

# OLOFF THE PIRATE SERIES

## 4. Captain Oloff the Pirate



**GERRIE RADLOF**

# CAPTAIN OLOFF THE PIRATE

*by*

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## **CAPTAIN OLOFF THE PIRATE**

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## SUMMARY

Prepare to be swept away on a thrilling adventure in the heart of the Indian Ocean, where pirates rule the waves, revenge simmers, and love blossoms amidst chaos. Captain Oloff the Pirate plunges you into a world of bustling pirate havens, treacherous betrayals, and daring escapades.

Oloff van Wagenaar, once falsely accused of a heinous crime, is branded a pirate, forever on the run. His path collides with the ruthless Captain Borghort, a man fueled by vengeance and ambition, setting off a deadly game of cat and mouse across the treacherous seas. In the midst of this conflict, Oloff finds solace and unwavering support in the captivating Anna te Hoogen. Their bond, forged in the crucible of danger, becomes a beacon of hope amidst the darkness of piracy and deceit.

As Oloff navigates the treacherous waters of Deelen Bay, a pirate community ruled by a shadowy Admiral, he grapples with his past while striving to clear his name. Can he convince this den of thieves to accept him? Each decision he makes is fraught with peril, and the line between pirate and honorable captain blurs with every passing storm. Driven by a relentless desire for justice, Oloff embarks on a quest to bring Borghort to justice. But Borghort is a slippery foe, weaving intricate webs of deception and power. As Oloff closes in, he uncovers a plot that reaches the highest echelons of power, threatening to plunge the entire region into war.

With the help of Anna and an unlikely alliance with Admiral Te Hoogen, Oloff must outwit Borghort and expose his treachery before it's too late. But can he overcome his past and claim the redemption he desperately seeks? Or will the treacherous currents of fate drag him into the depths of despair?

## EXTRACT

The first of the crew are already barely ten feet from the gate. Oloff jogs towards them.

“When you go out through the gate, turn at right angles towards the beach. Those of you who can swim, jump in and try to reach the ships. Captain Henning and I are rushing to the quay. We will go and get boats to come and fetch the rest of you at the beach.”

One of the men in front smiles. Then he calls out loudly to Oloff.

“We can swim, Captain. You just flee!”

Oloff leaps around. Henning has already taken the reins, and Heem is holding the little door open for his captain. As Oloff grabs the frame, the coach pulls away with a jerk.

Wildly, they race over the paved street alongside the parade. At the Heerengracht, they turn right, and barely five minutes later, they have reached the quay. It is dark here. There is little activity, and no one seems to have heard anything of the commotion there at the Castle.

There are several boats moored, but they easily recognize those of the Seewraak and the Jansje Meer. Oloff commands Henning and the other two to each man one of the boats.

“Go and get help from the ships, Henning,” Oloff commands. “You, Sias, and Heem must row along the beach to go and fetch the rest of the crew who are there.”

“What about you, Oloff?” the tall Henning Roux calls out to him, concerned.

## 4. CAPTAIN OLOFF THE PIRATE

### Chapter 1

The grand tavern along the sandy main street of Deelen Bay is teeming with chattering, laughing, and even shouting men and women. The diverse colours of the men's three-quarter jackets and breeches brighten the room. Most of them are rather well-dressed, as everyone in the Hanekraai tavern holds at least the rank of mate. Common pirate rabble is not permitted here, for indeed, the Hanekraai is the "palace" of the massive Admiral who rules Deelen Bay with an iron fist.

The tavern's name is apt, as the gatherings here usually last until after the first cockcrow in the early morning. It is here that the laws of the pirate community are crafted, and it is here that the captains come after their privateering voyages far north or south of Madagascar to rest and relax. Money flows in Deelen Bay as it does in no opulent European court or, as some have noted, even in the East. Around the arms and necks of even the most unrefined women hang jewels of incalculable value. These are gifts that their pirate paramours bring back to Deelen Bay after successful raids on the great merchant ships that sail back and forth between the fabled East and Europe, laden with rich cargo.

To obtain these treasures, the pirates merely risked their lives, and their lives mean nothing to them! They place the same value on the spoils, for after spending months at sea and often being in mortal danger, they return here to empty their coffers in a few weeks of drinking and revelry. In this way, the tavern owners and the few permanent residents of Deelen Bay become immensely wealthy, yet the largest portion of the pirate loot ultimately ends up in the treasure chambers of the man who calls himself the Admiral. He considers himself a retired pirate. He secured this harbor for the pirate captains. Now he levies heavy taxes, primarily on the tavern owners. For this, they obtain the right to conduct business there. Similar taxes are levied on the owners of visiting ships, in this case, to protect them from exorbitant prices of drink and food!

On either side of Deelen Bay, the hills slope down to a point in the sea. In the large basin between them lies the sheltered harbour, and behind the town, which is built almost on the beach, is fertile land. Here, gardens, fields, and orchards have been established. In the large slave

camp on the outskirts of the town, hundreds of sailors, captured on merchant vessels and other ships, are held as slaves to cultivate the gardens and thus supply the community and visiting ships with food.

The Admiral sits at a large oval table in front of the long counter. He peers out from under his thick eyebrows at one of the captains on the opposite side of the table. He usually personally approves the few captains and other friends who are permitted to sit with him at the head table. No one dares to take a seat there unless invited by the Admiral himself.

The man the Admiral is looking at is a blustery fellow. He has large, dark eyes and a flat face. His mustache connects to the black stringy beard around his chin, which is almost four inches long.

At this very moment, he slams his left hand on the table again, while bringing a cup of wine to his lips with his right hand. He spills some of it on his chest.

“I am one of the oldest captains here, and I tell you that I am more than a match for all of you!” He speaks with a slur, and it is very clear that he has drunk far too much. A few of the men nearby glance at him sideways. Then, they deliberately turn their heads away and converse with each other, as they have already noticed that Borghort’s behaviour displeases the Admiral.

“He’ll get his comeuppance,” the Admiral mutters to a young captain beside him. “Borghort is getting too big for his boots.”

“And if there is anyone here who doubts my words, you should just say so. Then we can settle the matter right here and now!” Borghort bellows.

The Admiral nudges the captain beside him. He leans over and whispers in his ear.

“Why don’t you accept his challenge, Masson?” he urges him.

The young Masson looks around, half startled. He cannot immediately determine whether the Admiral truly means it.

Then, the massive man bursts out laughing. He slams his fist on the table.

“You can all sit there and laugh at Borghort,” he exclaims, “but you’re still scared of him, aren’t you? He is indeed grumpy and ill-tempered these days, but before, he was one of the most cheerful among us, and

he remains a master with the sword and the pistol!”

“And you’d do well to remember that!” Borghort snaps at the Admiral. It is as if someone has slapped the Admiral in the face. He whirls around and glares furiously at Borghort.

“I put in a good word for you, and this is the thanks I get!” he bellows. “A good word!” Borghort retorts. “What good could that possibly do for me?” He is too drunk to realize what he is saying.

The other captains around the table have all already risen to their feet. They remain standing hesitantly, as they do not know what they ought to do. It is the first time in the history of Deelen Bay that anyone has dared to speak to the Admiral in such a way.

“If this quarrel had not occurred before, I would have been inclined to assume that you are too befuddled with drink to know what you’re doing.” The Admiral’s face is red with anger. “But now, this is once too often. Through your missteps, we have already lost several good men. Your supposed dear friend, Ben van Osse, is gone because of that. The same fate befell the Ketner brothers. Not to even mention Meert and Jorrit! All those who got mixed up with you are no longer with us. They were clever young captains who could have achieved great fame. I even often wonder if we should believe your stories concerning Oloff the Pirate. From what I’ve seen of him, he seems a better man than ten of your kind!”

These scornful words cause Borghort to leap up from his chair. He throws his cup of wine away from him.

“I have always known that you distrust me!” he shouts loudly. “I know that you would like to be rid of me. Very well, I shall leave. I shall leave Deelen Bay and never return. But woe to the man who falls into my hands!”

Without further ado, he turns around, and after bracing himself slightly against the table, he strides across the spacious floor and up the few steps to the front door. Two young officers are sitting near the door. They wait until Borghort has been out for almost three minutes before they jump up and follow him unnoticed. In those three minutes before they left the Hanekraai, however, they had heard everything that was said at the head table. Among the captains who had gathered around the Admiral, there was no shortage of plans to teach this insolent Borghort



a lesson, and the kind of lesson they prescribed was nothing less than a death sentence.

The two officers run up the street. A short distance ahead of them, they see the staggering gait of Captain Borghort. They position themselves on either side of him and support him by his arms. Half dazed, he looks at them.

“Ah!” he exclaims with a slur. “My faithful Cuyler. And my mate Berandi. You have not yet forsaken me.”

“They’re talking wildly in the tavern, captain,” Cuyler says in a muffled tone. “We must depart immediately.”

Borghort yanks his arms out of their grip. He comes to an abrupt standstill.

“Depart!” he bellows. “Have I, Borghort, run away like a dog with its tail between its legs! Have I run away from that riffraff! That lot of lily-livered cowards who are too afraid to touch their weapons as long as I look them in the eye! I shall depart!” He hesitates as if he cannot bring himself to say the words. “Depart!” he then says again, but this time it is as if he is beginning to think. “Perhaps we should go. We would have left the bay tomorrow morning at high tide in any case, wouldn’t we, Cuyler?”

“We would, captain. Therefore, there is no question of running away.”

Half an hour later, Borghort and his two men row out in a skiff to the large ship in the middle of the bay. Borghort immediately goes to his cabin and stretches out on the bunk. Cuyler takes command and sends the few available men up the masts. Berandi hurries to make a round of the taverns to find as many of Borghort’s crew as possible. When he arrives with the last load of half-drunk men, and others who are lying unconscious in the bottom of the skiff, Cuyler has the anchors raised.

There is a light breeze from the land. The large privateer’s speed increases rapidly, and with a white foam edge on either side of the bow, it ploughs through the narrow entrance of the bay and then turns northwards, as Borghort had already decided earlier in the day.

The next morning, shortly after daybreak, the captain appears on the quarterdeck. Cuyler has already gone to sleep, but Berandi is still at the helm. Borghort orders one of the crew to take over so that the mate can go and rest. Then, the pirate captain goes to stand by the railing and

peers ahead.

His thoughts drift back over his pirate career. In his prime, he was one of the most notorious and certainly one of the most feared privateer captains in the Indian Ocean. In Deelen Bay, he always sat at the Admiral's right hand. The younger captains admired him and tried to imitate him in every respect.

He befriended Ben van Osse, and after they went on raids together, they always returned to Deelen Bay with the largest loads of loot.

As Borghort thinks back, he views his and Ben's expedition to the Cape of Good Hope as the turning point of his career. They went ashore in False Bay to obtain supplies. On a farm in the area, they murdered a farmer before burning the place down.

The man was one of the senior merchants at the Cape. He had a son who looked remarkably like Ben van Osse, and he was accused of murdering his own father, as one of the slaves who had escaped the raid had mistaken Ben van Osse for the merchant's son.

To prove his innocence, the young man pursued Borghort and Van Osse. Back and forth across the Indian Ocean, he followed the pirates, and time and again, they came out the loser. The young man eventually became known as Oloff the Pirate. Eventually, he caught up with Van Osse and killed him. Since then, Borghort has drunk more and more. He gradually became less and less popular in Deelen Bay, and after the outburst the previous night, he is well aware that the gates of that pirate nest are closed to him forever.

In Borghort's heart, the desire for revenge burns. In Deelen Bay, it begins with the lowliest slave and ends with the Admiral. On the wide ocean, it is directed against every other ship's crew, but especially against that of one ship, Oloff the Pirate's. He is the man to whom his downfall is due!

In Borghort's twisted brain, a decision takes shape. He will rob and plunder until he has built the most powerful pirate fleet in the Indian Ocean. Then, he will attack Deelen Bay and rule in place of that loudmouth Admiral.

One day after another passes, but not once have they seen a sail on the horizon. Borghort has already begun to think that even fate has now turned against him.

Three weeks later, the watchman in the crow's nest shouts that there is a ship to starboard. Borghort's eyes light up. He yells for a spyglass to be brought. For a long time, he studies the sails that protrude above the horizon.

Meanwhile, Cuyler urges the crew up the rigging. Every bit of sail is hoisted. The large privateer heels over as Berandi changes direction slightly.

When Cuyler comes to stand beside the captain, Borghort turns to him. His eyes are no longer as red and bloodshot as they were the morning after their departure from Deelen Bay. This new determination that drives him has caused his craving for alcohol to subside.

"It looks like one of those Arab dhows that always sail along the east coast of Africa in search of slaves and other booty. Its cargo is probably worth little, but every little bit helps, doesn't it?"

Cuyler is not in the least excited. He knows that dhows like the one in front of them are rarely, if ever, heavily armed, because the pirates of the Indian Ocean usually hunt on the trade routes and usually do not come to the north-eastern coast of Africa so close to the shore. An hour later, the Kroonprins I's forward starboard cannon booms. The ball splashes, creating foam, obliquely in front of the Arab's bow. By this time, the three large foresails have already been trimmed, and the small ship lies still, rocking.

Borghort has seen these Arab ships before. From the high quarterdeck, a long, low, single deck extends to the small prow. It ends at the thick, low bowsprit, which is barely six feet above the surface of the water. Over the open mid-deck, a multi-coloured tent has been erected. It usually consists of several compartments in which the wealthy sultans and sheiks who travel along the coast reside.

"He may be from Zanzibar," Borghort says to Cuyler. "From up close, it looks as if the little ship is rather luxuriously furnished. If one of the princes is on board, our booty may be much more than we expected."

"It does not seem as if they will resist," Cuyler suggests.

Borghort laughs uproariously.

"Surely they are not that foolish. Lower the ship's boat. I want to go on board."

Cuyler realizes that it will be an impossible task in any case to sail the

Kroonprins I alongside the little ship, and he immediately gives orders to lower the boat.

A few minutes later, Borghort sends Cuyler and a few men over to the side of the Arab ship. He follows close behind them. Just before the quarterdeck, he encounters the captain and a few of the crew. He looks at the bearded Arab with the red cap on his head. His eyes wander over the long, wide robe, and he sees that it is made of expensive hand-woven material with beautiful embellishments. The wide trousers that protrude from underneath and hang loosely where they are fastened around the ankles are made of satin, and shiny buckles glint on the sandals.

Borghort looks around at the tent with its fine lace, and then back at the captain. He smiles.

“Where are you headed?”

“We are sailing north to Baderacha,” the captain answers stiffly. He looks slightly indignant. “To what,” he asks in turn, “is this visit attributed?”

Borghort throws his head back and laughs loudly. The way the man asks the question is somewhat ridiculous. Apparently, he does not yet realize whom he is dealing with.

Suddenly, Borghort stops laughing. He stares intently into the man’s eyes, and it is clear that something has struck him.

“Where do you come from?”

“I am on my way from the sultan of Zanzibar with a gift to sultan Harush Ben Nusaf of Baderacha.”

Borghort’s eyes narrow. For a while, he stands still and thinks. He has heard of the kingdom of Baderacha. Harush Ben Nusaf’s wealth is legendary. Even no maharaja of the East can be compared to him.

A plan unfolds in Borghort’s brain. If he plays his cards right, he may reach his life’s goal much sooner than he ever thought possible.

He smiles warmly.

“I see that you are not prepared for pirate attacks?”

“We are rarely troubled here along the coast,” the captain answers.

“This is the first time.”

“Oh!” Borghort exclaims. “To what are you now referring?”

“The flag on your mast.”