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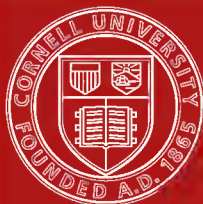
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“C Q”

OR,
IN THE WIRELESS HOUSE

BY

ARTHUR TRAIN

AUTHOR OF “THE PRISONER AT THE BAR,” “MCALLISTER AND
HIS DOUBLE,” “TRUE STORIES OF CRIME,” “THE CON-
FESSIONS OF ARTEMUS QUIBBLE,” ETC., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

By R. M. CROSBY



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I

“MICKY” QUARRELS WITH THE CAPTAIN OF THE
“PAVONIA,” AND BECOMES PALS WITH A LADY IN
HIGH SOCIETY.

THE chief trouble with “Micky” Fitz, as he was called, was that the women all fell in love with him. And as he was generally a totally unconscious factor in the proceeding, he can hardly be held responsible, although it can not be denied that he was usually receptive and on occasion even provocative, for he was a sailor-man — of a sort — and English, in spite of his name.

This, however, did not prevent his utter disgrace and prompt banishment from his uncle’s vicarage when he and the Hon. Evelyn Arabella Farquhar were caught by the head gardener kissing in the lilac arbor, and the matter

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was reported to the irascible Earl, her grandpapa. For the golden-haired, rose-cheeked Hon. Evelyn was a great person in the land, and the “Peerage” said that she was a lady (with a capital L) of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and that her father, the Viscount, was a general in India; while Michael Fitzpatrick was only a common or garden son of a second son, with no pretensions to aristocracy save through the elder branch of the family, which paid no attention to his trifling existence.

So the Earl, as was his prerogative, was exceeding wroth, and, having sent for the much-embarrassed vicar, made it entirely unequivocal that Michael was to be deported beyond seas,—to Prince Rupert or Peking, or Zanzibar,—where he could never more see his dream lady until she was safely married to a gentleman of at least her own rank and fortune. And the vicar, who, although he possessed the advowson of his own living, nevertheless feared the Earl and needed him in his business,—and who, incidentally, did not believe in kissing, either,—had a brief but serious talk with his scandalous nephew in the

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vicarage library, from which they both emerged very red.

Later in the afternoon the Hon. Evelyn, having escaped from her governess (she was only fifteen and three-quarters), met Micky, this time in the grove back of the second game-keeper's, and swore eternal fealty to him with her head on his shoulder, and they exchanged rings.

Ever since his father, the captain, had been killed before Bloemfontein in the early gray of an August morning by a whining Mauser bullet sent by a bushy-bearded Boer from an almost invisible kopje a mile away, and he had been taken out of school and sent to live with his uncle, his father's younger brother, at Toppingham, Micky had been in love with Evelyn Farquhar. He liked all girls and most boys, just as they liked him, and why Evelyn inspired this particular ardor in his youthful heart he could not have explained. Perhaps it was because this motherless boy (his mother had died while bringing him into the world) had come to Toppingham racked with grief at the loss of his father and keenly sensitive to sympathy of any kind, and had remained so for a long time.

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Of course she had been a mere child then, but in those days the Earl had never thought of objecting to his playing all day long with the little lady whose inclinations toward her old playmate now gave her grandfather such anxiety. So Micky had lay lessons of the curate — an explosive, tennis-playing, supercilious young man — and on Sundays recited his catechism and the collects to the vicar, who was really interested only in geology and model tenements, and the rest of the time — that is, until he went to Harrow — he spent racing over the lawns of Toppingham or paddling in a punt on the muddy little “Avon” with the little girl who, now that he was a grown man and ready to go to Sandhurst maybe (if his uncle approved), was father and mother and sister and sweetheart to him, all in one.

For Micky did not like his uncle the vicar, and neither did Evelyn, and both of them imagined Micky as very much oppressed and unfairly treated, and believed themselves to be the victims of a conspiracy between this wicked ecclesiastic (who was really a very harmless person) and the Earl of Toppingham, whose name was Richard de Coyne St. Gower Hugh

Fane-Crichton, and who was a Scottish peer besides, and were at times very miserable and very happy and really for their ages (which are the very best ages for that purpose) passionately in love with each other.

So he left her in the sweet, shadowy fragrance of the early evening, standing among the tree trunks with her arms outstretched to him, a brave smile on her lips, trying to keep back her tears,—a slender, wistful figure in a white frock that did not quite reach to the top of her shoes, her hair in rippling golden torrents blown toward him over her shoulders by a soft caressing breeze that bore a quivering “Good-by, Micky dear!” to his yearning ears.

Then, with a heart excitedly thumping and pumping a strange and mysterious exuberance all through his slender body, Micky packed a hand-bag, and, without saying as much as good-by to the vicar, walked four miles to the station and caught the 8.43 for Liverpool. For though he was nineteen, he did not know what was right and proper or to be expected of a mere son of a second son. Incidentally he carried in his left-hand breast pocket a cabinet photograph of his Lady of the Order of St.

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John of Jerusalem, showing her in long hair and standing beside a big St. Bernard dog.

This was three years ago, and in all that time he had heard from her only once, and that was when she had mailed him a post-card from Cortina d'Ampezzo six weeks after his departure, showing a Tyrolese couple in dancing costume and bearing the strange and unintelligible symbols (save to Micky), “I. L. Y.”—which are the initials of the most important sentence in all history.

Those three years on the sea had made a man of him, but they had not changed his attitude toward Lady Evelyn or the Earl; and both the photograph and the Tyrolese dancers occupied a conspicuous position on the wall over his bunk in the wireless house on the *Pavonia*. Yet during that time there had been many candidates for Lady Evelyn's position — lithe, smoky Arab girls in Tangier, starchy pink-and-white stewardesses, smart daughters of prosperous resident officers, and many ladies of high degree on the first-cabin passenger list. But he had discouraged them all and kept his heart true to the memory of the grove behind the second gamekeeper's.

“An infectious little red devil!” Mrs. Hubert Trevelyan called him — she of the white pony-coat and the string of melting blue-white pearls, who liked to joke with Micky on the boat deck and visit him in the wireless house, and whose full-blown, rosily radiant beauty filled him with a vague uneasiness. Yet it was not his looks,—he had freckles, blue eyes, and auburn-red hair,—but his smile that drew people to him, first and second cabin alike, and made it quite impossible for even the purple-nosed captain to be as harsh with him as his escapades deserved—as, for example, that night at Algiers when he had kept the ship waiting an hour, with the tide on the ebb, while he won £16 at the little horses in the Casino. And this particular captain was, at that, the worst it had been his ill luck to serve under in either the Pacific, the Atlantic, or the Indian Ocean, since his first job on the old *Fulda* of the Lloyds’. Now he earned £3 per month on a 17,000-ton Cunarder, was rated as an assistant purser and ranked the barber and Hooks, the head second-cabin steward.

It had been quite natural for him to go into the Marconi service, for he had always dabbled

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in electricity and had worked an amateur “wireless” between the roof of the vicarage and that of the village tinsmith who was the father of his childhood’s companion, Tommy Burcher. Tommy was the only one of his friends with whom he still kept in constant communication and from whom he learned the comings and goings of the Hon. Evelyn: how she now had her hair up and looked a ripper; how the family had taken her up to London and brought her out with a great party at Carlton Terrace; how she had been presented at Court; and how they had been filling the house with old bucks and young bucks, and been having party after party, until Tommy (who was not invited) said it quite turned his stomach. But never a word from the Hon. Evelyn, who, according to the ill-spelled and worse-expressed missives of the correspondent, was growing more of a stunner daily. As each letter was received and read in the privacy of the wireless house, Micky would grind his teeth, swear at the Earl and the vicar, and then smoke his pipe furiously for about an hour — after which life resumed its ordinary color. A letter had come that very day, with the usual consequences.

“Damn *all* the women!” he growled, still smoking, as he saw Mrs. Hubert Trevelyan’s copious blonde coiffure bobbing up the ladder that led to the little coop which served him as office, bedroom, and parlor, and was situated on top of the deck-house in the after part of the *Pavonia*. Passengers were forbidden access to it; but for Mrs. Trevelyan anything forbidden was sweet — particularly the society of Micky Fitz. And she had no sooner gained the top of the deck-house, and begun adjusting the folds of her white pony-coat and her trim sailor hat, than a steward scurried up after her and knocked on the door of the wireless house.

“Cap’n says report to him at once, and no first-cabin passengers allowed aft the second-cabin deck!” said he rudely.

“Curse the Captain!” snorted Micky. “I suppose I’ll catch it good and hearty for givin’ out that bulletin this afternoon! Good evening, Mrs. Trevelyan. Sorry I can’t receive you. The Captain’s sent for me — most pressin’ and particular!”

He smiled a soul-engaging, freckled smile.

“Oh, you naughty child!” protested Mrs. Trevelyan, shaking her finger at him. “Well,

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I'll wait for you! Don't be long. I am quite afraid to stay here all alone. What if a big sailor should come up?”

“Just shake your finger at him!” replied Micky.

He left her standing gracefully in the wind, the breeze tossing her hair from her white temples and outlining her shapely form under the white coat that floated behind her like the robe of the Wingless Victory. He hurried across the second-cabin deck, where trim, pipe-smoking valets were walking up and down with carefully got up ladies' maids, and where a husky, swarthy-cheeked chauffeur was playing shuffleboard with a little hunchback boy whose cheerful yet wistful smile made him the pet and comrade of the entire company. He climbed the ladder to the main deck, and stepped gingerly by the ranks of first-cabin passengers—muffled figures “laid out,” as it were, in grotesque rows, their noses buried in books or gazing in sorrowful meditation upon the long rollers that swung past the ship eastward toward Portugal. He dodged in and out between the pedestrians, who, in ill-assorted pairs, blocked the deck and got in one another's way.

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— lovers actual and prospective, husbands dutifully “exercising” their wives, old folks crawling around the ship and congesting the narrow thoroughfare until those behind turned right about face and retreated in the other direction — everybody trying to stimulate appetites stultified by Scotch breakfasts eaten berthwise at late morning hours, and struggling against that inexplicable tired feeling that accompanies a long liner’s slow pitch when running against the sea. He ducked under the upraised arm of the bugler, just beginning the first bar of “Roast Beef of Old England,” made a wry face at him, and then, with supernatural gravity, saluted the Captain.

“You young scamp!” roared the officer. “What do you mean by giving out the press news and letting it be posted on the bulletin-board? Don’t you know this ship does n’t subscribe for it? Look at this thing! I tore it down myself five minutes ago!”

He held out a crumpled sheet of ship’s writing-paper, upon which appeared, in Mrs. Hubert Trevelyan’s obvious chirography, a résumé of the wireless news sent out from Poldhu early that morning. The lady had been

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flippant, and the sheet was headed: “The *Pavonia's* Daily Scream.” Underneath were imitation newspaper columns entitled “Society Jottings,” “Marine News,” “Birth List,” and other harmless pleasantries, but containing the actual six hundred words taken by Micky out of the air for which the company had not paid.

“If that is reported it will cost me exactly twenty pounds!” shouted the Captain, glaring at him.

“Very sorry, sir!” answered Micky respectfully. “I did n’t post it, and I don’t know *who* did. I merely handed a copy to you, as usual, at breakfast. Of course, if by any chance one of the passengers saw your copy —!”

“You impudent young jackanapes!” retorted the Captain furiously. “*My* copy, indeed! You gave it out to some woman — you *know* you did! What’s more, you let them come up to the wireless house! I’ve seen them myself. If I catch another living soul there, I’ll have you discharged.”

“Very good, sir,” replied Micky stolidly. “Of course, if *you* did n’t give out the news the Marconi Company can’t charge the boat for it; and if *I* gave it out, the company will

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sack me. So far as the passengers coming up is concerned, I wish you would devise some way to keep 'em out. *I can't.* I'm sure the company would n't like it, and it interferes horribly with my work. Is that all, sir? And shall I take the news for you to-night, sir?”

The Captain gave Micky one withering look and brushed by him without reply. He had no evidence as to how the news had leaked out, and he was quite aware of it. In addition, he had no business to get the news himself, if his ship was not a subscriber. Of course they all *did* get it. There it was in the air, and all you had to do was to tune in and swipe it. The company expected it, and you did n't deprive anybody of anything by so doing. Even if you had n't subscribed, it was n't to be expected that men out of sight of land were going to be conscientious to the extent of avoiding knowing whether London had been blown up or who had won the Derby. The morning flimsy from the wireless house was a sort of daily courtesy from the Marconi people to the Captain. If he did n't want it — why, he could leave it, that was all.

All this the purple Captain knew very well,

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but he was angry and upset, for the home office had held him over two days at Genoa to take those of the *Olympic's* passengers, who after her collision with the *Hawke* had shrewdly figured out that the only way of making sure of getting home was by the southern route, and had had the *Pavonia* held by wire from London in consequence.

Mrs. Trevelyan had been one of these, and for four days now she had sat at his right hand and made love to him. The ship was jammed to the bulwarks, with first-cabin passengers sleeping in threes in second-class state-rooms, and everybody was growling except the stewards and stewardesses, who already heard the clink of golden sovereigns on every hand. It was a “stewardesses’ trip,” for the ladies-maids could find no berths in the first-cabin quarters and were ignominiously consigned to the second cabin, where, with noses in air, they sat at meals in undignified juxtaposition with chauffeurs, Turks, professors, Mafusi from Palermo and Camorristi from Naples, rug merchants from Beirut and Antioch, Mennonite bishops, Baptist missionaries, and millionaire lemon growers from Morocco, Oran, and the

yellow-red confines of the northern desert. It was a novelist's chance of a lifetime; but these ladies did not know it, and spent their time in indignant clusters, discussing their companions and “'ow 'orrid they smelled.”

At Gibraltar another swarm of belated ones had come aboard, and Billy Parish, the gambler who regularly travels from Algiers to Gibraltar and back again — “bridge only, you understand, — at sixpence a point” — had made forty pounds by pretending he had taken passage for New York, and selling out to a Wall Street stock broker “at the greatest possible inconvenience to himself.” But the really funny thing was how that *Olympic-Hawke* business had made all the captains so nervous — and Ponsonby, the purple captain of the *Pavonia*, was the worst of all.

As Fitzpatrick sauntered back to his post in the wireless house, they were all filing in to dinner, and the deck stewards were darting around among the old ladies, with sloppy trays of lukewarm bouillon and soggy sea-biscuit. A condensed odor, thick to the eye as a London fog, was working along the passageways, heavy with the steam of the soup caldrons, the smell

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of damp table-linen, of Castile soap, onions, oxalic acid, and warm upholstery. The string band was trying to be heard above the clatter of dishes, valiantly sawing out, “Oh, You Beautiful Doll,” and the stewards were fighting for places around the scullery windows, giving each other the lie in polite cockney with “Oh, I s’y, I ’m first there now, Denby!” and “You swine, you took my plyte! Give it ’ere, now!”

Inside the saloon, three hundred passengers were beginning to gorge stomachs, which should have been left entirely alone, with canned caviare, Scotch broth, boiled cod, celery, radishes, English mutton chops,—pheasant, sir, with the ’ead steward’s compliments,—Topsy pudding, Neapolitan ice-cream, assorted cakes, grapes, bananas, and coffee, washed down with heavy draughts of Apollinaris water. The great event of the day was in full progress.

Micky winked at the purser as he slid by the latter’s grating.

“No more news!” he grinned. “Cap’n’s orders!”

“The deuce you say!” muttered the rat-faced financier, and went on unconcernedly counting up neat piles of half-crowns.

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The second-cabin deck was clear, save for an invalid Italian woman lying on a steamer-chair in the shelter of a canvas windbreak. A sailor was picking up the scattered rope circles of a suddenly abandoned game of “ring-toss.” Micky ran up his ladder and opened the door of his office. There were Mrs. Trevelyan and a dark gentleman with waxed mustaches in a long green ulster, calmly eating pheasant from his operating-desk. A quart of champagne stood in a bucket of ice on the floor beside them.

“Ah, *there* you are!” cried the gay lady. “Lord Ashurst, let me introduce to you my very particular friend, Mr. Micky Fitzpatrick.”

“Glad to know you!” nodded his lordship, his mouth full of pheasant. “Awfully jolly up here, you know. Quite rippin’, in fact. So beastly hot in that saloon, one can’t eat.”

“Sit down, do,” said Mrs. Trevelyan. “I know you want to put us out, but it would n’t be polite — would it, Ashurst?”

“Assuredly not!” he answered. “Have a cigarette?”

“No, thanks,” replied Micky. “I’m very sorry, but I have to go down to lunch. By the way, if anybody calls up, just send ’em a

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few ‘V’s’ and take the message, will you?”

“Impudence!” smiled Mrs. Trevelyan.

Soon she finished her pheasant, and, Micky having vanished down the ladder, began to examine the contents of the office through her gold lorgnette.

“That must be his sweetheart!” she remarked suddenly, pointing to the photograph over the bunk—“that leggy little girl with the big dog.”

Ashurst arose stiffly, carefully wiped his mustache with his napkin, and inspected the picture.

“Well, I’m shot!” he ejaculated, in amazement.

“Why, may I ask?” inquired Mrs. Trevelyan, “and why do you invariably say you’re *shot*?”

Ashurst ignored the latter half of her question.

“That’s Evelyn Farquhar!” he gasped.

Mrs. Trevelyan burst into silvery-toned giggles, while Ashurst gave her a sheepish look.

“Rather rough on you, eh, boysie?” she laughed.



Mrs. Trevelyan and a dark gentleman were calmly eating from his operating-desk

His lordship poured out some champagne.

“Really, you know, that’s rather a stunner!” he admitted.

“It is, if what everybody said was true,” answered his companion — “that she turned you down hard at Biarritz last May. Anyhow, she’s engaged to Cosmo Hamilton at last — it was announced about a month ago. I wonder where Micky got that picture.”

“I — *I* never — asked her — *really*,” he protested. “Rum sort of a child, but an awful ripper!”

“Never mind, old chap!” cooed Mrs. Trevelyan soothingly. “You’ve still got *me*.”

“Yes, until Trevelyan comes out in a tug off Fire Island,” he retorted dryly, wrinkling his nose.

“Well, cheer up — and give me a cigarette!” she admonished him. “Let’s have a good time while it lasts.”

The deck-house, or “Island,” of the *Pavonia* is designated to accommodate second-class passengers, but the rooms are large and catch more air than those in the main body of the ship, for

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the port-holes look straight forward and straight aft. As Micky dropped down his ladder, he nearly landed on a tall man in a shabby ulster, the collar of which was turned up so as almost to hide the wearer's face. A soft hat was drawn down to cover his eyes. The man started and drew back into the shadow.

“*I beg your pardon!*” exclaimed Micky, who recalled the fact that this particular passenger had come aboard with a few others at Gibraltar.

The man muttered something indistinctly.

“Coming down to lunch?” continued the Marconi man politely. “You're at my table, you know—the one on the right as you go in.”

“No, thanks; I'm not feeling very fit,” replied the other, and, turning, he opened the door of one of the second-class state-rooms and disappeared inside.

Micky shrugged his shoulders.

“Affable!” he remarked to himself. “But rather a swell-looking beggar at that!”

Then he descended to the second-cabin saloon where he and his like belonged.

II

MICKY STUMBLES UPON A PECULIAR PASSENGER AND
EXPLAINS THE MYSTERIES OF THE WIRELESS TO A
YOUNG LADY.

THE atmosphere of the second-cabin saloon was somewhat clearer than that of the first, and Micky's appetite was of the best.

"Good afternoon, everybody!" he cried genially, as he slipped into his place at the head of the table nearest the door. "Fetch me some soup, Dobson."

An intermittent chorus in Italian, English, and French greeted his arrival. There were seven at the table, one chair being vacant.

"Goot vetter we're having!" nodded a German brewer from Hoboken.

"Fine!" said Micky. "I was talking to the *Berlin* this morning, two hundred miles to the westward, and they said it was like a mill-pond. And the *Cedric* — same distance ahead of her — reports the same thing."

"I'm so glad!" answered a wan English

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girl, traveling with her brother, who looked consumptive, yet ate almost nothing. “I’d hate to be in a storm. Is n’t it dreadful, Mr. Fitzpatrick?”

“Sometimes,” he admitted. “But we don’t get ’em this season — that is, *head* storms. You don’t mind the others.”

“I’d mind anything!” she sighed.

“Pardon, mees,” put in eagerly a sallow, lean-faced Algerian with grayish-black hair cut in a brush-like pompadour. “I haf been cross-in’ twenty years on thees ships, and dere ees nuthin’ to fear. *Alors*, why should you care? It ees *la mal de mer* that ees bad. It ees the worst thin’ for ’uman bein’s dere ees! It ees awful. But, think, mees, you do not ’ave it — no?”

He smiled at her with a gentle smile, like the soft desert wind among his own orange groves.

“No, fortunately!” she answered.

“Then, eef you ’ave it, come to me and I will geef you a lemon!” he continued parentally. “These ship lemons! *Mon Dieu!* They are like *nuts*. You should see my lemons at Sadi-bel-Abbas! Dere ees nuthin’ like that

country. It ees fine — so warm in winter an' so cool in summer!”

“But I thought Algeria was hot!” protested the girl.

“Algerie? *Chaud!* Ah, *non*, mademoiselle!” he cried, his face lighting up. “It ees like heaven. No hot weather like you have in New York. Always nice.”

“Say, Frenchie, what are you givin' us?” inquired the broad-shouldered chauffeur of an American railroad-owner. “Kinder hot in the desert, ain't it?”

“*Mais*, we do not live in the desert, m'sieu,” answered the other courteously. “Our plantations are in the mountains and the valleys. It ees not too hot for 'uman bein's. Of course in the desert! *Que voulez vous?* But even dere the Legion Étrangère build the roads in the sun. Those are the brave garçons, m'sieu! From all over the world they come — Espagne, Suisse, Russie, Allemagne, et les Etats Unis d'Amerique.”

“The United States?” questioned the chauffeur.

“*Certainement, m'sieu!*” the Algerian assured him. “They also work for *nuthin'*—

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you understan'— for *nuthin'*, with a *sou* each day for tobacco. They are the bravest men *dans tout le monde!* For they care nuthin' for their lives. They no more fear than the Mohammedan. *Kismet!* No one can stand against them. I have known in the ranks the sons of American millionaires — *c'est vrai!* — princes of Russie, noblemen of Oesterreich, and priests that were but are no longer within the Church — fugitives from justice from every country in the world, men of broken heart, *chevaliers d'industrie* —” He shrugged his shoulders. “Rascals, you say, perhaps, but *gentilhommes d'honneur*. Ah, the *petites histoires* I have heard them tell around the camp-fire and at the hospital of ‘Les Isles d'Hyères’ — the ‘Golden Isles.’”

A shadow fell across the table, and he paused in his recital as the empty chair was filled. The man in the ulster had entered unobserved, and now took his seat unobtrusively. Evidently he had changed his mind about coming down to lunch. It was his first appearance at table during the voyage, but Micky knew that his name was Cloud — since the chair was thus assigned. It was obvious that he had over-

heard the Algerian's impassioned eulogy of his country, for he now bowed in his direction with a polite :

“Don't let me interrupt you.”

The newcomer was dressed in faded but well-cut clothes of Scotch mixture, and he had a narrow, handsome, clean-cut English face, the high cheekbones of which were surmounted by bronzed temples and a forehead that ran well back over the crown until it met the rather thin but curly brown hair. Had it not been for the stubby beard, the face was such as you might have seen twenty times a day on the hunting field at Market Harboro or Melton Mowbray. Every distinctive feature of the sporting aristocrat was there — the flat, small ears, the ruddy skin, the clear blue eyes, the prominent arched nose, the large, white, even teeth — all but the chin, covered with that incongruous, grotesque beard. Such heads you see the world over, from Manitoba to Mombassa — sometimes even in the chorus of a comic opera, wherever the “younger son” is carving out his fate. But this man was not altogether true to type, for the skin about his eyes was dark and sunken, and he had the gaunt

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look of one who has played and lost, the hopeless expression of the man who has nothing left.

“Decided to come down, after all?” remarked Micky, with good humor.

“Yes,” returned the other in a slightly nervous manner. And the conversation lagged.

The stewards began clearing away, and the second-cabin passengers gathered in groups or sauntered out on deck. The wan girl and her brother, however, seemed to have made no friends, and lingered on. The girl was by no means bad looking, as Micky took pains to observe. Neither was the brother, although he had the pasty look of one who has lived his life inside closed doors, and the stoop that is apt to go with it — a clerk, Micky guessed, taking a sea voyage for his health.

Micky’s attention had been attracted to the pair early in the voyage for several reasons. In the first place, they, like Cloud, had come aboard at Gibraltar — a rather curious place to take a steamer for America in the month of September. Spain was pretty hot — infernally hot after the middle of June. Then, while the girl seemed like a chatty sort of person and was always ready to talk to her companions at the

table, neither she nor her brother had by so much as a single word indicated whence they had come, what their purpose in life was, or where they were going. Micky had a vague suspicion that the girl showed an unusual dexterity in avoiding anything like an approach to personalities—but he confessed that he might have been mistaken. Lastly, with all the readiness of the two to make themselves agreeable in the saloon, they never talked to any one outside on deck, or joined in any of the games that were played. In fact, the brother had remained almost constantly in his state-room, while the girl sat by herself, reading or watching the gulls. He had a sensitive, rather cadaverous face, and, like the man Cloud, sported a half-grown, bristly beard. They were English, of course, but they piqued Micky's curiosity, and he determined to break down the barrier of reserve with which they had surrounded themselves.

On the second-cabin list they were put down as “Mr. William H. Bennett, Miss Bennett,” and as such he now addressed her.

“Find it rather dull on board, Miss Bennett?”

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"Oh, no-o," she answered. "But we are not very quick at picking up acquaintances; and my brother has felt rather miserable until now."

"Like to take a look at the wireless house?" he asked, conscious, nevertheless, that the Captain might have meant what he said.

"Oh, *could* we! I thought it was n't permitted."

"*I'll* permit you," he reassured her. "Come along up."

Outside, the breeze had flattened and a film of gray had come over the sun. Aft, a great flock of gulls were racing the ship, now swooping down after some morsel thrown from the sculleries, again poised motionless aloft, but still keeping even with the stern. The great blue rollers went seething by without really breaking, save where, here and there, a single whitecap showed what the wind had been.

Mrs. Trevelyan and her companion had wearied of their rendezvous and were no longer to be seen. Bridge had succeeded a flirtation which for these two was no longer profitable or a necessity. But the fumes of his lordship's cigarette still lingered in the air, and Micky

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threw open the window and motioned his guests to take seats on the bunk. The man was obviously exhausted by his climb up the ladder, but the girl was all interest. The windows looking in every direction showed not a single sail or streak of black smoke on all the limitless horizon.

“You ’d think we were all alone, would n’t you?” said Micky, filling his pipe.

“Yes — are n’t we?” she replied innocently.

“Not one bit of it!” he answered. “We’re in the middle of a regular *drove* of ships.” He nodded westward. “Right over there are the *Berlin* and *Cedric*, and beyond them the *Fulda* and the *Frederick II*. Behind us are the *Oregon* and the *Hohenlohe*. About three hundred miles south of us is the *Argentina*, bound for Buenos Ayres, and the *Karib* for Colon. Just north is a big yacht, the *Nerada*, and the *Frankfort*, going eastward. I’ve been talking to all of them. I know most of the operators, too. The chap on the *Berlin* is named Morrissy. We had an evening together at Algiers about a week ago. He owes me a shilling sixpence.”

The girl listened, wide-eyed.

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“And you’ve been *talking* to all of them! It’s too wonderful. How do you do it?”

Micky laughed lazily.

“It’s no trick at all!” He threw over his rheostat and wound up his magnetic detector. The converter gave a great roaring whir, and he threw it off again; but he put the receivers to his ears and listened.

“All at lunch,” he commented after a minute. “Anyhow, nobody’s working. You see, there’s very little doing except at night. The air’s much more quiet than as a rule, and there’s no one to bother you. Of course, I only get relay messages out here, because we’re out of commercial range of The Ushant and Poldhu, and nobody sends anything from Tangier — at least, *I* never had a message for a passenger from there.”

“But I don’t understand,” she hesitated. “What happened when the machine made that great noise?”

“It was generating the current for my aerials,” he replied. “You’ve noticed those wires hanging down, something like a hammock, from the mast, of course? Well,” — he threw on his converter, — “now she’s

generating a current that is thrown off in waves whenever I close the circuit.”

The instrument was whirring like an aeroplane about to fly, and, when Micky pressed his key, crackled with a blue flame that made the girl jump.

“That’s nothing,” he grinned; “I’m just sending out a few ‘CQ’s’—that’s the call for ‘all stations,’ you know—to let the other fellows know I’m alive. Hello! There’s Morrisy already. He wants some ‘V’s’—letters, so he can tune in.” *Bz — bz — bz.* “Now I’m giving him ‘HS’—‘How are my signals?’—‘Signals good and strong,’ he says. You see, he’s tuned into my wave-length already by varying the capacity of his condenser and inductance. You have to send out the ‘V’s’ anyhow to test your spark.”

Micky was working his key rapidly, and now broke into a laugh.

“I asked him if he had forgotten about that shilling sixpence, and he said if I’d run over he’d give it to me.”

“How far off is he?” she asked wonderingly.

“Only about two hundred and fifty miles.”

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“Two hundred and fifty miles!”

“That’s about all you can do commercially by day, and it varies, at that, with the atmosphere. Every thunder-storm kicks up a bloom-in’ row. The least thing makes a difference, you know — heat of the air, cool of the night, latitude, hills (if you’re talking to a land station), any electrical disturbance (‘atmospherics,’ we call them) — storms in the ether you can’t see and only guess at. Three hundred miles by day is the very outside. But at night we get ‘freak’ working. I can send sometimes twelve hundred miles and receive two thousand miles. That’s a bally long way. But, with the air nice and cool, I can take Poldhu every night — and it’s well over a *thousand*.”

“It’s the most wonderful thing I’ve ever known!” she gasped.

“Yes — yes!” repeated the brother huskily, with an assumption of interest. “It is wonderful.” He coughed painfully a couple of times.

“Do you get the news from land that way?” she continued.

“Every night — regular as the clock,” answered Micky. “Why, I heard all about the

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Olympic-Hawke collision from The Ushant right through the Pyrenees, and I was lying in the bay of Algiers in a perfect nest of stations. There were fifty vessels all talking at once,— a terrible jam,— but I got every word. Now the regular press business comes every night through Poldhu — in Cornwall, you know. About a quarter past eleven you start your detector and begin listening. The detector is an endless iron band passing through a small coil of copper wire. It catches everything — any kind of an electric wave — any length. You tune into the other fellow’s wave by sliding these vulcanized rubber handles backward and forward. Well — now you’re ready. Then at eleven-thirty sharp (Greenwich time) Poldhu begins working ‘CQ — CQ — CQ — ZZ — ZZ — ZZ.’ That means, ‘All stations — Poldhu talking.’ Then he begins to send his commercial messages and signal for the ships he wants. Every ship has a letter. If he wants the *Caronia* he sends out MRA. — MRA — until he picks her up, or if he’s after the *George Washington* he sends out DKN. After he gets through his commercials he begins to distribute the news to

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our subscribers. ‘SP — SP — SP’ he says (‘Press for transmission only’), and gives the number of words. It’s usually about six hundred. Then he goes ahead and tells how the market is, and who’s dead, and who won the prize fight — and when he’s finished he goes back and says it all over again. Why, I sit here every night and it’s just as if I was on Picadilly Circus except for the lights. Often there’s just as much noise.”

“So everything that goes on in the world is known on the sea!” said the girl lightly.

“Everything of importance,” he answered.

“And you’re always in touch — never any more terrible uncertainty” — she hesitated for the smallest fraction of a second — “about — anything!”

“None. Even if you are n’t in touch with a land station, you’re always in communication with a whole bevy of ships, and they give you all the dope — the news. Why, sometimes, up here, it’s like an afternoon tea except for the women, and” — he laughed — “sometimes I have them too.”

“But, of course, there are many things that happen which are not worth reporting, like that,

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every night at such great expense — little things — that affect only a few people?” she asked, almost anxiously.

“Of course. It’s just like a newspaper of six hundred to one thousand words. They send out what is vital, and some of it is deuced urgent. You remember when Crippen was caught getting over to Canada? It was all wireless. Why, that murderer would have beaten it if it hadn’t been for the Captain snooping around and playing Sherlock Holmes among the passengers until he found a fellow that matched up to the description that had jumped through the air and overtaken him. Oh, it’s quite exciting up here sometimes. Imagine me getting an SOS! You’re talking to some rosy ass on another liner about how their butter is holding out, or if they’ve seen an iceberg, and suddenly — *bing* — out of nowhere you’ll catch a little SOS. You listen, and sure enough it is! You drop the ass and the iceberg, and tune in quick, and you find it’s a yacht that’s punctured herself on a reef, God knows how far off! And then the air gets full of ships simply yelling. You can hear ’em all, from the Bay of Biscay to the Azores, from

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Tangier to Madeira, and the ones that have the same wave-length fall all over each other. Of course, you can cut out the others. It's a terrible mess! And then you find out where she is, and the nearest ship simply goes and looks after her, that's all. It's—hello! There's somebody working now. He's sending out a CQ.”

Micky switched on his mains, and the blue flame leaped through the air as he answered.

“Signals are strong. I should say he must be close to us. Just look out the window, and see if there's anybody in sight, Miss Bennett. . . . He says he's the *Donald Castle* from Liverpool to Buenos Ayres, and in plain view of us.”

The girl looked all over the horizon.

“There's nothing except a sailing-vessel over there to the right,” she said. “They don't carry wireless, do they?”

Micky craned his neck and glanced through the starboard window.

“That's just some old tub,” he remarked. “It can't be *her*. Queer, is n't it? It's like a man holding out his hand in the dark. You know he's there, but you can't touch him.

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Now, this chap. He 's shirty because we don't see him.”

He pushed his key swiftly.

“Now, I've just said, 'Keep your hair on and tell me what sort of a bloomin' vessel you are.' . . . Oh, my! He's like a hornet! Says I must be chaffing him! . . . Oh, I say! The beggar's too familiar! . . . He is that cruiser over there. Must have rigged a wireless for himself. Lots of 'em do. I'll fix him!”

He pressed his key a few times, grinned delightedly, and threw down his receiver.

“What did you say?” asked Bennett.

“I just said, 'Oh, are you that old hay wagon on our starboard quarter?'”

The girl laughed again.

“It's really quite sociable!” said she, as they rose to go. “Will you let us come up again?”

“Come any time you want,” answered Micky, good-naturedly. “You'll always find me here, and you'll always be welcome.”

III

THE READER LEARNS SOMETHING OF THE CAREER OF AN INTERNATIONAL BEAUTY, AND ATTENDS VICARIOUSLY AN ARTISTIC ENTERTAINMENT IN THE SECOND-CABIN SALOON.

WHATEVER may have been her faults, it is not to be denied that only Mrs. Trevelyan prevented another and more serious explosion of wrath on the part of the Captain against his ne'er-do-weel Marconi operator. As a peacemaker she was beyond criticism. The Captain, pretending to be quite impervious to feminine charms, nevertheless allowed himself to be cajoled and flattered until he not only revoked his orders so far as visitors to the wireless house were concerned, but offered to accompany the lady there himself and explain everything to her. For the Captain, in spite of his appearance, was human, and, as he himself said aloud to himself in front of the looking-glass in his cabin: "She's a damned handsome woman!"

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No one could possibly dodge this obvious fact. Lily Trevelyan was one of those international beauties who, like the Countess of Warwick, appear on the front pages of the morning dailies whenever there is a dearth of legitimate news. Born in a manufacturing town in eastern Massachusetts, she had escaped from it at an early age, and, with another girl, had taken up the study of art in Paris. Then for about five years she utterly disappeared, only to blossom forth suddenly in London as a dashing society favorite, a bit flamboyant for some of the more conservative, but one who patently had attracted the discriminating eye of royalty. From that time on, Lily Leslie had been the rage. Dukes named horses after her and their jockeys wore her colors; her photographs appeared in the shop windows; cigars were branded and banded in her honor; and she was followed from one European watering-place to another by a kitchen cabinet of Austrian, French, and English aristocrats and millionaires.

All this but six years after her departure from Nesmith Street, Lowell! Yet, such things happen more often than is suspected.

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Lowell has produced more than one English beauty, and so has Fall River! God bless them! And “lovely Lily Leslie from Lowell,” having boxed the ears of a prince and rolled him down a grass terrace at Sandringham, eventually accepted the hand of a complaisant commoner who was ready to sacrifice his domestic security to a vicarious social prominence. Now she was Mrs. Hubert Trevelyan — still of the inner circles, but without the flare that had made her the toast of English hunting-lodges. The white neck was still round, but almost imperceptibly it flowered at the top toward a chin once the ecstasy of sculptors, which now had lost by a dim shade its clearness of outline.

She was still spoken of as one of the most beautiful women in the world; but the exquisite hour of her perfection had passed. Then, perhaps feeling that her supremacy was no longer undisputed, a sense of pique at younger and fresher women had led her into certain too flagrant indiscretions that could not be overlooked. Lord Knollys had intimated that a knighthood might please her husband; and the directorate of the Royal Bank of Edinburgh,

of which he was the London manager, by a coincidence no less extraordinary than it was timely, had proposed that he should open a similar branch in New York and temporarily become its resident agent. In other words, royalty had politely indicated that, although it was deeply pained to do so, it must, for policy's sake, at least, withdraw that intimacy which it had previously been pleased to extend.

The slight did her moral character small good. She and her husband left England for New York, and at once a dozen other American beauties struggled furiously for her vacant place — beauties from Pittsburgh, from San Francisco, from Albany, and — be it whispered — from Brooklyn. Many a flower in the garden of English society has had its root in some vulgar suburb of an American city. Indeed, usually the more vulgar the better, for it is the note of surprise, of unconventionality, of abandon, of irresponsibility and naïveté, which gives the American girl her vogue in London.

However, Mrs. Trevelyan's dethronement in England was no obstacle to her social career in New York, and she cleverly made use of the notoriety surrounding her English life to

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give herself that last touch of smartness, that slight atmosphere of the *risque*, that *tres chic* suggestion of impropriety, that made her the success of the season the winter of her arrival. Into a society composed of men and women of puritanical traditions, or, what is worse, the traditional respectability of the honest merchant princes of the red-plush and brown-stone era in New York, whose pose is that of careless immorality and whose conversation often reeks of the road-house, but beneath whose war-paint and feathers are concealed characters as stodgy as that of a Methodist Sunday-school teacher or as devoid of temperament as a Baptist missionary — into, in short, a society of “bogus badness” and affected worldliness, Mrs. Trevelyan blew like a cool breeze off the mountains of actuality upon the parched plain of imitation. Here, they felt, was the real thing, and their sordid souls thrilled with excitement at the thought. Women gained vicarious smartness from being seen with her. Little bores, whose greatest peccadillo was to drink two cocktails instead of one before dinner, swelled with worldly pride as they swarmed around her. She was a sensation, an education,

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worthier far than the hypocrites about her, because she at least was genuine. Her house became the center of the smart Bohemian circle, the Newport and Westbury crowds, and the stragglers of London and Parisian society, of whom there are always a few in New York, eagerly gobbled up to lend a cosmopolitan touch to social gatherings otherwise banal by reason of the absence of aristocratic titles. Her husband passed unnoticed. “*Is there a Mr. Trevelyan?*” it was quite the thing to say, with a half-knowing, half-ingenuous expression. Indeed, as a topic of conversation for “society” women, who otherwise would have conversed of servants or children, she was inexhaustible. For this reason, if for none other, her transplantation was more than justifiable.

But the lure of the scenes of her earlier triumphs came ever upon her, and each summer saw her for a few weeks in London and a month or two at Carlsbad or Biarritz. Trevelyan no longer went with her. She came and went as she chose, and with whom she chose — a mocking, tragic figure of what might have been.

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“Bah!” she cried that evening, throwing down her cards at the table in the men’s smoking-room, where she had made it fashionable for the women to gather after dinner. “It’s stuffy as a zoo in here. Can’t you have some more port-holes opened, Ashurst?”

“They are all wide open now; so is the ventilator,” he answered. “What do you say — shall we chuck it?”

Their two opponents, a young Boston bride and her husband who belonged to the “hunting set” at Myopia and were regarded at home as ultra-exclusive, hastened to signify their assent, and the table broke up.

“My maid tells me there is a vaudeville show in the second cabin. What do you say — shall we take it in?” inquired the bride. She spoke languidly, lighting a thin Russian cigarette which she took from a dainty dangling case of gold, while the eyes of forty male passengers watched her eagerly.

“Let’s,” said Mrs. Trevelyan. “I think we ought to be able to bribe the second-cabin steward to pass us into the menagerie. Anyhow, we can stand at the door.”

The quartet sauntered along the deck and

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descended cautiously into the region consecrated to the second class. Ashurst peeked through an open port, while Mrs. Trevelyan glanced into the saloon through another close by. From within came the strum of a banjo and the lilt of rag-time.

“ Ah 'l lend yo' ma hat!
Ah 'l lend yo' ma flat!
Ah 'l lend yo' ma lovely overcoat of fur!
Ah 'l lend yo' eberyting Ah 've got — exceptin'
ma wife!
An' Ah 'l mak' yo' a present of HER!”

Mrs. Trevelyan's eyes swept along the motley rows of maids, valets, and their heterogeneous companions, all eagerly drinking in the piquant sentiment of the lyric, until catching a profile at the end of one of them, an expression of hopeless bewilderment slowly gathered upon her face. Cloud was sitting a little apart, his chin on his hand, a forced smile about his lips.

“ It *can't* be! ” muttered Mrs. Trevelyan almost hysterically.

At the same instant the song ended, and a tumultuous round of hand-clapping and laughter showed that the audience was anything but unappreciative and that wives and matrimony

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were momentarily at a discount. Then the high-pitched masculine voice of the master of ceremonies — a cork merchant from Flatbush — began:

“Ladies and gentlemen: It gives me great pleasure to announce that our friend, that distinguished American statesman Colonel W. C. Spothal, of Bloomington, Illinois, will give us a few personal reminiscences of him who cast the shackles from the slave and preserved the Union from dissolution amid the throes of internecine warfare — President Abraham Lincoln, or, as we of the States love to call him, ‘Old Abe.’”

“What is *internecine* warfare?” giggled Ashurst.

“Now!” exclaimed Mrs. Trevelyan, with sudden animation. “Just slip in the door.”

In the flurry caused by the rising and coming forward of the distinguished statesman, the party managed to force their way into the saloon almost unobserved.

“Rather interesting,” carelessly remarked the horsey bride.

“Aw — lots of atmosphere, you know,” ventured Ashurst.

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“Lots!” retorted Mrs. Trevelyan in a stage whisper. “More than I want!”

The statesman had now reached the platform amid mild applause, and, thrusting his onyx-buttoned cuff into his low-cut waistcoat, entered upon a sonorous, somewhat perspiring, and detailed history of his intimacy with the martyred President. The anecdotes were chiefly about himself with sporadic references to Lincoln. Still, the audience listened good-naturedly.

“And now I’ll tell yer,” he declared impressively, “’bout some Noo York fine-an-seers that come down to Washin’ton ter ask Ole Abe to release the gold in the treasury durin’ the gold panic. He listened patiently to ’em, and then he says: ‘Gents! You remind me o’ the farmers out in Illinois when I wuz a young feller. There wuz a hog plague out thar, an’ the hogs wuz a-dyin’ like flies. Finally a man come along and claimed he had discovered a cure — an’ he had. He said, ‘Cut off their tails and they ’ll get well.’ So the farmers cut off their hogs’ tails and the hogs all got well. But the next year the plague come ag’in — *and thar were n’t no more tails!*”

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There was a momentary silence, and then a roar of merriment, while the statesman bowed himself from the platform. Chauffeurs slapped fat thighs and the stewards crowded in the doorways stamped vigorously. Ashurst and the hunting gentleman from Boston stared vacantly before them. But Mrs. Trevelyan laughed heartily and threw a nod to Micky, whose smiling face appeared for a moment at the doorway.

“Edifying!” remarked the bride, with a deprecating shrug and a faint condescending smile.

“Our fellow passenger, Mr. Walter Anderson Savage, has kindly consented to sing ‘Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep,’” next announced the cork merchant.

A sad-faced, black-bearded man in heavy boots and badly fitting clothes made his way forward. A glance sufficed to show that he was one of those unfortunate persons who regard it as a sacred duty to give pleasure to others by a display of their vocal accomplishments. With his eyes fixed on the ceiling and his hands folded on his abdomen, Mr. Savage

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in a thin bass began to sing, accompanied by a young lady in a vermilion demi-toilette :

“Rocked in the *cray-dul* of ther *deef*,
I lay me *down* in peace to *sleep*!
And calm and peaceful is my sleep,
Rocked in the *cray-dul* of ther *deef*.”

A slight tittering made itself heard in the corners of the saloon; but the vocalist remained stolidly gazing at the ceiling during the interlude, rendered with many quavers by the vermilion pianist. Ashurst had turned very red and was shaking violently. Even the Boston bride was biting her lips, while her husband delicately covered his narrow face with his hand. Mournfully Mr. Savage began again.

“And *such* the trust that still were *mine*
Though stormy winds sweep *o'er* the *brine*,
Or through the tempest's fiery *breath*,
Rouse me from *sleep* to wreck and *death*.
And calm and peaceful is my *sleep*,
Rocked in the *cray-dul* of ther *deef*!”

But Mrs. Trevelyan was neither listening to the song nor watching the singer. From where

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she had carefully selected her seat, she commanded a full view of Cloud's face, and during the five verses rendered by the gloomy vocalist she continued to scrutinize it intently.

“It *can't* be! And yet it *is!*” she repeated blankly. “What on earth can he be doing here?”

Suddenly Ashurst gave a muffled explosion and stumbled out of the door, followed by the bride and her husband, and presently, after another last look at the second-class passenger, by Mrs. Trevelyan.

“Rahly!” Ashurst was exclaiming, in a convulsion of mirth. “Did you *ever*, now! Rahly! A man like that!”

“It *was* funny, was n't it, Mrs. Trevelyan?” laughed the bride apologetically, as the latter joined the others outside in the moonlight.

“*Rahly! Rahly! Rahly!* Ashurst! Why do you make such an idiot of yourself?” snapped Mrs. Trevelyan. “I'm going to bed. Good night, everybody!”

And she turned and moved quickly along the passageway leading to the main saloon. The rat-faced purser, a susceptible young English-

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man, was just finishing up his accounts. Mrs. Trevelyan cast a dazzling smile upon him, and he, behind his grating, felt instantly like an eagle imprisoned in a cage with his mate soaring in the blue vault above.

“Let me see the second-cabin list, if you please,” she said in her sweetest tones.

“Certainly,” he smiled back at her, “the ship is yours if you want it, Mrs. Trevelyan.”

IV

“CQ — CQ — CQ — !” IN WHICH MICKY LEARNS OF
THE MURDER OF THE EARL OF ROAKBY AT PARSLEY
CROFT.

MICKY, having attended several hundred ships' "entertainments" during his maritime career, had retired early to the wireless house, where, after a glance into the second cabin in time to hear Mr. Savage's dismal contribution, he had remained. There were a score or so of messages to be relayed on to New York, and he had a letter to write besides; so by ten o'clock his pipe was alight and his mains had been switched on. Then his detector had got out of order, and it had taken him nearly an hour to fix it, and when he at last got working he found that Morrissy over on the *Berlin* was frantic with the delay.

"Hardly time to give messages," he growled. "What's the matter?"

"Mind own business!" Micky retorted angrily. Then the German behind began signaling for the *Pavonia*.

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“You cut out, Morrissy. I’m going to take the Dutchman,” he jerked with his key.

“CQ de DKV — CQ de DKV,” persisted the Norddeutscher Lloyd three hundred miles eastward.

“DKV de MPA — HS,” replied Micky. (“To the *Hohenlohe* from the *Pavonia*: — How are my signals?”)

“MPA de DKV,” answered the operator on the *Hohenlohe*. “Good evening, Mister.” (The German boats always say “Mister”). “Your signals are strong. MSG” (“Commercial message.”) “Time now 11.55 Greenwich. Four messages.”)

But Morrissy was still vainly trying to break in. Micky threw him a formal “service message” — a deadly insult to a friend, under the circumstances.

“DKB de MPA — SG. Stand by. If you do not stop jamming I will report you.”

Then he turned again to the German.

“Time O. K. Thanks. GA.” (“Go ahead.”)

“MSG. Number one,” returned the other operator, Morrissy having been reduced to silence. “Ten words. *Hohenlohe*. Radio.

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Via Casablanca. Trevelyan, *Pavonia*: Government inspectors here wise to your necklace. H.”

Micky whistled under his breath, but he had no time for disconcerting speculations. The German kept right on sending:

“MSG. Number two. *Hohenlohe*. Radio. Via Casablanca. Smith, *Pavonia*: Brother John died this morning. Return first boat. Alfred.

“MSG. Number three. *Hohenlohe*. Radio. Via Casablanca. Tavish, *Pavonia*: Consols up three quarters shall I sell. Pratt.

“MSG. Number four. *Hohenlohe*. Radio. Relayed Basaltic — Umberto Primo — via Tangier. Perier, *Pavonia*: La situation politique très grave. S.”

“O. K. Thanks. GN. Good night,” replied Micky.

“Thanks, Mister. Good night,” answered the German. And there was silence upon the face of the waters.

Micky lit his pipe and gazed out of the window.

“So Mrs. Trevelyan was up to a little smug-

gling in spite of her wealth and position!” He laughed softly to himself. Then he turned to the *Berlin*.

“Now, smarty,” he signaled to Morrissy. “Give us your message, and next time keep a civil tongue in your head.”

At quarter past eleven he stuck his head out of the door for a breath of fresh air. The “entertainment” and its aftermath were over. The starched maids who strolled deckwise of an evening had long since tumbled into their bunks to snore like ladies until such hour as they chose luxuriously to arise. Only a sailor or two could be seen. He darted down the ladder and into the second-cabin scullery, snatched up a couple of beef sandwiches, and clambered up to his perch again. The *Pavonia* was surging along at twenty knots an hour, but in the soft night she seemed to be lying motionless in a hazy sea of gold.

He cast a look at the Hon. Evelyn’s picture, tested his detector, adjusted the receiver, and began munching his sandwiches and waiting for Poldhu, thinking every now and then of Mrs. Trevelyan and her necklace. He wondered if

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it was the one she had on. Hardly; she would n't be so foolish, with all those “detective-stewardesses” aboard. Still — Suddenly he stopped eating. Out of the utter silence of the aerial sea, a silence as dead as that around the frozen pole, a silence opaque in its density, across, as it seemed, millions of miles and eons of time, came to his waiting ear-drums the faintest *pk — pk — pk*, like — if it was like anything — the pluck of a kitten's claw in the nap of a carpet in a room across the hall — the ghost of an inaudible signal, like one from a spirit world.

“CQ — CQ — CQ — ZZ — ZZ — ZZ.”

Poldhu was calling.

“All stations — all stations — all stations!”

Three thousand miles away, a man in his shirt-sleeves, in a shanty on a Cornwall cliff, a man in an eye-shade, smoking a pipe under a green electric bulb, with a pile of yellow sheets on the table in front of him, was pressing a rubber key with his forefinger and breaking a current of electricity that shot across the black waves through the night at 186,000 miles per second — seven and a half times around the world in a single tick of the five-shilling alarm-

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clock at his elbow; and Micky and Morrissy, and all the other operators off the Azores, were hearing him as distinctly as if they were on the other side of the room in that same shanty and listening to the ticking of the clock.

Micky drew a pad toward him and picked up a freshly sharpened pencil. The man in Cornwall threw a few commercial messages to boats here and there on the northern route, and then sent out his “ SP — SP — SP ” signal. “ Press for transmission only. Time 1.45. Four hundred words.”

At the end of every sentence he said “ stop ” instead of punctuating. Micky took it down mechanically. Sitting there in his little box in the middle of the night, a half-eaten sandwich beside him, he jotted down the doings of the world as casually as if he were playing tit-tat-to.

“ Germany - has - not - yet - replied - France’s ultimatum - regarding - Morocco - stop - Considerable - uneasiness - in - financial - circles - Bank - of - England - raises - rate - one - half - per - centum - stop - famine - spreading - in - China - stop - Millions - on - verge - of - starvation - stop - Great - fire - in - New - York -

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factory - scores - operators - suffocated - stop
Cunard - steamship - *Carmania* - breaks - tur-
bine - and - is - laid - up - for - repairs - passen-
gers - transferred - to - other - ships - stop -
Prince - Rospetti - wins - 300,000 - francs - at
Monte - Carlo - stop.” Then came the stock
market.

Micky took it all down religiously. Some of it interested him and some of it did not. Some beggar was always winning huge sums at Monte Carlo, and he was sick of the Bourse and the Stock Exchange. It bored him to death — most of it; there was something so impersonal about it all! He never seemed to pick anything out of the air that meant anything to *him*. Why could n't the man in Cornwall give him a hint as to what the Hon. Evelyn was up to, for instance? Nothing ever made his heart beat the slightest bit faster.

He yawned and glanced across at the photograph of the “leggy little girl with the big dog.” In the haze of his pipe-smoke, she seemed to be smiling at him. Then he stiffened in his chair and listened with all his ears, peering feverishly into his coherer as if to verify the faint message coming from so far away.

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“ Earl - of - Roakby - reported - dead - from - pistol - shot - wound - at - Parsley - Croft - seat - of - Marquis - of - Varricks - Tuesday - last - stop - fact - concealed - until - today - and - all - details - are - being - carefully - suppressed - stop - disappearance - of - Cosmo - Graeme - youngest - son - of - Lord - Varricks - coincident - with - homicide - leads - to - suspicion - of - foul - play - stop - latter - believed - to - have - left - England - and - to - be - either - on - Continent - or - on - ship - bound - for - America - stop - all - ports - of - arrival - being - closely - watched - stop - Scotland - Yard - requests - all - transatlantic - liners - examine - passenger - list - for - man - about - thirty - years - of - age - weight - one - hundred - and - sixty - height - six - feet - slightly - bald - blue - eyes - curly - hair - clean - shaven - report - if - on board.”

Micky turned slightly pale as the man at Poldhu stopped short and began sending it all over again, and the right hand which held his stub of pencil trembled a little as he checked off the same old story about the French ultimatum and the price of consols and cotton. Earl of Roakby murdered! There was news for you! And the murderer had escaped and was snug

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aboard an ocean liner. Tuesday last — and this was the following Monday. If the fellow had caught the *Mauretania* he would already have reached New York. But she was jammed with people from the *Olympic*. No, he would have had to take some other and slower boat. But why suppose he *was* on a liner? Probably he was hiding in some quiet English village. Micky stopped checking up. Something made him feel dizzy. The air in the wireless house seemed strangely stuffy. There it was again:

“Earl - of - Roakby - reported - dead - from - pistol - shot - wound - at - Parsley - Croft - seat - of - Marquis - of - Varricks.”

There was a queer roaring in his ears, and he could not hear the man at Poldhu, try as he would. There must be something doing atmospherically. Then a drop of sweat fell from his forehead upon the pad.

“What’s the matter with me!” he wondered, as the cabin turned black for a moment. “There’s nothing the matter with me!” he repeated, but his knees were shaking. With an effort he shut off his detector and fumbled for the door leading to the open air. For an in-

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stant he let the night breeze dry his forehead; then he seated himself crossed-legged on the deck outside and leaned his back against the side of the wireless house.

V

IN WHICH MICKY OVERHEARS A MIDNIGHT CONVERSATION AND PREVENTS THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME.

THE night was a glorious calm, so clear that it almost gave the illusion of day. A huge yellow moon rode full astern, and in its weltering swath of light the wake of the ship whirled and writhed, lashing itself to foam against the rollers, then dropping out of sight momentarily in the hollows, until, still revolving in grotesque circles, it twisted itself into an endless white rope that trailed over the sea and lost itself on the edge of the horizon.

On such nights as this Micky rarely turned in at all, preferring to sit atop the deck-house, watching the great ship surge through the rollers that lifted her stern high up until the rail touched the rim of the moon and, after holding her for a moment, plunged her down with a dizzying rush until the water roared in

a maelstrom behind her. The gulls had vanished. Not a light showed on the gray expanse of the silvery, heaving sea. Four hundred feet forward on the bridge, an ulstered officer paced to and fro. Every window and port-hole was dark, except a yellow circle in the after deck-house, where some of the crew slept and whence came the mournful tinkle of a mandolin. Even the throb of the propeller seemed to be stilled, save when for a brief instant the stern rose to the apex of the angle which it described and the steamer trembled in her sleep. The air was as soft as in the tropics. In the silence it seemed as though a whisper could be heard the length of the ship, although the night was full of soft murmurs, the lapping and rush of the water along the side, the strain of ropes, and the seething of the waves.

He must have fallen asleep as he lay propped against the wireless house, for the moon was high overhead when the creak of shoes on the deck below and the soft closing of a door brought him tensely to himself. Dreams of English castles, green lawns, and purple afternoon shadows, of white-dressed girls and a big St. Bernard dog, dissolved into a glittering sea

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of golden mist out of which two voices broke in startling sibilants:

“What are you doing on this boat?” It was Mrs. Trevelyan speaking.

The man, her companion, gave a nervous laugh.

“Why not?” he answered, affecting a lightness that seemed strangely artificial at that place and hour.

“Don’t fence, Cosmo!” she retorted almost sharply. “Why not, indeed? You—in a shabby suit in the second cabin—with a beard!” She laughed in that clinquant laugh of hers that rivaled in clearness the light on the edges of the distant waves. “In a *beard!*” she repeated.

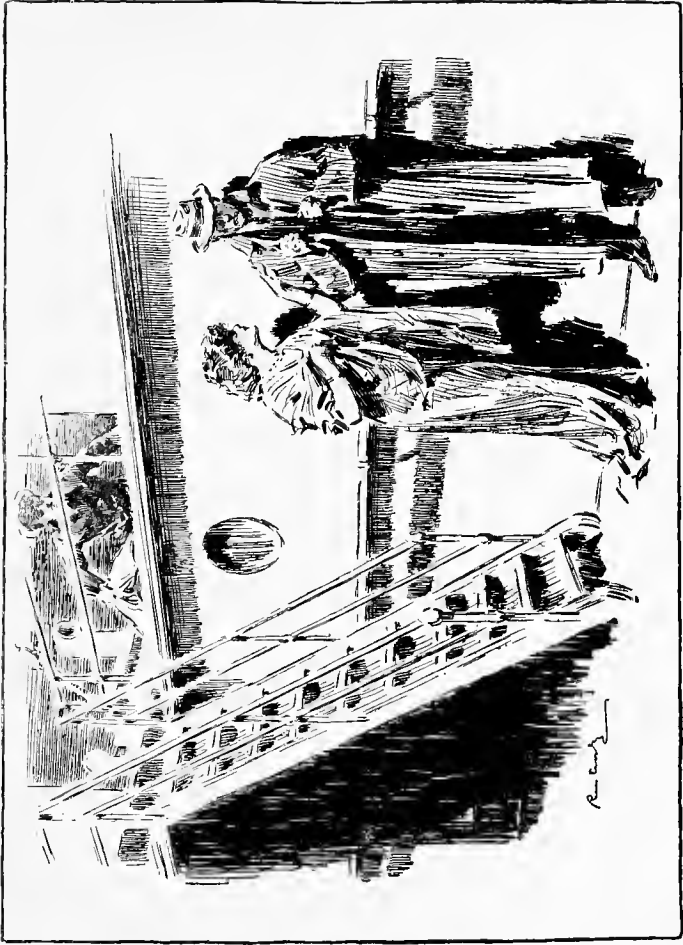
There was silence for a moment before the man replied. He seemed to be waiting. Then—

“Have you heard nothing?” he asked in dull tones.

“Heard? I? What do you mean?”

Again the silence.

“I hardly thought it possible that you had not, but, since you don’t know, there is nothing to tell.” He spoke with infinite depression.



“What are you doing on this boat?” It was Mrs. Trevelyan speaking.

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“How mysterious you are!” she cried, striving to throw a careless jocularity into her words. “You speak like the villain, or rather the misunderstood hero, in a melodrama. My dear fellow! What is it all about? Can’t you see how I’m simply dying to share your secret with you, whatever it is? We’re old friends. You’ve made hopeless love to me a hundred times. I leave you engaged to be married to Evelyn Farquhar, one of the loveliest girls in all England, tearing around from house-party to house-party — and now, right in the midst of the hunting season, when you ought to be full of brandy-and-soda and tucked up sound asleep in your little bed at Parsley Croft, you bob up, looking like a half-baked sociologist, in the second cabin of my steamer! I won’t have it! What have you done? Have you done anything, old sport? Cosmo *dear*, out with it. You can trust me!” Her voice was tenderly coaxing.

The man drew back from her. Micky had turned cold and his heart suddenly felt like lead. Oh, Evelyn Farquhar!

“No — No, Lily! Don’t ask me. I know it looks like a rum go. It is a rum ’un. You’ll know soon enough, doubtless. Just

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cut me out, will you? How's Trevelyan? I see that swine Ashurst is on board.”

“You never liked him, *did* you?”

“*Like* him! It's beasts of his sort that make England a by-word! Why do you have him around?”

“If *you* were traveling first cabin I would n't. But I'm lonely, Cosmo. Don't you see I want to be friends with you? You used to like me a little bit. I'll meet you here every night after everybody else has gone to bed.”

“Don't, Lily!” he groaned. “Can't you see I'm all cut up? Forget me — just as I'm trying to forget England! Suppose some officer saw you here with me now at three o'clock in the morning! It would make nice ship gossip, would n't it? Hurry back to your stateroom. It was crazy of you to come and knock at my door.”

“Oh, very well,” she answered abruptly. “I've tried my best to be nice to you. I don't suppose it would do even *my* reputation any good to be seen at night around with second-class passengers. You're too cold a proposition to bother with. You can paddle your own canoe, and I'll paddle mine, even if I

have to carry Ashurst in it along with me!”

There was the sound of a door closing quickly. The man did not stir. Then he hurriedly opened it again and whispered hoarsely after her: “Lily! — Lily!”

During this surprising interview Micky had held himself quite motionless, undecided, after the first shock of hearing his lady's name, whether to make his presence known or not, and indeed he was still debating the matter in his mind when the conversation concluded as unexpectedly as it had begun. Then the man emerged from the shadow of the deck-house and began to pace nervously up and down the deck. His coat collar was still turned up and his felt hat pulled down over his eyes, but his hands writhed and twisted in the moonlight like frightened snakes. It was clear that he was under the severest tension, and now and again some word muttered under his collar reached Micky as he sat, the mute, involuntary witness of a soul's torture.

And then the man began to glance quickly around the deck, as if to make sure that nobody was there. He took off his hat and ran his hands through his curly hair, and the face

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Micky saw in the moonlight was the face of one in hell. He began to be worried, for he had seen them like that before — when the Lithuanian woman had jumped off the bow, and the crazy Pole had dived over the rail near the Azores the last time across. Cloud walked slowly aft, holding his hat in his hand. He trod as if in his sleep, with his eyes directly astern. Micky slid down the ladder and in his rubber-soled shoes followed on the other side of the after deck-house. If Cloud contemplated suicide, he knew where he meant to do it! He stole silently along, and reached the clear space at the end of the ship before Cloud had emerged on the other side.

There was an old wooden bench there, where people who did not mind the cinders and the motion could sit in the daytime and watch the gulls. Another instant, and the creak of Cloud's shoes could be heard; another, and the man himself appeared around the corner. He stood in the moonlight, not more than six feet from where Micky was flattened against the star-board side of the deck-house. Only a single twisted, weather-beaten iron rail separated him from the actual stern itself — the

edge of the abyss, below which the white foam churned itself into fantastic shapes, now looking like a white patchwork quilt with green squares floating quietly for a moment upon the surface, then parting asunder with a roar, as some unseen force sucked it down below into a black hole amid a cataract of spouting waves. There had always been a fascination for Micky in the boiling caldron of blue-green water, and Cloud must have felt it too, for he rested his hands on the rail and gazed steadfastly into its swirling depths. Should a man jump, there was no doubt as to what would occur when he entered that gyrating vortex. Down he would be drawn, down, down, in that transparent column of green and white, helpless and immovable in the mighty suction that would whirl him pitilessly round and round, this way and that, until, like a shark shooting towards its victim, would sweep the huge propeller, slicing him in two or beheading him and tossing his dismembered body aside here and there, to spin and dive in its wake until it freed itself from the back current and floated to the surface a mile or more behind, to bob face upward in the moonlight to the surface, where, with

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the morning sun, the screaming gulls would find and settle on it.

As Cloud stood there, Micky saw it all, and he turned faint with horror. What a deed must rest on the stalwart Englishman's soul if he could seriously contemplate doing such a thing! What foul iniquity could this man have perpetrated, when, as the woman he called “Lily” had said, he ought to be tucked up in his little bed at Parsley Croft, full of brandy-and-soda? Yet, whatever it was, Micky's inherited instincts made his muscles stiffen in an automatic resolve that no living temple of God should cast itself thus down — that no creature once of the sunlight, however abased and sullied with crime or vice, should plunge into the oblivion of death to rot in a nameless ocean grave or be gnawed by the slimy denizens of the sea, so long as he could save it. Murderer, betrayer, traitor,— it mattered not; the man himself was no sane judge of his present relation to life. As he stood there he was but a mindless effigy of a man swayed by the winds of destiny.

Thus the two stood, Cloud unconscious of the other's presence, while a filament of mackerel cirrus drifted between the moon's

path and the ship and made black the pit underneath their feet. Only the surging rush of the waters — through which the tinkling of the mandolin came faintly. Only the deserted, moon-swept deck. Only the vast, pale star-specked sky. God and the man!

As in his sleep, drawn by some hypnotic power, Cloud slowly removed his ulster and hung it mechanically on the iron rail. Then he laid his felt hat beneath it on the deck. A moment more, and he ducked under and stood upright on the slippery, heaving stern. There was no doubt as to his purpose. He looked down into the abyss, steadied himself, and took a step backward, preparatory to the plunge.

Micky saw the move, and rushed swiftly from his hiding-place. Another instant and he threw himself upon the man from behind, pinning his arms to his sides. On a wet convex surface ten feet square, that heaved and lifted, the two swayed and struggled, the one in his resolve to take life, the other in his determination to save it; and all that Micky, in his hysterical excitement, could muster intelligence to utter was a fatuous shriek of:

“O you bally ass! You bally ass!”

VI

IN WHICH MICKY TUCKS THE SON OF A MARQUIS IN HIS BED AND MIXES SOME DRINKS AND THE NEWS.

FOR possibly ten seconds — a period which seemed like so many hours to both of them — Cloud and Micky struggled on the trembling stern of the *Pavonia*. Then as the turtle-back rose towards the moon on a huge roller, they slipped, lost their footing instantly, and plunged head foremost towards the deck-house. Had the *Pavonia's* stern been dropping into the hollow of the waves instead of lifting upon the swell, they would as certainly have shot in the other direction and been sucked down into the green, weltering whirlpool that roared and foamed behind the chains. But by some instinct Micky had timed his rush to the second, and now they came sliding inwards over the stern, cursing, clawing and feebly striking at each other until Cloud's head hit squarely against one of the stanchions that held the guard-rail in place and his adversary man-

aged to drag him, white and motionless, but safe, upon the deck.

Cloud lay there upon his back, his face ghastly in the waning light of the moon, his eyes closed and the blood oozing from a broad scalp wound in his high forehead. His coat still hung idly upon the rail, flopping to and fro with every rise and fall of the ship. Micky, faint now that the horrible danger of the moment was over, sank weakly upon the wooden bench and rested his head on his hands. Both their hats had slipped overboard in the mêlée, and one arm of Cloud's coat hanging free of the rest of the garment waved almost like a human thing and seemed to beckon Micky towards the stern. He shuddered at the thought of what they had escaped, and yet his action had been so utterly instinctive, so automatically altruistic, that not until this moment when the man was lying at his feet did he fully perceive the significance of his act. He gazed curiously at this inanimate thing who was in fact no second-class passenger, or shabby adventurer, but the son of an earl, a high-rolling, hunting swell to whom by the curse of the high gods his Lady of the Order of St. John

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of Jerusalem had plighted her troth, forgetful of her faithful Micky, forgetful of the wistaria arbor and of the grove behind the second game-keeper's, of their little gold rings and of the post-card bearing the cabalistic “I. L. Y.”

Here, alone with this silent corpse of a man, on the wallowing stern of the *Pavonia*, it suddenly came to Micky that he had been jilted — chucked — given the mitten, just as he might have anticipated had he been a few years older when he had marched out of the vicarage and trudged so independently, if not arrogantly, to the station. Yes, by Gad — he had hauled back the very man that had spoiled his dream for him — his “hated rival!” Micky made a wry little grimace at the ashen face in front of him. There was a “note” for you! Yet as moment by moment it grew clearer to him that he had lost the Hon. Evelyn, that his poor little collateral branch of a romance had been kicked into the street like a yellow dog with a tin can tied to its tail, that he had been a fool and an ass to suppose that he would have the ghost of a chance in inbred England to make a girl happy, simply because he loved her, nevertheless second by second there welled up

in his heart something that drew him to this sad, motionless figure upon the deck, something — of chivalry perhaps (though he was only a son of a second son!) — of the comradeship of those who are fighting against odds on a losing side, of motherhood for a life that had been saved, of proprietorship for the same reason, of pity! For this bally ass had won the Hon. Evelyn in the correct, aristocratic, legal and recognized way (and not behind the second gamekeeper's), and then had proceeded to get gay and do fool things!

“My God, man!” thought Micky, “when you *had* her — whether you got her by fair means or foul — whether she did it herself or whether it was a stinking game of that bloody old sneak the Earl, why — why — why in God's name — did n't you sit tight and behave yourself and hang on to her? For now you've lost a thousand times more than I have! You poor, foolish, blundering devil!”

And a great surge of sympathy welled into Micky's breast and (he was shaking and dizzy) the tears came into his eyes, and, being only twenty-three and not a hero at all, he suddenly felt for this other fool of an Englishman the

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same kind of loyalty that sends gray-haired Eton boys into battle shouting, “Floreat Etona!” — the same stupid, blind affection that led dozens of English officers in the Mutiny or the Malakand campaign to cut their way into a howling mob of Kaffirs or Afghans and carry out on their backs comrades that they hated — in a friendly sort of way. For something told him that in essence this man was a brother — one of his own clean kind, and that whatever he might have done, however desperate its character, there must be — *must* be — some extenuating circumstance, if not justification.

“Yes, my friend, we’re both in the same boat, but having saved your life, I now propose to go the whole hog and make a man of you,” was the unconscious drift of Micky’s dazed cerebrations, and before he knew what he was doing he was doing precisely what he ought to have been doing, namely, dragging Cloud towards the deck-house with the idea of tucking him up in his little bed with a brandy-and-soda inside him just as Mrs. Trevelyan had said he ought to be — at Parsley Croft.

It was a dead weight that Micky had to lug along the deck for some hundred feet before he

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reached the door of Cloud's state-room. Quite out of breath, he dropped him flat outside while he entered the stuffy little room, turned on the electric light and poured out a basin of water. Then he ran up his ladder, fished a bottle of brandy from his locker, and descended again to where Cloud was lying. His one present fear was that the watch might notice what was doing, or that some steward might be loafing about for a last pipe before turning in, and report the matter, for he felt a fierce determination to protect his property rights in Cloud at all costs,—the man was *his* and should remain so.

He lifted Cloud's head as gently as he could and let a few drops of the brandy slide down his throat. Then he dampened a towel, bathed his forehead and wiped off the blood. The man gave a groan and opened his eyes. For an instant he gazed stupidly at Micky — then:

“What's the matter?” he asked quietly.

“Hit your bloomin' nut,” answered Micky lightly. “Lie still a minute and then we'll tumble off to beddie!”

Cloud closed his eyes wearily.

“Have ‘a wee doc and doris’?” urged his

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attendant. “You knocked yourself out for fair.”

He poured out a strong quarter tumbler and held it to Cloud’s lips.

“Now just hang on to me, if you can,” wheedled Micky, “and we’ll soon have you where you belong.”

He put his arms under Cloud’s shoulders and lifted him, after an effort, to his feet. Then he guided the still half unconscious man into his state-room and tumbled him into his bunk.

“I must have given myself a nasty crack!” whispered Cloud. “My head feels as if I’d been chucked at a water jump and landed head on — in a pile of stones.”

“It *was* almost as bad as that,” said Micky, as he closed the door and loosened Cloud’s collar and cravat. “Now I’m going to undress you as well as I can, and after you’ve had another nip of brandy I’m going to leave you until morning.”

He fussed over Cloud as lovingly as a young mother over her babe, and the other, still confused from the blow of the stanchion, suffered himself to be made ready for the night.

“*Now!*” exclaimed Micky as, after having

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bandaged Cloud's head, he turned him so that the light would not fall upon his eyes, “try to go to sleep. I'll come in and see how you are every half hour or so, and whatever you do, *don't* ring for the steward. Understand?”

Cloud made no answer, and Micky slipped the soiled silk curtain along its wire and enclosed him in his bunk. Quietly he turned out the light, locked the door on the outside and put the key in his pocket. So that was done!

He leaned heavily against the deck-house. It was now nearly seven bells. Half an hour more and the yellow disk of the moon would begin to whiten, the stars would draw away to minute points in a paling sky,—then would come the moment when the faded magic of the moonlight would be shattered as with a single blow by the reality of dawn. You could n't say just when it happened on one of those white nights,—but take that jolly-boat, over there. One minute it floated in a sort of indistinct yellow haze, not quite focusable, getting dimmer and dimmer, grayer and grayer, and then—bang! it anchored itself—a plain ordinary jolly-boat in its natural green and white, and the sea which had been quite bright and color-

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less towards the east with the reflection of the moon suddenly became dark blue, almost black, against the burning dawn.

Micky climbed wearily up to the wireless house, pausing at each step. The mystery of the night was wholly gone. He felt jaded, disgruntled, depressed,—perhaps a bit the way Cloud had felt when he walked sternwards not so long ago twisting his hands. The joy of living had been knocked clean out of him and there was a dull ache in his heart that became a poignant agony of soul as he pressed the electric button in his little office and went over to where the picture of the little girl with the dog was fastened above his bunk.

Whatever might have happened to the real Evelyn in the three years last past, the little girl in the picture had not changed. Under the bushy curls that clung around her shoulders and fell almost to her waist she gazed smilingly out at him, with a glance archly innocent. Micky gave a kind of hiccough and with eyes suffused with burning tears took out his jack-knife and pried the photograph off the wall. Then he opened the drawer of his desk and pushed it under a pile of papers at the back.

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It was a fool thing to have a girl's photograph on your wall anyway, he decided. Mechanically he stuffed some tobacco into the bowl of his pipe, but he did not strike a match, and, exhausted though he was, he stood looking out of the window towards the east.

The long antennæ of the day were stretching up into the lightening sky. In a few hours the Captain — that irascible, illogical, altogether detestable captain — would be yawning in his bunk and ringing for his coffee, marmalade and — the news. Oh, he'd want the news, all right, in spite of his jaw that morning, — want it *all*, and growl because there was n't more! Micky gave a mournful laugh. Well, there was one bit he *would n't* get — at least not for some time, — the bit about the murder of the Earl of Roakby and the flight of Cosmo Graeme. Micky had no question about that. It was n't even debatable. Save a man, and turn him over to be hanged? Not on your life — not even if the murderer was your rival and by so doing you could get rid of him once and for all! No, so far as Graeme and he were concerned the Hon. Evelyn could choose between them and

do as she liked. But would n't the Captain roar, though, when he reached New York and discovered how he 'd been fooled, and would n't he send in a fine, eloquent complaint to the Marconi Company? Think of it! A captain with a chance to duplicate the Crippen case cheated clean out of it. Why, if Micky handed him everything Poldhu had sent out that morning old Ponsonby would be all over the ship by eight o'clock and have every passenger lined up for inspection. He'd have Cloud or Graeme, if that was his name, in irons and tossed into the brig before you would say knife! Not much! And yet—the dawn brightened—it was a hell of a hole for a well-meaning Marconi man to find himself in,—made you think of one of those paper novels the first-cabin female passengers were always giving you,—where whatever you did you were bound to do the wrong thing.

His eyelids drooped and his head began to feel as if it were made of lead. He wondered if it was n't time to go down and see how Cloud was getting along. His head fell forward. Why was he so done up? But were n't there some special circumstances in this particu-

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lar case, that rendered it almost imperative that he should disclose the fact of Roakby's murder and the presence of his murderer on board the *Pavonia*? Would n't the Marconi people kick up a jolly row, eh! He laughed sleepily. What did he care! Cloud belonged to *him*. He was a decent sort, after all, he'd be bound, if you only knew the whole truth, and Roakby was a swine — everybody knew that anyhow! He drew some paper towards him and began laboriously to copy his notes taken at one o'clock.

“Poldhu reports famine spreading in China. Germany not yet replied to France's ultimatum regarding Morocco. Considerable uneasiness in financial circles. Bank of England raises rate one-half per centum. Brother John died this morning.— Shall I sell? Terrible fire in New York factory. Scores of operators suffocated. Situation diplomatique tres grave —”

Was n't that all? He fumbled with half-shut eyes among his papers. Was n't there something about the *Carmania*? Oh, yes, here it was.

“Cunard steamship *Carmania* breaks turbine and is laid up for repairs; passengers

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transferred to other ships. Consols up $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Earl of Roakby reported dead —” No, not that! He rubbed it furiously out. Not that! Not that! And with the scrawled sheet askew in front of him Micky slid forward upon the desk and fell into a coma of utter exhaustion with his auburn head pillowed upon his arm.

The sun seared the horizon with a scarlet pencil, then poked a burnished disk above the waves, but the red beams which shot across the sea and into the wireless house did not awaken the sleeping boy. Groups of sailors in bare feet appeared and silently began to play the hose over decks already scrupulously clean, while others on hands and knees scoured them with holystone. The ensign was shot up. A champagne drummer disclosed himself on the boat deck in pink pajamas and disheveled hair, smoking a cigar. Below decks you could hear electric bells being rung for breakfast, or for trousers sent to be pressed over-night. Vague noises came from the scullery. Up forward somewhere echoed the faint notes of a bugle. Two or three gulls were already hovering high over the stern,

their wings ever and anon winking white in the sunlight. To the north a huge freighter running parallel to the *Pavonia* was proudly breasting the rollers. The breeze was fresh. It was going to be a good day. It was in the air.

At eight bells a white-coated steward came running along the deck and clearing the second-cabin reserve in two leaps bounded up the ladder to the wireless house. He was the Captain's steward — after the news. Just on the point of shouting indignantly to Micky, he stopped short in the doorway and smiled. The boy was still sleeping the sleep of oblivion, the scrawled copy between his fingers.

“Well, I'm blowed!” he muttered. “Poor little tyke's pl'yed out! Damned if I'll wyke 'im!”

He took the sheet with care from Micky's fingers and glanced over it hurriedly. What was the use of being the Captain's steward if you did n't get *something* out of it? Then his brow wrinkled.

“Germany not yet replied to France's ultimatum regarding Morocco.—Brother John died this morning.—Shall I sell?”

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“Holy cats!” he grinned. “Micky must ‘a’ kinder mixed things up. That’s the damndest bloomin’ noosepaper I’ve ‘ad yet!”

And so thought the purple captain, but he held his peace, for reasons best known to himself.

CHAPTER VII

IN WHICH MRS. HERBERT TREVELYAN COMMITS AN
INDISCRETION AND DISCOVERS SOMETHING WHILE
SO DOING.

THE bugle for inspection at ten o'clock
awoke Mrs. Hubert Trevelyan out of a
deep sleep, during the last two hours of which
her French maid had sat motionless by the
window, ready to spring forward at the first
suggestion that her mistress had regained con-
sciousness. The de luxe suite occupied by this
distinguished lady was situated on the upper
promenade and could be entered directly from
outside, so that what it gained in convenience
it lost in quiet. Inconsiderate passengers
tramped up and down outside late at night and
early in the morning, talking loudly — children
romped under the windows and threw balls of
celluloid and of rubber through the open door-
way — and — be it confessed — gentlemen —
and others — on pretense of being en route to
the smoking-room had been suspected of peek-

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ing through the slats in the shutters as they went by.

It is hardly to be thought that this last indiscretion would have bothered Lily Trevelyan in the least,—it is more probable that she would have accepted it simply as a tribute to her charms. There *are* such women and they filled the ranks of the Chateaux, the Montpasans, the Pompadours (I considerably avoid all English names) since the dawn of history. There is something quite charming in the combination of coquetry and natural innocence which does not object to the display of a soft tapering arm bursting from the spring foliage of a flurry of Parisian lingerie or of a well-rounded neck and bust arising out of a setting of the same tantalizing material. Sometimes indeed Mrs. Trevelyan unconsciously forgot to pull down her blinds and sometimes she complained to her maid of lack of air. But why criticize thus unkindly one of the most beautiful of women? Or why speak slightly of one who still wielded in a marked degree the most dangerous weapon in human destiny?

Sunlight, reflected from the waves, played in

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little globules of catoptric radiance on the white painted wall above her head — myriads of will-o'-the-wisp “Peter Pans” were there dancing and dodging, mingling and leaping, darting elusively hither and yon — like the pleasures of life which she had sought and was still seeking to grasp in her firm white hand. And she lay there lazily gazing upward at them and felt that life was good and that she had nothing to regret but much to give her pride, and only wished that the bubbles of joy were not evanescent (as she knew perfectly well they were) and did not burst even as you quaffed the wine of life. She lay there like an Egyptian queen or an Indian princess and, if we are to believe history, rather less cruel and more decent than either, and wondered whether she would turn over for another little doze or tell Fantine to bring her breakfast. She was in that state of complete comfort where the fact that, if she pursued the latter course, she would have to elect between marmalade and honey, made her quite ready to remain as she was, in a state of somewhat unstable mental equilibrium. She knew however that the unchanging laws of her nature would shortly drag her

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out into the sunlight and into the focus of men's eyes, and so she stretched her legs and snuggled down into her bevy of pink and blue silk pillows (yes, madam, some ladies do carry them on board ship) and good-naturedly set herself against fate, much as a happily and facetiously obstinate puppy will allow itself to be dragged around by its tail.

The nerves of the older women would have been set on edge by the noises around her,—but not Lily Trevelyan's. She had no nerves. Sailors ran up and down directly over her head. Below her she could feel the deep-down distant throb of the engine and the vibration of the screw. The seething of the waves along the side rose and fell on her ears with the movement of the ship and the wooden partitions squeaked and wheezed, with the slow but regular upheaval and subsidence, like the creak of a monstrous shoe. But these sounds did not disturb her.

Children began to throw ring toss forward, and to squeal and quarrel; down on the main deck the four male passengers who had monopolized the port (the best) shuffleboard area since the first day of the voyage were shovel-

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ing the disks into place and starting to play with boisterous enthusiasm.

“S-s- sh- sh- sh- sh- *click - cluck!*” went the disks. “S- s- sh- sh- sh- sh- *clock - click - click!*”

Two old maids began walking up and down in the sun outside and paused in front of the window.

“You’ve noticed her, of *course,*” remarked the first in a rather asthmatic but distinctly superior manner. “She’s the one that wears the daycollytay gown and the big string of pearls every night.”

“*Noticed* her! I should say I *had!*” answered the other in the cracked, nasal tones that Lily had learned to know so well as a child in Lowell. “Bad taste, *I* call it. I don’t know *what* it is about such women attracts men so!”

“Well, I’m glad I don’t know!” sniffed the other. “They say she acted scandalous over there and that she was the Prince’s —”

The woman lowered her voice and the pair moved off along the deck out of earshot. Lily smiled comfortably among her pillows. Poor flat-chested, withered things! No, they would

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never know what attracts the men so,— or at any rate they would never admit that they knew it. She could afford to be magnanimous. Indeed she was fully aware that either of her critics, had she dropped a handkerchief or a book upon the deck, would have breathlessly scrambled around on their bony old knees to return it to her with gracious smiles.

“Fantine!” she murmured drowsily.

“*Oui, madame!*”

“Ring for the stewardess! And order breakfast — honey, I think, this morning.”

“*Oui, madame.*”

The maid laid down the ruffle upon which she was sewing and rang the bell. She was a swarthy, wiry creature,— crisp, capable and discreet. Some day she would return to Paris and marry again, and educate her child, which just now was in an institution where she had placed it before taking service. There are many of these “widow-maids” in New York and London. But nobody knew about the child and nobody cared, and nobody would have guessed that each night she prayed to the Virgin with passionate tenderness for its safe keeping and, with the tears in her black eyes,

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covered with kisses a tiny pair of shoes surreptitiously drawn from the bottom of her sewing bag. No, the world of men and of most women would have classified her as a rather smart-looking, rather hard-looking, rather wicked-looking and distinctly good-looking French girl, who knew a thing or two and probably more than she ought, who had her price, perhaps, but realized when she was well off and stuck to the bridge that carried her over. Yet she had her other side, and every penny that she could save went into the Postal savings bank for her “*pauvre Philippe.*” She had been with Mrs. Trevelyan five years and during that period had never been guilty of the slightest indiscretion nor seen any. Such women sometimes become the mothers of deputies and cabinet ministers.

Now the maid pushed aside the silk curtain of the berth and assisted her mistress to rise, and when the starchy stewardess arrived with a hot special breakfast prepared under the second steward's own particular eye, Mrs. Trevelyan, rosy from her bath, was reclining in an armchair in a blue Japanese dressing-gown heavily embroidered with roses and dragons,

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while Fantine deftly dressed the heavy mass of golden yellow hair that hung almost to the floor. Mrs. Trevelyan's cheeks always glowed with unfictitious health, and now as she sat smiling and chatting to Fantine she presented a truly lovely picture to the eyes of the stewardess bringing in the tray.

“Good morning, Mrs. Dorrance,” said Mrs. Trevelyan. “What a glorious day!”

“Fine, madam,” answered the stewardess as she placed the tray on the wicker table in front of Mrs. Trevelyan. “It's lovely weather — and, if you will pardon me sayin' it as should n't — you're as lovely as a rose yourself this mornin'.”

Fantine doing her mistress' hair smiled the faintest undefinable smile at the directness and banality of this broadside compliment.

“Thanks, Dorrance!” laughed Lily. “You can say it just as often as you like! Why does n't everybody realize that nobody minds the *nice* things people say, no matter how undeserved we know them to be. And truly they have a great deal to do with how we look and act. I'm sure I really *shall* look lovely this

morning just because you say so, and if you only believed I was very, very good, I'm convinced I should be a saint.”

“Yes, madam,” answered Dorrance, feeling a bit out of her depth and also a little ill at ease, for although she was a stout, middle-aged and rosy-cheeked English party with a Santa Claus smile and motherly manner, she eyed human nature with suspicion and made a living as a detective in the United States Customs' Service. “Yes, madam,—thank you, madam.—Shall I go or can I get you anything?”

“Nothing, thank you!” smiled Lily “Unless you hand me my pearls over there. Fantine's hands are full of my hair and things.”

She nodded towards the dresser where on a red morocco case lay coiled the pearl necklace that she had bought at Voysans' in the Rue de la Paix the week before sailing with the money her husband had sent her for the purpose.

Mrs. Dorrance had seen the pearls before, had seen them daily, had been watching for them, in fact, when Mrs. Trevelyan had come aboard at Genoa, owing to the perfection of that system of espionage adopted by the Cus-

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toms Service over the American in Paris and the compulsory information extorted from the jewelers of the Rue de Rivoli and the Rue de la Paix in return for being allowed to do business in peace, whereby every important sale is reported to the eager officials. The necklace had cost her \$50,000. Against her husband's express advice she had spent the entire amount on the pearls themselves instead of reserving a portion of the money to pay the duty, but the obvious difference between the necklace offered her for 150,000 francs and the present one at 250,000 had been too much for her and she had succumbed to the soft iridescence of the handful of weightless things, had set prudence aside, and with the idea of getting them in somehow without duty had hardly hesitated before purchasing the more expensive string. And can she be blamed?

Perfect — every one — bluish white, almost opalescent at times, the necklace contained thirty-nine pearls, absolutely matched on each side and graduated exactly from the big one in the center to the smaller ones at the ends next to the diamond clasp which in itself was a precious thing of value. She took them from

the stewardess and held them up in the light, swinging them to and fro, gently.

“Beautiful — are n’t they?” she cried.

“Beautiful, madam!” gasped the stewardess in unfeigned appreciation, for she knew a good pearl as well as anybody.

“Yes,” continued Lily, “I care for them more than for any of my other things. Mr. Trevelyan bought them for me five years ago at Tiffany’s in New York and I wear them everywhere. I just could n’t live without them. No, nothing else, Dorrance!”

She poured out a cup of steaming coffee and crushed a honey-dipped Vienna roll between her white teeth.

“Dear old Dorrance!” she laughed. “If they were all as easy as she is! But Hubert would never get over it if he had to pay \$30,000 more duty on those pearls — never! I fancy I can manage. Surely I can hide them somewhere!”

“The inspectors are very thorough, madam,” ventured Fantine. “I am told that now they even make the ladies undress,— and they look everywhere! There is no escape at all!”

“Nonsense!” returned her mistress rather

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nervously. “They would n’t do such a thing. Anyhow, *you* could bring them in. No one would think of searching *you!*”

“I?— Oh, *madam!* I should not dare! They might put me in prison!” cried Fantine.

“Don’t!” snapped Mrs. Trevelyan. “You are pulling my hair. Well, I’m sure we can devise some way to fool the inspectors. Anyway, it does n’t do any harm to *try*. You can always pay the duty if you don’t succeed!”

“*Peut-etre, madame!*” answered Fantine, shrugging her shoulders. “I should not like to do it!”

By this time Mrs. Trevelyan had finished her breakfast and the maid had fastened her into a trim, ochre-colored costume and pinned on her hat.

“*Voila! Madame!*” she sighed, stepping back. “*Vous etes charmante! La plus chic!*”

Mrs. Trevelyan glanced at herself in the glass and lit a cigarette from a silver box lying on the dressing table. Then she stepped out on deck and walked erectly towards the stern. It was now about eleven o’clock and the edge had been already taken off the morning appetite

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for exercise on the part of the ship's passengers. The shuffle-boarders were still at their eternal game, but most of the others had retired to the saloon or smoking-room for bridge, or were tucked up in their deck chairs, dreaming over novels. Lily Trevelyan crossed the reserved second-cabin space, and, hesitating for a moment outside Cloud's door, climbed briskly up the ladder to Micky's office. The door was shut but, always ready for a joke, she opened it stealthily. Perhaps she could put her hands over his eyes and make him guess who it was! He'd *guess*, too!

But to her amazement Micky lay at his desk, his head on his arms, amid a riot of yellow sheets, sound asleep. He breathed heavily. He was, as she would have said, “dead to the world.” Poldhu or The Ushant might shriek across the ether waves, Tangier might summon impatiently, a sinking ship might send out the danger call of “S O S”—but it would be in vain. It would take more than a wireless message to wake Micky Fitz.

“Poor little man!” she whispered to herself.
“Poor tired, little man!”

She leaned over and brushed his hair with

her lips,— and as she did so she seized the opportunity of glancing at the messages in Micky’s penciled scrawl on the sheet around him. She absorbed the news about France and Germany, took in the situation diplomatique, made a mental note of the price of consols, observed that Brother John had died suddenly, and then started forward with half-parted lips as she read of the murder of the Earl of Roakby.

“My God!” she ejaculated. “Cosmo *has* done it! The fool! Why did he take a man like that!”

She was trembling with excitement.

“I never *guessed!*” she gasped. “I never suspected for a minute! Why, they’ll *hang* him! Poor Cosmo! — The idiot! — I wonder if Micky’s told the Captain. Of course! Lucky they did n’t see me with him last night! This is a go!”

She glanced hastily around the office, missed the picture of the Hon. Evelyn from its accustomed place and smiled in spite of her upset nerves. Funny coincidence — three men on the same ship, thrown together quite by chance, and all in love with the same girl! And three such men — a masher, a murderer



She read of the murder of the Earl of Roakby

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and a Marconi man! Yet she knew which *she* would have taken had the way been open to her — even though he had red hair, a pug nose, and freckles! The “way of a man with a maid”? Rather, if you please, the way of a maid with a man! Who can explain the idiosyncrasies, — the charming irrationalities of woman’s gift for unnatural selection?

So Mrs. Trevelyan, with a lingering look at Micky lying hot and flushed in the noonday sun, quietly closed the door of the wireless house and hurried back to the boat deck, fearful lest she should meet Cosmo Graeme and not know what to say to him.

VIII

IN WHICH MICKY HAS A STRANGE DREAM AND MRS.
TREVELYAN BECOMES WORRIED ABOUT PEARLS AND
OTHER THINGS.

MICKY dreamed, at the last, strange dreams. " 'T was brillig and the slithy toves " were clinging like huge leeches to the sides and stern of the ship, and trying to climb on board, while he, alone, in the moonlight, pushed their white jelly-like tentacles off the rail. But they came all about him and one larger than the rest swarmed its white pulpy body over and grasped him round the waist and legs and arms and held him helpless and smothered — and laughed a silvery, glittering laugh and dragged him to the stern, while Cloud sat cross-legged on the deck-house roof and played, " Ah 'l lend yo' ma' hat; Ah 'l lend yo' ma' flat! " on a tinkling mandolin. Then the " tove " pulled him gently over and they plunged swiftly downward into the boiling froth of the wake and were tossed around and

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around, still locked in a strangling embrace.

The water roared all about them and away up above, through the foam, he could see the stars whirling in spirals and Cloud still playing on the mandolin, then the “tove” released him and he worked his way through the dark currents for miles along the bottom of the ocean until he came groping through the coal chute of the vicarage, and found himself in the library, sitting at the desk with one of his uncle’s sermons in his hand, and the Captain’s steward was trying to take it away from him, singing, “Rocked in the *craydul* of ther *deep*, I lay me *down* in peace to *sleep*.”

Just then the sun rose and suffocated him, and he floated out through the vicarage garden until he lay in the broad noonday heat by the lilac arbor and became very, very happy and peaceful and sleepy — just like the song. There was a smell of violets all about him and Evelyn Farquhar came daintily across the lawn in a white frock with a big blue sash, smiling at him with parted lips and teasing eyes, and he kept his own shut and pretended not to see her. She came close and bent over him as he lay on the hot grass and touched his hair, and

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whispered in that low, sweet voice of hers,—
“I. L. Y.—but I’m engaged to Cosmo Graeme. Oh, Micky dear, why did you go away?” And he gave a great sob, for he knew she could never be his, and reached for her with his arms, but she vanished, leaving only the smell of the violets behind her, and he heard a tiny voice say right below his window, “Just knock him enough to push him over the line and you’ll stay in the ‘9’ yourself.” He knew it was the little hunchback—playing shuffle-board—in the lilac arbor. There was something wrong about the whole thing he felt indignantly, and struggled to his feet amid a shower of yellow papers.

The sun was pouring through the windows of the wireless house. There was a pungent odor of violets everywhere and—he looked through the window—Mrs. Trevelyan was just going down the ladder.

It came to him with something of a shock that he must have been asleep—and that the Captain had n’t got his news, and it bothered him for a minute until he remembered the other events of the night before and how he had kept Cloud locked in his state-room. Then

he quite forgot the Captain. His own back was lame and his muscles felt stiff and creaky. He must get right after Cloud; there was no question about that.

“Whew!” he whiffed as he threw open the forward window. “Smells like a chemist’s!”

He stooped laboriously and gathered the scattered sheets, noticing the absence of the draft he had prepared for the Captain’s use. Perhaps Mrs. Trevelyan had swiped it. Then with a feeling of relief his eye caught the jottings he had made of the news from Poldhu and the Roakby affair. Lucky *that* had n’t been stolen while he slept,—and yet, if Mrs. Trevelyan had been up there, no doubt she had read it and by this time it was all over the ship! No—she was Cloud’s friend. Of course she would n’t give him away! Or would she! Perhaps she had gone directly to Cloud himself and taxed him with it. Anyhow he must get busy and look after his prisoner of war.

He brushed his hair—the hair that something had touched—in front of his cracked sixpenny mirror, straightened his collar and tie, and swabbed his face and hands with the cor-

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ner of a towel stuck in the water pitcher. These primitive ablutions over, he felt in his pocket for Cloud's key, removed from behind the door an old worn cap to take the place of the one lost overboard, and slowly climbed down the ladder.

Outside Cloud's room he stopped and listened. There was nothing going on in there, and he knocked softly. There was no response. He thrust the key into the lock, turned it and opened the door. The stateroom was empty; the bird had flown. Moreover, the steward had been in and put things quite to rights. The place looked just like any other second-class cabin,—not a bit like the den of a murderer or the son of a marquis or of any other extraordinary or sensational person. The silk curtains bellied gently at the port-holes and over the berth; there was an overcoat—yes! the very overcoat Cloud had hung over the rail—peacefully hooked against the back of the door; and there were clean sheets and pillow-cases on the bed. No sign anywhere of Cloud's suicidal attempt. Where was he? Overboard, perhaps?

A shadow darkened the wall and the gaunt

face of the second-class passenger appeared in the port-hole.

“Good morning,” said Micky cheerily. “You gave me quite a start, you know! How on earth did you get out?”

Cloud left the port-hole and came to the door of the state-room. He looked very white and a neat bandage had taken the place of Micky’s improvised one of the night before.

“You forgot the steward,” he said. “I pretended to be asleep, until finally I could n’t keep up the bluff any longer and the chap let himself in from the outside. He did n’t notice that there was n’t any key.”

He held out a lean, muscular hand which Micky clasped firmly.

“How ’s your head?” inquired the latter.

“My head ’s well enough,” returned Cloud. Then, “I ’m afraid I put you to a lot of trouble last night.”

“Not at all! Not at all!” rejoined Micky as if saving people from committing suicide were a daily occurrence with him. “You see the old boat — maybe you remember? — well, the old boat sort of lifted herself at the psychological moment and chucked us in where we be-

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longed. Nasty place out there. My! You 've got a grip on you! My back 's as lame as after a house match at 'The Hill.' ”

“Did you go to Harrow?” asked Cloud. “So did I — I was in Sandford's.”

“Well, I was in Bailey's. We licked you three years running when I was in the house. Not *because* I was in it, of course. By the way, you 're not contemplating doing anything like that again, are you? You see I could n't guarantee that it would come exactly the same way.”

Cloud smiled a wan smile.

“I give you my word,” he answered simply, “as a fellow Harrorian, not to make a fool of myself again.”

He held out his hand again. Micky took it, and looked him in the eye.

“Honor bright?” he asked.

“Honor bright!” replied Cloud.

“Thanks,” said Micky. “By the way, you might drop up to the wireless house any time you feel a bit off your peck. I'm there most of the time, especially evenings. I ought to tell you, right now, that I inadvertently overheard your little talk last evening with Mrs.

Trevelyan. However, that's all behind us.”

Cloud looked at him inquiringly.

“You heard all we said?”

“Yes, I think so,” answered Micky lightly.

“Of course none of it is my business, so long as you don't try to deprive us of your company! She's a very circumspect lady, Mrs. Trevelyan! But take it from me, there's no place on an ocean liner to discuss private matters except on the end of the bowsprit or in the crow's nest! Even *there* some old woman from Putney would probably get on to what you were saying by reading your lips.”

He handed Cloud the key to the state-room. Cloud received it without comment, his innate English distaste for any display of emotion struggling with his genuine gratitude to Micky. Turning his back he put the key into the lock and, as he fumbled with it, he jerked out awkwardly a few disconnected phrases that contained among others the words:

“Awfully obliged — what you did last night. Really didn't know what I was doing.— Never forget it.— Must think me a damn coward. Try to explain it all some time.— Feeling down and out.”

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“Don’t mention it, old chap!” chirped Micky. “We all make asses of ourselves occasionally. Now I’ve got to deliver a few radios, but I’ll see you at lunch and maybe tonight you will come up and smoke a pipe with me?”

Cloud nodded and kept on fumbling with the key, while Micky, glad to escape, and fully confident that, for the time being at least, any danger of the attempt being repeated was over, hastened away to the purser’s office with his Marconigrams — among them the one for Mrs. Trevelyan.

The purser looked suspiciously at him as he shoved the yellow slips under the grating, but Micky wore an air of entire unconcern.

“A little slow in transmission,” said the Marconi man casually, “but the fact is I was done up and slept right through until this minute. However, I’ve dated ’em all this A. M. And anyhow nobody can get off this bloomin’ boat a minute sooner than New York,—that’s *sure!*”

The purser gave him a look of disgust.

“By Gad, you’re a rum ’un!” he remarked fiercely, although Micky was a perennial joy to

him. “I wonder you last a day — can hold your job a minute — with your infernal cheek and indifference! I *bet* you get the sack once and for all at the end of the voyage.” He glanced over the radios. “One for Mrs. Trevelyan, too!” he added ruefully. “Oh, you’d make an angel weep, you would!”

“Go on, Shylock!” growled Micky, sticking out his tongue at him. “Can you change me tuppence ha’penny? I would n’t have your little ‘dot and carry one’ job if they rated me with the ship’s surgeon!”

And he retreated to the scullery for a cup of coffee while the purser marked the charges and turned over the radios to the reading-room steward for delivery.

Mrs. Trevelyan had returned to her room and was gazing abstractedly out of the open window in a dim cloud of cigarette smoke. The news of Roakby’s murder had quite unnerved her. She had known him well, before her Trevelyan days,—too well for her own good. That he should have been put out of the way was no great loss either to her or to society at large. But that Cosmo Graeme — her friend — whose father’s house she had visited

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for weeks at a time, should be his murderer — liable to instant arrest — and (she shuddered) to be hung —! Could she sit calmly by and do nothing for him? See him run down and caught without raising a finger? Yet what could she do? Was not the information in the possession of the ship’s officers? She imagined them already in cold, impassive conference, debating as to whether it were better to arrest him now and put him in irons or wait until the ship should near the land and he could be turned over at once to the civil authorities. Cosmo Graeme — the youngest of a quartet of handsome, chivalrous brothers! Cosmo — the darling of the smartest set in England! How could he have! And then it came to her that perhaps Micky had not yet told the Captain. That perhaps she could persuade him to hold his peace and keep the matter secret until, at least, she could try and think what to do. And as she wondered, she puffed her cigarette faster and faster until it burnt her lips and she hastily threw it down. Yes, she must find Micky at once and use all her powers to induce him to become her ally.

“Marconigram for you, madam.”

“C. Q.”; OR, IN THE WIRELESS HOUSE

The reading-room steward touched his cap smilingly as he handed it to her. Impatiently she tore open the paper.

“Government inspectors wise to your necklace.”

She stared at it helplessly. Wise to her necklace! How could they? *Her* necklace? Impossible! It was just a joke of Trevelyan's! No, *he* never would have taken that amount of trouble for a joke! The Roakby affair faded out of her mind under the stress of this new and unexpected complication! She set her lips indignantly. She was sure the Government could n't treat its citizens in any such despicable fashion. Trevelyan was a ninny,—an old woman! What did he mean by wiring her? Was it to advise her to declare the necklace and make herself liable to a duty of some thirty thousand dollars, or was it simply to give her the tip that extra precautions would be necessary to smuggle it safely in? That was it, probably. Why, he'd whine for six months if he had to pay all that money! And he'd make her life miserable into the bargain. She crumpled the paper in her hand and tossed it into the scrap basket—where it was promptly found

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and read by Mrs. Dorrance within the hour.

Lily Trevelyan hurried back again to the wireless house. How foolish she had been not to act sooner and stop Micky before the damage had been done. Now it was probably too late.

She found him playing shuffle-board with the little hunchback who, used to kindness from all the world, greeted her with a smile, but she glanced at him quite coldly and to his surprise addressed herself to Micky with an imperative, “I must speak with you at once. You’ll find me at the stern.” And Micky, yielding the game by default, promised shortly to return, quite to the satisfaction of his cheerful little friend, who regarded him with awe and admiration and thought him the most wonderful person on the seven seas.

Micky found Mrs. Trevelyan awaiting him on the bench where he had sat and watched Cloud’s colorless face the night before, and her face, too, was pale and her chin quivered, and her hands in their fresh white kid gloves clasped and unclasped themselves in her lap, as she turned to him and asked with unconcealed anxiety:

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“Have you told anybody about Roakby?”

Micky had never seen her like that — without her mask of light frivolity and teasing insincerity, and he liked her better than he ever had before.

“No, Mrs. Trevelyan,” he replied. “Why do you ask?”

“Because if you have n’t I want you to promise me that you won’t — at any rate not for a few days. I can’t explain. Only something very terrible may happen if you do. Please don’t ask me. I can’t think to-day. When I — when I read it over your shoulder in the wireless house it bowled me out or I’d have waked you. I know I’d no business to read it, of course, but now it’s done. Please promise me you’ll keep it to yourself.”

She raised a serious, sweet face to his and laid a beseeching hand upon his blue sleeve. He felt a quick pang of compunction for his unworthy thoughts of her. Was it possible that this woman was anything but noble? Had he not done her an injustice? Was there anything but entire unselfishness in this tense appeal directed towards the saving of a friend?

“C. Q.”; OR, IN THE WIRELESS HOUSE

“Yes,” he answered slowly, “I’ll promise you that — if you want —”

He hesitated. But anything save frankness was utterly abhorrent to him.

“I might as well tell you,” he added simply, “I overheard your talk with Cloud, that is, with Graeme, last night. “I could n’t help it. I was just above you on the deck-house.”

“Then you *know*?” she asked quietly.

“The same as you,” he nodded. “I got it off Poldhu half an hour before you came aft. It’s a bad mix up. They’re sure to pinch him at quarantine. And I’ll never be able to cut it all out. It must be the biggest story in England! Cosmo Graeme! Why, I’ve always heard of Cosmo Graeme! He stroked the eight at Oxford, did n’t he? Give *him* up? *No* — I won’t give him up! Not for an old Ponsonby, or Scotland Yard, or the whole Marconi Company!”

“Oh, Micky!” she cried, her face flushing. “What a brick you *are*!” — It will be our secret, won’t it? We’ll not tell a soul! Give me your hand on it.”

She gave him her hand and Micky took it in his freckled paw and held it for a moment, and

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something coursed from her veins into his and made him tremble so that he let it drop.

“Good-by, Micky!” she whispered. “Remember!”

“Good-by,” he answered, his heart beating a little faster. “I’m not likely to forget!”

He stood there alone after she had gone with a strange feeling of exhilaration in all his body. The hand that had held hers still tingled from her clasp and his heart seemed somehow to have expanded like a toy balloon.

“My God!” he thought. “A woman like that could make you do anything!”

He waited for a long time watching the gulls, which without a quiver of their wings hung poised above the rail, and, by some unknown and unascertainable power of flight, were borne along through the air effortless, motionless save when a sudden gust deflected them for a moment from their angle of incidence, only to resume it instantly again and demonstrate how little man really knows of the secret laws of physical nature — to say nothing of the more complex mysteries of a woman’s soul. And as he watched them and looked once more into the foaming whirlpool behind the stern he remem-

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bered with a strange revulsion of feeling his dream of the early morning and how the “Tove” had clasped him in her arms with a glittering, silvery laugh and drawn him over the side and down into the stinging depths, and he was still struggling in her embrace when the notes of “Roast Beef of Old England” recalled him to the reality of an empty stomach and his onerous duties as an officer who ranked the barber and the head second-cabin steward.

IX

IN WHICH MICKY HEARS A CONFESSION AND IS FORCED TO DELIVER AN UNFORTUNATE MESSAGE.

UP in the wireless house that night Micky was kept on the jump until a late hour. There were more than a dozen commercials of all sorts. The *situation diplomatique* continued to get graver and graver; there were detailed accounts of the temporary disposition of Brother John's remains and his proposed formal interment, and conflicting items of information as to the stock market, owing to the Moroccan crisis. He dutifully jotted it all down and with ears hungry for English news waited for the "ZZ—ZZ—ZZ" from Poldhu. At last it came and Micky grasped his pencil firmly and began to write as the man in the shirt sleeves in Cornwall threw the leaping current at him through the ether.

"Press - for - transmission - only - stop - consols - off - one-half - per - centum - stop - Lloyd - George - down - with - severe - cold - interferes -

“ C. Q.”; OR, IN THE WIRELESS HOUSE

with - speaking - stop - Germany - replies -
France's - ultimatum - by - counter - proposi-
tion - generally - regarded - as - substantial -
compliance - stop - Tony - Burke - known - as -
The - Southdown - Slugger - knocks - out -
Jimmy - Devereux - at - Birmingham - in - four -
teen - rounds - stop - Bombardier - says - he -
will - certainly - defeat - Johnson - if - allowed -
to - fight - in - England - stop - Lord - North -
cote - injured - by - fall - while - hunting - stop -
Mrs. - Roberta - Menges - Corwin - Hill - sent -
to - Tombs - prison - in - New - York - City -
for - attempting - to - smuggle - jewelry -
through - customs - stop - vigorous - effort - on -
part - of - United - States - Government - to -
prevent - violations - of - tariff - law - stop - de -
falcation - in - London - branch - of - Royal -
Bank - of - Edinburgh - amounting - to - over -
five - thousand - pounds - confidential - clerk -
who - mysteriously - disappeared - last - week -
now - known - to - be - embezzler - thought - to -
be - on - liner - to - America - description - tall -
clean - shaven - blue - eyes - brown - hair - hol -
low - cheeks - aquiline - nose - last - seen - Paris -
in - company - young - woman - stop - no - trace -
of - whereabouts - of - Cosmo - Graeme -

“C. Q.”; OR, IN THE WIRELESS HOUSE

fourth - son - of - Lord - Varricks - Marquis -
of - Conyngfort - still - believed - to - be - mid -
ocean - stop - details - Roakby - murder - still -
concealed - stop - funeral - today - Castle -
Ruyn - Waterford - Hants - Scotland - Yard -
requests - thorough - search - all - Atlantic -
steamships - and - report - at - governments -
expense - stop - Lord - Varricks - prostrated -
stop.—”

There was a knock on the door of the wireless house.

“Come in!” shouted Micky, and went on taking as Cloud entered hesitatingly and stopped just inside the door.

“—Greatest - excitement - prevails - in -
England - where - alleged - murderer - was -
popular - in - high - society - stop.”

“Hearing all about you,” remarked Micky shortly, as he waved his visitor towards the bunk with his disengaged hand.

Cloud nodded. He looked more gaunt and hopeless than ever. Micky pushed a box of cigarettes in his direction and Cloud lighted one while the Marconi man continued to take down a miscellaneous assortment of information which, with its repetition, occupied another

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twenty-five minutes. During this period both sat mute.

“Stop,” said Poldhu suddenly, and sent no more.

The man on the cliff, Micky knew, was knocking the ashes out of his pipe and snapping off the green electric light preparatory to turning in. The air was quiet, except for the *Hohenlohe*, which was trying to flash a belated commercial over the *Pavonia* to the *Berlin*.

“MPA de DKV”—“MPA de DKV”—“MPA de DKV”—“Warum antwortest du nicht?” (“Why do you not answer?”) insisted the *Hohenlohe*.

Then he tried the *Pavonia*, but Micky shut off his coherer, threw his receiver on the desk, and took one of the cigarettes from the box with a grunt of disgust.

“Let him holler!” he mumbled.

“Who?” asked Cloud.

“That chap on the *Hohenlohe!*” answered Micky. “He’s one of those conscientious fellows that never sleep. Well, how do you feel?”

Cloud puffed nervously at his cigarette, tried to answer, and looked helplessly at Micky. Ut-

ter despair was written in the lines of his mouth and forehead. Finally he said in dead tones:

“I might just as well have done for myself last night. That’s better than — being caught and —” (he hesitated), “brought back.”

“Oh, Tommy rot!” retorted Micky. “A live dog’s better than a dead lion! You’re a long way from Bow Street yet. Lots of things can happen before we reach New York.”

Cloud shook his head.

“Nothing can happen,” he replied. “No matter what comes, I’m done for! You say you heard my talk with Mrs. Trevelyan and so of course you must know I’m Cosmo Graeme, a fugitive from justice, a man charged with murder!”

He dropped his cigarette on the floor and crunched it out with his heel.

“Why, yes — of course I know that,” answered Micky in a conversational tone. “You can’t conceal yourself on the Atlantic Ocean, my friend! It’s worse than Broadway or Regent Street. Now *I* should never think of trying to hide on a ship — if they spot you, *there* you are. You should have thought of that before you got on board.”

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The man on the bunk pressed his temples with the palms of his hands.

“Look here,” he said. “You did a damn decent thing last night. I may be sorry now you didn’t let me fling myself in, but that’s over and done with. I’ve given you my word not to try it again and I won’t. I understand you’ve got the news I’m wanted for Roakby’s murder and Mrs. Trevelyan says you’re going to hold it back. I don’t know why. I don’t ask. I can’t think. All I know is that just as I was going to do a cowardly act you stopped me. And, now, when I might be chucked into irons and held up as a murderer to the whole ship’s company — you come along and rescue me again!”

“Rather interesting, is n’t it?” said Micky easily.

“You’ve saved my life,” continued Cloud, “and — I wanted you to know I was n’t the ordinary sort of criminal.”

“I didn’t suppose you were,” remarked Micky. “Considering what I — what common report said about — the other fellow.”

“The beast!”

Cloud shook both his fists.

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“Was he?” asked Micky. “Tell me about it.”

Cloud took another cigarette and the match with which he lit it cast great shadows in the hollows of his cheeks. He rose and paced up and down the little room as if trying to find the right beginning. Outside, the night was opaquely dark and a strong breeze made it impossible for him to be overheard by any stray loiterer on the deck.

“Begin with me — and then how it happened, later,” he jerked out. “Cosmo Graeme, of Harrow and Oxford. My father is Lord Varricks — I’m the fourth son — our place is down in Hampshire — Parsley Croft, they call it.” It seemed hard for him to force the words from his lips. “We’re a hunting lot. Keep our own hounds. Always a crowd of people at the house. You know the *kind* of people — Mrs. Trevelyan used to be one of them. What they call the best people in England!” His lips curled.

“Well, this beast Roakby used to be one of them too. He was a friend of my father. There weeks at a time. Came when he pleased and had the run of the house. One of those

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ingratiating scoundrels that simply hypnotize the women. He lived all over — had a shooting in Hungary and an apartment in Paris, and a villa at Monte Carlo. You know the type. A married man that did n't live with his wife, and had n't any children.”

Cloud ran his hands through his hair and his voice rose in higher key.

“You know what some country houses are. You've read about 'em in the magazines and weeklies, I suppose. Well, ours was n't very different from the ones you read about. But Roakby made a point of what he called being a gentleman — a *gentleman!*”

Cloud turned suddenly upon Micky and grabbed him by the shoulders and his words came grating forth in a hoarse series of cries.

“What would you have done — if this beast — this cur — O God!” He gave a dry sob. “Our sister — our little sister — fifteen — Man! Think of it! — The degradation of it! The foul swine! My brother Basil came running into the billiard-room, looking like a ghost. ‘Cosmo, come here,’ he said in a queer voice, and dragged me into the corner by the observatory. Then he told me. It made

me actually sick. Oh, the swine! The swine!”

He was wailing; this full-grown man.

“Harold and Frank were somewhere about, smoking. It was a week ago Sunday. Harold all but fainted. Frank wanted to kill him at once. He was quite insane, I think. But Basil said he must die quietly — there could be no explanation. We could see him from where we stood, walking around on the lawn *with my father!* Basil told us to go into the billiard-room and sent for some brandy. Then he locked both doors and took down from over the mantelpiece the sword of old Roland de Pleinpalais — a founder of our house. It has a cross for a handle, and the sun was shining on it through the window. Basil stood it up on its point between us and we all laid our hands on it and swore to kill Roakby. Then he took the helmet that goes with the sword and put four slips of paper in it with a cross on one of them — I drew it. Then we talked it all over calmly enough. I was to go to him and give him his choice of either doing it himself or being executed — that was all. That night after all the guests had gone to bed, I found

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him smoking in his room and drinking whisky and soda.”

“ ‘Hello, Cosmo, old chap,’ he said, smirking at me. Then he saw something was up and turned white.

“ ‘I told him he must kill himself or the matter would be taken out of his hands. He turned yellow — *yellow* — and knocked the glass of whisky on to the floor. He could n’t speak.

“ ‘No,’ he said. ‘No! — It’s a joke, isn’t it, Cosmo?’

“ ‘Joke, you swine!’ I cried. ‘Have you a pistol?’

“ ‘Yes,’ he said. But he lied. He had n’t one.

“ ‘Give me twenty-four hours to settle my affairs,’ he whined.

“ ‘We’ll give you till to-morrow noon,’ I answered. ‘If it is n’t done then — we’ll do it for you.’

“ ‘I waited near his door all night, but nothing happened. There was a hunt next day and everybody was in the field. We mounted Roakby on an old broken-winded roan that dropped behind inside the first three fields. I

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clung to him. He saw it and could hardly sit his horse.

“‘Well,’ I said, riding alongside of him.

“He was shaking like a leaf.

“‘Cosmo!’ he stammered. ‘You don’t mean it, man?’

“I put my hand in my pocket and handed him my own pistol — a fool thing.

“‘You see that copse?’ I said to him. ‘Get off your horse and go in *there*.’

“He got off and almost fell, but he took the pistol and went staggering into the trees.

“I waited but again nothing happened. I must have stood there ten minutes. Then I tied the horse and went in after him. The cur was leaning against a tree and the pistol was on the ground beside him. He simply could n’t do it. When he saw me he began to swear just to keep his courage up.

“‘Well?’ I said. ‘Will *you* or shall *I*?’

“Then all of a sudden he made a dive for the pistol, and rushed at me with a kind of scream, and in the struggle it went off and killed him. *I* did n’t fire it; but that was a mere accident, for *I would* have. Only, as it happened, he

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shot himself — without intending to. I led the roan into the trees and rode after the hunt and told Basil what had occurred. He said that on no account must I stay in England because any defense would involve our sister. So I'm here. Hunted like a real murderer. I can never tell my side of the case and if they get me — as they're bound to — they'll *hang* me — just as they would Jack the Ripper. It's a pretty story, is n't it. A fine story for England! Now is it better for Cosmo Graeme to disappear quietly?

“That's how it happened. There's nothing more to tell. We even agreed not to let my father know. After all, the swine was dead! So I went to Paris and from there to Madrid and so on down to Gibraltar where I came aboard. There is a man who followed me all the way from Paris — with a woman. They sit at your table — Bennett is the name they go under. I have a horrible feeling they're trailing me. But they did n't have me arrested —. I don't know! But when you stumbled over me yesterday I began to think I was making myself too conspicuous by my absence.” (He gave a flicker of a smile.)

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“That’s why I turned up. But then I saw that man there and — then Lily Trevelyan saw me — and well — I just could n’t stand it — that’s all! I’m done for. I can *never go back to England!* Dear, rotten old England! My life’s over!”

He stopped and wiped his eyes which had filled with tears, and Micky could see what it had cost him to tell the story.

“Not over yet!” answered Micky, laying his hand on Cloud’s shoulder. “You may be done as Cosmo Graeme, but there’s many a good man who’s gone on living and done useful work under some other name than his own. You give me a chance to think it over. Maybe I can think something up before we reach New York. . . . And thank you for telling me.”

He held out his hand and Micky shook it silently.

“Good night,” he said, opening the door.

“Good night,” answered Cloud. He could say no more.

Micky returned to his seat at the desk and sat there for a long time in what is commonly described as a brown study, but in his case it was, or would have been by daylight, rather a

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study in red, for his face and forehead were burning, and now that Cloud had gone he gave way to the indignation that the story had inspired in him. The calm despair in which Cloud had finished it filled his eyes with tears. It was true — the man's life was done — save in some other country under some other name — (the talk of the Algerian from Sai-bel-Abbas came into his mind) — in Oran perhaps as one of the legion of dare-devils made famous by their reckless bravery against the Moslems. Why not? Only men who had nothing to lose by death could cope with men who believed that they could not die unless Fate has so ordained.

He looked out into the night, but its thick blackness gave him no consolation. There was no way of escape — Cloud was caught like a rat in a pit. Once the ship reached quarantine the officers would swarm over the side and go through her as with a finetooth comb, and they would find Cloud and recognize him, as easily and certainly as they would find Mrs. Trevelyan should they want her. There was no mistaking him. And his conduct — his prolonged absence from the dining-room at

first — his solitary habits — his unresponsiveness had already made him the subject of discussion and criticism on the part of the other second-cabin passengers. It would have needed very little to make him the object of suspicion as well.

Micky lit his pipe and shook his head. No matter how he projected his mind forward he could see no way out of it for Cloud. He would be under arrest before the *Pavonia* was off Fire Island, and safe on a steamer bound for England inside twenty-four hours. And then what? A quick trial in which there would be no defense, but where the court room would be crowded like a royal levee with peeresses in their own right and all the importunate distinguished women in London society — come to see Cosmo Graeme caught and killed, like a cotton-tail dragged out of a hole with a ferret clinging to his throat — and cracked on the back of the neck with a gamekeeper's stick! Oh, they'd be there, and all the pompous panoply of the law would be invoked to impress the jury and the public that English justice struck swiftly and with an iron hand — peer, peer's son and commoner alike — that in fact

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it took a peculiar pleasure in being able to don the black cap and sentence the son of a marquis to be hanged — particularly one who had been so foolish as to try to escape from its grasp.

Micky had sat through two days of it once and now it all came back to him in the night. He saw the jury whispering to one another in the box — carefully dressed men from the city in braided cutaways and “dickies.” He saw Graeme sitting by the rail with his counsel, the center of attraction and comment, and the bevy of powdered women in picture hats with their escorts, most of whom had played tennis and croquet with the prisoner and whose hearts were torn with excruciating pity for poor dear Cosmo, but who would n’t have missed his trial for anything in the world. He heard the usher tap on the jury box and cry “Oyez! Oyez!” and the crisp rustle of black gowns as the three judges came swinging in with long noses a bit in air followed by the King’s Counsel, a lean barrister with a wig slightly askew who strode after them like a thoroughbred led out for a warm-up. It angered him, the affected unconcern of these officers of the Crown,— as if they did n’t know it was the most screamingly sensa-

tional thing in England, this trial of Cosmo Graeme for the murder of the Earl of Roakby. That cursed K. C. acting as though he were going in to bat for his house at some school cricket game. . . . Then he was aware of a momentary flutter and of the clerk conferring with the presiding judge.

“Is the jury satisfactory?” Micky seemed to hear the latter asking.

“Perfectly, me lud.”

“Yes, me lud.”

Then through the haze of his pipe smoke he had a dim vision of the end of this human hunt. He heard the Chief Justice blow his nose, saw him throw back the hood of his gown, and listened while he proceeded to expound to the impressed and awe-stricken jury the law of England, which was that Cosmo Graeme, the prisoner at the bar, had not a leg to stand on and that on the evidence they were obliged to return a verdict of guilty of murder, and that he so charged,—and that they might retire to deliberate.

He saw the usher open the gate, and the jury, looking very much frightened, file slowly out, leaving the prisoner in his place, his head in

his hands. He saw the judges chatting among themselves and the K. C. stroll up to the bench and compliment the Chief Justice upon his masterly summing up.

“Not at all! Not at all, Mr. Willets!” he heard the Chief Justice say in a loud voice. Then he heard the usher pound again on the rail and saw the jury come filing in with averted heads. He noticed that some of them stumbled as they walked and the foreman’s mouth quivered as he faced the judges.

“We find the defendant—” the foreman paused and swallowed—“guilty—of murder.”

“Record the verdict,” he heard the Chief Justice say approvingly. “The jury find the defendant, Cosmo Graeme, guilty of murder. The jury may take their seats.”

Then Micky heard the Chief Justice blow his nose again and the room was hushed into expectant silence as the jury sank shakily into their seats. He saw the judge wait until the stillness was absolute and then place a ridiculous small black cap upon the top of his wig, and the usher motion to Graeme to arise.

“Cosmo Graeme—you have been lawfully

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convicted by a jury of your peers of the crime of murder. Have you anything to say why judgment should not be pronounced against you?”

“No, my lord,” he heard Graeme reply in a low voice.

“Cosmo Graeme,” he heard the judge continue, “the sentence of the Court is that you be carried from hence to the place from whence you came and from thence to the place of execution, and that the sheriff shall do execution upon you sometime between sunrise and sunset and that you shall be hung by the neck until you are dead —”

There was a knock at Micky’s door and the picture conjured up by his reverie was rudely shattered. By some trick of telepathy, perhaps, this unnerved man had been drawn back again to the wireless house.

“I saw your light still burning and I came back,” he said. “I can’t sleep. You don’t know what torture it is to lie in one of those state-rooms, staring at the ceiling hour after hour. I thought maybe if you had any work to do you’d let me stay here with you.”

“Sure thing,” answered Micky. “Sit down

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and have a pipe, while I see what that Dutch idiot on the *Hohenlohe* was after.”

Cloud took a pipe from his pocket and filled it while Micky connected up his detector and put the receiver to his ears. Sure enough the German was still at it — signaling frantically.

“MPA de DKV — MPA de DKV — CQ — CQ — CQ — CQ — CQ — CQ —”

“DSN de MPA,” answered Micky, “K — K — K —”

“MPA de DKV,” shouted the German, “T R ” (time rush)—“MSG ” (Commercial message)—“Time now 1.15, one message.”

“DKV de MPA,” replied Micky. “Time O.K. G.A.” (send when ready).

“MPA de DKV,” retorted the *Hohenlohe*. “O.K. - thanks - radio - via - *Hohenlohe* - *Umberto* - *Primo* - *Casa* - *Blanca* - message - No. - 1 - thirty-five - words - Ponsonby - Captain - *Pavonia* - you - are - herewith - ordered - in - compliance - request - Scotland - Yard - to - search - your - ship - for - escaped - criminal - described - press - despatches - Poldhu - and - report - direct - to - company's - office - Liver - pool - via - Casablanca - for - the - company - Hammersley.”

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The man on the *Hohenlohe* stopped sending and Micky threw him a “Thanks. Good night,” but he felt no thanks. On the contrary a great and horrible fear stole over him and turned his forehead cold. So the game was up! There would be no lapse of time in which to devise a way of escape for the man who sat there so helplessly, clinging to him like a child without a mother.

“I’ve got to deliver it!” muttered Micky. “I’ve *got* to deliver it, and when I do the jig will be up!”

He looked stupidly at Cloud. Could this be the end? Had he hauled him back for this? Saved his life to have it snatched away again?

“What is it?” asked the other. “Anything important?”

“So — so,” answered Micky. “The Cunard Company have ordered the Captain to search the ship for you,— and I’ve got to deliver the message to-morrow morning.”

X

MRS. TREVELYAN MAKES AN ERROR OF JUDGMENT AND THE CAPTAIN SCORES.

A GENTLE southern breeze, warmed by the bright rays of the September sun, fanned Mrs. Trevelyan's straying yellow curls as she sat outside the door of her state-room and idly turned the pages of the European edition — without the advertisements — of an American monthly. Somehow the loss of bulk in her usual slice of current literature gave her a sense of being defrauded. It was not that she enjoyed the contents less, but she missed all those ingenious devices to capture her jaded attention, the humor of the phraseology of the Yankee "ad," and the oftentimes startling representations of ladies and gentlemen in divers stages of undress and dishabille that peeped at her from between the leaves. Sometimes she recognized her own photograph, thinly disguised, advertising a cigar, a cold cream or a

hair tonic. She had no objection to this, and in fact rather enjoyed it. It was one of the misfortunes or prerogatives (whichever way you choose to regard it) of being a public character.

She had glanced through an article on how to dress alluringly on seven hundred dollars a year and had stigmatized the author as a pernicious fool. Dress on seven hundred a year? Why, no woman could be *decent* on less than seven thousand! Then she had skipped over a Yiddish dialect story laid in the lower East Side of New York City and written by a young woman who had never been east of Denver, to sip here and there the sweet insipidity of a love affair in which flossy girls with trim, athletic figures and strong-jawed, manly young men, clean shaven and clad in lower Broadway ready-made suits, dallied together towards legitimate matrimony — although the reader was always in a delicious uncertainty — on yachts and at “Cabarets” in the Tenderloin, along the elm-shaded walks of marvelous Long Island estates, or in the “gun rooms” of English castles. It was very amusing, this mixture of fluff and folly, of lingerie and love, in which the most

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reckless, risque situations only led to the most innocent of consequences, and wherein the excitement of the reader was relieved by a series of necessary anti-climaxes without which his nerves would certainly have parted company with his self-control. She had read at least twenty such, and she even knew a gentleman — a quiet enough little man — who made sixty thousand a year writing them. Sometimes she thought she would write herself. If she had written *herself* she would have been the best seller in either England or America.

She was just about to inform herself as to the habits of the bee — and particularly the queen bee — when a shadow fell across the pages, and Captain Ponsonby, attired in immaculate uniform and much gold braid, made his appearance at her side. Mrs. Trevelyan thought him a hideous bore but he himself was firmly convinced that he had made a deep impression upon her.

“*Good* morning, my dear lady!” said the gallant officer. “How fresh you look this morning.”

“And how fresh you *are* this morning!” Lily murmured to herself,—transforming the

words vocally to “Oh, good morning, Captain Ponsonby! How you startled me! I was deep in a story.”

“A *love* story, I’ll be bound,” simpered Ponsonby with a grimace intended to be tender but which would in fact have been thoroughly terrifying to an inexperienced person. “I want to propose — ”

“Remember I’m a married woman,” shot back Lily. “It’s not customary — is it — to be so formal in such cases.”

Ponsonby, who was a much-married man with five ill-assorted offspring, blushed furiously.

“I — I — I,” he stammered.

“You — you — you are a very wicked person!” interrupted Lily, shaking her head at him. “What *was* it you wanted to propose?”

The Captain, thus relieved, for he was a ponderous flirt and would have floundered for an hour if left to himself, grinned a fatuous purple grin.

“I want your bright eyes to help me do some detective work!” he whispered in a hoarse voice. “There may be a criminal on board!”

Under the veil of her golden smile Lily

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Trevelyan's radiant color fled. Something had gone wrong—the news had leaked out! Could Micky have tricked her? Could he have endeavored to save her feelings by promising not to do something which he had already done? For an instant she was disinclined to accept such a possibility, then, as it seemed clear to her that there was no other way for the facts to have become known, she decided that Micky had simply taken her in with his childlike, guileless face and made a fool of her. And there leaped into her breast a fierce hatred of him—a hatred as full-blooded and intense as her passion for him had been before—less because of what he had done than because she, whose business in life was deceiving, had been deceived.

“A criminal?” she repeated innocently.
“How interesting!”

“Yes,—is n't it! Of course he may not be on my ship. But they traced him to the Continent. Perhaps he came aboard at 'Gib.'” The Captain's face betrayed ill-suppressed excitement.

“What has the poor man done?” asked Lily, putting her finger between the pages

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which detailed the matrimonial eccentricities of the queen bee.

“Ah!” the Captain remarked teasingly with a peculiar and meaning smile. “That would be telling! However, I’ll say this much, that *you* would be particularly interested in the case if you knew who the man was and whom he had wronged.”

“You don’t mean to suggest that I am personally acquainted with this — criminal!” Lily flashed with simulated indignation.

Ponsonby smiled again.

“Perhaps,” he said significantly.

Lily took up her magazine.

“I don’t think you are at all nice,” she pouted. “First you ask me to help find a criminal for you,—and then it turns out that you imagine he or she is one of my personal friends. Anyhow, you don’t think I’d turn traitor, do you? My dear Captain Ponsonby, even if there were a murderer on board, and I knew him — I’d never tell. I won’t be a bloodhound, a hawk or a trained panther for you or anybody else.”

All the time she was furiously raging inside at Micky who had thus played her false. And

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then it burst upon her! What an idiot she had been! To think that a common little red-haired beast like Fitzpatrick could or would do the decent thing, when he was, or foolishly fancied that he was, in love with the same girl as Cosmo Graeme. Why, it was his one great chance! Turn Cosmo over to the law and Micky could go on making love to Evelyn Farquhar and perhaps either persuade her into a vulgar intrigue or stir up such a scandal that the Earl would be compelled to buy him off. She had seen many a young coachman, many a red-cheeked chauffeur, annex thirty or forty thousand dollars by judiciously tampering with the tender affections of his master's daughter. And as Lily Trevelyan was ready to believe the worst of anybody and did believe the worst of most people, she then and there stigmatized Micky as a rotten little sneak and consigned him to the lowest depths of the inferno. And a deep red slowly surged up her neck and into the roots of her yellow hair as she thought of the pilot-house and Micky asleep at his desk in the blaze of yesterday morning's sun.

A tiger-like resolve to stand by Cosmo to the last possessed her. If they took him it should

be not because of her but in spite of her. She almost forgot the Captain for the moment, but he answered her question and stood his ground.

“My dear Mrs. Trevelyan,” said he reprovingly, “I did n’t mean to suggest that this criminal might be your friend,—I only said you might *know* him. That’s an entirely different matter, is n’t it? You might *know* Jack Johnson, the prize-fighter, or Nan Patterson, or Oscar Wilde —”

“What a delightful circle of acquaintances!” laughed Lily, amused in spite of herself. “If you’d only throw in Harry Thaw, Tod Sloan, Abe Hummel, and Grand Duke Boris it would be really *chic*,—a real salon!”

The Captain seemed a bit annoyed.

“You’re a very witty woman,” said he stiffly. “I can’t argue with you.” Then he added more genially, “But don’t you want to stroll around the ship and see what we can do in the Sherlock Holmes line?”

It suddenly occurred to Lily that it was conceivably possible that if she went with Ponsonby she might somehow be able to divert his attention or throw him off the track, so far as Cosmo was concerned.

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“Certainly I ’ll go with you,” she answered quite cordially, getting up and throwing the magazine into the seat of her deck-chair. “Where shall we go? The fore-castle or the rear castle? — By the way, you have n’t told me what your criminal has done.”

“This way —!” bowed the Captain. “No, Mrs. Trevelyan, I want to give you a little surprise — if we identify the man. And you *will* be surprised! If we don’t find him on board I ’ll tell you all about it, afterwards.”

Feeling that it would be unwise for Cosmo’s sake to show too great an interest in either the identity of the criminal or the details of his crime, Lily walked along the deck with the Captain towards the reading-saloon.

“Extraordinary, isn’t it!” continued Ponsoby confidentially, “how we are able to keep in constant touch with England? I receive all the news, as you know, every morning. Now this man had no sooner committed his offense than I knew all about it and the directors at once wired me personally to look over the ship and see if I could n’t pick out the fellow among the passengers. I won’t tell you who he is — but I ’ll give you his description

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and ask you to help me” (he pulled out a slip of paper and studied it) “‘tall, clean-shaven when last seen, blue eyes, brown hair, hollow cheeks, aquiline nose.’ Ought not to be difficult, ought it? There can’t be many fellows on board all exactly like that, can there?”

Again Lily felt the blood leave her face. Yes, it was Cosmo fast enough. Micky had played fast and loose with her. He might even have confided to the Captain that she was a friend of Graeme’s. No,—if he had done that the Captain would never have talked to her so unconcernedly. Micky, probably, had simply delivered the press news, as she assumed was his duty, and had *not* held it back as he had promised. Yet he had not been a traitor to the extent of repeating to the Captain the interview between Cosmo and herself at which he had been — as she now believed — a deliberate eavesdropper.

“If there is any one on board who fits the description you will surely have no difficulty in finding him,” said Lily. “Where are you going first?”

“Let’s take a look into the reading-saloon,” said Ponsonby, who wanted as many of the pas-

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sengers as possible to see personally that he had been honored above all men. He stalked along with her, whispering intimately, and touching his cap in all directions. But there was nobody on deck who fitted the description and in the reading saloon were only the Boston bride and her husband, playing an exclusive game of piquet, three old women who were writing exhaustive narratives in their diaries of the astonishing things one saw on the Champs Elysées and in the Vatican, and an aged man in a gray shawl eating an orange, the odor of which permeated the air and suggested a dining-car on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad going through a tunnel.

“I don’t think *he’s* the one!” giggled Lily; “that is, unless he’s accused of the crime of eating oranges in the closed season.”

“No,” answered Ponsonby. “There are no burglars or murderers concealed in here. Let’s take a turn on the second-cabin deck.”

Now it was perhaps a rather peculiar thing that on the promenade deck in all the long line of extended masculine forms there was not one which fitted the very general description repeated by the Captain. There were flat-nosed

tall men, and pug-nosed short men; there were thin men with aquiline noses and fat men with almost no noses at all; and there was one very aristocratic person whose appearance tallied with the description exactly — only he was the royal chamberlain of King Gustaf of Sweden.

As they wended their way among the passengers, Lily, as usual, drew the glances of everybody after her. To-day she looked younger than ever and as, owing to the warmth, she had discarded her polo coat, the extraordinary beauty of the lines of her waist and hips were plainly visible to the admiring eyes of all the passengers — only to be truthful and to give her full credit she *had* no hips — to speak of. And yet she ate everything she wanted, never took any exercise, and did not “roll” each morning before breakfast!

Lily Trevelyan was an assiduous frequenter of “Jenny’s” department at her club on Madison Avenue, where that most expert of all masseuses gave her daily attention, and she occasionally walked around the Reservoir in the Park — with some friend of the opposite sex. That was the extent of her regimen. Otherwise she took no thought for her health

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or figure. Yet she had a perfect cure for any tendency to put on weight, a guaranteed recipe for remaining trim and slender,—a recipe which any one of her stout friends at the same club would have given nine-tenths of their fortunes to possess, well knowing that with a figure such as hers they could recover not only the nine-tenths of their own fortune thus surrendered but at least one additional fortune besides, and perhaps more. What this recipe was I shall not disclose. Some day when Lily Leslie is no longer Lily Trevelyan and the stress of poverty is upon her (which God forbid!) she may perforce have need to open a beauty parlor or a perfumery shop on Fifth Avenue or elsewhere and this secret will prove as much her fortune as her face was in her younger days. But do not pray for her downfall, ladies! Perhaps — I do not say it — that secret may be simply that you must be one of those fortunate persons that Heaven *intended* to be always slender and trim and hipless. If a quarter inch on the end of Cleopatra’s nose would have changed the destinies of Europe, how much of an inch on — well, I shall not go further into this interesting speculation. But I suggest the

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subject for the serious consideration of Professor Hugo Munsterberg of Harvard University.

And so this Hebe, this Diana — who was any age you choose and not a day over — walked along with Captain Ponsonby, looking like a woman of thirty,— not because she was good or bad, had lived well or ill, but because it was preordained that a woman just like her should exist, to mix things up on this poor little humdrum globe of ours, and set the sluggish blood of boot-blacks and butlers, of princes and prize-fighters, of clerks, cab drivers, kings and crossing-sweepers dancing through their veins, and to stimulate them to actions of all sorts — good, bad or indifferent — just like a cocktail, a sermon or a pint of champagne. Had she wished consistently to do so, Lily Trevelyan could have accomplished more good in the world, have been a greater influence for the elevation of mankind, than a Parkhurst or a Pankhurst, a T. DeWitt Talmage or a T. DeWitt Anybody. But unfortunately she was not consistent, and the wind of her emotions never blew long in the same direction although it often blew at eighty miles an hour.

Thus they proceeded toward the second-

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cabin deck and as luck would have it they had no sooner reached the bottom of the companionway than they met Cosmo Graeme face to face. He was crossing from the deck-house to the windbreak and coming straight towards them, and so unexpected was the encounter that instinctively he raised his hand to his hat and bowed to Lily, who gasped, flushed and drew back.

Captain Ponsonby grasped her arm tight, if tenderly, as Cosmo hurried by them without speaking.

“That’s our man!” he whispered tensely. “The very man! You saw how he recognized you. Fits the description to a T.”

But in the single moment required for the Captain to formulate this very obvious judgment Lily Trevelyan had recovered herself.

“I’m sorry to upset your theory, Captain Ponsonby,” she replied in her usual bantering tone, “but I never saw that mournful-looking person before in my life. I’m sure if I had, I should remember him — such a ‘lean and hungry’ Cassius as that! (No, my friend,— he may be a criminal but you can’t prove it by me!)” This last sentence was added as a sort

of mental foot-note to the paragraph of her verbal retort.

But the Captain besides being an Englishman, was the czar of his ship, and more than usually obstinate. Besides, he regarded all women as having considerably less intelligence than dogs,—and in his experience the better looking they happened to be the greater fools they were apt to prove. And now having the chance to go down into history as a man of marvelous perspicacity, he swept Lily Trevelyan aside and classed her brutally with all the rest of her sex so far as the matter of brains was concerned.

“I can’t help that,” he answered, calm in the confidence of his own superiority of intellect; “that’s our man. When you know more about the case you’ll probably remember him! — even if you don’t now.”

Lily bit her lip. Old Purple Nose was not such an ass as she had always taken him for. The game was up. There was nothing she could do now but play for time, and so far as possible prevent Cosmo’s immediate arrest and public disgrace. A wild scheme of hiding him in some nook or closet on the ship and cutting

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loose one of the life-boats flashed across her mind. It would be easy enough to bribe some sailor to so create the counterfeit presentment of an escape. But the danger and genuine futility of such a course instantly became obvious to her. No, she must use all her arts to induce the Captain to keep the matter to himself and to delay action until the ship should near the shore.

They had crossed the second-cabin deck with the apparent object on the Captain's part of asking Cloud's name of the second-cabin steward, when a short way aft of the deck house they encountered Bennett and his sister walking in the opposite direction. This was the first time that Lily had noticed the couple, since there was, to be sure, nothing about them which would have especially attracted her attention, but as the man had removed his hat in order to get the full benefit of the breeze, his face was brought out into sharp relief by the sunlight, and, one glance at him told her that so far as features and coloring were concerned he fitted the description received by the Captain as well as Cosmo, if not better. Certainly he had blue eyes, was thin and hollow-

cheeked, and he too was slightly bald and had curly hair; and yet he was no more like Cosmo than the Duke of Wellington was like Napoleon Bonaparte. The intensity and directness of her gaze embarrassed both the girl and her brother, and the latter nervously raised his hand to his face, possibly as if to conceal it, then changed his mind in the act and touched his cap to the Captain.

“Good morning,” returned Ponsonby stiffly.

“Good morning, sir,” answered Bennett confusedly. Something about the man recalled in a vague fashion a long-forgotten impression to Lily,—she had a statesman’s gift for faces,—a distant and not altogether pleasant recollection of her wedding to Trevelyan, with its crowds of relatives and acquaintances, its awkward congratulations and useless, ponderous gifts of glass and silver. Had she ever known this person? Had she perhaps seen him doing duty in some ungainly and clownish fashion on the occasion when the employees of the bank had presented her husband with a loving cup? Ah, that was it! This must be the man who had made the speech of congratulation,—had expressed in halting, insipid, and

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unconvincing phrase the regard in which these poor automatic machines held the autocrat who had lived by the sweat of their brows and the scratching of their quills, the man who came at ten forty-five and smoked a cigar in the inside office with a silk hat on the back of his head, the man who did about one full day's work each week while they slaved from eight until six, except on bank holidays. Yes, now she recalled him! He was the assistant cashier, who had come disjointedly forward at the wedding reception and in high-water trousers and weird white tie had made the “few remarks.” Bennett saw that she recognized him and his face changed color. Coincidentally Lily thought she saw a chance to divert the Captain's attention in a new direction, and as she squeezed his arm she bowed quickly to the man before her.

“How do you do?” she said in cordial tones. “It's a long time since we've met, Mr.—”

Bennett looked at her helplessly with an expression of agonized entreaty.

“It's Mrs. Trevelyan,—is n't it?” he stammered.



She turned to him with a face full of childlike simplicity

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“Yes,” she answered. “I’m glad to see you again. I forget your name.”

The man opened his mouth as if to reply but no sound came from his lips.

“Bennett,” interjected the girl at his side hurriedly. “You must excuse us,— my brother is n’t feeling well.”

Lily and the Captain passed on, the officer deep in his plans for the immediate arrest of Cloud. He was naturally exhilarated over his good fortune at so quickly identifying a celebrated criminal among his passengers, while Lily was furious at herself, the Captain, and especially at Micky for having everything go wrong. And as she believed that the main thing was to conceal the identity of the real Cosmo, however temporary the expedient might prove to be, and thus give the latter a few days or at least hours more of freedom, she resolved to take a desperate chance—for more desperate chances had occasionally served her ends—and to make a last and Herculean effort to put Ponsonby upon the wrong scent. So she turned to him with a face full of childlike simplicity and candor and said quietly:

“Captain Ponsonby, you noticed that person

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who just passed us, I presume? You saw the color of his eyes and hair? You observed that he recognized me? And I him. Well, that man — the man who called me by name — is the one you want — *Cosmo Graeme!*”

Captain Ponsonby turned upon her with an expression of utter bewilderment.

“Cosmo Graeme?” he repeated after her. “Who on earth is Cosmo Graeme? I’m looking for a man named Chilvers who’s robbed the London Branch of your husband’s bank of £5,000!”

XI

MICKY'S MIND IS MOMENTARILY RELIEVED

“WYKE up, hangel face!”

The Captain's steward grabbed Micky by the feet and yanked him violently up and down in his bunk. Then as the angel face slowly resumed its normal appearance of freckled good nature Mr. Binks proceeded to throw at its accompanying head with great velocity and accuracy of aim one pink and one orange newspaper, which opened like parachutes and descended like Navajo blankets upon his red hair.

“Bl'ime me! Wot a chi-ros-kooro o' color!” remarked Binks admiringly. “You livin' solar spectrum — see wot old Ponsonby's give yer! He's that tickled with the news and 'is special message that 'e's sent yer 'is copies o' *The Pink 'Un* and *The Winnin' Post*.”

“Last year's copies?” asked Micky, yawning.

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“Nanty! The latest — wot come on board at Gib.,” answered Binks. “Great doin’s this mornin’! Escaped criminal discovered on board the *Pavonia* owin’ to perspicosity o’ the line’s most trusted hoffer! Wot d’ye s’y? Somethin’ ’ot, eh?”

Micky suddenly sat bolt upright.

“Eh?” he stammered. “Who? What?”

“Sure!” replied Binks, sitting down on the bench and lighting a pipe. “One o’ your own particilar pets.”

Micky sank back and drew the bed clothes up around his face. So it had come as soon as this!

“Yep!” continued Binks, enjoying the sensation he was creating. “Hidentified by your ’ighfalutin’ friend Mrs. ’Ubert Trevelyan!”

“Mrs. Trevelyan!” repeated Micky aghast. Could it be possible after their conversation of yesterday at the stern?

“Nailed ’im solid on the main deck!” rattled on Binks. “She and the Captin covered the ship first thing this mornin’. Caught ’im aft. Reg’lar female Sherlock ’Olmes. O’ course she *knew* ’im. Robbed her husband’s bloomin’ bank!”

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“Wha-at?” cried Micky, throwing back the clothes. “What bank?”

“Royal Bank o’ Edinburgh,” answered Binks. “Swiped five thousand golden soverings! Bennet’s ’is nyme. Feller with the girl as s’ys she’s ’is sister. *I s’y she ain’t ’is sister! You see now!*”

A moment more and Micky was throwing on his wardrobe and cross-questioning the acquiescent Binks.

“Sure, did n’t you take it off Poldhu yerself last night? Description an’ all? *You* must be batty! And you took the service message for the Capting to search the ship. Wyke hup, you sleepin’ beauty, you!”

Then, like a flash of light into a dark cavern, intelligence dawned on Micky’s drowsy brain. And he had never even *thought* of it. Cosmo Graeme’s shocking and dramatic narrative had driven all else from his mind, or he would have realized that since he had transmitted no information concerning Lord Roakby’s murder to the Captain the latter could never for a moment have connected the message to search his ship for an escaped criminal with anything except the defalcation from

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the bank. And by a fortunate coincidence — fortunate for Graeme, if not for Bennett — the description had fitted both of them and Fate had sacrificed the one to the other! So Bennett was a criminal! He did n't look it,— and yet there was no room for doubt.

“Is Bennett his real name?” he asked.

“No — Chilvers — James Chilvers,” answered Binks rapturously. “A bloomin' clerk. Mrs. Trevelyan knowed 'im at onct. Some doin's, *I* calls hit, for this old tub! Well, I must be goin' or Ponsonby 'll tyke my hair off. Lemme see *The Pink 'Un*, when you 're done with it.”

He made his departure lingeringly while Micky completed his toilet and glanced at the front page of *The Winning Post*, that edifying sheet edited by the celebrated Bob Sievier, and “having the largest circulation in the world of any paper costing more than a penny.”

Graeme seemed to have more lives than a cat! He could n't drown — must have been born to be hung. But evidently not just yet. Micky descended to the second cabin and bolted a bowl of coffee with some toast and marmalade.

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“Great hexcitement, sir!” said Dobson, jauntily. “Our table’s drawn the grand prize in the lottery!”

“So I hear!” answered Micky. “What have they done with him?”

“Locked ’im hup in ’is state-room,” replied the steward. “The girl’s gone clean off her ’ead! Poor little thing!”

“Too bad! Too bad!” acquiesced Micky, who hated to see anybody in misfortune. “Be sure and take her a nice lunch, Dobson. She ’ll need it — and Bennett too.”

He left the table and glanced up and down the deck for any sight of Graeme, but the latter was not to be discerned, and he ascended again to the wireless house to smoke an after-breakfast pipe and ponder on the new complications in his little floating world. The *Post* and *The Pink ’Un* still lay where Binks had thrown them on the bunk. Outside the sun was radiating a fierce glare from the white paint. The wireless house was cool and shady. He put his feet on the operating desk and took up his favorite weekly. With interest he read:

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Mr. Bettinson was busy last week. Whilst at Cardiff he there made a match between Jim Driscoll and the Frenchman Jean Poesy, who lately defeated Digger Stanley at headquarters. The men are to box the best of twenty rounds at the National on Monday in Derby week, October 3.

But Micky's interest in the “fancy” was secondary to his love of horses, and he turned his eye to the racing columns. He wondered what would become of Roakby's racing stable now?

RACES TO CLOSE

Nottingham and Newark Hunts Steeplechase meeting will take place on Monday and Tuesday, October 15th and 16th, 1912.

Handicapper — Mr. T. F. Dawkins.

FIRST DAY

The Nottinghamshire Selling Handicap Steeplechase of 150 sovs. for four-year-olds and upwards; winners extra; the winner to be sold by auction for 50 sovs.; the second to receive 10 sovs. out of the plate; entrance 2 sovs. and 3 sovs. extra for starters. Two miles.

The Consolation Handicap Hurdle Race Plate of 80 sovs., for four-year-olds and upwards; winners extra; the second to receive 5 sovs. out of the plate; entrance 2 sovs., and 1 sov. extra for starters. About two miles and three-quarters, over hurdles.

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He 'd give his ears to be there! He had n't seen a race for three years except a joke of a one at Buenos Ayres,—niggers up. It was good to see the old *Pink 'Un* again! And to think of Ponsonby taking it! He began to think better of Ponsonby. He glanced on:

CRUELTY TO OYSTERS

To the Editor of the "Sporting Times," otherwise known as the "Pink 'Un."

DEAR SIR: I see it reported in to-day's papers that President John Craft of the Alabama State Oyster Commission is trying to pass a law "making it a criminal offense to eat an oyster unless it has been humanely killed." This is right!

Just because an oyster cannot yell and wriggle when its shells are torn violently asunder and it is cut from its base and speared with a fork, and sprinkled with salt, pepper and vinegar, is no reason for concluding the mollusc has no feelings.

As a matter of fact, it does feel pain, and it suffers dreadfully. All this could be avoided if the oyster were killed before being served. It could be slaughtered quickly and mercifully, and it would come to a peaceful end.

Yours molluscilly,
W. H. SMITH.

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Smith was all to the good, grinned Micky. What a relief it was to have the strain of that Graeme business eased momentarily!

He drew contentedly on his pipe.

NOTES TO QUERIES

C. F. M.—Bottomley is pronounced as spelt; not Bholmondeley, articulated as Bumley.

J. H. M.—It was Oscar Wilde who spoke about Mrs. Langtry, when in America, having an outdoor photograph taken “with the Falls of Niagara as a kind of unpretentious background.” Nor do we want the very long spun out lines dealing with “the rather primrose.”

SERPENTINE.—H. wins the bet; the last favorite to win the Lincolnshire Handicap was uninsured.

W. A.—Have handed it over to Mr. Pitcher, who is pondering a volume on “Good Tunes and Old Fiddles,” opening with Mrs. Werry (at the age of fifty-six) blubbering over Byron at Smyrna and depriving him of a lock of his hair.

D. D. R.—Too lurid for cultured readers.

A. F. A.—Selina Young, “the Female Blondin,” crossed the Thames on a rope stretched from the Battersea shore to Cremorne Gardens in 1861. We have never heard of the other lady.

CARRIE UPSCHER.—It may have been accounted a good story hundreds and hundreds of years ago, when there was a land connection between Europe

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and America, and Hull and Leith were on the coast of Norway, but it reads a bit old-fashioned now.

T. S. M.—The race was won by Mr. Solly Joel with Bendy Tree; Billy the Verger could only get seventh.

A. W. A.—Was very popular four reigns ago, or about the time when Lady Dorothy Nevill tells us she “remembers Lady Cardigan as a girl dancing the Cachuca with great verve.”

BARMY.—Because both papers are practically owned by Cadbury, the cocoa man.

OLAF.—Quite good for private circulation, but not to put into print.

“How it took him back home! Back to crowded London — back to the green turf — to the smell of stables, to the Crystal Palace, to the cliffs of Dover,—to dear old England. He let the paper fall and his mind turned to the Bennetts and their trouble. How the poor little devil of a girl must feel! Why, it was only a couple of days ago that they had been up in the wireless house and he had explained everything to her. *Was* she his sister, he wondered! No wonder the fellow looked sick, if he'd stolen five thousand pounds! But, if he had, why did they travel second cabin? Then came a sound of steps on the roof of the deck-

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house and Binks reappeared waving a sheet of paper.

“Marconigram from the Captin tellin’ wot a bloomin’ ’ero ’e is!” announced the latter.

“Thanks,” said Micky, bringing down his feet. “Here ’s *The Pink ’Un*,—I’m done with it.”

Binks grabbed up the sheet and hurriedly left the office for his own quarters, there to devour greedily its engrossing contents.

“Cunard, Liverpool,” ran the Captain’s message. “Criminal wanted discovered to-day on *Pavonia*. Placed under immediate arrest. Await instructions New York.

“Ponsonby.”

Micky laughed. Just at the present juncture things seemed to be going Graeme’s way. The poor old Captain had worded his radio so that it applied to either of the two,—Chilvers or the other. There was luck for you! If he had said “Chilvers discovered to-day,” Scotland Yard would have radioed him to look for Roakby’s murderer as well, and all would have been over—again. Heaven must be looking out for this unfortunate son of a Mar-

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quis, even if it had turned a cold and neglectful shoulder upon the more humble clerk. He threw on his mains and relayed the message on to New York via the *Berlin* for transmission through Wellfleet and Crookhaven to Liverpool.

XII

MRS. TREVELYAN HAS A BAD QUARTER OF AN HOUR

ON a somewhat murky afternoon about a week later, the Boston bride and groom, Lord Ashurst, and Mrs. Trevelyan were playing their customary afternoon game of bridge in the *Pavonia's* smoking-room, in dignified unobtrusiveness, for ten cents a point. Luck had deserted Lily and she already owed Ashurst some fifty pounds and the Boston bride one hundred and fifty. But she always endeavored to "even up" if possible and, now that there were only two days left of the voyage, was making a last frantic effort to get back what she had lost by "doubling" and "doubling again" and "playing it alone." Now as she lost again to the Boston lady she rang the bell impatiently for the steward and said sharply:

"Boy, bring me a whisky and soda! What will you have,—you others?"

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The bride, who was winning, shook her head.

“I’m on the wagon,” she smiled. “Still, you may bring me a sherry and bitters.”

“B. and S.” grunted Ashurst.

“Gin ricky,” added the Bostonian.

“’K you” (he pronounced it exactly like the letter “Q”), said the steward as he bustled off.

The bride offered Lily a cigarette and lit one herself, and the blue smoke slowly drifted upwards until it caught the draft from the ventilator and shot in a thin, straight line out of the nearest port.

“Captain says we’ll dock day after tomorrow,” remarked Ashurst.

“Are you going to declare anything?” asked the bride of Lily.

“I had n’t thought,—are you?” returned Mrs. Trevelyan.

“Well, really I have n’t anything in particular,” replied the other. “A few dresses and some lace. I suppose I shall declare a dress or two. The lace I can slip into my camera. You can always take the inspector’s name and address and send him something. Of course

there is n't any *need* to declare anything,— but I usually do just for form's sake.”

At this juncture the boy returned with the drinks and the subject was abruptly dropped only to be resumed upon his departure. Lily handed him a crown and brushed aside the change.

“Q,” he chortled, and disappeared.

“Beastly nuisance! — that Customs business,” drawled Ashurst. “The beggars bore the life out of a fellow! And those damn ‘declarations.’ Even if one wanted to put anything down one could n't remember it! I usually write ‘one pipe — 2 and 6,’ and let it go at that.”

“It would n't do me much good to declare a pipe, Ashurst,” remarked Lily lazily. “What do you suppose the women do who really have a lot of things — jewelry, for instance? Nobody ever pays on anything, so far as I can see. But suppose the inspectors really *looked?*”

“Why, as you say, nobody ever pays on jewelry,” said the bride. “It's so easy to hide. How on earth could they ever find a lot

of loose diamonds or pearls? I had a friend that did an awfully clever thing once — was n't it, Lawrence? She had a pair of pearl earrings,— oh, great big ones,— and her husband had some shirt studs, worth over fifteen thousand dollars all together. She could n't think *what* to do at first, and then she had a brilliant idea — she's *awfully* clever. They took his revolver and emptied out the shells and put the pearls in the cartridges instead of powder and placed the bullets on top of them just as they were in the beginning. Was n't that neat?”

“Diabolical!” assented Lily.

“I knew a chap that invented something better than that,” put in Ashurst. “You know there are n't any inspectors around after everybody has left the ship. Well, this fellow was bringing in a pearl necklace for his wife — cost nearly \$20,000. He did n't declare anything and walked right through the inspectors. A couple of days later he went down to the office of the Company and got a card to go over and look at the ship, which was lying at the dock with only a few of the crew on board. The chap at the gangway let him up and he found

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a steward who unlocked his state-room for him. Then he got the necklace, which he'd hidden there, and brought it ashore,—no questions asked.”

“Where'd he hide it?” inquired Lily.

“Why,” said Ashurst, “you know those ventilators for the forced draught? Well, he just tied a string to it and lowered it in. No one would think of looking for anything there, would they?”

“I think he took a good many chances!” remarked the bride decidedly. “What's the matter with getting one of the officers or a stewardess to bring anything you happen to have ashore for you? Nobody ever searches *them*. My brother gets all his cigars that way. Why, either the assistant purser — or the second steward — is always glad to earn an extra tip. So is any one of them. In that way you don't take any risk at all.”

“By George! there you go!” laughed Ashurst. “It's always the women who corrupt the men!”

“Well, if the Government is bound to have such ridiculous and unjust laws, it must expect people to break them!” exclaimed Lily hotly.

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“Why should n’t I bring in dresses or anything else that I have bought and paid for? I call it *stealing* — simply stealing — for them to make me pay over a lot of money for my own things! You can’t get anything fit to wear in America, anyhow!”

“That ’s right,” said the Boston man judicially.

“I should say not!” assented Ashurst. “By the way, where do you get your clothes, old chap?”

“Poole’s,— ever since I wore kilt-skirts!” answered the Boston man as if insulted by the question. “Where d’you get yours, may I ask?”

“Feller in Hanover Square,” answered the other. “Peddler ’s his name. Rippin’ good cloth. Try him, sometime!”

“Thanks,” said the Bostonian, scribbling down the name on the back of a card. “Well, are we going to play any more?”

“Oh, let ’s cut it out!” said Lily. “I ’m so bored with everything — present company excepted, of course — on this ship, I could scream. What ’s the news?”

“Nothing,” answered the Boston man

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gloomily. “We have n’t had a storm and nobody has even had the relief of being seasick — I mean,— that is to say,— the monotony has not even been interrupted to that extent.”

“Hear! Hear!” exclaimed Ashurst. “I don’t want my monotony interrupted that *way*. Speaking of being seasick, there ’s an old woman at my table that was jolly well scared she was going to give up the first day. She asked our steward what to do. He said — Ha! Ha! — what d’you suppose? — ‘So long as you don’t *float your food*, Madam, you ’ll be all right!’ He meant, you know, she should n’t drink too much. He ’s a card, that fellow!”

“Ashurst, you ’re disgusting!” drawled Lily. “I ’m not interested in seasick stories. It ’s almost enough to make one ill just to hear you talk. I think I ’ll go out and stroll ’round a bit.”

“Shall I come with you?” asked Ashurst plaintively.

“No, thanks!” she retorted. “I want to invite my soul! See you all later.”

She got up and crossed the deck to her state-room, where Fantine had drawn the easy chair close to the door, and rather disgustedly she

threw herself into it, directing the maid to order some tea from the steward. The whole day had been a failure from start to finish, and it was now five o'clock and almost over. Ever since her ridiculous break with the Captain — a break due to her foolish readiness to believe that Micky had deceived her — she had felt utterly out of patience with herself.

Not that she was particularly to blame. How was *she* to know there had been an embezzlement at the Bank of Edinburgh in addition to the Roakby affair, one following close on the heels of the other, and that Scotland Yard had sent out descriptions of both fugitives. And poor little Micky! What an injustice she had done him! The boy was a trump — as she had always thought! He had mentioned nothing to her about the Bank of Edinburgh. But why should he? He probably did n't know that her husband was connected with it, and it was the most natural thing in the world for her to have assumed that if the Captain was looking for anybody he *must* be looking for Cosmo. But her *ridiculous* lie! And her bungled, half-hearted and altogether unconvincing excuse to Ponsonby that she was

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trying to mix him up just for fun! Just for fun! She would n't try any such fun again,—at any rate not with *him!* He had done with her. That was clear enough, and he had not come down into the saloon to a single meal since she had so foolishly tried to make him think that Chilvers was Cosmo Graeme. What a wild stroke that had been! The worst ever! And now more than likely Ponsonby had a sneaking suspicion that Cosmo was a crook too — traveling as he was under an assumed name. How lame had been her attempted explanation to the effect that he was in fact a student of practical sociology! She felt hot with disgust at the thought of it. The whole thing had been too absurd! There she had been striving and lying to divert attention from Cosmo when all the time the Captain had been looking for an entirely different person,—a miserable, consumptive drudge of a clerk, whom she afterwards had been compelled to identify as Chilvers in order to prevent the Captain from arresting Cosmo. What a mixed-up performance it had turned out to be! And yet, after all, what a natural mistake it had been on her part.

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Now the whole ship was talking of the extraordinary coincidence by which she had stumbled upon the very man who had robbed her husband's bank! It had made a terrific sensation, particularly when the officers had taken him and locked him up, half fainting, in his state-room. And now there was a guard pacing up and down, in front of his door! And Cosmo was still free to come and go as he chose,—but for how long? Only until the pilot should come aboard with his bundle of papers and the Captain should read all about it, and begin to wonder why on earth he had n't heard of it before. Then he'd know he had Cosmo Graeme on board for she had told him so,—fool that she was! And Cosmo would either have to jump overboard or be thrown into irons! And *she* was to blame for it! No one else.

Everything was going wrong. There was her necklace — what was she going to do with that? She must decide shortly or she would certainly have to pay the duty on it. Thirty thousand dollars! She could n't pay any such sum,—it would be too ridiculous. Yet after what Fantine had told her about the stringency

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with which the regulations were being enforced she had no wish to try to smuggle it in herself. Yet somehow it must be done! Thirty thousand dollars duty? It would be a fortune for some people! And then the conversation in the smoking-room came back to her and she wondered if she could n't get somebody on the ship to take the necklace in for her,—Micky perhaps. If he did n't want to do it at first *she'd* persuade him. Why, he could fetch it to her several days after they landed and nobody would be any the wiser. And she'd have one on Trevelyan! He even might be willing to shell out for a new motor on the strength of her little coup.

The sun was setting into a bank of gray and crimson cloud that lay along the horizon like a sash of watered silk. People were beginning to take their ante-prandial walk around the ship. Hoydenish girls tramped lankily up and down in front of her, hanging on to one another's arms, giggling and shrieking with laughter. The doctor, a neat person, who rather fancied himself in his blue uniform, was strolling up and down with two overgrown misses of fifteen, who thought him the most

fascinating man they had ever met. Out forward the immigrants were gyrating in circumscribed circles to the accompaniment of an accordion playing “Waltz me around again Willie! ’round and ’round and ’round!” The bow rose and fell slowly on the long surge. How happy they were! And they were going to a life of drudgery,—in sweat-shops, kitchens, or Minnesota farms! Lily shuddered! Thirty thousand dollars!

“Fantine!” she called sharply.

“Oui, Madame,” answered the maid, obediently appearing out of the recesses of the state-room.

“I wish you to put my necklace in a cardboard box, if you can find one, and do it up carefully in a piece of paper.”

“Oui, Madame,” replied Fantine. “I can use the box for Madame’s ruching.”

“Yes, that will do,” said Lily. “Mind you tie it up neatly, in the smallest possible parcel.”

When Fantine was gone Lily lay back and with half-shut eyes watched the horizon turn from rose to purple, and from purple to slate. Strands of mackerel cloud barred the western sky drawn together in a focus at the point

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where the sun had sunk, and there was a dampness in the air that seemed to presage a change in the weather. Well, anyhow, they had had a perfect trip so far. One day of rain would n't matter so much. Already she had seen shore birds flying about the ship, and one or two lines of smoke on the distant circle told her that they were converging upon the course of other western bound steamers. Soon the red eye of Fire Island light-ship would begin to blink, soon the Statue of Liberty would raise its burning torch and the tall buildings on the end of Manhattan would poke their heads above the sea. And then dust, motor gas, the confusion and clatter of New York — and — Trevelyan! She gave a shrug of disgust. It sickened her to have lost a thousand dollars to Ashurst and that trim snip from Boston,— that conceited child who thought existence beyond the purlieus of Beacon Street and the North Shore quite impossible. And Cosmo? What of him? Would they come down the harbor with a squad of officers and put the “bracelets” on him in view of the whole crowd of gossiping passengers? Would the papers print full page stories about Roakby and Parsley Croft, with

photographs of Cosmo led off between detectives with shackles on his wrists? She could n't stand it! Maybe Micky could devise some way of hiding him on the ship. She'd heard of such things.—Micky! Always Micky!

“Voila,” said Fantine softly. “Here is the necklace, Madame.”

Lily took the package done up daintily in tissue paper and tied with a piece of pink ribbon, and placed it in her lap. She had not worn it since the evening before she had received Trevelyan's marconigram. Her husband had not sent her another radio and she had not replied to his, but either was hardly to be expected. Their relations did not call for much; theirs was an offensive and defensive alliance simply,—to Lily rather more offensive than anything else.

“Oh, I might as well take a chance!” she muttered. “If Micky won't do it for me, perhaps I can cook up some other way of getting it in!”

She sighed, feeling unconsciously the fall of the barometer. What a muddle she'd made of life! Here she was getting to middle age,

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with not a soul who really cared for her in the entire world. Why had n't she married some decent young fellow out of the hundreds she might have had during her first seasons in London, instead of losing her head and running amuck the way she had done? God only knew what she had expected then. Nothing had seemed too high for her to attain. There were dukes she might have had if she had only played her hand more carefully, more conservatively. That hand which had been full of trumps! But she had *over*-played, and now at the end of the game what had she won? Nothing! Nothing that gave her the slightest satisfaction — except that which she still derived from the remnants of her beauty. She bit her lips fiercely; she was still young! She would not grow old! She would play the game until the candles grew dim and then — she shrugged her shoulders and closed her eyes.

The light faded out of the west and the wind rose, while a gull squeaked harshly with a sound like the chalking of a billiard cue, and shot aslant the wind a few feet from the rail before her like a bird of evil omen. The two old maids staggering by to get up an appetite for

the evening meal cast sidelong glances at her as she lay with her head thrown back in the light cast by the electric bracket inside her window.

“That’s her,” whispered one. “*I* don’t see anything in her at all.”

“Nor I!” echoed the other raspily. “She looks like an old woman!”

They passed and a spat of rain struck Lily in the face. Wearily she arose from her steamer chair and entered her drawing-room. There were dark circles under her eyes.

“Fantine!” she cried, with clenched hands, “get my best evening dress out of the wardrobe.— Yes, the Paquin one, with the foulard skirt and the chiffon trimming.”

XIII

IN WHICH MANY PERSONS ARE SURPRISED

THE barometer had been falling steadily all the afternoon. But nothing could lower the mercury of Captain Ponsonby's good humor. By gad! He'd made a hit! His name would be on the front pages of the papers that the pilot would bring on board to-morrow afternoon. So he had ordered half a dozen of those shilling cigars from the smoking-room and was making a day of it. Now as he strode up and down on the bridge, still smoking, the fact that a northeast storm was on its way did not worry him in the least, although he knew that from every direction other vessels were drawing nearer and nearer and that the *Pavonia* was in the direct course of the eastward bound steamers on the southern route.

"Going to be a wet night, Simmons!" he growled.

"Yes, sir,—we ought to be passing the

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Saxonia about nine o'clock. She left New York at ten this morning,” replied the second officer.

“We've made a successful run — all things considered,” continued the Captain, who had Chilvers in his mind.

“Very fair, sir,” answered the other, a spare, wiry little man who loathed Ponsonby.

“Ought to pick up Fire Island by eight o'clock to-morrow night,” went on the other.

“And probably take on the pilot by five,” nodded Simmons, furious because the Captain had n't had the simple, ordinary decency to offer him a cigar.

“I suppose they'll come down and take off Chilvers in a tug,” mused Ponsonby, thus adroitly luring the conversation in the direction of his *coup*.

“Very likely,” assented the other dryly.

He had heard nothing but Chilvers — Chilvers — Chilvers for a week, and he was sick of him and of his captor.

“Well,—I'm afraid it will make a great talk in the papers,” meditated the Captain. “Yellow press is hungry for this sort of thing. By the way, how is the man? You must be

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careful and not let him jump overboard or find a piece of rope or a knife — those fellows are very apt to do away with themselves.”

“No danger, sir,” responded Simmons. “Everything of that sort has been removed from his state-room, and I have one man outside his window and another on guard at the door.”

“Yes — we must deliver him alive,” went on Ponsonby, as if Chilvers were a wild animal destined for a zoölogical park. “It would never do to lose him!”

“No, sir,” said Simmons. “It’s beginning to rain,” he added.

It was the same advance gust of drops that had driven Mrs. Trevelyan into her cabin. As the light had died out of the west an army of clouds had arisen to the north and east and was now sweeping down upon the ship, bearing in its wake a solid bank of fog. The Captain stepped to the speaking tube and ordered Binks to bring up his rubber coat.

“I’ll take this watch, Simmons,” he said gruffly. He had no inclination to sit at the same table with Mrs. Hubert Trevelyan during another long ship’s dinner. His dignity would

not allow it. The woman had deliberately attempted to make small of him — *him*, a senior captain of the Cunard Line! He 'd not compliment her by his presence. She could continue to get on without him and see how she liked it. Then at the conclusion of the voyage he would magnanimously and very formally bid her adieu. It rankled in his bosom that he had picked the wrong man and that she had told him so. That was bad enough, but for this woman — no matter how handsome she was — to try to mix him up and jolly him in that fashion — ough! Captain Ponsonby, slightly conscious of a congenital incapacity to understand what the devil she *had* been up to, felt both chagrined and insulted. Well, they had the chap anyway, safe and alive. No, Mrs. Hubert Trevelyan could eat alone with that fool Ashurst.

The steamer met the advancing fog bank and in a moment her search-light was trying unsuccessfully to bore a red-rimmed yellow hole through it.

“Slow her down!” ordered Ponsonby. “The *Saxonia* may be around here somewhere.”

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The young officer on duty rang down to the engine room and instantly the great liner ceased her straining and swept almost noiselessly through the fog,— which came swirling in over her bow. At about the same instant the rain rattled down upon the bridge in volleys of icy drops.

“My gad!” exclaimed Ponsonby, spitting out a limp and dripping shilling cigar. “This is *wet*.”

Darkness, black, dense, impenetrable, had come with the fog, and the search-light striking against that barrier of mist and rain was thrown back and upward at arm’s length, as if a burglar’s lantern were reflected from a wall.

“Let go the whistle every ten minutes,” called down the Captain through the speaking tube, and in another moment the ship trembled to the hoarse vibration of the fog horn.

Then Ponsonby, his glistening purple face stinging with the cutting rain, his eyes burrowing fiercely into the black night, his red ears listening for every sound above the seething of the waves and the lashing of the storm, unconcernedly minding his own regular business as well as he knew how, rose in stature from be-

ing a ponderous ass into a high and efficient type of man, to whom we should be glad to trust our lives.

Meantime, Lily Trevelyan had intended with the assistance of Fantine to complete *une grande toilette* — her challenge to the flat-chested maiden ladies of whose acerbity she had been so unfortunately a victim, as she sat on deck. Her dressing-room blazed with electricity — in sharp contrast to the blackness outside. Her bath, gently lapping the porcelain edges of the tub (as the *Pavonia* began to throw up her nose against the storm) was faintly scented with rose water. Diaphanous linen things as soft as silk and as thin lay in lacy piles on a wicker chair. A huge gold powder puff box was open upon the dresser. A pair of chamois slippers edged with fur had been placed conveniently by the bath. Two soft, thick towels hung from the glass rod with a dozen embroidered linen ones. And across the brass bed had been carefully laid out the Paquin foulard dress with the chiffon trimming — that is, if dress it could properly be called, since it resembled rather a sort of skirt with a couple of loops and a handful of gauze above.

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All of the apparel which this full grown and round-limbed woman needed to cover herself and keep her warm could have been crammed into a man's overcoat pocket — or nearly so. It is the cause of perpetual amazement, this superiority of the female over the male in her ability to go through life with a minimum of clothing and a maximum of expense. Every one of us — I refer of course to my masculine readers, who alone are interested in Mrs. Trevelyan's boudoir — would have been wearing under the same circumstances several thick layers of wool and a shirt as heavy and impenetrable as a steel breastplate. Some day, if she lives long enough, Lily Trevelyan may be wearing the same things, but when she does, although she may be able to vote, her power will be gone.

“What a horrid night!” she cried, irritably, swinging to the door with a bang that made the lights flicker in their sockets. “Fantine! Do you see any lines under my eyes?”

“Mais, non! Madame!” expostulated the maid, as she deftly removed her mistress's coat and hat.

“I know you 're lying to me!” she answered,

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throwing herself into the armchair before the mirror. “I’m getting old! — and tired!”

“Madame!” cried Fantine. “You look but twenty! There is no one like you. But your bath is ready. Madame will dress?”

In the glass Lily saw the dragged look on her face that now came there so often. Any over-exertion, any nervousness or anxiety, any slight indisposition, might bring it — the dawn of old age. Five years ago, she thought, I could do anything! And *now!* She turned away gloomily.

“I’ll *show* them!” she cried angrily. “I’ll show them whether I’m an old woman or not!”

And in a moment more a gentle plashing in the next room told Fantine that her mistress was in her bath.

XIV

AT CLOSE QUARTERS

WITH the first dash of rain Micky had scuttled for the wireless house. Less than three hundred and fifty miles from New York he knew well the dangers of a collision with another liner or a coastwise schooner. Earlier in the afternoon he had been talking to one of the land stations and to several other steamers round about him. Morrissy on the *Berlin* had said they were going to make quarantine that night,—that the pilot had come aboard and that there was to be a tremendous ball game at the American League grounds between the Giants and Philadelphia for the world's Championship, betting somewhat in favor of the Athletics. He had also picked up the *Saxonia*, who had given her location at three o'clock as some two hundred and seventy-five miles off Fire Island. The two boats

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should pass each other some time during the evening.

Now as he threw on his mains his “C Q” caught Cape Cod, the *Berlin* just entering the narrows, and a dozen or so other ingoing and outgoing liners, including the *Saxonia*. He passed the time of day and the weather with all of them. In every case the answer was the same,—fog like cheese from Cape Sable to Hatteras,—*had* been for two days. And before he knew it Micky found that the *Pavonia* had herself plunged into the bank and had slackened her speed.

Then came the deluge. At first a spatter and skurry on the top of the deck-house, then a prolonged roll as from a hundred snare drums,—and then, the rain really came, sweeping in steady sheets against the windows, lashing the top of the deck-house into a dancing frog pond, rattling and shaking his windows and driving a steady stream of water under the tightly closed door.

“Sufferin’ ducks!” he whistled. “This is some water,—*what?*”

The wireless house shook with the wind, for it stood alone exposed to the full blast of the

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storm. Small cataracts began to flow down from the window-sills, and a leak appeared in the ceiling and an uninterrupted trickle poured from it upon his dressing-table. Yes, it was a dirty night.

“H-n-n-n-n-n!” went the hoarse voice of the fog horn, in a suspiration lasting for several seconds, but which in the fury of the gale sounded dim and distant to Micky. How far could it penetrate on such a night?”

“MSA de MPA,” he snapped out on his instrument. “Do you get my signals?”

He waited amid the riot of wind and water for the faint response.

“MPA de MSA — Your signals are weak. How are you?”

“MSA de MPA,” he answered. “Doing nicely, thank you. Running now at half speed on account of fog. Can you hear our whistle?”

“MPA de MSA,” replied the *Saxonia*. “Cannot hear your whistle or anything else. Too much noise. We are running at half speed also.”

At that moment another boat — the *Washington*, cut in.

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“MPA de DKN. Are you whistling? I can hear whistle to starboard now. Answer.”

But the *Pavonia* was not uttering a sound.

“DKN de MPA,” rattled Micky. “We are not whistling. Must be some other ship. Can it be *Saxonia*?”

“MPA de DKN,” answered the operator on the *Washington*. “*Saxonia* says not. Cannot find out who it is. Devil of a night.”

“DKN de MPA — Bet your sweet life!” said Micky, and listened with all his ears.

But he was not listening any harder than Captain Ponsonby on the bridge. For four mortal hours that ponderous ass had strained every nerve of his aural organs for the faintest noise of escaping steam — but in vain. He knew the *Saxonia* was due at about that time, but there was no way to place her in the fog. She might be either one or twenty miles away. She might be —

“H-n-n-n-n!”

Without warning there came suddenly a prolonged blast close upon his starboard bow.

The *Saxonia*!

He sprang to the indicator and with his heart in his throat gave the engineer “Reverse —

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full speed.” Instantly came the response and the huge liner keeled far over to the thundering of her screw, and wrestled with the sea amid a white lather of foam, as the Captain grabbed the rope and sent the answering warning of the *Pavonia* across the darkness into the fog.

“H-n-n-n-n!”

She was right upon them! This time to port! Or was it to starboard? *Where* was it!

“Stop!” The Captain almost yanked the handle off the indicator.

The *Pavonia's* engines ceased to throb. Slowly she drifted sideways to the storm, and bellowing like some prehistoric sea-monster in its death agony, began to rise and fall in the hollow of the waves. Again came the snorting of the funnel, deafening, overwhelming.

Micky in the wireless house heard the roar of steam and realized that the *Saxonia* and *Pavonia* were almost in collision.

“Do you hear us?” he jerked out, the sweat beading his forehead. “Reverse—for God's sake!”

“Yes. Cannot see you. We have reversed,” shot the *Saxonia*.

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“We have reversed also,” he flashed back. “All safe. Cannot see you. Must be within few yards of each other.”

Thus the *Saxonia* and *Pavonia* lay at arm's length thundering like two helpless giants, their captains expecting momentarily to be hurled, each from his bridge, by a splintering concussion, while the two boys in the wireless offices flashed encouragement to each other.

Lily Trevelyan had been playing bridge with her friends all the evening in the smoking-room, where the glare of the electric lights was tempered by a cloud of cigar smoke almost as thick as the fog outside. Arrayed in her Paquin gown with its extreme cut she had dazed the passengers at dinner and filled the smoking-saloon afterwards. Apparently the only male absent was Ponsonby, and he had duties elsewhere. The men, who had had plenty of opportunity to study her beauty, vowed she had never shown herself off to such advantage.

“This is the last!” she announced, as, a cigarette between her lips, she essayed to deal. “It is getting too hot in here!”

Suddenly the ship shook violently and rolled to starboard with a violence that almost threw

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the party out of their seats. The sound of crashing glass came from all sides, and there was a chorus of oaths and ejaculations in French and English, above which rose the thunder of the funnel directly over their heads.

“Collision!” some fool shouted.

There was a rush for the door, which was thrown violently open by the nearest passenger. Lily turned faint, but the Boston bride exhibited a studied unconcern.

“Ashurst!” cried Lily, “go and see what it is!”

Through the door amid the driving rain that entered came also the diapason of the *Saxonia*, directly beside them.

“Another steamer!” gasped Lily, and pushing her chair away from the table rose unsteadily to her feet, sick with fear.

“H-n-n-n-n! — H-n-n-n-n!” snorted the two steamers.

“G-g-g-od!” stammered Ashurst, leading Lily towards the door in the wake of the other occupants of the saloon, who, hatless and in their evening clothes, were crowded upon the promenade deck staring stupidly into the night.

The noise made by the two boats indicated

deadly danger, but there was no confusion and no scurrying for life preservers. And then, with equal unexpectedness, the screw began to vibrate again and the *Pavonia* righted herself and moved forward.

“Look! Look!” shouted half a dozen of the men on deck.

And Lily looked quickly and saw not more than two hundred feet away upon the starboard quarter a row of feeble, misty lights and a great glare that beat upon her eyes and nearly blinded her.

Bellowing and roaring, the *Pavonia* gathered headway and shot into the storm while the *Saxonia* dropped astern rapidly and soon was swallowed up by the night.

“And this is the 13th!” sighed the only humorist in the damp and silent crowd that hastily sought the saloon again and ordered hot drinks to prevent taking cold and steady their shaken nerves.

“Cut it out!” snapped a millionaire with a huge solitaire shirt stud. “That’s the nearest *you* ever came to going to hell!”

Lily Trevelyan, trembling and weak and without her coat, hurried along the deck to her

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room and threw open the door. The drawing-room was empty.

“Fantine!” she called. “Where are you?” There was no answer, and Lily entered her state-room.

Fantine was kneeling by the bed with her beads in her hand, praying, and before her lay a tiny pair of baby’s shoes.

Something touched Lily’s heart,—something of pity and of jealousy combined.

“Poor thing!” she thought, and for a moment was tempted to place her arms around the bowed shoulders. Then she drew back into her parlor.

“What’s the use!” she murmured, and closed the door.

XV

MICKY PLAYS FATHER CONFESSOR FOR THE SECOND TIME.

“LUCKY shot!” was the parting salutation of the wireless man on the *Saxonia* to Micky as she slid into the darkness. “Never come as near as that again!”

“Thanks!” answered our friend. “I can do without. So long!”

But it must be admitted that he was quite wabbly as he made his way to the ladder and descended to the deck, in response to an instinctive feeling that the passengers who sat at his table were somehow entitled to his encouragement. He found the second-cabin saloon crowded with a gesticulating and chattering mob of heterogeneous persons, each telling why it had happened and how near they had come to being sunk. A Baptist missionary from Ceylon was vainly endeavoring to organize a prayer meeting, while a commercial traveler from At-

lanta had ordered up a case of beer at the other end of the saloon as a counter demonstration. The bunch held no interest for Micky. The simple fact was that they had had a narrow squeak, and he wanted neither a Hallelujah Chorus nor a Drinking Song as a supplement. He saw his Algerian friend calmly smoking a cigarette, and the brown-faced chauffeur devouring a sandwich. *They* were all right. Cloud was not to be seen,— he was in his room, probably, unless he 'd tried to swim off to the *Saxonia*,— a reckless and entirely improbable supposition. And Bennett *could n't* get away. Micky left the saloon intending to go back to his office, smoke a pipe and then turn in.

As he made the corner of the deck-house, however, a small figure emerged from one of the passageways and caught his arm. It was the Bennett girl.

“Oh, Mr. Fitzpatrick!” she cried. “I'm so frightened! Is there any danger?”

“No, of course not!” he answered cheerily. “We had a close shave, but it's all over now! She's two miles behind us by this time.”

“O—” she began. Then suddenly she gave way and began to sob pitifully.

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“Poor little girl!” exclaimed Micky, touched to the quick. “Poor little girl!”

Before he knew it he had taken her in his arms and she was crying hysterically with her head on his shoulder.

“By George! *This* won’t do!” he thought. “Suppose somebody should walk in on the party unexpectedly?”

“Look here, Miss Bennett,” he said soothingly. “I’m afraid we’ll have to go somewhere else. You’ve had a hard time. You’re all unstrung. But try and brace up!”

The girl attempted to restrain her sobs, but without success.

“I’m all alone!” she cried brokenly. “They won’t even let me see my brother! And I thought we were going down with him locked in his state-room!”

“Oh, I say!” cried Micky, “you don’t mean old Ponsonby refuses to let you talk to him?”

“Yes,” she answered. “Not a word can pass between us. I have n’t a soul to speak to. I don’t know anybody! And I don’t know what to do!”

“Poor child!” exclaimed Micky. “Well,

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you just do as I tell you. We've got to talk, that's sure. Of course I can't go to your state-room, but you come on up to the wireless house and take a nip of brandy and tell me all about it.”

“Ought I?” she stammered. “You're the only person who's been kind to me on the whole boat. Since this morning I have n't left my state-room, but when I thought we were going to be sunk I ran out.”

Micky preceded his guest up the ladder and placed a chair for her by the steam pipes. Then he poured out a tiny sip of brandy and handed it to her.

“Do you good,” he said, smiling.

She drank the brandy obediently, and wiped her eyes.

“Oh,” she said, “you don't know what it is to have *one* person kind to you when you're in trouble. And we *are* in trouble! Of course—why, *you're* the person that knows most about it,—for it must have come by wireless.”

Micky nodded grimly.

“Yes,” he said, “it came that way. But it would n't have made any difference. They'd have caught him in New York.”



Before he knew it he had taken her in his arms

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The girl began to cry again softly.

“He *would* do it!” she sobbed. “I told him no judge would sentence father if he knew why he ’d done it,—but Jim would do it!”

“*Who* — would do it?” inquired Micky. “Come, you might as well put some confidence in me and let me have the whole story.”

“There’s no particular story,” she answered. “Father took the money to pay the doctors for mother and send her on the trip to Egypt. You see he ’d been employed there all his life,—but he could n’t ask the bank for money. And Sir Penniston Crisp, the great specialist, you know, said mother must have all kinds of care, trained nurses, and so on, and travel. He said she ’d die without them. Well, mother was sixty-one and father was sixty-seven and we only had his salary — two hundred and fifty pounds a year — to live on. But one day he came home and said he ’d had a bit of luck on the exchange and mother could go abroad.”

“I see!” said Micky.

“That was four years ago!” went on the girl, gaining confidence as she proceeded. “Mother went to Egypt with a trained nurse

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and spent the winter, and did the same thing the winters following. In the summer we took a cottage at Brighton and had the best specialists. It must have cost a pile of money. And all that time neither mother nor I ever suspected a thing.”

“No,—why should you?” interjected the listener.

“Then Jim — Jim Chilvers — I was engaged to be married to him —”

She stopped suddenly and looked enquiringly at Micky.

“Sure,—I understand,” said Micky encouragingly.

“Jim came to me one day and said he’d found that father had taken the money from the bank — nearly £5000 — by shifting the securities around some way. I don’t understand those things. We were to have been married in a month, but Jim explained that they were going to have some kind of an investigation and that the bank would surely find it out.”

She turned a white face to him. Outside the rain beat a ghostly tattoo on the rattling panes.

“Now Sir Penniston had said that *any* shock might kill mother, and Jim said that the disgrace would kill father, too. He’s an old man, you know! There was nothing to do, he said, except for him — Jim — to shoulder the blame to save father. He said the only person who made any difference to him was *me*. As long as I knew he was n’t the ordinary sort of criminal he did n’t mind. Father would n’t hear of it at first, but finally on mother’s account he agreed to let me go with Jim. Poor Jim! He’s got some trouble himself! I’m awfully afraid he’s tubercular. So two weeks ago we ran away to Paris — Mother thinks I’m on a visit in Scotland — and got married and then took the train to Madrid and Gibraltar. There’s a man on board who has followed us all the way from Paris. He sits at our table. Cloud is his name. And we were terribly afraid he was a detective. Perhaps he is. Maybe that is how Jim came to be arrested.”

“No!” said Micky. “I know that man. He’s *not* — a detective.”

“Well,” she continued, “that’s the whole thing. Then one morning Jim and I met Mrs. Trevelyan and the Captain, and she recognized

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him. So there we were! And inside an hour Jim was locked up in his state-room under arrest with orders from the Captain to let him talk to *nobody*. So everything's over!”

She looked at him helplessly.

“It is tough!” answered Micky with sympathy.

“The hardest part of it all is being kept away from Jim! — I don't know why Captain Ponsonby won't let me go to him — I'm all alone,— no one to speak to —!”

“Look here!” said Micky. “You'd better go down now. I'll see what I can do. You can't tell. Perhaps everything will come out all right even yet. No one would *want* to punish him — unless it were the bank.”

“Except the bank!” sighed the girl.

Micky opened the door. The rain had almost ceased, but the night was as thick as ever. He assisted her down the ladder and to her state-room. On the opposite side of the narrow passage one of the older stewards stood on guard at Bennett's door. He grinned sheepishly at Micky.

“Jim!” called the girl. “Jim.”

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“Beg pardon, Miss!” interrupted the steward. “It’s against orders!”

“It’s a damned outrage!” retorted Micky. “Tell the Captain to go to hell! Hello, there, Mr. Chilvers!”

“Jim! Jim!” repeated the girl hysterically. “Mr. Fitzpatrick is looking after me. Don’t worry. I’m all right. Good night.”

“I’ll do the best I can for both of you!” added Micky. “Keep up your nerve!”

Then he turned to the steward.

“Now go and *tell* Ponsonby!” he cried wrathfully.

Micky, after bidding good night to Mrs. Chilvers, climbed up the ladder to the wireless house with many conflicting emotions and lit a pipe. Poor Bennett! “Not the ordinary sort of criminal,” the girl had said. The very words used by Graeme. “Not the ordinary sort.” *Was* there any “ordinary sort” of criminal, he wondered? If you only knew the truth would n’t you always find some reason for their having done what they did,—some extenuating circumstance,—some excuse? No one really *wanted* to do wrong, he felt sure.

“I *wish* I could *help* these people!” he

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sighed, gazing out into the night through the water-stained windows.

“I wish I could help 'em!” he repeated. “And I wish I could do something for Graeme! — Queer fix *all* around!”

He looked at the alarm clock. It was almost time to take the news from Wellfleet. But first he threw over his mains and called up Morrissy on the *Berlin*.

“What's doing?” he asked, when he had aroused the whole seaboard with his shower of “C Q's” and cut out all the others except the *Lloyd*.

“What's doing? *We* have just missed cutting the *Saxonia* in halves.”

“Don't say,” returned Morrissy. “We're at anchor at quarantine. Fog thick as pea soup. Say, that Roakby story is a corker, is n't it? The papers are full of it.— By the way, the first game of the World's Championship series was played to-day and the Athletics batted Matty all over the lot.”

XVI

IN WHICH EVERY MINUTE COUNTS

THE next day was as thick as ever and the *Pavonia* poked her way through the fog towards Fire Island in the company of half a dozen other screaming liners with whom Micky kept in constant conversation. Indeed there were so many messages to and from shore that he was busy in the wireless house all the morning and all the afternoon as well, and he had little time to think of either Graeme or Chilvers. A message had come for the Captain congratulating him on his arrest of the latter, but there was nothing further officially about the murder of the Earl of Roakby. Nevertheless Micky knew that the boat would be searched from keel to crow's nest before she was half way to her dock from quarantine and that if anything was to be done for Graeme it would have to be done within the next few hours.

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The *Pavonia* had slackened her speed until she was barely making twelve knots an hour, and under the circumstances it was unlikely that she would pick up a pilot before evening, but she kept up a constant whistling in the hope that one might be near by. The passengers, nervous at the delay, tramped up and down the decks or spent hectic hours in their state-rooms endeavoring to conceal recent purchases of underwear, lace or dresses under soiled linen or inside other and more ancient belongings. Each was or had been industriously engaged in attempting to outwit the United States government in its effort to enforce the protective tariff for which two out of every three male passengers had voted indirectly at the last election. Fantine, by her mistress's instructions made a careful pile of all Lily's newly acquired Paris creations, together with her hats, gloves and lingerie.

“I'm going to declare everything I bought!” she had announced convincingly in the morning when the stewardess had brought in the breakfast. “I've given up trying to smuggle things — it's no use, and the duty amounts to very little at the most.”

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“Yes, Madam,—it’s best not!” answered Dorrance, bobbing and beaming as Lily slipped into her ready palm three golden sovereigns. “Thank you, Madam! I really don’t deserve as much, ma’am!”

Lily had hoped and still did hope to see Cosmo and offer to assist him in any way in her power for old friendship’s sake, but he had kept studiously out of her way. After all, he was nothing to her. He had killed a man and would have to suffer, if not swing, for it, and the less she had to do with him the better. But a gray depression rivaling that of the atmosphere outside gradually settled upon her spirits. The voyage had been a fizzle. She had lost money, made a fool of herself with the Captain, and had mixed herself up in two embarrassing criminal affairs. Then there was the necklace! *Should* she try to get Micky to take it in for her, or *should n’t* she? She had intended to go up to the wireless house the preceding evening, but the violence of the storm had rendered it out of the question. Her delicate evening dress would have been quite ruined, even had she been physically equal to the climb up the slippery ladder in the wind and

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rain. Had she done so she would have had more time to make her plans in case he refused to aid her. She must see him that day or at any rate that evening, at the latest!

“I don’t suppose you pay on much, do you?” Ashurst had asked her.

“Of course not!” she had replied. “The inspectors all know me and then —” with a laugh — “I never have anything to declare, you know!”

“Rather — not!” he had smirked. “By the way, I suppose Trevelyan will be climbing up the side before long.”

“I hope so!” she had retorted unsympathetically. “I would n’t mind seeing his face again. Perhaps you like these interminable trips — I *don’t!*”

The day wore on with the *Pavonia* sliding quietly through an oily sea only visible through the fog for the space of a few feet beyond the bowsprit. Just at dusk a shrill whistle from the obscurity announced the presence of a steam pilot boat; the engines ceased throbbing as a white dory came swiftly alongside and the pilot in tarpaulins and rubber boots appeared up the

gangway with a huge bundle of papers in his arms. These he tossed to the Captain's steward and then, dripping, made his way towards the bridge.

The pilot's dory slid away from the ship's side, the bell rang once in the engine-room, and the *Pavonia* surged ahead. Micky, looking out of the window of the wireless house, made a rapid calculation. Those papers would be delivered at once to Captain Ponsonby, who would immediately retire to his room, light a big black cigar, remove his boots, and hold a reading fest. The papers were for the *last fourteen days*. Ponsonby would begin by hunting through them for the accounts of his own exploit. That might take thirty minutes. It was now a quarter after six, and that would make it six forty-five. Dinner was at seven-thirty, and of course Ponsonby would have to go down the last night of the trip. He always shaved himself and was a slow dresser. No, it was unlikely that the Captain would learn of the murder of Roakby before half after eight or nine o'clock. But he certainly *would* discover it then and begin to suspect that Micky had held back something from him.

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The ship was now about half an hour from quarantine and it was a question whether or not she would come to anchor before the Captain should learn that he might still add to the luster already surrounding his name by identifying yet another fleeing felon on board his ship. Once at anchor Graeme must swim for it. Micky had already figured out that that was his only chance. With a life preserver or an oar pitched from the last life-boat aft he might, if the tide were favorable, make the Long Island shore. But in the meantime? Suppose Ponsonby stumbled on the Roakby affair the first thing?

The ship's bell struck six times and the bugler began simultaneously to blow the first call for dinner. Seven o'clock. It still lacked thirty minutes before the ringing notes of "Roast Beef of Old England" would send the passengers in their everyday clothes down into the saloon for their last musty meal at the line's expense. It was the moment when all the passengers were in their state-rooms washing up and brushing their hair, or taking an appetizer at the bar.

Micky put out the lights in the wireless house

and climbed down the ladder. Graeme's port-hole showed a yellow circle through the fog and he turned the handle of his door and opened it without knocking. Cosmo was sitting on the bunk — writing a letter. His face was ashen. He nodded, finished writing, licked the envelope, and sealing it, wrote an address. Then he handed it to Micky.

“I say, old chap, mail this for me?” he said. “I may n't get a chance. This is my last night of freedom, I fancy.”

“Freedom — fiddlesticks!” retorted Micky. “I'll have you safe on shore before midnight — if you don't mind swimming in water that's a trifle cold.”

Graeme shook his head.

“I don't mind cold water, but they'll have me under arrest before we're within reach of land. By the way, here's thrippence for the stamp.”

Micky took the three-penny bit and the letter.

The Hon. Evelyn Arabella Farquhar,
Toppingham Manor,
Toppingham,
Old Stottesbury, Hants.

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The blood rushed to his freckled face. He had striven to keep this phase of his relation to Graeme in complete abeyance, but now —! It would be his last chance. What if it *were n't* his business? Was Graeme the accepted suitor of his Lady of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem or not? He opened his mouth as if in interrogation.

“It's only a penny to England,” he said in a queer voice, fumbling awkwardly in his pocket and producing twopence. “You'll need the change when you get ashore.”

Graeme laughed in spite of himself, and pocketed the two coppers.

“You're a queer chap,” he said. “Somehow when you are with me I feel as if nothing could happen.”

He hesitated —

“Do you mind if I give you my watch? I'd like you to have something of mine. Your taking it would make me feel as if — somehow — you did n't blame me too much for what I'd done.”

He unhooked his watch from its guard and laid it in Micky's hand.

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“I’ll exchange with you,” said the Marconi man.

“You’re an understanding sort of fellow,” continued Graeme. “Maybe we’ll meet again. I hope so.”

“No,” answered Micky. “We shan’t ever meet again. But sometime, when you’re mining out in Vancouver or farming in Manitoba or trading in the Malay Peninsula, you might look at the name engraved inside my old turnip and drop me a line how you are.”

“Done!” said Graeme.

Each snapped on the other’s timepiece and Micky laid his hands on his friend’s shoulder.

“Now,” said he, “put out your light and follow me up the ladder.”

Graeme turned the switch and, locking the door of his state-room, placed the key in his pocket. No one was on deck. Indeed the night had fallen swiftly and black darkness covered their movements. Micky opened the door of the wireless house stealthily and closed it after them.

“In about two hours,” said he in a whisper, “old Ponsonby will wake up to the fact that

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you are on board. Of course he knows you Cosmo Graeme. Mrs. Trevelyan's response for that. Then he'll probably search the ship. I've got to keep you out of the way until you can swim for it, and that won't be until we're off Fire Island.”

Behind the bunk was a narrow closet, totally concealed when the door of the wireless hut was open, and amply large enough to contain a human being standing.

“I won't turn on the lights,” said Micky “and even if any one comes up there is no chance in a hundred of his finding you. You can sit on the bunk, and hide in the closet, and you can't hear anybody on the ladder.”

Micky sat down at his desk and put the receivers to his ears. Instantly he found himself in the midst of a babel of sound. Within a few miles from New York at nine o'clock at night the ocean is as noisy as a department store. Everybody is working all along the coast from Hatteras to Glace Bay, including the five hundred amateurs inhabiting New York City, most of whom can *send* but few of whom can *receive*. Thus if they jam no one can explain to them what trouble they are making for everybody.

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else. Outside the night seemed to be clearing up and the air was carbonizing. He could hear all the big stations shouting at each other and high above the racket the shrill whistle of the quenched spark sets of the Radio Telegraph Company on the Metropolitan Tower.

“Toot-o-o-t-oot-oot!” they went, just like a French locomotive.

Over on the Waldorf old man Pickering was complaining to the operator at the Bellevue-Stratford in Philadelphia —

“Oh, you! You! You! Why don't you wake up? I've been calling for fifteen minutes. Don't you know this little hole up here is as hot as Hades? W A P K.”

“Oh, shut up!” came back from Philadelphia in the sharp tone of the DeForest wave. “Why can't you give us a rest? Ain't Philadelphia hotter than New York? B S S P.”

Micky laughed. He knew both those fellows. Later, when he'd nothing to do he'd call up Pickering and get the details of the ball game.

“AX” (Atlantic City) was trying to get some vessel far out in the gulf-stream and an amateur was answering just for fun. Other

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amateurs joined in the ha-ha chorus. Really it was a scandal the way those fellows jammed and got in the way. There ought to be aerial regulations and an American board of supervisors.

Then the Brooklyn Navy Yard, which uses a rotary spark gap that whines like a gigantic humming-top, began calling Hatteras. Starting with a low, angry buzz like a militant mosquito, it rose gradually to high G, soaring into the acoustic zone like a rocket, and wailing like a lost soul. Micky always liked to listen to the Navy Yard. It did good clean work.

“HA — HA-HA-NAH” sent the Navy man. (Hatteras — Brooklyn Navy Yard calling.)

“NAH I-I-I (I’m here) G A. (Go ahead),” replied Hatteras.

“HA-AA. MSG (message) CK 11 (check eleven words),” answered the Yard.

“Waldon Torpedo Destroyer *Yellow Jacket* Hampton Roads. Report at once Brooklyn Navy Yard for repairs and general overhauling. Seavey. PR-NAH.”

“PR — That’s Proctor,” mused Micky.

Hatteras acknowledged the message.

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“NAH — MSG.— OK GB (good-by)
HA.”

Then the New York *Herald* office on the Ferry building at the Battery began calling the New Willard in Washington for Senator Smith, and a lunatic on the Ansonia kept interrupting.

“Please — please — *please* don’t jam!” expostulated the *Herald*. “My message is important.”

“Oh, rats!” retorted the Ansonia. “Who’s Smith? And who are you, anyhow? Do you think you own the whole air?”

“Please — please —” whined the *Herald*.

“Shut up, boy, and let the *Herald* talk!” thundered the deep tones of the United Wireless at Manhattan Beach. “Mind your own business or we’ll lodge a complaint against you.”

“Ha! Ha!” mocked the Ansonia. “What can *you* do, old fuss cat?”

“Please — please —” kept on the exasperated and almost demented *Herald*.

“Oh, for God’s sake, let somebody work, can’t you, kid?” threw in Atlantic City. “You’re getting entirely too gay!”

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“Listen, everybody!”

It was DeForest fooling with his radio telephone over in Newark.

“Listen, everybody!”

And through the air came clearly the chorus of “There ’ll be a hot time in the old town tonight,” rendered by a phonograph nearly a hundred miles away.

“By gad! That’s great!” ejaculated Micky.

“What is?” asked Graeme from the darkness of the bunk.

“I can hear the Radio Company’s phonograph as plain as if it were on the bridge!” answered Micky. “Wait a minute till I call up the Waldorf and see how the game came out!”

“WA — WA — WA —” he flashed. “Are you there, Pickering? This is the *Pavonia* — Fitzpatrick. How about the ball game?”

“MPA — MPA — Hello, Micky. Glad to see you. Giants won game — one, nothing — eleven innings. Josh Devore knocked a home run. Great work. Say, did you hear that kid at the Ansonia? He makes me sick! Can’t hear yourself think some of these evenings. PK.,” answered Pickering.

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“WA — WA — Thanks. GB. MPH — MF.,” said Mickey.

There was an unexpected diminution of speed and the engines of the *Pavonia* stopped. Through the mist appeared a row of yellow lights. Beyond could be seen the feeble ray of a search-light creeping here and there around the zenith.

“Quarantine!” cried Micky. “It’s now or never!”

There was a thunder of running chains, a thud, a roar — and the *Pavonia* was still. Suddenly he snatched up the receivers and placed them at his ears. A second or two more and the blue flashes leaped in showers across his spark gap.

“Do you see those lights?” he whispered in running comment. “Over there to starboard? That’s the *Patrie* — French Liner — bound for Algiers. Operator is a friend of mine — Gaston Bruyere. She’s waiting for the tide to turn and the fog to lift. To-morrow she’ll be three hundred miles on her way to Africa. What do you say? Will you try it?”

“How can I get aboard?” asked Graeme.

“Wait a minute!”

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Again the crackle of the leaping sparks.

“I’ve asked Bruyere to lend you a hand, and he says he will. Wants you to swim around to the starboard chains and he’ll throw you a line. Are you on?”

“Yes!” replied Graeme.

Micky dropped his receivers and turned to where Graeme was sitting in the dark.

“Ever since that fellow from Sadi-bel-Abas got off all that stuff about the foreign legion I’ve had a hunch Africa was the only place for you. This is your chance. You can trust whatever Bruyere says — and you’re safe on board the Frenchman. No extradition papers are valid on the high seas. And it must be a great life — fighting the desert and the Arabs!”

“I’ve thought of it myself — often,” answered Graeme. “Yes, I’ll take the chance and thank you for it.”

They crept out of the wireless house, climbed down the ladder to the after-deck and side by side walked silently towards the stern — the stern where a week before they two had struggled so fiercely together in the moonlight. Not more than two hundred-feet away the

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Frenchman lay with her nose towards the sea, her lights gleaming, the water pouring from her vents. Graeme took off his coat and waistcoat and held out his hand.

“God bless you!” he whispered.

For the last time Micky turned to ask him a single question — but he did not ask it.

“Good-by,” he answered. “Good luck and God bless *you!*”

Graeme lowered himself as far as he could over the stern and dropped. There was a slight splash. A moment more and Micky could see his head bobbing among the waves as he was carried by the tide towards the Frenchman. Presently he was lost in the darkness.

“Well!” sighed Micky to himself. “That disposes of *one* of them!”

He folded the coat and waistcoat into as small a bundle as possible and stole back to the wireless house.

XVII

THE WAY OF A MAID WITH A MAN

MICKY slowly climbed his ladder, carrying Graeme's clothes on his arm, and wondering what luck the poor devil was having. He felt sure of Bruyere, and the tide was not so very strong. Anyhow, Graeme had been stroke at Oxford and certainly could take care of himself. Each moment the night was getting thinner and the ports of the Frenchman gleamed clearer through the drifting haze. Nebulous lights appeared on all sides, indicating where other liners lay awaiting permission to enter the channel to the city. Overhead one could almost — almost — see the stars. Hoarse tootings came from the inner harbor, but the noise on the water was nothing like the noise in the air to which Micky had been listening. A lurid glow high in the sky above the fog showed where Broadway was.

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From the top of the “Island” he looked down upon a deck swarming with passengers. It had needed only the sound of the chains to bring them scurrying out of their state-rooms and the saloons, eager to get ashore.

“Cawn’t one land presently?” an English valet was enquiring of every one he met.

The promenade deck was alive with persons who had not hitherto made an appearance, and every seat in the reading-saloon was occupied by persons filling out and signing Customs declarations in anticipation of the morrow. It was time for Micky to get back to his instrument, for there would be a big bunch of commercials. To-morrow he’d go ashore, get a Turkish bath and take in the game.

He opened the door of his office and stepped inside, drawing it to behind him, and as he did so became aware of that same delicate fragrance of violets that he had noticed the week before when he had awakened from his dream and observed Mrs. Trevelyan going down the ladder. But this was stronger. Had she been there?

“Micky!” Lily’s voice came from out the darkness.

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“Why, Mrs. Trevelyan!” he stammered.
“You here — in the dark?”

“Oh, I don’t mind — if you don’t,” she answered in honied tones. “I love seeing the lights and things — and not being seen. It’s like having on an invisible mask. You can’t imagine the relief it is to one who is regarded as a sort of natural curiosity. People are always elongating their necks and nudging one another when I go by.”

“Rubber necks,” annotated Micky.

“Yes,” she answered. “But between you and me the only men who *are n’t* are the ones who are atrophied.” She dropped her voice.

“Micky,” she added, “I’ve come to say good-by to you. You’ve made the voyage so much pleasanter than it otherwise would have been!”

“It’s been awfully jolly to have you on board,” he answered gallantly, a vague uneasiness such as he had felt earlier in their acquaintance again coming over him. “Don’t you want me to turn on the lights?”

“Oh, no!” she replied. “Unless it’s against the rules to sit in the dark. Oh, Micky! Won’t you be sorry to lose me?”

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“Why — yes!” he answered truthfully, wondering what was coming next. She certainly was a wonderful creature.

“Come over here where I can see your little freckled face!” ordered Lily peremptorily.

Micky grew hot and his heart thumped the way it had on the stern the day she had taken his hand. The odor of violets grew more and more fragrant — almost suffocating. He drew a stool near her and sat down obediently.

“Micky!” She laid her hand on his arm. “You *do* like me, don’t you?”

“Of course I do, Mrs. Trevelyan!” he replied, his voice trembling. He could smell now that curious perfume that exuded from her hair — her neck — like a drowsy odor of Araby. “*Everybody* does,” he added after a moment.

“Oh, Micky! Shame on you! That’s not what I want!” she laughed playfully. “*You* do, and that’s enough! Here, you naughty boy! Give me your hand!”

In the darkness of the wireless house Micky felt her soft, gloved hand slide along his arm to his wrist and clasp his fingers. He knew it was wrong for him to be there. He wanted

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to cry out — to run away, but he could n't. He was fastened to where he sat as by a spell — by a spell which the enchantress was weaving tighter and tighter every moment. The blood had rushed to his face and neck and his pulse was beating a hundred and fifty to the minute.

“Micky — *dear!*” whispered Lily, her hair brushing his lips as she bent forward.

And before we judge this woman too harshly let us pause to consider that her every action was composed of motives both good and bad, and that her vices were often the virtues of other less virile persons run riot or carried to an extreme. For Lily Trevelyan was such a creature of caprice, such a weather-cock of emotion, that she responded to every gust of passion, every breath of nobler impulse, without much regard to consequences, and often conduct which started with less worthy motives ended in charity, and actions which began in pity ended in love, so that evil and good sometimes joined hands and hurried her along her path together. Now while she had come to the wireless house for an unworthy purpose, her infatuation for Micky was as near a pure flame as any she had ever felt.

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"Don't, Mrs. Trevelyan!" he gasped, trying to draw away from her; but his head was whirling as he felt her breath on his face. "Mrs. Trevelyan — I —."

"Micky dear! You'll come to see me in New York? Say you will! We must n't lose sight of each other entirely."

"Of course I'll come," he answered weakly, the blood pounding in his ears.

"Come day after to-morrow — at five. We'll have a cup of tea together and talk over old times."

"Very well." He no longer tried to withdraw his hand.

There was a moment's silence. Then:

"Micky! Will you do something for me?"

"Why, certainly!" he answered wondering what he could do for her.

"Bring this box with you."

She laid the box containing the necklace gently on his knees.

"You will,— *won't* you?" she urged, bending towards him.

"Is it — all right?" he asked faintly.

"Why, Micky! Of course it's all right!"

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she whispered, and took his other hand in her left.

And as she did so that strange, inexplicable something — that aura — animal magnetism — what you will — that had held Micky powerless suddenly dropped away and in its place there stole over him that physical revulsion he had felt in his dream for the Tove that had swarmed its tentacles over the side and dragged him down into the ocean’s depths, and she too felt it depart — knew that the pure had revolted from the impure, — and that the oil and water of their natures had resolved themselves again into their own elements, and she drew him to her passionately in one last effort to overwhelm his spiritual instinct with her physical intoxication.

“ Promise me ! ” she breathed as he struggled to draw away his hands.

“ Promise me — ”

He wavered.

There was a stamp of feet outside, the door was thrown rudely open and a ship’s lantern held high in the hairy fist of a seaman illuminated the wireless house and disclosed Captain Ponsonby glaring at them white with anger.

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“*Excuse* me!” he thundered with elaborate sarcasm. “I did not know I was interrupting a — *meeting!*”

Lily sprang to her feet, her eyes flashing.

“Captain Ponsonby! What do you mean! You have no right to insult me in this way, a passenger on your ship!”

“Passengers are not allowed in the wireless house — at this hour!” he retorted. Then he added with heavy politeness, “May I offer you an escort to your cabin?”

Mrs. Trevelyan stood before him speechless with fury. Her lace shawl had fallen upon the floor and her yellow hair had been slightly disarranged. For the first time Micky saw that she had on evening dress, and that her neck which was quite bare, had blushed as red as her cheeks.

“I — I’ll assist Mrs. Trevelyan,” interrupted Micky.

“Oh — you will!” roared Captain Ponsonby. “Then *assist* her at once!”

He leaned over and turned on the electric lights. Micky stooped and picked up the filmy lace shawl and handed it to Mrs. Trevelyan. Then he offered her his arm and led her

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past the Captain and to the top of the ladder. Lily gave a hollow laugh.

“Charming fellow — Ponsonby!” she remarked nervously. “No,— don’t come down. I can take care of myself. Good-night.”

The Captain and his attendant were leaving the wireless house as Micky turned back and he stood aside to let them pass. Ponsonby did not deign to notice his presence and strode by in haughty silence, but the seaman with the lantern indulged in an expansive grin and a wink that distorted half his face. The glimmering line of lights that marked the Frenchman suddenly seemed to slide forward. She must be getting off. He threw over his mains, wound up his detector, and hurriedly called the *Patrie*.

“Friend arrived safely,” flashed back Bruyere.

“Thank God!” muttered Micky, pleased at the sagacious manner in which his fellow operator had veiled his answer.

“Much obliged. Will write Algiers,” he answered. “Good luck and G. B.”

As he removed the receivers something white upon the floor at his feet caught his eye.

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It was Mrs. Trevelyan's package which she had overlooked in her embarrassment. Perhaps she had *not* overlooked it. Had he not intimated that he would accede to her request; had he not in fact practically promised to do so? He weighed the package in his hand.

“There's only one thing that can be in *that*,” he remarked judicially, “and that's *pearls!*”

Micky had been correct in his supposition that Mrs. Trevelyan's absent-mindedness had been intentional. She had gone to the wireless house with a well-matured plan which contemplated concealing the package somewhere in Micky's chest of drawers provided he did not return during her visit, and of communicating her request to him next day under circumstances which would make it seem discourteous on his part to decline. Should he refuse it was her determination to return to the vessel a day or two later, secure the pearls from him and take them ashore herself when the Customs inspectors were no longer on duty. She was wrathful at the Captain for his ill-timed interruption and the hippopotamus-like manner in

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which he had burst upon her rendezvous, and she was furious with herself and everybody else at the series of blunders which had characterized her crossing. But having determined upon her course she made up her mind to fight it out on that line to the best of her ability. She had already filled out and signed a declaration in which no mention of the pearls had been made and this she now sent to the purser's office at the hands of Fantine before going to bed. Micky had her address — the St. Regis — and she would trust to his honor as a gentleman and a sailor. For a moment all thought of Cosmo had vanished from her mind. Meantime the Captain sedulously searched the ship for Graeme but without success. Certainly the man must be *somewhere* on board — it was only a question of finding his hiding-place, and it never occurred to the honest Ponsoby that his quarry could at that moment be safely on board a French liner speeding eastward towards Africa and sound asleep in its wireless house in a uniform belonging to an operator of the Marconi Company.

XVIII

MRS. TREVELYAN AVAILS HERSELF OF A "LOCU
PENITENTIAE"

THE *Pavonia* was already under way the next morning when Lily Trevelyan awoke from a nervous and troubled sleep. The fog had cleared and the air sparkled with the brilliancy of autumn. But her discontent and melancholy had not vanished with the mist. Uneasily she wondered if she had not made a mistake in trusting so much to Micky's good nature,—wondered if she had not obviously over-played her hand,—had not given herself away. What if he should hand the package back to her as she was leaving the ship? What if he opened it, and should choose to feel that she had taken advantage of him? He might even report the matter to the inspectors. No, he would hardly be as treacherous as that — and yet something might so easily go wrong. But now she was committed. Her name was

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signed to a declaration intended to defraud the Government and perhaps already in the hands of the Customs' officers.

She sprang out of bed and called for Fantine, but the maid was not there. Where could she have gone? Lily's anxiety increased. Neither was there any response when she rang the bell for the stewardess. Then she remembered the notice that had been posted stating that breakfast would be served only in the saloon. Hurriedly she began to dress herself without Fantine's customary assistance. But in the midst of her toilet the door opened and the maid, dressed for landing, made her appearance.

“Oh, Madame!” she cried. *Quel Malheur*. I have overheard the stewardesses talking. This Dorrance is a detective!”

“A what!” cried Lily faintly.

“A detective, Madame! In the employ of the Government!” answered Fantine with a white face. “And Madame has not declared her pearls?”

“No,” answered her mistress. “Why? They were not purchased abroad — you understand?”

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“*Oui, Madame,*” said the maid. “But the stewardess believes them to have been bought in Paris. Oh, Madame! Last week they put a lady in prison who did not declare her furs.”

Fantine began to wring her hands and walk excitedly up and down the room. Lily turned hot and then cold. Her knees seemed to have lost their strength.

“Nonsense!” she cried in a tone unconvincing even to herself. “Nonsense!”

“It is true, Madame!” wailed Fantine hysterically. “Madam Corwin-Hill was sent to the — comment e’appellez-vous — the *sepulcre* —”

“Tombs” — corrected Lily.

“And another lady hung herself out of a window for shame and disgrace!”

“Stop, you fool!” almost shouted Lily. “Why do you tell me such things!”

But she sank into a chair and ground her nails into her palms. No, it was too late. The declaration was beyond her control,— and so were the pearls. She must bluff it through.

As soon as she was dressed she stepped out upon the deck into the gorgeous sunlight that

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flooded the harbor. The *Pavonia* was slowly sweeping by the green shores of Bay Ridge. Here and there other huge liners were moving in the same and the opposite direction. The *Auguste-Victoria*, outward bound, bands playing and decks black with swarms of waving passengers, majestically swung past and gave the *Pavonia* a roar of welcome.

Fest steht und treu die Wacht
Die Wacht am Rhein!

But Lily's heart did not thrill at the martial strains. It had sunk somewhere far below her waist line. She had a premonition of impending disaster — the culmination of an unfortunate crossing. Neither did the inspiring vision of turreted Manhattan, rising like an island fortress of white marble, from an azure sea, arouse any response in her breast. She had turned to common clay, ready to be shattered at a blow.

As she stood there at the steamer's side a tug whistling shrilly came darting down channel towards the *Pavonia*. She looked at it idly, then focused her eyes upon the figure standing in the bow. It was her hus-

band, Hubert Trevelyan, immaculately clad as usual, his iron-grayish hair blowing back over his bald spot,— a tall, rather stoop-shouldered figure, with an anxious, melancholy face. Behind him were stationed two other men,— and the sunlight flashed and twinkled from time to time as it caught something upon the breast of each. Fear rose in her throat. Who were these men and why were they with Trevelyan? Were they Customs inspectors, dogging him in order to prevent possible collusion as to the necklace? Why had he come down the harbor anyway? Had the declarations already been filed and her deception made known? Or had he merely come to warn her against any attempt at evading the law? But already he had seen her and waved his hat passively. In reply she nodded. That was all — the only recognition between husband and wife — separated for four months. The tug cut a wide circle, came up alongside, the companionway was lowered and Trevelyan made his appearance followed by the two officers. Lily did not go to meet him. She only turned in his direction, as he hurried towards her.

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“Hello, Trevelyan!” she remarked in matter-of-fact tones. “Why this excitement?”

He shook hands with her ceremoniously.

“I’ve come for Chilvers, of course,” said he. “I wanted to avoid any publicity at the dock. You received my Marconigram? Why have n’t you got on the necklace?”

She choked in spite of herself.

“I — I —” she stammered in a low tone.

“I — have n’t got it!”

“Have n’t got it!” he cried aghast. “Have n’t got it! Why not? Where is it?”

“I have n’t declared it,” she answered. “Don’t be cross with me! I shall manage. A friend of mine on the boat is going to bring it ashore for me.”

He looked at her in consternation.

“You must be mad!” he whispered. “The Customs people know all about that necklace. It’s historic. Its sale was reported next day by cable in New York. It used to belong to the Marquise de Villancourt. You must get it back at once and wear it in.”

“I wish I could,” she gasped. “But I’m afraid it’s too late!”

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“What do you mean?” he asked. “Why too late?”

“Oh, you would n’t understand,” she answered. “I did n’t tell him what it was,—but he suspects, do you see? And I really did n’t give him a chance to refuse. We’re in his hands,—at his mercy.”

She hurried him to the ladder leading to the wireless house and the eyes of those on deck followed them curiously,—this joyless aristocrat and his butterfly! Behind them walked the central office men.

“You have to go up here,” she said. “I left it with the wireless operator.”

Sir Hubert preceded her stiffly up the ladder, and waited while she knocked at the door of the wireless house. In a moment it was opened by Micky Fitz.

“Oh, good morning, Mrs. Trevelyan!” he exclaimed in his usual cheerful manner. “What can I do for you?”

“I wish to present my husband, Sir Hubert Trevelyan,” she answered. Micky held out his hand, but the baronet merely bowed. Then a look half of inspiration, half of mischief, crossed Micky’s freckled face.

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“Won’t you step into my parlor?” he said, politely holding open the door.

They passed in, leaving the officers outside.

Sitting on the bunk with her handkerchief to her eyes was the Bennett girl. Mrs. Trevelyan did not recognize her.

“Mr. Fitzpatrick, my husband and I have come to find out if you have the package I left here last night,” said Lily, formally. She might have been the merest acquaintance. Indeed, from her tone one would have gathered such to have been the case.

Micky hesitated, and looked inquiringly from one to the other.

“Yes,” echoed Sir Hubert with emphasis. “What I want is my wife’s necklace!”

“Necklace?” returned Micky innocently. “Was there a necklace in that package?”

Trevelyan bit his lips, and metaphorically kicked himself for a fool.

“Yes,—it contained my necklace,” said Lily, frankly. “I was trying to smuggle it in. I might as well tell you the truth.”

Micky nodded.

“Right-o!” he exclaimed, experiencing one of those quick changes of emotion that Lily

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Trevelyan could always inspire. “But don’t you think you were a bit rash?”

Trevelyan scowled.

“We are not here to discuss the wisdom of my wife’s course,” he remarked coldly. “The only question in which we are interested is whether you intend to return the necklace at once.”

It would have been quite impossible for Micky to formulate the vague hope which the juxtaposition of Sir Hubert and the wife of the latter’s unfortunate employee had suggested to him. Indeed, he would undoubtedly have then and there produced and turned over to Lily the package had not the hitherto silent witness behind them created an unexpected diversion, by suddenly swaying and toppling over upon the bunk. Micky darted forward, but Lily had taken in the situation and thrown herself upon her knees by the girl’s side.

“She’s fainted!” she cried. “Hand me that pitcher, Micky!”

In another moment she was gently bathing the girl’s forehead while Micky opened the door and windows.

“Dear me!” exclaimed Sir Hubert, as he

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adjusted his glasses. “Poor child! Poor little thing! Can’t I do something? Can’t I be of some assistance?”

He moved around ambiguously, totally helpless, entirely ineffectual.

The girl on the bunk opened her eyes and fixed them imploringly upon the baronet.

“You won’t — you *won’t* — put Jim in prison?” she pleaded in a weak voice.

“Er — are you speaking to *me*?” inquired Trevelyan, in an embarrassed manner. “Who is this young person, may I ask?”

“It’s Mrs. Chilvers,” said Micky turning to the representative of the Royal Bank of Edinburgh. “The wife of the man who took that money from your London Branch — that is, he did n’t take it, but he was willing to assume the blame for it.”

Trevelyan and his wife both turned to Micky in astonishment.

“What do you know about it, may I ask?” snapped the baronet, his manner changing abruptly. “That is what *she* says, I assume.”

“It’s God’s own truth!” cried the Chilvers girl. “Every word of it! Father took the

money for medicine and doctors and to send mother to Egypt. Without it she'd have died.”

“Who *is* your father?” asked Sir Hubert.

“Fergus MacPherson,” she replied. Trevelyan seemed stunned.

“MacPherson! Why, he's been with the bank for over thirty years! It's impossible! He would n't betray his trust like that!” he cried angrily. “And *why* should any one else want to shoulder the blame for him?”

“On mother's account,” answered the girl. “If father had been arrested, the shock would surely have killed her. So Jim — Chilvers — said it was better for him to pretend *he* was the one. So we ran away, and here we are.”

“Oh, Hubert!” groaned Lily in a rush of sympathy. “Don't arrest him!”

“A fine fool I'd make of myself with the directors if I did n't!” he retorted, the veins in his temples swelling ominously. “I never heard such a cock-and-bull story in my life! Aged father — dying mother — heroic lover! No, no! I'm too old a bird to be caught that way. Why, you've only got this girl's word

for it! No man ever *admits* that he's a criminal. If there's any truth in his yarn let the jury acquit him!"

"It's true! I swear every word is true!" moaned the girl. "Are you going to lock him up in prison because he was too kind-hearted to let my mother know what father had done? Oh, Sir Hubert! Have some pity! And father had worked for you thirty years—thirty years,—and the most he was paid,—at the very end,—was two hundred and fifty pounds a year! He *could n't* support us all and educate me, and have proper care for mother on that!"

"Trevelyan," interrupted Lily, speaking very steadily and clearly, "let me say a word. I believe this girl. I don't believe her husband is a criminal. All I ask you, is not to be hasty in the matter. Save him the humiliation of an arrest and have his story investigated. The directors certainly would not want to punish an innocent man, and they probably would n't want to prosecute old Fergus Mac Pherson under the circumstances."

"But my duty!" returned Trevelyan doggedly. "How about my duty? Are we to



R. C. Cady

"It's true! I swear every word is true!" moaned the girl

let people commit crime without being punished for it?”

“I beg your pardon, Sir Hubert,” said Micky quietly. “I believe you were asking for Mrs. Trevelyan’s necklace. Here it is — without any strings to it, either.”

Trevelyan turned a deep red.

“Hubert,” murmured Lily, “do you know whom I thought those officers were coming for? I thought they were going to arrest a woman for attempting to violate the Customs laws. She was guilty, too. But it turned out they were after a poor fellow who had committed no crime at all. Can’t you do something for him, Trevelyan? Let him go! Let them start life over again somewhere else! Do it for me! I ask you! For me!”

Trevelyan gnawed his mustache and looked nervously out of the window.

“Of course,” he stammered, “I have no personal feeling in the matter. On the contrary, I am very much affected by what the young woman tells me. But the writ has been issued and the warrant will have to be served.”

“Excuse me,” contradicted Micky. “Extradition is simply a courtesy extended by one

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country to another. If the complainants request it the warrant need not be served. It's up to you!”

“Nevertheless,” answered Sir Hubert, “I shall not interfere. The law must take its course. Later on we will see what can be done.”

Micky shrugged his shoulders, while the Chilvers girl threw herself upon the bunk and burst into a torrent of weeping.

Trevelyan started towards the door, but before reaching it, he turned.

“However,—in view of all the circumstances I will take the matter up with our local board before sending Chilvers back to England,” he said gruffly. “Meantime I will withhold the warrant, and merely keep him under surveillance. But I warn you,” he looked sternly at Mrs. Chilvers, “that this is only temporary and that the chances are we shall allow the extradition proceedings to be carried through.”

He walked out sententiously.

“Fiddlesticks!” cried Lily. “He thinks he means it,—but he does n't. He's all for law and order and all that sort of thing—

theoretically. But he'll cool off. I promise you — I *promise* you, that nothing shall happen to Chilvers. You can trust me for that. I'll *make* him see the truth!”

Her face was set in determination.

“Oh, thank you! Thank you!” cried the girl. “You're the best woman in the world!”

Lily smiled a sphinx-like smile.

“Sometimes I am,” she said, “and sometimes I'm the worst. If you don't believe it ask Mr. Fitzpatrick.”

“You're the best *to-day*, anyhow,” retorted Micky. “We shall hold you to your promise.”

Outside Trevelyan was endeavoring to explain the situation as best he could in high-pitched English tones to two very much astonished central office men. He desired obviously to carry out the law as far as possible without carrying it out. There are many admirable people just like him.

“So you see, my good man, I shan't need you for the present, do you understand?”

“All right, boss!” replied the puzzled officer, touching his cap as he pocketed the twenty-dollar bill which Sir Hubert handed

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him. “I’ll call up the District Attorney and tell him what you say.”

Lily was an amused spectator of her husband’s encounter with the officials of the law.

“You rascal, Micky!” she laughed. “You little blackmailer! Do you know you’ve really made my husband act like a sensible human being. And if he *dares* to change his mind —! Well, let him look out.”

She nodded to the girl and started to join her husband.

“Micky,” she added over her shoulder, “don’t forget our engagement — to-morrow afternoon at the St. Regis — at five o’clock precisely.”

Micky laughed and touched his cap to her.

“I fancy everything is all right, Mrs. Chilvers,” he said.

XIX

IN WHICH THE RAT-FACED PURSER, SOME OTHERS,
AND PERHAPS THE READER, RECEIVE A JOLT

THE great ship steamed up the channel, swung round the Battery and into the North River amid a throng of shrieking tugs and ferry-boats. The marble turrets of the lower island rose against the blue like the dream towers of Maxfield Parrish's imagination in his picture of the "Dinky Bird."

In an ocean, 'way out yonder
(As all sapient people know),
Is the land of Wonder-Wander,
Whither children love to go.

Nearer the river the vision lost its romance, even if it retained its inspiration, and huge signs emphasizing the admirable qualities of pickles, pattern concerns, and stove polish reared their gigantic frames skyward. Across on the New

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Jersey side the congestion was as great, but of a somewhat lower order, and more smoky. The glittering surface of the river was covered with swiftly moving boats and launches which projected themselves in all directions with the velocity and manner of water beetles on a mud pond. The air was charged with a deep uproar in which mingled the whistles of factories, locomotive engines, freighters and ocean liners, their tones rising from the deep diapason of the leviathan to the shrill scream of the motor boat. Even half a mile from shore the air was electric with the thrill and bustle of lower Broadway. The island irradiated good nature.

The whole ship's company experienced an elevation of spirit. Tongues carefully restrained for fear of encouraging undesirable acquaintanceships were loosened to chatter recklessly with persons whose only claim to recognition was that they had been upon the same boat for fourteen days. The little hunchback was hobbling around everywhere, thanking people for having been so kind to him. First and second cabin alike massed themselves forward striving to distinguish through inferior glasses relatives or friends supposed to be awaiting

their arrival upon a dock as yet over a mile distant. The second steward appeared walking ostentatiously in the vicinity of the more wealthy passengers, and state-room stewards and stewardesses hurried anxiously about the decks looking for patrons who had forgotten them. Ladies who had arrayed themselves like last year's scarecrows during the voyage appeared in crinkly Parisian garments with marvelous hats and heavily embroidered veils, and an elderly woman whose mottled features had been all sicklied o'er with a more than pale cast of thought during the past two weeks now burst forth in a white serge costume and an entirely new countenance bearing the vivid imitation of rosy youth. On her feet she wore shapely pointed patent-leather shoes absolutely new, which creaked loudly as she walked; and in her large white-gloved hand she carried a leather-covered parrot cage with a flap fastened by a brass buckle. When a momentary lull occurred the occupant could be heard crooning and chuckling to himself.

Everybody was talking to everybody else. Now that the trip was over and the shore close at hand people seemed to be rather sorry

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that they had not taken greater advantage of their opportunities to make themselves agreeable. Many felt a passing tinge of disappointment that the journey was not a day or so longer. The even keel of the ship and the present solidity of her decks caused a temporary forgetfulness of recent intestinal experiences, and dimmed the virtues of Father Sill's Celebrated Sea-Sick Remedy in which the barber had done a thriving trade throughout the voyage at two bob six per box.

Ponsonby, bursting with pride over the reproduction of his purple face on the front page of a morning edition, strode up and down the bridge, smoking the remaining shilling cigar. Chauffeurs and valets down on the second-cabin deck renewed their attentions, which had lagged somewhat during the dead waste and middle of the voyage, to the various ladies of their choice and made definite engagements, positive and binding, for the next Saturday afternoon out. Business men with pencil and paper in their hands sat figuring and wondering how long it would be before they could reach their offices; passengers for Boston and Chicago pensively studied railroad folders; and the champagne

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drummer distributed cards to all his acquaintances recommending “our special cuvée 1911 Brut at \$24.00 per case of pints.”

People forgot that they had been across the ocean or on the sea at all, their minds being filled with disquieting thoughts anent getting through the Customs. Little girls worried about being late to school. Little boys uttered horrible swear words at having to go back at all. Everything was jam, bustle, confusion. The baggage was piled in a towering mass by the second-cabin gangway, and a hundred more of the crew stood idly waiting to hustle it ashore at the proper moment. Intelligent men and women gained intense pleasure from recognizing a particular piece of their baggage among the ruck, although it had reposed in their state-room but an hour before.

It seemed hours before the *Pavonia* slowly began to turn her nose to the dock, assisted by a dozen puffing tugs who rammed her with padded bows in order to make a shorter corner. At an opening at the end of the Cunard pier could be seen a multitude of tiny heads.

“There ’s John, I *know* it is!” cried the parrot lady, wildly waving her handkerchief, al-

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though she was firmly wedged among a crowd of at least fifty other persons. With exasperating deliberation the steamer floated dockward, foot by foot. The heads at the end of the pier grew bigger and bigger.

“Why, it is n’t John *at all!*” exclaimed the chagrined lady. “I never saw that man before in my life.”

With streams of water pouring from her vents down her huge black sides the *Pavonia* was shoved, pushed and hauled into her moorings amid a terrific bellowing of orders from the bridge. The relatives and friends on the dock, having recognized with ostentatious excitement the relatives and friends on board, repeated the exchange of salutations from moment to moment in a gradual diminuendo of enthusiasm.

“Hello! Hello! Mary! *Here* I am!”
“Hello, old sport!” “Have a good trip?”
“Fine!” “Hello, father — hello!” “Yes! Got it in my bag!” “Yes! Oh, fine!”
“How’s maw!” “Rotten! Yes, I lost her overboard —” “Oh, yes, Rome was great, but you oughter see Parus — it was *simply* fine! — fine!” “Yes! I see her! She’s fine! —

fine!” — “Perfectly lovely!” — “No, *I* was n’t sick, but lots of ’em were!”

These and a hundred thousand other platitudes, banalities and witticisms were bawled, shouted and shrieked across the intervening forty feet of water, accompanied by extraordinary contortions of body, and by the most horrible mouthings, grimaces and gesticulations while the *Pavonia* was made fast and her gang-planks run ashore.

Then they all began to crowd down the gangways, and that pitiable and enlightening spectacle — the great American public struggling with its individual conscience — began.

All this time Micky sat aloft in his little cage, smoking his pipe and taking in the scene with huge enjoyment. He was in no hurry to go ashore. In fact, unless he were fooling with horses, he’d rather be on a boat, even with nothing to do, than hanging around town any day in the week. He saw with mingled feelings Lily and her husband, followed by Fantine, edge their way down the gang-plank and disappear in the covered shed of the pier. She was really a good sort, but — ! There was a something about her — he could n’t explain it

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— not just right. He wrinkled his freckled nose. What was it always told him about such women?

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe, pulled out the drawer of his desk and searched around among the pile of miscellaneous papers with which it was littered. With some difficulty he found what he was looking for. He placed the photograph on his knee and looked into Evelyn Farquhar's young face with its arch glance and half parted lips. Now *she* was just as full of fun as Mrs. Trevelyan,— just as lively, just as jolly a companion, yet she was cut out of clean, whole cloth. She had no flighty fits of temper. She was always the same. Always the same — ? His lips quivered. How could his little girl have forgotten her ring and her promise? Could she with her true nature have chucked him for even so fine a chap as Cosmo Graeme had been? Could she have given herself to another after their parting in the grove behind the gamekeeper's? His heart told him no, yet he had heard it from one who should know. “I leave you engaged to be married to Evelyn Farquhar, one of the loveliest girls in all England,” Mrs. Trevelyan had

said to Graeme in the moonlight. Well, it was true that his Lady of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem was the loveliest girl in all England, and — perhaps — it was true also that she had been engaged to this other man. But *now* — now, what? Graeme was out of it. He might have won the race but he had passed out before he could claim the prize. That bloody old earl! Micky ground his teeth through the tears that would come in spite of him.

“Hello, Micky!” said Binks, sticking his head in the door. “’Ere’s a pyper in exchange for that *Pink ’Un* you gave me! Goin’ ashore?”

“Thanks, old chap!” replied Micky. “No — not just yet.”

“Say,— those hofficers is ’avin’ a great ’unt for that fellow Cloud,” continued Binks. “Hit turns out ’e’s a murderer. Killed the bloomin’ Hearl o’ Roakby! An’ blime if ’e ain’t just disappeared entire — without so much as a by yer leave!”

“Well, let ’em look!” retorted Micky. “What’s to have prevented his jumping overboard and goin’ ashore?”

“Dunno,” answered Binks. “By the way,

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the third match of the champean series between Noo York and Philadelphia is goin' to be played off this afternoon. Wanter come along?”

“Should n't wonder,” answered Micky. “Stick your head in here before you start, will you?”

Binks departed down the ladder and Micky lazily opened the paper, but he found little in it to excite his interest since he had heard most of the news through the air the evening before and during the early morning. Sheet after sheet he scanned of murder mysteries, divorce actions, run-overs, and political upheavals until on the fourteenth page his eye caught a column entitled, “Social Gotham,” with the sub-heading of “Earl of Toppingham visits America.”

“Humph!” thought Micky. “The old scallywag! What does *he* want to visit America for?” He ran down the column. Towards the bottom appeared the following:

The Right Hon. Earl of Toppingham, accompanied by his granddaughter the Hon. Evelyn Arabella Farquhar, is stopping for a few days at the Plaza preparatory to making a trip over the Canadian Pacific to Van-

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couver, and thence to Japan and India, where his eldest son is in command of a division of the regular army. The party consists of the Earl, his granddaughter, a secretary, valet and maid. It is the Earl's intention to first visit Niagara before proceeding west. His lordship expresses himself as much pleased with our country, but comments unfavorably upon the rates of cab hire, the prevalence of pictorial advertising, and the character of the Broadway musical shows. The Hon. Evelyn Farquhar is a well-known favorite in London society and her engagement to Cosmo Graeme, youngest son of Lord Conynfort, who disappeared two weeks ago after the Roakby murder, has been announced. It is supposed that the visit of the Earl is upon his granddaughter's account and for the purpose of diverting her mind by a prolonged journey in the Far East.

Micky swung his feet to the floor and sat bolt upright. The alarm clock before him pointed to ten minutes past twelve. The passengers were all safely down the gang-plank and still engaged in combat with the inspectors. He felt in his pocket for change, grabbed his faded cap from its hook and ran down the ladder. On the main deck he met Binks.

“Sorry,” he said, as he hurried by, “I find I can't go with you this afternoon. Got another engagement.”

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“Oh, you have, have you?” remarked Binks suspiciously. “Wot’s her name?”

“None of your blooming business!” retorted Micky, turning the color of a tomato. Then he escaped down the gang-plank and parrying the questions of the guardian at the gate hurried across to Ninth Avenue. Panting, he stumbled up the two long flights of metallic steps and struggled through the turn-style operated upon the elevated platform by an unshaven negro in a cinnamon-colored uniform.

With his eye staring vacantly at the seat in front of him he was whirled northward on a level with the second stories of sweat-shops and tenements, out of the windows of which hung in unconscious fashion slatternly women in loose calico garments. But he saw them not. The train swung grinding around a long pair of curves, throwing him first this way and then that, a couple of Russian Poles reeking of garlic and gurgling volubly at each other jostled him, a fat woman in a white shirt waist with blue polka dots took the seat beside him and smothered him behind her enormous bulk, the passengers came and went, got up and sat down, lurched forward and back, gates slammed, the

engine jerked, the conductor shouted nasally,— but Micky neither heard, saw, nor smelt them. He saw only a broad green English lawn across which stretched the purple shadows of oaks centuries old. The evening air was sweet with the scent of flowers, and the sunlight still lingered on the tree trunks among which stood a slender, wistful girl in a white frock with her arms outstretched to him, a brave smile on her lips, trying to keep back her tears — this was the vision sent to his yearning eyes amid the squalor and hubbub of the elevated, and all that he heard was a tender, girlish voice saying, "Good-by, Micky dear!"

It was exactly three minutes of one when there entered the Plaza Hotel from the 59th Street side a somewhat short, freckled faced, auburn-haired, and anxious-looking young person in a shabby blue uniform. The sleek youth at the revolving doors looked at him doubtfully.

"Whodoyerwant?" he shot at him.

But Micky was already at the marble-topped desk with his eye fixed on the elegant frock-coated figure that lounged behind it. The figure continued to lounge even after Micky had accosted him.

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“Earl of Toppingham? Sure, he ’s staying here. What do you want to see him about?” answered the clerk, eyeing him condescendingly.

Micky clenched his fists. He would have liked to knock the fellow’s block off.

“I wish to see Miss Farquhar,” he growled, controlling himself.

“Oh, you do? Well, how do you know she ’ll see *you*?” inquired the clerk, who spoke as if Micky should have applied for admission to the hotel at the kitchen entrance.

“I ’ll take a chance on it,” he muttered. “Give me a blank card,—*Lord Algernon*.”

The clerk glared at him, but haughtily indicated a receptacle containing cards.

Micky wrote something upon one of them, carefully enclosed it in an envelope, sealed and addressed it, and delivered it to a hall-boy, together with half a crown. Then he stared the clerk out of countenance and took a seat in a grove of potted palms. The boy was gone about ten minutes. Then he appeared, looking eagerly in every direction.

“Come right up,” he said, nodding hospitably.

Micky stumbled after his guide, into a

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bronze-gilt elevator half full of big hatted ladies, that shot him up swiftly into regions of eternal peace, smelling of buttered toast and Axminster carpets. He was evacuated into a dark hall at which a fluffy-haired girl sat at a small telephone desk and a couple of Corsican Brothers in fierce mustaches stood motionless in dress suits.

“Thees way, saire!” said one of them with a majestic wave of his hand.

Micky followed along miles and miles of highly polished hall to a mahogany door. His guide turned a handle that caused the feeble imitation of a decrepit alarm clock on the inside. The door was opened by Morley, the gray-haired valet of the Earl of Toppingham, who unemotionally took Micky’s cap and preceded him to another door, knocked, and left him.

“Come in,” said the Hon. Miss Evelyn.

Micky felt the blood rush to his eyes and head. Suppose the Earl should be inside there, too. He felt himself choking.

“Don’t be a blooming ass!” he muttered and turned the handle.

It was a big room furnished severely but expensively, and there was no one there except a

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young lady standing by the window in a trim gray walking suit, her golden — really golden — hair neatly done up under a small but rakish hat. It was not his Lady of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, but another,— a glorified, an apotheosized Evelyn, only her eyes and lips were the same. She stood quite still staring at him in a sort of half wonder, and he approached her speechless.

“Micky!” she gasped. “I thought you must be dead!”

“Is that why you did n’t answer my letters?” he asked stiffly.

“But I *did*,” she replied tremulously — “all I got.— I only received three. And I went on writing to you just the same. Have n’t you got them?”

“None,” answered Micky with a lump in his throat. “Oh, Evvy! I have n’t had anything but that postal from Cortina!”

“You poor boy!” she exclaimed, coming towards him. He started forward, questioning her with swimming eyes.

“Then you’re *not* engaged to Cosmo Graeme?”

“No — of course not!” she cried with a lit-



"Micky!" she gasped, "I thought you must be dead!"

tle laugh that was half a sob. “How could I be when I’m engaged — to some one else?”

That most sedately correct person, Mr. Jonathan Morley, several times poked his head inside the door to announce that lunch was ready and each time discreetly withdrew it. His lordship had gone down town to attend a mid-day banquet in his honor given by the Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Morley did not feel at all at his ease with respect to what he observed in the drawing-room of his master. More especially, however, his conscience began to smite him for having arranged for the abstraction of the letters of the pair inside who, he observed, were quite oblivious of his existence,— of everything, in fact, except each other. The luncheon grew cold,— colder,— stone cold. At the end of an hour Mr. Morley regretfully ordered its removal, and retired to his lordship’s bed-chamber to lay out the evening clothes of his master.

In the embrasure of the window these two babes in the wood sat in much the same posture that they had occupied in the grove behind the gamekeeper’s on that memorable afternoon three years before.

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“You must never, never leave me now, Micky dear,” whispered the Hon. Evelyn. “Promise me!”

The words brought back to him the scene of the night before and the woman who had spoken them. For an instant the form of Mrs. Trevelyan swam before him. And he had an appointment with her at 5 o'clock! At least she *thought* he had.

“I've been so lonely!” added Evelyn. “Grandpa has been utterly unreasonable. Why, he used to instruct me just what I was to say to different people — imagine! And I'm sure he gave it out that I was engaged to Cosmo.”

“The old ruffian!” answered Micky, patting the back of her hand. “But poor old chap, perhaps he was right. I might have become an awful bounder, you know, batting around this way all over the globe. But I'm going to settle down now; — and I'm going to find your letters if I have to visit every Marconi office in the civilized world!”

“But you've enjoyed it, have n't you?” she teased him.

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“Enjoyed it! — have you?” he answered reprovingly.

He drew her to him and kissed the lips that quivered and smiled at the same time.

“Lunch!” she suddenly exclaimed, disengaging herself from his arms. “Why, it’s half-past two!”

“Oh, hang the lunch!” answered Micky. “Let’s cut it out and go for a drive. We can get tea somewhere.”

A moment later the much scandalized Morley saw his mistress depart with her shabby visitor. He shook his head resignedly.

“Hit’s no use kickin’ against the pricks!” he ruminated sadly as they entered the elevator and the bronze door clashed to behind them. “What is written is written! I wonder what his lordship ’ll say when he comes back!”

The elegant young man in the office almost lost his balance as he saw the Hon. Evelyn Arabella Farquhar and her escort pass unconcernedly through the hall and enter a hansom, and his excitement was shared in almost equal degree by the sleek youth at the revolving door and the six-foot starter on the sidewalk.

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“Where to, sir?” asked that stately person touching his cap respectfully.

“Oh, anywhere!” answered Micky casually. “Anywhere that ’ll take until about half after six to get back from.”

“Very good, sir!” gasped the starter. “*Yonkers!*” said he to the cabby with a grin behind his gloved hand.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Toppingham did not return to the hotel until nearly five o’clock. He was somewhat out of temper as his taxicab had collided with a brewery wagon and he had been obliged to give his name, occupation and address to an assiduous policeman, very much to his disgust. He had also essayed to walk from the scene of the disaster and had lost himself in the neighborhood of the East River.

Morley followed him deprecatingly into his bedroom and coughed suggestively.

“Mr. Michael has turned hup, sir,” he said in well-considered tones.

“What!” ejaculated the noble Earl. “Here?”

“Just so, sir!” replied Morley regretfully. “And I should tell your lordship that Miss

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Farquhar went out with him at 'arf after two, sir, and 'as not yet returned, sir.”

The Earl of Toppingham made no reply. Then with his back to Morley he said:

“Have you still got all those letters?”

“Yes, my lord.”

“Well, give them to me,” directed his master. “I may be able to arrange to have them delivered.”

Then the Earl of Toppingham, who was really a nice old man according to his lights, went alone into the drawing-room, and having lit a very cheap and nasty cigar, stood looking out over the waving tree-tops in the park for upwards of an hour, and he was still watching the lines of misty lights that circled among the foliage or marched in double columns along its boundaries when the door opened and Evelyn came in.

“Hello, grandpa!” she cried, going over and putting her arms around his neck. “I suppose Morley has told you the whole thing?”

His lordship bent and kissed her flushed cheeks.

“My little Evvy!” he whispered. “My little Evvy!”

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“Beg pardon, sir!” called the astonished cabby after Micky as the latter was leaving the steps of the Plaza just as the Hon. Evelyn had entered her apartment on the twenty-fifth floor.

“Ain’t yer goin’ to pay me? This here old hoss is clean played out.”

Micky stopped short and thrust his hands into his pockets one after the other.

“How much is it?” he inquired calmly.

“Thirteen dollars and seventy-five cents,” answered the cabby.

“Is *that* all?” said Micky. “That’s much too cheap. I should n’t think you could feed the horse on that,—apart from yourself. But, you know, I have n’t any small change about me.”

“Eh!” cried the cabby. “What are you givin’ me?”

“Charge it to the Earl of Toppingham!” said Micky, lighting a cigarette.

“Charge nuthin’!” shouted the cabman. “You give me my money!”

Then as the starter approached in lofty dignity he turned to him in aggrieved and whining tones.

“Say, guvnor, this guy ’ere tells me to hang

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up his bill to the Earl of Toppingham. Would n't that jar you?”

“Oh, well,” retorted Micky, climbing into the cab, “drive me down to the Cunard Pier!”

As they jogged along Fifth Avenue the electric lights flashed out in pale blue lines and the tops of the tall buildings faded into the darkening sky. He had finished his last cruise! His job with the Marconi Company was over. The leggy little girl with the big dog was his! And there was poor Cosmo racing across the sea to fight the niggers in Africa under a blazing sun while he — he was going back to England — dear, rotten old England, as Graeme had called it, to begin a new and very different life, a life of responsibility, of gravity, he hoped of usefulness — with Evelyn beside him. It had been a strange mix-up, yet it had all come out better than any one could have expected. And the strangest feature of it all had been the way in which Fate had chucked him and Graeme together.

Across the way blazed the windows of the St. Regis, reminding him of his quasi-engagement with Mrs. Trevelyan for five o'clock.

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Should he keep the appointment? Could he do so, just having left the girl he was going to marry, with the touch of her lips still lingering upon his? He shook his head. No, let her go! That passage in his sailor life was well over. Besides, the fact of his new position in society at large would lead her surely into some ridiculous stage business, and he hated all that sort of gush!

Poor Mrs. Trevelyan! Yet, she had her good points as well as her bad. Should he judge her too harshly? If you only knew would n't you find some reason for her being the way she was? He had really liked her — until last evening. She should n't have tried that — no, she should n't have tried that! It was better to leave things as they were.

The cab rumbled on down the avenue, through unending side streets, across car tracks and cobble stones, until it stopped in front of the big pier with its flashing rows of myriad electric lights.

“Wait a minute,” said Micky as he climbed out. “I'll be back in a minute and give you the money.”

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“No, you don’t!” remarked the cabby.
“Me an’ you will go along together.”

“Oh, very well,” answered his fare. “Come on. Perhaps sometime you’ll want to take a state-room on the boat.”

They climbed the stairs to the upper story, passed the watchman who looked suspiciously at the shabby fellow carrying his whip in his hand, and thence ascended the gang-plank to the *Pavonia*.

“This way, my friend,” said Micky, leading him to the purser’s office.

The rat-faced purser was hard at work at his accounts and did not look up at his visitor’s approach.

“Hello there, old chap!” called Micky through the grating. “Come over here a minute like a good fellow; I want to speak to you.”

“Wait a minute, Micky,” answered the other meditatively still counting,—“and nine is sixty-seven.” He wrote it down, stuck the pencil behind his ear and stepped to the window.

“What do you want — money?”

“Yes,” said Micky. “Among other things.”

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“What are the others?” laughed the purser.
“Perhaps they’re easier to get.”

“Well,” replied Micky in his most casual manner, “I want to engage Saloon A 1 — and the rooms that go with it for the return voyage. You call it the ‘bridal suite’ don’t you?”

The purser looked at him reprovingly.

“What kind of a joke is that?” he asked.
“Are you tight?”

“Have n’t had a drink since we left Naples,” answered Micky. “This is on the level.”

The purser eyed him suspiciously.

“Who for?” he inquired.

“Myself,” said Micky with dignity.

“You make me *sick!*” snapped the purser.
“Confound you! What business have you to try and be funny at my expense.”

“I’m not kidding,” answered Micky. “I want to engage it — honor bright.”

“Go soak your head!” rapped out the other.

“Are you going to take my order or not?” inquired Micky loftily.

The purser shoved a yellow blank towards him under the grating.

“All right, smarty,” he retorted; “sign an application if you want it.”

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Micky took up the pen and hesitated a moment as if trying to recollect something he had almost forgotten. Then he filled out the slip carefully, taking a long time about it, and slid it back to the purser. At the bottom, after the words “Signature of applicant,” appeared in Micky’s labored scrawl the name:

Michael Fitzpatrick St. Giles Stanley Hamilton, Earl of Roakby, Viscount Chiselhurst, Baron Montagu.

“You see,” he explained semi-apologetically, “that Roakby chap who was shot in England the other day happened to be my uncle.—Now Shylock, old chap,” he added patiently, “just give me a month’s wages to pay my cabby, will you?”

THE END

