who I'm sure had been just about to make a remark about my unusual thirst, looked like he had just been told that the ocean was in actual fact purple and not blue.

"You have got to be joking." he said with a shocked voice, "This old thing is the item?" I nodded just nodded and watched him lean back in his chair, shaking his head in utter disbelief and muttering under his breath. It was entertaining to watch. Elwyn's reaction was rather one of curiosity, which no longer surprised me; she wasn't as much about the monetary value of an item but rather the sentimental value, as she always told me. I had no idea what she was on about and was still looking for someone to explain it to me. She was flicking through the book while Rubin was counselling Dylan and the rest of us were hiding our smiles in our drinks.

"Anything interesting?" I asked after a while, and Elwyn shook her head.

"It's too worn out, but I would love to find out what it says." she responded with a under flowing plea.

"Sorry, client comes first." I told her.

"More importantly the reward." Rubin interceded. And they exchanged looks, you know the one. They had always had a difference in opinion about the worth of an object. It was a funny debate to watch, over and over again. From all of my gang Elwyn was the one who fit in the least, but she had had some bad experiences with the navy and army and agreed with my policy of not being a criminal or lawful citizen but just being. She didn't have anywhere else to go anyway, and I liked her and thought us friends. As did she, but she was all too trusting, a flaw that me and the rest of my gang were trying to rid her off. No success yet, she hung on to her morals like a dog to its bone, but we kept trying.

"The client is going to be really disappointed when he gets this old rag." Dylan remarked and Elwyn shot him a look, again you know the one.

"Who's the client anyway?" Charity asked casually, and I swear, even though they pretended not to, all their attention went straight to me, if they were dogs their hackles would be up. I gave Charity a lopsided grin, telling her that I knew exactly what she was trying to do, and took another sip of my drink. I hadn't told my gang who the client was, even though we had done a couple of jobs for her over the time we had worked together, she was the only client who I dealt with myself. It's not that I didn't trust Dylan or Elwyn to deal with her; I just didn't trust her to deal with them. Not that she was a psychopathic old lady who killed people for fun, but she was odd, and a psychopathic old lady who killed people for fun.



"Oh come on already!" Rowena whined, as she had the last couple of times I refused to tell them. I had learned to block out irritations. They were about to start another session of trying to break me and annoy me to hell, when all hell actually did break loose.