

# OLOFF THE PIRATE SERIES

## 12. The Fleet of Destruction



**GERRIE RADLOF**

# THE FLEET OF DESTRUCTION

*by*

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# THE FLEET OF DESTRUCTION

The cover sketch was designed using the AI-powered tool DALL-E 3 (openart.ai). This twelve book in Oloff the Pirate Series is now available for the first time in ebook format and in the English language. The translation was completed with the help of AI tools such as ChatGPT (chatgpt.com).

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## THE FLEET OF DESTRUCTION

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## SUMMARY

Amidst the vast oceans and treacherous shores of 17th-century South Africa, *Oloff the Pirate* unfolds a tale of loyalty, danger, and redemption. Oloff, a fiery and determined pirate captain, is on a mission to eradicate the notorious pirate haven of Deelen Bay. Despite his friends' concerns about possible treachery, Oloff seeks the help of Admiral Rynhardt te Hoogen, a former ally, and brother of Oloff's past love, Anna. As they navigate the shadows of their past, secrets, and unresolved emotions, the two men confront the ultimate challenge to destroy a fortress filled with the most ruthless pirates of the Indian Ocean.

Oloff's resolve is tested as he faces betrayal, the weight of his past, and the hope of a future where he can clear his name and return to a life of peace. With a fleet at his back, the odds seem insurmountable, but Oloff's courage and cunning may be enough to bring down the pirates and reclaim his honor. Will the destruction of Deelen Bay grant him the redemption he seeks, or will it lead him deeper into a life of endless battles? The tension builds as old friendships are tested, and the true cost of vengeance is revealed. *Oloff the Pirate* is a thrilling adventure that weaves together loyalty, love, and the relentless pursuit of justice on the high seas.

## EXTRACT

It feels as if the plank beneath him is giving way slightly. He looks back over his shoulder and sees the laughing faces, the eyes filled with malice, glaring at him from the far end of the plank. He realizes they're just trying to scare him, playing with him like a cat with a mouse.

And before the chance slips away, Oloff takes one last look over the harbor at the positions of the various ships, then shouts as loudly as he can, so his voice is heard clearly above the noise, "None of you will see Oloff the Pirate die. None of you will relish in my death. I know how to die, quickly and cleanly! Farewell, Henning! Sias, Heem, we will meet again!"

With this final shout, he dives off the end of the plank. Before his head hits the water, Henning's cry echoes in his ears.

"Oloff!"

The single word tears from his friend's lungs.

But then the water closes over Oloff's ears, and suddenly, the noise and the screams of the women are silenced.

Oloff has taken a deep breath. Like a madman, he kicks with his feet. He deliberately dove so that his body turned slightly inward just as he hit the water. Now he opens his eyes, but he knows he won't see far around him because the water near the shore is murky. The harbor is deep here, and even on the clearest and calmest day, the bottom is completely invisible.

## 12. THE FLEET OF DESTRUCTION

### Chapter 1

"But what if it's a trap, Oloff?" Henning Roux's voice is filled with concern. His tall, lean figure leans slightly forward. The rowers rest their oars as he gently requests them to stop rowing. The ship's boat glides silently through the still waters of Hout Bay. Only the sound of the waves crashing on the shore is carried to them by the evening wind from the land.

"I don't understand your concern at all, Henning," Oloff responds. His soft, refined voice sounds upbeat as he dismisses his friend's fears, but he, too, anxiously tries to peer through the darkness to see the beach beyond the white foam of the breakers. The faint starlight reflects in his blue eyes, casting a slight glow on his fiery red hair, neatly tied back in a ribbon at the nape of his neck. His broad shoulders are squared as he stands upright in the stern of the boat, the rudder in his right hand. His left hand rests comfortably on the grip of a pistol in his wide belt, where his cloak has been pulled back.

"It's been a few years since you last saw Te Hoogen, Oloff," Henning persists.

"And why would he decide in those few years that it's necessary to set a trap for me?" Oloff counters calmly. "He knows I trust him. He could have easily approached me openly and captured me." He shakes his head as if trying to convince himself as well. "Row," he instructs his

crew, and at the same time, he steers the boat to the left towards the dark beach beneath the high peak that encloses one side of the bay.

"Maybe he never knew how to contact you, Oloff," Henning says somberly. "Now that you've requested to meet him, he might be taking his chance..."

"Admiral Rynhardt te Hoogen is an honorable man, Henning," Oloff interrupts his friend, almost formally. "He was sent to drive me off the seas. It wasn't too difficult to convince him of my honest intentions back then. He himself promoted me to captain of the Dutch fleet. Why would he suddenly..."

"Back then, you were engaged to his sister, Oloff," Henning interjects. "Since then, your engagement has been broken off, and you haven't seen her again. Before, she was your advocate."

"We didn't part as enemies, Henning. She wasn't willing to accept my wandering life. For me, it was impossible to give it up at that time, when the passion and resentment I harbored against the pirate community burned so much stronger in me than it does now. Then..."

"I know all that, Oloff." His friend places his hand on Oloff's shoulder. "But you're married now, and feelings could have changed. It's for your sake that I'm concerned."

"I know, Henning," Oloff replies sincerely. "I appreciate it. But I don't believe that Rynhardt or Anna are so petty that if they did receive news about me, they would change their opinion of me and their trust in me

because of it." He laughs softly, but cheerfully, as if to end this gloomy conversation.

"Why are you bringing up all these objections now, at the last minute? From the beginning, I've consulted you every step of the way. We both decided that it was a good plan to enlist Rynhardt's help."

"I know." Henning sighs. He looks ahead as they already feel the swell of the first wave beneath them, and the foam sprays from the white breakers sting their faces. "I just wonder now if we shouldn't have continued with our plans on our own."

"You're nagging like an old woman, Henning!" Oloff exclaims softly...

"The destruction of Deelenbaai is a massive task. With Rynhardt's help, we'll achieve our goal much sooner. And that's not all. You keep forgetting that after we eliminate those pirates, we can return to civilized society with clear consciences and settle down somewhere as normal citizens of a peaceful community. But before we can do that, we must prove our innocence according to the world. We need witnesses, Henning, not just one, but hundreds so that they can spread the truth about us. Rynhardt te Hoogen and the crews of his fleet will fulfill that role. That's why, perhaps more than for any other reason, we need their help."

Henning Roux shrugs. He owes his life to his friend and leader, for he would have died in the slave camps of Deelenbaai if Oloff hadn't freed him. He will voice his opinion, but after that, he will follow Oloff to the death.



The oars are pulled in and laid silently inside the boat. The only sound is the soft scrape of metal as one of the men isn't careful enough while drawing his saber through the iron grips. They have already received their orders, and not a word is spoken.

In the bow, the pilot waves, and Oloff can barely see the movement against the white beach in the background. Knowing now that there are no rocks ahead, he steers the boat straight for the crest of the wave that lifts it and pushes it high onto the beach. Barely has the keel scraped the sand when the ten men, knee-deep in the water, with sabers in their right hands, grab the side of the boat with their left hands and drag it a bit further up.

Then they stand still. Lightly, Oloff jumps out, and with Henning beside him, they look along the beach and up the slopes where the Twelve Apostles begin. They can't see Table Mountain, but for a moment, Oloff's thoughts drift back to a few years ago when he first arrived at the Cape of Good Hope. Here, his father was murdered, and here his wandering life began.

But he shakes off the thoughts. He had arranged with Rynhardt te Hoogen to meet him here in the bay. A few months ago, he had written a letter to the young admiral in Holland. He had left an address where the reply could be sent, and his highest expectations were exceeded when the letter informed him that Rynhardt had almost simultaneously set out for the Cape.

Oloff considered the Cape the most suitable place for their meeting because the greatest secrecy was essential for the success of his plans. Although he never once admitted it to Henning, he couldn't ignore the fact that it had been so long since he had seen Rynhardt and that much could have happened meanwhile.

"You should wait here, Henning," he softly requests.

"I'm going with you, Oloff."

Oloff shrugs. It's already late, and there's no time for arguments.

"Very well, come along." After giving a few soft orders to the crew, they walk along the outer edge of the beach beneath the rocky slopes.

"I hope you notice that I'm being quite cautious," Oloff says dryly.

"Always a big mouth," Henning answers with a soft laugh, "but also cautious, right?"

Where the beach curves, they run, crouching over a dune. Occasionally, Oloff imagines he sees a figure near the water's edge, but then he realizes it's just a piece of black bamboo.

He stops and leans closer until his lips are almost against Henning's ear.

"This is strange," he whispers. "They should be here somewhere. Against the white sand, we should have seen them by now."

"I told you, Oloff," Henning replies anxiously. "They might be waiting..."

"Don't start with your ominous predictions again," Oloff cuts him off.

"Let's go deeper inland and then explore back towards the beach. We'll soon find out what kind of reception has been prepared for us."