



ACROSS  
THE  
LATITUDES

JOHN FLEMING WILSON



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**ACROSS THE LATITUDES**







Our men were boiling for a scrap, tough as knots.

FRONTISPIECE. *See page 293*



# ACROSS THE LATITUDES

BY

JOHN FLEMING WILSON

AUTHOR OF "THE LAND CLAIMERS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

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PS  
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TO  
MY FRIENDS  
OF  
THE SS. HANAIEI

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# ACROSS THE LATITUDES

CHIEF ENGINEER MICHAEL  
O'ROURKE

## I

ORDER No. 113

COMMANDER HALE's thoughts traveled straight from the lofty office down the Columbia River and out on the Pacific to a brick-red vessel with stumpy masts. His quiet, tired eyes half closed as the picture of this farthest outpost of his command rose before him, tossing on the bright, lonely sea, tugging at the slender steel cable that marked the authority of the United States Lighthouse Establishment. Columbia River Light-Vessel *No. 188*, as her official title ran, was new, built to replace faithful old *No. 153*, which for so many years had clung to her desolate post, suffering the terrific punishment of month-long hurricanes, the scars of collision, going adrift in roaring gales, but always coming back to the job till that last occasion that erased her from the list and put *No. 188* in her place.

Now the Commander — lately transferred from a cruiser to this lofty and busy office — was confronted

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with the task of picking out a new master for the new vessel. His choice stood before him, young, eager and confident. And in his freshly chosen subordinate's attitude Hale thought that he saw still another thing that was new — not a man or a ship this time, but an idea.

With old *No. 153* there had passed an era as well. Hale resented it; what had the great, vigilant, unwearying, patient Lighthouse Establishment to do with a strange idea? And such an idea, too. It was preposterous. *No. 188* vanished from his mind's eye and he frowned on the new captain. "What was that you just said?" he inquired of the young man.

John Ethan Lethbridge, with his new appointment in his pocket, smiled confidently. "I merely remarked, sir, that I would be the first and only American in command of a light-ship on this coast."

The Commander's frown deepened. "All the officers of this service are American citizens," he said stiffly. "And I believe most of the seamen are, too."

Lethbridge nodded, paying no attention to the Commander's frown. "Oh, I don't mean they are n't citizens, and all that," he said easily. "But look at 'em — Oleson, Larsen, Svensen, Rasmussen, Jurgenson, Nielsen — and you'll have to acknowledge that your light-vessels are captained by Scandinavians. I understand there are a few Irish and Scotch in the engine-rooms. You see what I mean, sir. I'll be the only real American among them."

The Commander made no reply and Lethbridge went on: "I've always felt that it was a shame to have good

American vessels in the hands of foreigners, and I'm glad you've broken the old custom, sir, and have n't handed over Government jobs to men who have no claim at all except that they've signed papers and lived so long in this country. Just remember, sir, that there's an American out on *No. 188*."

There was a brief silence. Hale raised his eyes from the desk and said in a curt, official voice: "I'll remember that, Captain Lethbridge. I am not aware that any officer of this service has ever shown himself delinquent in his duty, however, and you owe your own appointment merely to your standing in the examination and your general character. Of course I'm glad you are a native-born American, but I have no criticism to make of any of the men in the Establishment. I suppose you have studied the book of instructions? I wish to call your particular attention to Order No. 113. It is one rule that we never break in this service, Captain. You observe that it forbids you to leave your station under any circumstances whatever without special orders from this office. That means that the only excuse you have for coming into port is if your moorings carry away entirely. It is distinctly to be understood that there are no circumstances that will justify your heaving up anchor or slipping your cable. The Government expects every light-vessel to be in its place at all times and in all weathers."

Lethbridge seemed about to say something, but merely nodded. Hale handed him a fresh copy of his orders, dismissed him and rang for the chief clerk.

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When that kindly and experienced man came to a halt before his desk Hale looked up at him and demanded, "Who is the mate of *No. 188*?"

"Nicholas Sunni," was the reply.

"What nationality?"

"Finn," was the laconic answer.

"And the chief engineer?" pursued Hale.

"O'Rourke, sir."

"Irish, of course?"

"Born on the old sod," said the grave clerk.

Hale made a gesture of dismay. "Lethbridge seems to think the service has gone over to the foreigners completely," he said. "The man actually congratulated me on getting an American master for *No. 188*."

The clerk bowed slightly, coughed and suggested, "All the officers in the Establishment are Americans, sir. It is the law."

Hale flushed. "Quite right. I meant 'American-born.' As you say, all our men are citizens, and there can be no complaint on that score. But I wish I had given Lethbridge a ship with fewer nationalities among its officers. I suppose there is no other officer on board who might meet Lethbridge's expectations? Who is the assistant engineer?"

"Macpherson," said the clerk, smiling gently. "Alexander Macpherson. He's the chap that brought the *Kilday* in seven years ago after the boilers had given out and killed a dozen men. Been in our service ever since that happened."

"He must be a good man, even if he is n't what Leth-

bridge calls an American," Hale commented, and he turned to his mail.

That evening the Commander of the One Hundred and Twenty-Third Lighthouse District read the following paragraph in his afternoon paper:

Captain John Ethan Lethbridge, formerly of the steamer *Cape May*, has received the appointment of master of Columbia River Light-Vessel *No. 188*, the new light-ship that has just been assigned to the station off the bar. Captain Lethbridge's appointment seems to mark a new departure in the lighthouse service, as it has been a matter of frequent complaint that the Government has accepted foreign-born masters and mates constantly in preference to Americans born and bred. Along the water-front the hope was expressed today that Commander Hale, just assigned to this district, will continue to recognize the efficiency of American-born officers and relieve the Lighthouse Establishment from the odium of being manned entirely by foreigners who have taken out citizenship papers. Captain Lethbridge, while yet a young man, exemplifies a high type of the American seaman who made our flag famous years ago. He left this evening to take command of *No. 188*, relieving Mate Nicholas Sunni, who has been in charge since the resignation of Captain Sven Svensen last month.

The Commander reread this, laid the paper down and shook his head. He suddenly realized that the new idea had sprung into a mature and dangerous existence. The law made no distinction between the native and foreign-born American in the lighthouse service. It had gone ahead, for years, guarding the coasts of two great oceans, watching over the welfare of the world's commerce, and the question had never arisen whether American-born Jones or Swedish-born Oleson had been the better, more faithful servant. And yet —

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Hale saw the other side of the question. The ambitious and patriotic American was anxious to see his Government's vessels in the hands of fellow-countrymen. He might judge the naturalized citizen unjustly, but the prejudice was deep-seated, and, the Commander had to acknowledge within himself, it might easily become a slogan. Then, when this new idea became a war-cry, how was he, the Commander, to be just and fair? For instance, there was Svensen. He had served long and well. It was Svensen who had hung to his moorings that time when the huge *Glenfalcon* had driven staunch *No. 153* deep into the water, crushing her gallant little hull into the boiling brine. Hale recalled reading the dusty reports about that episode, the *Glenfalcon's* story of a ship held unmanageable betwixt wind and tide, and some tugboat skipper's brief note that "*No. 153* appeared in sinking condition at sunset with rising wind and sea, but master refused assistance. Saw lights lit as usual between squalls." He saw again that thumbed report of Svensen's, wherein the old captain had set down, in a cramped hand: "Were run into by Ship *Glenfalcon* at 4 P. M. . . . Kept crew at pumps and lit lights four minutes late owing to carrying away of forward lamp-house and lamp. Night squally. Kept lights bright till vessel sank at 6:15 A. M., when took to boats, arriving in Astoria same night; all hands safe."

"Good old Svensen!" thought the Commander; "with his scrupulous fidelity to his orders, his sedulous lighting of the great lamps on his wallowing and sinking craft, his grim 'Kept lights bright till vessel sank.'"

But Svensen was a Swede, and according to the evening paper the Lighthouse Establishment bore a degree of odium because it had delivered the keeping of its vessels to men of alien birth. Hale dropped the paper and muttered: "I don't like the notion Lethbridge has; it is n't fair. And yet — I hope it works out all right."

Fifty miles away, in a railway car swinging along the Columbia's steep cliffs, Captain Lethbridge was cutting the same paragraph out of his paper with a sharp knife. He snapped the blade to with a quick, satisfied gesture and reread the item. Then he carefully tucked it into his wallet together with his new master's papers, some blank forms for reports and a receipted bill for wet-weather clothes. A slight flush warmed his eager face as he stared out of the window at the wide, shadowy river. He saw its debouchment into the sea, the quick run of the surf along the jetties, the smoke of the tugs, the jumping bar buoys, and, flung against the horizon, the image of his new command, *No. 188*. "It'll be rather slow," he meditated. "But a good man can wake up even a light-ship. And they need a good, active man on one of 'em just to show how it ought to be done. Maybe the Commander will see how much better it is to have a hustling American in charge of a vessel, and then he'll quit having these old Swedes and Norwegians and foreigners on 'em, and we boys will have a chance to do things up to date and in real American style."

He turned to answer a low-voiced greeting from a bulky man whom he recognized as Jurgenson, master of the Lighthouse Tender *Eucalyptus*. Jurgenson sat

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heavily down beside him and remarked, "So you're going out to take *No. 188*, Captain?"

"Yes," said Lethbridge curtly.

"I think she's a good vessel," Jurgenson went on solemnly, filling his pipe and cramming the tobacco down with a stubby finger. "That's a hard station. I thought Svensen would keep her. I hear he's resigned."

"So he has," Lethbridge assented. Jurgenson stared out of the window into the darkness. "I was mate with Svensen before I went to *No. 167*, up on Swiftsure Bank," he remarked. "Good man. Getting old, I guess. Thought he'd die in the service."

"He lost *No. 153*," Lethbridge offered, as a half explanation.

Jurgenson nodded. "Yes. Kept her afloat all night and the lamps burning. Todd of the *Wasp* wanted to tow him in that night. Svensen climbed up on the rail and megaphoned across, 'I ain't got no orders to leave yet, Cap'n!' Todd, never being in the service, thought the old man was crazy to stick to his moorings, and almost grabbed old *153* by force to take her in and beach her. But Svensen, he just said he had n't got no orders to leave his station and kept his lamps bright, and so old *153* sank and Svensen and his crew had to pull twelve hours in a small boat across a smoky bar."

"Svensen would have saved a hundred thousand dollars' worth of property if he'd allowed Todd to bring him in," Lethbridge said impatiently. "The Government does n't expect a man to be a fool about such things. A master of a lightship ought to use some judgment."



The other captain puffed slowly on his pipe. "Well, orders are to hang on to your moorings till you're ordered in," he said calmly. "Svensen obeyed orders."

"That may be all right for you fellows," Lethbridge said with total disregard of Jurgenson's feelings. "You men who were n't born here can't be expected to take any responsibility. But I'll bet an American skipper would have brought old 153 in, saved his Government a hundred thousand dollars, and showed his sense."

Jurgenson digested this slowly. Then he said, with grim quietness: "I saw that piece in the paper. I'm an American, Captain, if I was born in Norway, and I've been an American as long as you have, even if you were born one. And I think that orders are orders. Svensen figured out that he was put there to keep those lights bright, and he kept 'em burning till his vessel sank — which was more than a hundred thousand dollars." Jurgenson got up and tramped heavily away down the aisle. Lethbridge was embarrassed, for he realized that he had offended one of the oldest men in the service, and this had been unwise on the part of one of the youngest. "But he'll have to wake up and listen to straight talk before long," he comforted himself. "No commander expects his captains to make idiots of themselves for the sake of an order like that."

Eighteen hours later Lethbridge swung himself down into the tender's small boat that was to convey him across a quarter of a mile of tumbling water to *No. 188*. Jurgenson waved a friendly hand to him from the *Eucalyptus'* deck and called out: "I've told the steward to give

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you a quarter of fresh beef, Captain. You'll need it before we get your quarterly supplies out to you. This nice weather is n't going to last long."

Lethbridge called back thanks and turned his eyes to his new command. She seemed very small as she lay heaving to her anchor. Stumpy masts, dwarfish lamp-houses and a flush deck gave her almost a miniature aspect. After all, she did n't amount to much; he was sorry he had left the merchant service for the Establishment. This was n't a young man's work, sticking to a mushroom anchor. It was a job for old fellows like these foreigners.

He crawled up the ladder to the lightship's deck and shook hands with the mate, who seemed glad to see him. Then he waved his hand to the officer in the small boat, glanced around and followed Sunni down the steep steps to the cabin.

In its cramped space, with stateroom doors giving into it on both sides, Lethbridge felt better. He noticed that the mate was in full uniform. His own dress gave a good reflection back from the mirror above the sideboard, making a general air of official importance. *No. 188*, small as she was, belonged to the Government, and he, Lethbridge, was master of her. He asked for the log-book.

Sunni nodded. "You will find it on the shelf behind you, Captain," he said with a distinctly foreign accent.

Lethbridge turned and picked out the big volume and sat down in a swinging chair with it open before him on the table.

"Everything all right?" he demanded.

Sunni sat down across the little table and answered, "All quite right. Did you bring off any fresh meat?"

"Yes," said Lethbridge indifferently. "And, by the way, I've got some mail for you."

The mate brightened up, his gray mustache lifting to display full, mobile lips. He took the packet Lethbridge handed him and went through it, picking out a couple of letters which he dropped into his pocket. Then he said, "I'll take the mail for'ad to the boys. I'll be back in a moment." The door slid open and closed behind him.

"That fellow has no business being mate," Lethbridge said to himself. "He's old and I'll bet he's rheumatic as well." He determined to ask for a new officer next time he wrote to the commander. "I'll tell him we need an energetic American," he thought.

Sunni returned to say, "The ship's all cleaned up, Captain. I've just let the men go below to read their mail."

Lethbridge glanced at the clock. "Short morning's work," he remarked dryly.

Sunni looked down at the two letters he had withdrawn from his pocket and said nothing for a moment. Then he suggested, "We always give them an afternoon below these days."

"What days?"

"Days we clean the ship," Sunni answered. "They appreciate it."

"I imagine they appreciate anything that does n't

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look like work," Lethbridge snapped, and plunged into the log-book. The mate glanced at him inquiringly, got up and went into his own room, where he carefully opened his letters with a knife and sat down on the edge of the bunk to read them. He sighed gently as he turned the closely written pages, but the slow expiration of his breath seemed more an involuntary yielding to the motion of the ship than an expression of sadness. He did n't hear the captain's call till it had been repeated. Then he laid the letters down, weighted by the knife, and took the two steps needful to bring him into the cabin again. Lethbridge was holding the log-book open with one hand while he figured with a pencil in the other. "How much coal does she burn a day?" he demanded.

The mate shook his head. "The chief knows," he responded. "I can't tell exactly."

"Where is the chief engineer?"

Sunni left the cabin and returned with a small, heavily mustached man who bowed and looked at Lethbridge out of bright eyes. "Did ye want me, misther?" he inquired.

"You are Mr. O'Rourke?" demanded Lethbridge.

"Oi om," said the chief engineer. "Me mother christened me Mickey, but Oi'm Misther O'Rourke now, thank God and the Governmint of the Unithed Sthates."

"How much coal do you burn a day?" Lethbridge said stiffly.

The chief engineer slid into a chair and shook his head dolefully. "Now you 're askin' me a quistion it breaks me heart to answer, misther," he said. "On ould

153 we cud kape the stheam up, condinse our dhrinkin' watter and have a bit bye for the cook's taypot and only burn a ton or maybe two hundred pound beyond. But 188 — and Oi'm not sayin' a wurd aginst her, misther — ates up an unhowly amount of coal. Ye see, misther — ”

Lethbridge felt that he was being made a fool of, and said curtly, “ How much does this vessel burn a day ? ”

O'Rourke tossed grimy hands in comic discomfiture. “ It 's all down in the little book,” he asserted earnestly. “ Misther Macpherson sets it all down each day, sor, and a betther engineer than Macpherson don't breathe air — he 's a grand mon, sor, and he sets all thim little things down in the book ivery day, as you 'll see for yoursilf, misther.”

Lethbridge stared, saw a faint smile on the mate's face, and rose from his place. “ Things have been going pretty slackly on this ship,” he remarked, “ when the chief engineer does n't even know how much coal his furnaces use.”

O'Rourke seemed thunderstruck. “ Och, misther ! ” he said contritely ; “ Oi 'll tell ye as soon as I get me glasses on. Ye see, she burns some coal one day and more another, and Misther Macpherson keeps it all down in the little book. But Oi 'll look and see, misther — ”

The chief dived through the door and Lethbridge heard him bawling somewhere : “ Tommy, Tommy ! Tell Misther Macpherson the captain wants him, and tell him to bring the little book so he can tell the captain

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how much coal we burn ivery day right off, with no throuble to anny of us, seein' it's all down in the little book —” As the voice died away in the depths of the engine-room Lethbridge saw the smile on Sunni's face broaden into a grin.

“Mickey is a wonder,” the mate remarked.

“I'd like to know how such an idiot ever got to be engineer of this vessel,” Lethbridge broke out in wrath. “This craft seems to be a kind of imbecile asylum.”

Sunni's grin faded. “Mr. O'Rourke has been in the Establishment twelve years,” he said formally.

“No wonder the Government is trying to get some Americans into its vessels,” was Lethbridge's reply. Sunni flushed, but kept his peace. The chief engineer reëntered, triumphantly escorting a tall, blue-eyed Scotchman who held a log-book in one calloused hand.

“This is Misther Macpherson,” said O'Rourke. “And he can tell ye iverything ye want to know about the engines and the coals and the machines, sor. Misther Macpherson, tell the new captain what he wants to know, and do it out of yer little book, so that nobody will be up and say we don't know annything about our own engines, God bliss thim fer the surface-condinsin', double-actin', fore-and-aft compound beauties they are!”

Lethbridge's face was hot. “I think we won't bother the assistant engineer,” he said with dignity. “When the chief engineer of this vessel can find time to tell its commander what he wants to know I'll listen to him.

Mr. Sunni, let's have a look at the men. I hope we have at least one good boat's crew among them."

As the captain passed haughtily out into the berth-deck the chief engineer gazed thoughtfully after him. "Now we've gone and offended a bran-new uniform, Macpherson, with our little book and our coal figgers. The devil's childher have their father's luck, Mither Macpherson, and me bould Mickey has said ayther a mite too much or a heap too little." O'Rourke sighed, and wiped one eye with the cuff of his cotton shirt. "But the bilges are clane, annyway," he said with returning cheerfulness. "And thot's all your work, Mither Macpherson. I give ye credit fer bein' a clanelly mon and a handy one, and the ingins of ould 188 bliss ye with their shinin' faces. I wundher what we've done to offend the new skipper? He looks a good sort, and a good seaman too."

Macpherson grumbled in his beard, tucked the engine-room log-book under his arm and slipped away. But as he plunged down the alleyway he came full on Lethbridge, who was examining the coil of fire hose. Lethbridge stopped him and said acidly, "How often do you inspect this apparatus?"

"It's not in our department," said the assistant sourly.

"It will be hereafter," was the curt response. "See to it that the couplings are ready and on, if you have n't tossed them over the side!" — a speech that made the assistant speechless with rage, for he took pride in his work.

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Just one week later Lethbridge sat alone in the little cabin over his first official report. He contemplated it grimly. In it he asked for a new mate, two new engineers, and recommended that at least two of the sailors be discharged for physical disability. "That sounds pretty bad," he muttered to himself, gnawing the penholder. "But it's my duty to do it. The idea of having such men on board a Government vessel!" An hour later he was still at the same point, furious with himself for his hesitation to complete the task. "If the commander can't see that I'm right," he argued to himself, "then I've no business out here. Bad weather is coming on again, and if this craft ever broke adrift these fellows would be as helpless as cats in a whirlwind — chief engineer an old Irishman who does n't know enough to keep his men at a distance, second engineer a cocky Scotchman who only draws his pay, and my mate an old fellow with a wife and children ashore and no thought for his work out here."

At this moment Sunni slid the door open and said quietly, "The *Wallula* is alongside, sir."

Half an hour later Lethbridge was reading a paper, freshly brought off by the tug, while Sunni was explaining to O'Rourke that he had just had a letter from Mrs. Sunni saying she would leave for Tillamook, forty miles down the coast, on the steamer *Gull*, sailing Sunday morning. "This is Saturday," the mate groaned. "And the *Gull* is n't fit for a lake."

"The *Gull* is a betther ship than a dozen you and me have sailed in," said O'Rourke consolingly. "And yer



good lady will hov a nate trip down and she's goin' to see her own born sister, ye say? Misther, d' ye begrudge her the visit? Begorrah, there's no harm'll come to her, for she's a foine woman Mrs. Sunni, and I ray-mimber well the dinner she gave me the time me arm was broke in the bunker of ould 153 and I cud n't ate with me fork like a Christian, but had to fish for the chicken leg with a spoon out of the platter. It's not for you and me to be timptin' God to spoil a good woman's mirth by our fears of disaster."

"The weather is changing," sighed Sunni, clasping one hand within the other.

"It's niver steady at sea," said O'Rourke. "If it's pleasant in the hivins, it's a terrible storm in the cabin; if the sea goes down and for once in a while our legs stay straight undher us the way the good Lord made thim, and we can kape our hands in our pockets and off the furniture, something has gone wrong with me bould skipper, or the cook has a tanthrum, or the submarine bell has to be hauled out and looked into its innards. I niver yet saw the ship where the weather was consistently foine, misther."

Sunni refused to be comforted. "There've been a lot of accidents on Tillamook bar," he groaned. "And here's Helma going down there in the heart of winter."

O'Rourke's face grew grave. "Niver ye fear, Misther Sunni," he said. "Even the divil wud do yer woife no harm, savin' her grace fer mintionin' her good silf and the ould bhoy in the same breath. And Rasmussen of the *Gull* is a good seaman; we were together in the ould

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*City of Brussels* and swam out to the same spar whin she sank, and hung there, the watter pourin' into our ears; and Rasmussen says to me, 'Mickey, are ye cold?' and I says to him, 'Misther Rasmussen, me belly's warm, but it's a long way from there to me toes.' And Rasmussen, seein' I was a little fellay, gave me a mite more of me bould spar and says, 'Ye woid Oirishman, what d'ye expect whin ye're supposed to be drowned? I niver knew yet an Oirishman that was satisfied.' And so he kept the heart in me till we were picked up. Rasmussen is a foine fellay, and Mrs. Sunni he'll look after special."

At this instant Lethbridge came up and looked at the barometer.

"We're going to have another gale," he remarked.

"Thot's the way it does on this coast," O'Rourke said, casting bright glances about the deck and hitching at a broken suspender. "It's foine as silk for a wake and thin it pours the wind out of the sky be the month. I raymimber in ould 153 that Oleson — he was mate thim days and came out of a steam schooner like yersilf, Misther Lethbridge — was congratulatin' himsilf that his throubles were over, praise God, whin it blew for three wakes on ind, and Oleson lost all six caps he had brought off from shore with him and was mournin' day and night that he must go bareheaded to Purgat'ry, savin' yer prisince, Misther Lethbridge; but that's what he said and there's no harm in it, for we must all sweat in Purgat'ry and why not make the best of it, misther?"

Lethbridge showed his open contempt for such remarks by walking away a few paces and then coming back to say, "Mr. Sunni, I wish you would tell the men on watch to keep a good lookout when the weather breaks. There are a lot of old tubs coming in and out, and we must be ready to stand by if they need assistance."

"There!" said O'Rourke as Lethbridge vanished. "We'll all be on the lookout for the *Gull*, Misther Sunni, and if aught happens to it yer woife is safe."

But the mate found small comfort in this, recalling to the chief engineer's mind that Mrs. Sunni and he had been married fifteen years and had three children. "And I've not seen them for five months," he concluded.

"No wundher yer woife is goin' on a visit," said O'Rourke cheerfully. "And ye'll see Rasmussen hike the *Gull* past us to-morrow morning like a yacht."

"I hope she won't go to sea," said Sunni. "But that opposition line makes it bad for Rasmussen. The owners will make him go out no matter what the weather, just so as not to lose a trip and let the other boat get some freight." He walked away, bitterly thinking that experience and seamanship counted little when profits were at stake.

The next morning Lethbridge, coming on deck for the first time, saw the far mountains of the coast draped in cloud, but ignored the portent. He saw only the glimmering, quiet sea, the pilot-schooner a mile to the south, an oil-tanker curtsying decorously to the blue rollers far astern, the sun rising mistily, a bark standing in toward the bar under all plain sail. Sunni joined

him, rubber-booted and glum. "Storm coming," he remarked.

"Don't think so," said Lethbridge. "The wind will haul into the southeast, but that means ordinary weather this time of year."

Sunni stared at the big lamps, now being lowered into their houses. "I wonder whether the *Gull* will leave out for Tillamook this morning?" he said.

Lethbridge answered with the simple remark, "That old tub? That Swede skipper of hers will put her under some day."

Sunni flushed. "Rasmussen is a friend of mine," he said bluntly. "He's a first-class man."

Lethbridge smiled tolerantly. "You foreigners all hang together, don't you? You'd run a paper box filled with passengers around the Horn if there was any money in it for you. You could n't get an American to touch the *Gull*. It's plain murder to send that craft out in winter time." And Lethbridge walked away, taking no personal pleasure in snubbing his mate, but feeling that it was his duty, as a patriotic American, to put the foreigners in their place.

Sunni, for the first time in a long life at sea, took his troubles with his superior to another man, finding O'Rourke at work in the engine-room berating a fat fireman. The chief engineer, after one glance at the mate, withdrew him into a dark bunker, where he lit a greasy torch. "'T is me confessional," he explained. "Whin things go wrong and the tall blue divil has his nails on me bould Mickey, I come down here and have

it out. The coals won't tell. What's on yer chest, misther? It is n't all worry, I see; 't is part of it plain anger."

"I'm going to ask the commander for a transfer," said Sunni, balancing himself to the uneasy tumble of the ship. "The skipper calls you and me foreigners. I've been in the Establishment ten years, Mickey, and you've been here longer, and I've a little home ashore and I'm an American as much as that young fellow on deck. I'm a Finn, but I'm an American too."

The chief engineer rubbed his hands on a bit of waste and stared at the flickering torch. "I was born widout shoes, misther," he said presently, "and no shoes did I have till I was passin' coal in the old *City of Liverpool* and Nesbitt, who was assistant in her, hove a pair of brogans at me head. And Nesbitt was an American. Me mother, God bliss her! niver lived to see me with a white shirt on me back, and now whin I'm old I'm an American citizen, with me papers and me oath of allegiance and me good pay ivery month. I've served in half the light-ships on the Coast, and I've nursed ingins and kept condinsers goin' and saved coal and done me duty as I saw it, and thanked God for Uncle Sam and me honest service with me foine uniform and me good grub and the rispict of me shipmates. And he calls me an ignorant Oirishman befure me own min. Oi'm Oirish, but me bould Mickey is an American too, and chief engineer in the Unithed Sthates Lighthouse Establishment, with good service behind me and an honest day's work ahead of me. Oh, misther! the bhoy is crazy!

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But he's the mather of this vessel and orders are orders. Oi'm askin' fer a transfer mesilf. If the commander will give me back me ould job on ould 167, with liss pay and more work — Oi'm the sanior engineer too — Oi'll be contint. But so long as you and me are on this ship, misther, we must obey orders. 'T is n't America that's threaten' us this way; it's a mere bhoy, all puffed up wid the pride of being born here."

"I won't be called a foreigner," said Sunni sullenly.

"A word's a word, and soon past," said O'Rourke, picking up a piece of coal; "but a man's a man. Oi've seen a dozen commanders in this district, and ivery one of thim had something to say to me, and I spoke out to thim and they spoke out to me, always saving their prisince, and whin all was said Mickey was on his job and the commander was on his. The bhoy aft there is tryin' to hold all our jobs, not knowin' that each man must stand on his own foot. But we're here to do our duty, and the Governmint ain't carin' whether we loike the color of his hair, the roof where he was born or the twisht of his mousers. He'll learn too."

Sunni shook his had and said abruptly: "The glass is falling and there's a strong set to the current. We're in for another gale."

"Pity the poor fellays on the steam schooners," said O'Rourke. "We're snug."

"I hope the *Gull* won't try to make Tillamook with this tide," grunted Sunni dismally.

"Trust Misther Rasmussen," adjured the chief, blowing out the torch and leading the way out of the bunker.

"Ye'll see the *Gull* pass out of the river at eight o'clock and know that all 's well."

But Nicholas Sunni did not see the *Gull* cross the bar, though he peered through the sodden mist with all his eyes; for as the sun rose the wind got up and by ten o'clock a howling tempest was piling up the seas and *No. 188* was plunging bows under, tearing at her cable, lashing herself into a perfect frenzy of excitement as the sky settled down on her and the great tides of the North Pacific turned and clutched at her with streaming fingers.

At noon Lethbridge, clad in oilskins and boots, was hanging to the rail of the booby hatch abaft the after lamphouse. He was watching the wild gyrations of his new command and wincing as she snapped the big riding springs hard against the chocks with a jar that made the steel masts whimper. Sunni was about his slow, daily business with a secretive air, as though he knew something of vast importance that he dared not tell. Now and again O'Rourke would come up, shirt-sleeved, bareheaded, to stare brightly out landward, where there was no land to be seen, only a grayish blur of spume and driven brine.

At one o'clock a hard-pressed oil-tanker lurched up to leeward, smelt the roily water of the outer bar and was swept off, black smoke pouring out of her low funnels as she fled for the Straits a hundred miles north. In a break in the afternoon gloom Lethbridge saw the pilot-schooner running for the open sea, a last sign that the storm was growing in strength. Sunni, too, saw the

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little vessel and sighed. "We sha'n't see her for a week," he remarked. "When she quits it means that nothing else can risk it this close in. Well, our cable's strong and if we break it, we've the power to go it alone."

Lethbridge made no response except a grunt. The twilight settled into the blank darkness of night. The great lamps swung wildly at the mastheads, throwing their gleam into the smother. The last faint radiance of North Head Light was swallowed in the murk, and the hoarse fog-whistle began its monotonous two-second blasts. Overside the submarine bell clanged rapidly, tolling off breathlessly the signal One-Eight-Eight. The mess-boy reported supper ready. So the storm settled down on the laboring light-ship, wrapping her in streaming mist, roaring sullenly about her lonely lights, flinging over her the huge cracking surges that marked the sea's angry might. And in the little cabin the officers sat in their creaking chairs, clutching at the dishes which the tottering boy handed them with a wry face. Lethbridge seemed flushed with pleasure, eagerly listening to the crunch of the driving seas and the jar of the windlass. O'Rourke ate swiftly, occasionally muttering a word to Macpherson. Sunni stared at the lamp, apparently reading some eccentric and puzzling message in its erratic passage from one end of its little arc to the other. His mind was on the *Gull*. Had Rasmussen left harbor only to run into this gale? After all, experience and wisdom did n't count in these days, he reflected. All people wanted was that vessels should



make their schedule. Rasmussen could n't afford to lose his job. Lethbridge had been correct in saying that no native American would have taken the *Gull* to sea. Sunni wondered miserably why it was that it was the Scandinavian who did these difficult things, who kept old ships running, who made it possible for non-seafaring stockholders to amass dividends. Lethbridge, even his hatred told him, would have defied owners and stuck to his own judgment. There was something in Lethbridge and his like that scorned the routine and drudgery that made the whole existence of so many sailors and masters. What was it? Sunni demanded of himself. Dimly he knew that his own wit and skill were greater than Lethbridge's. Yet all that skill and all that experience did not prevent Mrs. Sunni — Helma, his children's mother — from being at sea in an unseaworthy vessel in a storm. Lethbridge's people, he bitterly reflected, were at home, in snug houses, careless and ignorant of the devouring sea.

The mate got up suddenly, clutched his way out of the cabin and on deck. The chief engineer followed him, brushing his gray mustache and turning his bright eyes hither and thither till the full blast of the wind almost drove them back into his head. Standing in the shelter of the hatchway he pulled at Sunni's oilskin coat. "Misther! Misther!" he said miserably. "Your lady is n't at sea this night."

Sunni turned his white, aged face on him. "Mickey," he said wretchedly, "I wish I had never seen the sea."

The chief engineer dragged himself one step farther up, poking a grimy forefinger into the mate's waist-lashing. "Him," he said with sudden profound wisdom, "don't know annything about it. He thinks he's boss here, misther. But you and me, we've been workin' and toilin' all our lives, and our fathers and mothers worked and toiled all their lives on this same domned sea, and we know. Misther Sunni, the lad down there with his uniform and his high ways don't know annything. Me father was drowned off Ushant. I've heard ye say yer own father went down in a lumber drogher in the North Sea, and we know." He stopped, fixing his weary, sparkling eyes on the stolid mate, embodying in one comprehensive and authoritative gesture the history of a race, of all the races of seafarers, who live, suffer and die, who struggle and battle and strive for the little that the sea does not withhold, who go against it in armies, who make their lives fit its codes of necessity, who accept defeat and are unsure of their victories; who never boast, who constantly patch up their theories to meet the sea's new contingencies, who know that the only way to gain even transient ascendancy is to hang together and obey the hard-learnt rules of the game. And it was one of these rules that the chief engineer enforced now with his sooty finger. "Forget it," he adjured Sunni. "'T is our business to kape the lights bright. 'T is Rasmussen's to get the *Gull* and your lady safe into Tillamook."

The mate nodded briefly, turning his face once more into the biting wind. His hoarse voice broke along the

dripping, careering deck. "For'ad, there! The after light is smoking! Lower away and trim!" As two men tumbled out in response to this command O'Rourke silently withdrew down the steps, peered wisely in upon Lethbridge, who was writing up the log, and retired to the fiddle, where he dried himself in the dry, aromatic heat from the fire-room below, humming a song under his breath, listening to the throb, hiss and beat of the hurrying air-compressor engine. Overhead the whistle flung out its crashing bellow, shaking the strong structure of the light-ship with vibrations of sound. Far down against the vessel's side the submarine bell tolled chokingly, One-Eight-Eight, hurriedly, insistently, as if its office were the most important in the world. O'Rourke nodded, lost the tune of his song and slept, surrounded by the humming boilers, soothed by the clatter of shovels in the fire-room, the slather of the coals across the plates, the creaking and straining of the beams that carried the motionless engines' weight.

He wakened at midnight, gave the fireman just come on watch his blessing, peered at the whistle-engine, felt the hot cylinders of the air-compressor, poked his nose into the jangle forward where the windlass was biting into the cable and snarling over the leap and jerk of the moorings, and then went up the steps on deck. As he thrust his head above the hatch-coaming and caught the whirling blast of the gale Sunni lurched by, stooping over to avoid the volleys of spray that rattled along the decks. O'Rourke stopped him and dragged him back into the shelter of the lamphouse. "'T is the Captain's

watch," he protested. "And for why are ye on deck here, Misther Sunni?"

The mate turned his haggard face to the light. "I thought we'd best keep a double lookout," he muttered. "If the *Gull* can't make Tillamook, she'll come out here to lie by till daylight."

"Much good 't will do you if she does," said the chief engineer practically. "The *Gull*'s safe enough. Ye can spind money and get it back, but lost slape niver did annybody anny good at all, for nobody iver found the slape some one ilse lost. Turn in, Misther Sunni."

Sunni's eminently practical mind had gone off on a tangent, however, and he enlarged to O'Rourke on the various accidents that might befall the *Gull*. He pictured her stranded on Tillamook bar, helplessly adrift off the coast, foundering in the darkness. O'Rourke scorned him. "Turn in and get some slape," he adjured him. "All the bhoys will kape a good lookout, and if something did happen what cud we do, Misther Sunni?"

"We might pick up the small boat," said the mate wretchedly.

"If the small boat cud hit us in the pit murk," was the response. "Rasmussen won't thry that. He'll wait till dawn, like a sinsible fellay, and come up bright and foine with the sun to breakfast with us."

"Look here!" said the mate, dragging the chief engineer over to the side. "Look at that, man!"

O'Rourke balanced himself on the slippery plates and

peered down the vessel's side. A sinking sea slid into some abyss and left streaming steel flanks quivering below them. Another sea buried them, flinging the lightship far over. But O'Rourke had seen and groaned.

"'T is a tin-knot current," he whispered. "No wundher the ould girl winces on the cable and the shackles sing in the hawse-pipes. No small boat can live in that."

"It might live a while," said Sunni, "but it would be helpless. Even a full-powered steamer could hardly breast that tide."

Lethbridge came along, shaking the spray from his cap. "The wind is pretty nearly a hundred miles an hour," he gasped. "D'ye think the cable will hold?"

O'Rourke wagged a wise head. "It'll hold, misther," he cried back. "She's a new chain and she's been tested and built and retested just to stand this weather. The Governmint don't take no chances now."

"If she does part," said Lethbridge, coming into the lee of the lamphouse, "we have power enough to go out and steam around with the best of them."

"She's a good boat," said the mate. "I expect she could make fair time even against this wind and tide."

"Oh, we're safe enough!" Lethbridge assented easily. "And if need be we could slip our moorings and go and help some other vessel."

Sunni nodded. "We could," he grunted; "but we've got to hang on here. That's orders."

"I'm never going to see a vessel in distress and not

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help her," said Lethbridge sharply. "That's why we've got engines and a full head of steam. We're supposed to use judgment in this business."

O'Rourke was shocked. "Och, misther!" he pleaded. "'T is our orders to stay here till we are told to come in, and we cud n't slip our moorings. 'T is impossible. It has n't been done in all the years light-ships have been on station. Nobody iver heard of one lavin' its place till it sank or was ordered into port to be relieved."

Lethbridge glanced amusedly at the chief engineer. To-night he felt himself really in a position of responsibility, and he was resolved to make the most of it. He stared into the blackness around the light-ship with an imperious and eager air. He was about to speak when a hoarse cry from forward drove the three of them leaping outward. Sunni's quick eyes interpreted the call instantly. "Boat alongside!" he bellowed. Lethbridge followed his outflung arm and saw a faint, twinkling gleam to windward, a mere matchlight of a glow, deep in the howling smother of darkness. His quick hands felt along the rail and clutched a heaving-line. He saw Sunni, still bellowing orders, come to a stand by the pilot-house, and knew that he, too, held a line ready to cast when the boat, if boat it were, came within casting distance.

Out of the forward hatch men poured like shot from a bottle, scurrying to their stations, bearing lanterns, flinging coils of rope on the deck, crying out to each other. And overhead the huge lamps blazed steadily, careering through the great arc of darkness, while the

feeble glimmer to windward vanished, reappeared, showed brightly an instant and then dimmed. Lethbridge heard the chief engineer's voice beside him. " 'T is a boat," he said calmly.

It was a boat. It suddenly appeared almost under the bluff bows of the light-ship, uprose on a crested wave, swerved wildly, sank into the boiling trough and swung up on the next hurtling sea. From forward a rope swished outboard. Lethbridge saw some one in the little craft make a stiff, helpless gesture, and knew that the line had fallen short. He saw Sunni clamber upon the rail as it dived down, balance himself and throw out his arm. Again he saw the helpless gestures of the huddled people in the boat and realized that they were numb with cold, fast perishing, unable to reach out quickly for a line. His own coil lay in his hand; he waited till another driving sea lifted the little craft almost level with the light-ship's rail and then flung it out. He saw frantic graspings, heard a feeble shout; the man in the stern dropped his oar and fell forward, clutching at something. But the rope's end came slack into his hand and he knew that his cast had failed. In desperation he leaped for another rope and realized that O'Rourke was yelling down at the shipwrecked boat's crew to " Hang on! " He vaguely saw the little Irishman fling an arm upward, thought he saw a line uncoil in the air and fall across the sodden craft that now barely appeared in the seething water under the counter. He leaped and caught hold of O'Rourke's arm. He felt a thin wet rope come taut. O'Rourke yelled furi-

ously, hanging to it and shuffling aft to the pull of it. Sunni ran up, trying to tear a tangled line apart.

“We’ve got ’em, and it’s Rasmussen,” O’Rourke bawled.

Lethbridge jumped to the rail and peered down. A sweeping gleam from the high lanterns crossed the little boat and displayed its plight. White faces stared up. Stiff arms swung imploringly towards the lofty lanterns. The man in the stern turned his sodden, stern visage to Lethbridge for one instant. He recognized the captain of the *Gull*. Then he noticed a woman’s eyes on him. He stared down fascinatedly. What was a woman doing in that sinking boat? How had she come there? Who was she? He cursed Rasmussen in a sudden, unreasoning access of rage. His words did not carry a fathom. The wind whipped them to itself. The passing gleam swept on. The boat vanished in the darkness. O’Rourke seized him with both hands and cried: “The loine did n’t hould, misther!” He showed the frayed end of it in proof.

Instantly Lethbridge came to himself. “That boat can’t live another half hour,” he roared. “We’ll up anchor and get it!”

He plunged away, yelling: “Chief, get your engines turning and full head of steam up. Mr. Sunni, unshackle the cable and slip it. Unlock that pilot-house, somebody! Stand by, men, and we’ll go and get those people.”

A wild shout echoed up from the depths of the light-ship. A fireman appeared in the light from the cabin



hatch and vanished below. A sailor cried out that the wheel-house was open. Two others slashed furiously at the lashings of the steering chains and took the stoppers off the big helm. Lethbridge threw his full voice into his next order: "Ring the engines full speed ahead! Hurry, boys, and we'll go get 'em. There's a woman among them!"

Suddenly he realized that two men had not moved. The mate and the chief engineer stood peering into the darkness in which the boat had been swallowed up. He seized at them both with rough hands. "Chief, get down to your engines. What do you mean by stopping up here? Give me full power as quickly as you can. Mr. Sunni, why don't you get along and unshackle that anchor? My God, man, seconds count! That boat will sink before we can get down to her and pick her up."

O'Rourke's bright eyes turned to his superior. "Yer the skipper," he croaked; "but no orders does Mickey O'Rourke give in the engine-room this night if ye leave the station."

Lethbridge stared, choked, and wrung the Irishman's arm. "You refuse duty?" he roared. "You coward! Get down to your engines and we'll save that boat and its passengers."

"Oi'm no coward," said O'Rourke defiantly. "But Oi've tin years' service, honest and true, behind me; and no engines do I turn to leave the station. Orders are orders, sor."

In answer, Lethbridge stepped aside and jerked the

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bellhandle. Far down in the bowels of the ship a gong clanged. O'Rourke's mustache bristled. "Ye're a lad widout sinse," he stormed. "We did our best for that boat and no more can Saint Peter do. But Oi'll not turn the engines to leave the station. Nor will Macpherson, ayther."

Sunni turned his white, lined face to his superior. "The chief is right, sir," he said almost humbly. "I don't think you understand, sir. *We can't leave our station.*"

A sailor leaped aft, dripping spray. "All's clear, sir," he cried.

Lethbridge gazed through the wind-driven darkness at his two officers. Within him he felt a terrible disgust, too deep for open rage. His soul flamed, and he had thoughts of killing them as they stood. But somehow their attitude balked him. In all his experience at sea he had never run against this stolid disobedience. Time and again he had seen men whom he despised cheerfully take risks; there was no risk in steaming after the sinking small boat and rescuing her drowning crew — and the woman. What was this that held his two subordinates like stone against his will?

And as he gazed at them through smarting eyes the tremendous weight of their obstinacy bore down on him. He knew them for men of long service; men who had suffered and endured, and would suffer and endure again. He despised O'Rourke, but O'Rourke was no coward. Sunni was old and unfit for active duty, but

Sunni was a seaman and had never faltered, so far as he knew. What was it? What was it?

O'Rourke's harsh voice explained it again, baldly: "It's orders, misther, not to leave our station. Ship that I was on niver did yet, and won't while Oi'm chief engineer."

Lethbridge turned to his mate. Sunni answered him with difficulty. "It's down in the book that we all signed," he said monotonously. "We all signed it when we entered the service. We can't slip our moorings, sir. It's Order No. 113."

The prodigious earnestness of the two men appalled Lethbridge. He perceived his own helplessness. Yet a boat filled with dying people was being driven through the foaming seas not a mile away and *No. 188* could save them. It was so simple to slip the cable and steam after them. But it was impossible. The single obedience of these two men to an old order set up a barrier that even Lethbridge could not break through. They seemed to embody the tremendous and awful authority of a vast department of the Government; they bore him down, crushed his noble and seamanlike impulses under the terrific weight of precedent, of dull rules, of office-made orders. He rebelled. But his rebellion was merely a curse on them; "You would n't break a rule to save a woman's life, you d — d foreigners!"

O'Rourke thrust his grimy fist into Lethbridge's face. "Oi'm an American," he said with deadly meaning. "And Misther Sunni is an American — betther American than you are, ye cocky young sprig. Misther Sunni

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and I both took the oath of allegiance, which is more than iver you or your loikes did; and whin we swore to obey the Governmint we meant it, and we've done it, fair weather and foul."

Lethbridge stared and laughed. Yet he felt something of the truth behind the engineer's words. He recalled that Macpherson had not answered his gong signal. But what he was on the point of saying was never uttered, for a sailor came running aft to say, "There's a steamer for'ad, sir; showing signals, sir."

Lethbridge peered into the darkness and saw the gleaming lights of a liner. In her rigging rows of lights showed that she was anxious to be spoken. Lethbridge turned. "What do you make of that signal?"

The mate wiped his eyes out with his cuff and said dully, "That's the big *Rose City*, sir. She wants to know if we are on our station."

"She's lost!" said O'Rourke. "Lucky fer her she picked up our lights. Another half hour on the course she was goin' and she and all her hun'reds o' passengers would be poundin' in the surf."

Lethbridge's voice barely carried to the mate. "Just signal her that *No. 188* is on her station," he said.

The mate lifted his hand in response and plodded wearily forward, a bent and broken figure of a man, lurching to the pitch and surge of the light-ship's deck. He was muttering to himself, "She'll understand it was orders . . . Order No. 113."

O'Rourke, by himself on the after deck, was on his

knees by the bitts praying for the soul of Lars Rasmussen, who had once saved his life.

Lethbridge, hanging to the pinrail at the foremast, was staring blindly out at the liner, now hove to a mile out; he realized poignantly that the authority of the great Establishment which he served had saved those lives on the *Rose City*. Yet he was dumb before the sacrifice of the *Gull's* crew. *No. 188*, he knew, could have steamed after that sinking boat and rescued them all, including the white-faced woman. And yet—he went down and tore up his report to the commander, the report in which he had asked for new officers instead of O'Rourke, Sunni and Macpherson. But he did not know the extent of the devotion to duty that had made possible that bold signal at the masthead: "*We Are On Our Station.*" For Michael O'Rourke, Irish-American, and Nicholas Sunni, Finnish-American, did n't tell.

## II

## TAD SHELDON, SECOND CLASS SCOUT

THERE is no harm in the story, though it speaks ill for us big people with Misther to our names," said Chief Engineer Mickey O'Rourke, balancing his coffee cup between his two scarred hands. "Ye remimber the lasht toime I was on leave — and I wint down to Yaquina Bay with Captain Tyler on his tin gas schooner, thinkin' to meself it was a holiday — and all the fun I had was instructin' the gasoline engineer in the mysteries of how to expriss one's sintimints without injurin' the skipper's feelin's? Well, I landed in the bay and walked about in the woods, which is foine for the smell of thim which is like fresh tar; and one afternoon I finds two legs and small feet stickin' out of a hole under a stump. I pulled on the two feet and the legs came out and at the end of thim a bhoy, mad with rage and dirt in his eyes.

"Ye have spoiled me fun!' says he, lookin' at me very fierce.

"Do yez dig yer fun out of the ground like coal?' I demands.

"I'm investigatin' the habits of squirrels,' says he. 'I must find out how a squirrel turns round in his hole. Does he turn a summersault or stick his tail between his ears and go over backward?'

"He turns inside out, like an ould sock,' I informs

him, and he scorns me natural history. On the strength of mutual language we get acquainted. He is Tad Sheldon, the eldest son of Surfman No. 1, of the life-saving crew. He is fourteen years ould. Me bould Tad has troubles of his own, consisting of five other youngsters who are his gang. 'We are preparing to inter the ranks of the Bhoys Scouts,' he tells me, settin' be the side of the squirrel-hole. 'We are all tender-feet and we can't get enlisted with the rest of the bhoys in the United States because each scout must have a dollar in the bank and between the six of us we have only one dollar and six bits and that's in me mother's apron pocket and in no bank at all.'

"'Explain,' says I.

"'T is this way,' says me young sprig. 'All the bhoys in the country of America have joined the scouts, which is an army of felleys that know the woods and about animals and how to light a fire, and know the law.'

"'Stop!' I orders. 'No one knows the law without gold in one hand and a book in the other. If ye knew the law ye would have yer dollar.'

"'T is the scouts' law,' says he. 'It tells ye to obey yer superiors and be fair to animals and kind to people ye care little for. Ye must know how to take care of yourself anywhere and be ready whin the counthry needs ye.'

"'And ye need a dollar?' I asks. 'Thin, why not work for it and stop pokin' yer nose down squirrel-holes, where there is neither profit nor wages?'

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“ ‘Because I’m to be the pathrol-leader and I must know more than me men,’ he retorts.

“Now, ye remimber I had in me pocket three pay checks, besides the money of Mr. Lof, the second engineer, which I had got for him and was carryin’ about to send to him by the first friend I saw. So I took off me cap and pulled out one of the checks and said: ‘Me bould bhoy, go down to the town and get the cash for this. Bring it back to me and I’ll give ye a dollar; and thin ye can become a scout.’

“The lad looked at me and then at the Governmint check. He shook his head till the dirt rolled into his ears, for he was still full of the clods he had rubbed into himsilf in the hole. ‘I can’t take a dollar from a man in the service,’ he says. ‘I must earn it.’

“ ‘The Governmint’s money is clane,’ I rebukes him. ‘I’m ould and me legs ends just above me feet, so that I walk with difficulty. ’T is worth a dollar to get the coin without trampin’.’

“ ‘I will earn it from somebody not in the service,’ says me bould bhoy, with great firmness.

“ ‘I’m no surfman, thank Hivin!’ I remarks. ‘I’m in the establishmint and look down on ye.’

“ ‘If I’d known ye were a lighthouse man I’d have taken all ye had at first,’ he retorts. ‘But ye have made me a fair offer and I forgive ye. My father works for his living.’

“Ye know how the life-savers and the lighthouse people pass language between thim whin they meet. The lad and I exchanged compliments, but he spared



me because I had gray hairs. 'In time ye will become a keeper of a station and perform for the idification of the summer gur-rl,' I concludes. 'But, if ye were more industrrious and had more iducation, ye might in time get into the establishmint and tind a third-order light.'

" 'Why should I bury mesilf among ould min without arms and legs?' he inquires haughtily. 'Me youngest sister clanes the lamps in our house with a dirty rag and an ould toothbrush.'

" 'Well,' says I, seein' that it was poor fortune to be quarrelin' with a slip of a kid, 'do yez want the dollar or not?'

" And at that we got down to facts and he explained that this scout business was most important. It appeared that the other five bhoys depinded on him to extricate thim from their difficulties and set them all up as scouts, with uniforms and knives and a knowledge of wild animals and how to build a fire in a bucket of watter. We debated the thing back and forth till the sun dropped behind the trees and the could air came up from the ground and stuck me with needles of rheumatism.

" The lad was a good lad and he made plain to me why his dollar was har-rd to get. He had thought of savin' the life of a summer visitor, but the law read that he must save life anyhow, without lookin' for pay. 'And we can't all save lives,' he mourns; 'for some of the kids is too young.'

" 'But ye must earn money, ye scut,' I says. 'Ye're

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fourteen and whin I was that age I was me mother's support and joy. I made four shillin's a wake mixin' plaster for a tile-layer.'

“‘I work,’ he responds dolefully. ‘But it goes to me mother to put with the savings in the bank against the time me father will be drowneded and leave us without support, for ye must know that we life-savers get no pensions.’

“‘I niver hear-rd of a life-saver bein' drowneded,’ I remarks. ‘But it may be, for I see ye are of an extrhaordinary family and anything may come to such. How many are there of yez?’

“‘There are six of us childher, all gur-rls but mesilf,’ says he, with rage in his voice. ‘And Carson — he was No. 4 — broke his hip in a wreck last year and died of the bruise and left five, which the crew is lookin' after. Young Carson is one of me gang and makes a dollar and four bits a week deliverin' clams to the summer folks. Ye see he can't save a dollar for the bank.’ And we got up and discussed the matther going down the hill toward the town. Before we parted Tad tould me where he lived.

“‘I'd call on yer father and mother,’ says I, ‘if I cud be sure they would appreciate the honor. ’T is a comedown for an officer in the lighthouse establishmint to inter the door of a surfman.’

“‘Me father has a kind heart and is good to the ould,’ he answers me. ‘We live beyond the station, on the bluff.’

“With that we went our ways and I ate an imminse

meal in the hotel with the dishes all spread out before me — and a pretty gur-rl behind me shoulder to point out the best of thim. Thin I walked out and started for the house of me bould Tad.

“I found thim all seated in the parlor excipt the missus, who was mixin' bread in the kitchen. I inthroduced mesilf, and Sheldon, who had No. 1 on his sleeve, offered me a pipe, which I took. I came down to business, houldin' me cap full of checks and money on me lap. ‘Yer bould bhoy wants to be a scout and lacks a dollar,’ I says. ‘I like his looks, though I discovered him in a hole under a tree. He won't take me money and scorns me and the establishmint.’

“‘He must earn it,’ he answers, scowlin' over his pipe.

“‘But I'll spind it,’ I insists, peerin' at the bhoy out of the tail of me eye. ‘If yer town were n't dhry I'd have given it to the saloon man for the good of the family he has n't got. So why bilge at a single dollar?’

“‘’T is the scout's law,’ puts in me bould Tad. ‘I must make it honestly.’ And he settled his head between his hands and gazed reproachfully at the clane floor. So I saved me money and sat till eight o'clock exchangin' complimentis with Mither Sheldon. Thin the bell rang on the hill beyond the station and he pulled his cap off the dresser, kissed his wife and the five gur-rls and wint out to his watch and a good sleep. Whin he was gone I stood in the doorway and Missus Sheldon tould me of the little Carsons and how Missus Carson had sworn niver to marry again excipt in the life-saving service.

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'She says the Governmint took away her husband and her support,' says the good lady, 'and she'll touch no money excipt Governmint checks, bein' used to thim and Uncle Sam owin' her the livin' he took away.'

"'With five childher she shud look up and marry one of the men in the establishmint,' I informs her. 'They are good husbands and make money.'

"'Though a widow, she has pride,' she responds sharply; and I left, with young Tad follerin' at me heels till I let him overtake me and whisper: 'If ye'd buy some clams off of young Carson it wud help the widow.'

"'I am starved for clams,' I whispers back like a base conspirator for the hand of the lovely gur-rl in the castle. 'Show me the house of me bould Carson.' He pointed to a light through the thin woods.

"They thought I was crazy whin I returned to the hotel with a hundred pounds of clams dripping down me back. 'I dug thim with me own hands this night,' I tould the man in the office. 'Cook thim all for me breakfast.'

"'Ye're a miracle of strength and endurance under wather,' says he; 'for 't is now high tide and the surf is heavy.'

"'I found their tracks in the road and followed thim to their lair,' I retorts. 'Do I get thim for breakfast?'

"And in the mor-rnin', whin I was that full of clams that I needed a shell instead of a weskit, I walked on the beach with the admirin' crowds of summer tourists and lovely women. It was fine weather and the little ones

were barefooted and the old ones bareheaded, and the wind was gentle, and the life-savers were polishin' their boat in full view of the wondherin' throng; and I thought of this ould tub out here on the ind of a chain and pitied yez all. Thin I sthrolled around the point to the bay and found me bould Tad dhrillin' his gang in an ould skiff, with home-made oars in their little fists and Tad sthandin' in the stern-sheets, with a huge steerin' sweep between his arms and much loud language in his mouth. Whin I appeared they looked at me and Tad swung his boat up to the beach and invited me in. 'We will show you a dhrill ye will remimber,' says he, very polite. And with my steppin' in he thrust the skiff off and the bhoys rowed with tremenjous strength. We wint along a full three knots an hour, till he yelled another ordher and the bhoys dropped their oars and jumped over to one side; and I found meself undher the boat, with me mouth full of salt watter and ropes. Whin I saw the sun again me bould Tad says to me with disapprobation: 'Ye are n't experienced in capsized dhrill.'

“ ‘In the establishmint we use boats to keep us out of the watter,’ I responds, hunting for the papers out of me cap. ‘The newspapers are full of rebukes for thim that rock boats to their own peril.’ With that they all felt ashamed and picked up me papers and grunted at each other, tryin' to blame somebody else. And whin I had me checks and me papers all safe again I smiled on thim and me bould Tad took heart. ‘’T is not to tip the boat over,’ says he, ‘but to get it back

on an even keel after a sea's capsized her — that is the point of the dhrill.' And we pulled ashore to dhry.

“Whiles we were sittin' on the sand drainin' the watter out of our shoes a small, brassy launch came down the bay, with manny men and women on her little decks. Me bould Tad looked at her with half-shut eyes and snorted. ‘Some day it will be the life-saving crew that must bring those ninnies back to their homes,’ he says. ‘The Pacific is nothing to fool with in a gaso-line launch. ’T is betther to be safe and buy your fish.’ And we watched the launch chug by and out on the bar and to sea. I learned that she was the *Gladys* by name and fetched tourists to the fishing grounds, nine miles down the coast.

“All the bhoys were respictful to me excipt young Carson, who recognized in me bould Mickey the man who had asked for a hundredweight of clams. He stared at me superciliously and refused to have speech with me, bein' ashamed, if I can judge of his youthful thoughts, of bein' in the same company with a fool.

“But I discovered that the gang was all bent on becomin' what they called second-class scouts, which they made plain to me was betther by one than a tenderfoot. But they niver mintioned the lackings of the dollar, bein' gintlemin. They wanted to know of me whether I thought that boatmanship and knowledge of sailing would be accipted be the powers instid of wisdom as to bird-tracks and intimacy with wild animals and bugs. And the heart of me opened, the youth of me came back; and I spoke to thim as one lad to another, with riferince

to me years in a steamer and the need of hard hands and a hard head.

“The ind of it was that they rowled across the sand to me side and we all lay belly down over a chart, which me bould Tad had procured after the manner of bhoys, and they explained to me how they knew the coast for twelve miles each side of Yaquina Bay, with the tides and currents all plain in their heads. And I was surprised at what the young scuts knew—God save thim!

“At noon the visitors suddenly stopped lookin’ at the scenery and hastened away with hunger in their eyes. The crew ran the surfboat back into the station and the bhoys drew their skiff up out of har-rm’s way; and I wint back to me hotel and more clams. On the steps I found young Carson, grinnin’ like a cat.

“‘Ye don’t have to eat thim shell fish,’ says he, lookin’ away. ‘Gimme the sack of thim and I’ll peddle thim to the tourists and bring ye the money.’

“‘Whisht and away with ye!’ I commanded. ‘Who are you to be dictatin’ the diet of yer betthers?’ And he fled, without glancin’ behind him.

“There was some remar-rks passed upon me wet clothes, but I tould the clerk in the office that me duty often called me to get drippin’ soaked and went into the dinin’ room with a stiff neck under me proud chin. There was but few in the place and the gur-rl who stood by me shoulder to pilot me through the various coorses infor-rmed me that the most of the guests were out on the *Gladys* fishin’. ‘And the most of thim will have

little appetite for their dinners,' she mused gently, thereby rebukin' me for a second helpin' of the fresh meat.

"In the afternoon I sthrolled out on the beach again, but saw little. A heavy fog was rowlin' from the nor'-ard and the breeze before it was chill and damp as a widow's bed. I walked for me health for an hour and then ran to kape war-rm. At the ind of my spurt I was amazed to find mesilf exactly at the hotel steps. I wint in and laid me down be the fire and slept. I woke to hear a woman wailin'.

"Whin me eyes were properly open, and both pointed in the same direction, I found mesilf in the midst of a crowd. The sittin' room was full of people, all with misery in their faces. The woman whose cries had woke me was standin' be the windey, with one hand around a handkerchief. 'My God!' she was sayin' — 'My God! And me bhoy is on that boat!' And I knew that it was throuble and that many people would have their heads in their hands that night, with aches in their throats. I got up — shoes in me hand. At sight of me bright unifor-rm ten men flung themselves on me. 'You will help save them?' they cried at me.

"'I will so soon as I get me shoes on,' I remar-rked, pushing them off me toes. I put on me boots and stood up. 'Now I'll save thim,' says I. 'Where are they?'

"'They're on the *Gladys*,' says three at once. 'Thirty of our people — women and men and childher.'

"'Why wake me?' I demanded crosslike. 'Are n't the brave life-savers even now sitting be the fire waitin'?



for people to come and be saved? I'm a chief engineer in the lighthouse establishmint and we save no lives excipt whin we can't help it. Get the life-saving crew.'

"And they explained to me bould Mickey that the crew was gone twenty miles up the coast to rescue the men on a steam schooner that was wrecked off the Siletz, word of it having come down but two hours since. They looked at me unifor-rm and demanded their relatives at me hands. I shoved thim away and wint out to think. In the prociss it occurred to me that the *Gladys* might not be lost. I wint back and asked thim how they knew it was time to mourn. 'If that launch is ashore they are as close to the fire as they can get,' I tould thim. 'And if she has gone down 't is too late to dhry their stockings.'

"'She is lost in the fog,' I was infor-rmed. She shud have been back at her wharf at four o'clock. 'T was now turned six and the bar was rough and blanketed in mist. The captain of the harbor tug had stated, with wise shakes of the head, that the *Gladys* cud do no more than lay outside the night and wait for sunshine and a smooth crossing. I shoved thim away from me again and wint out to think.

"It was a mur-rky fog, the sort that slathers over the wather like thick oil. Beyond the hill I cud hear the surf pounding like a riveter in a boiler. Overhead was a sheet of gray cloud, flying in curds before the wind, and in me mouth was the taste of the deep sea, blown in upon me with the scent of the storm. Two words with the skipper of the tug tould me the rest. 'It's coming

on to blow a little from the south'ard,' said me bould mariner. 'It's so thick the *Gladys* can't find her way back. Her passengers will be cold and hungry whin they retur-rn in the mor-rnin'.'

" 'And will ye not go after thim ?' "

" 'I can't,' says he. 'Me steamer is built for the bay and one sea on the bar wud destroy the investmint. The life-saving crew is up north after a wreck.'

" 'Is there no seagoin' craft in this harbor ?' I demands.

" 'There is not,' says he. 'Captain Tyler took his gas schooner down the coast yesterday.'

" So I sat down and thought, wonderin' how I cud sneak off me unifor-rm and have peace. For I knew that me brass buttons wud keep me tongue busy all night explainin' that I was not a special providence paid be the Governmint to save fools from purgat'ry. In me thoughts I heard a wor-rd in me ear. I looked up. 'T was me bould Tad, with the gang clustherin' at his heels.

" 'Ye have followed the sea for many years ?' says he.

" 'I have followed it whin it was fair weather,' I responded, 'but the most of the time the sea has chased me ahead of it. Me coattail is still wet from the times it caught me. Speak up! What is it ?' "

" The bhoj pulled out of his jacket his ould chart and laid it before me. 'The *Gladys* is at anchor off these rocks,' says he, layin' a small finger on a spot. 'And in this weather she will have to lie there as long as she can. Whin it blows she must up anchor and get out or

go ashore here.' He moved his finger a mite and it rested on what meant rocks.

" 'Well?' I remar-rks.

" 'Me father and all the bhoys' fathers are gone up north to rescue the crew of a steam schooner that's wrecked. Before they get back it will be too late. I thought —'

" 'What were ye thinkin', ye scut?' says I fiercely.

" He dropped one foot on the other and looked me between the eyes. 'I was thinkin' we wud go afther her and save her,' says he, very bould.

" I cast me eyes over the bunch of little felleys and laughed. But me bould Tad did n't wink. 'There's people out there drownin',' says he. 'We've dhrilled and we know all the ropes; but we can't pull our skiff across the bar and the big boat is not for us, bein' the keeper's orders. And we have n't the weight to pull it anyhow.' And he stared me out of me laugh.

" 'There's no seagoin' craft in the harbor,' I says, to stop his nonsinse.

" 'There is another launch,' he remar-rks casually.

" We looked at each other and he thin says: 'Can ye run a gasoline engine?'

" 'I have had to,' I infor-rms him, 'but I dislike the smell.'

" 'The owner of this launch is not here,' says me young sprig. 'And he niver tould us not to take it. If you'll run the engine we'll be off and rescue the folks on the *Gladys!*'

" Be the saints! I laughed to kill mesilf, till the little

brat up and remar-rks to the gang: 'These lighthouse officers wear a unifor-rm and have no wor-rkin' clothes at all, not needin' thim in their business.'

"So I parleyed with thim a momint to save me face. 'And how will ye save thim that's dyin' in deep watters?'

"'By to-morrow nobody can cross the bar,' I'm infor-rmed. 'And the skipper of the *Gladys* don't know this coast. We'll just pick him up and pilot him in.'

"'But the bar!' I protests. 'It's too rough to cross a launch inwardbound, even if ye can get out.'

"'I know the soft places,' says the little sprig of a bhoy, very proudly. 'Come on.'

"'And if I don't come?' I inquired.

"He leaned over and touched the brass buttons on me jacket. 'Ye have sworn to do your best,' says he. 'I've not had a chance to take me oath yet as a second-class scout, but between ourselves we have done so. I appeal to yez as one man to another.'

"I got up. 'I've niver expicted to serve undher so small a captain,' I remar-rks, 'but that is neither here nor there. Where is that gasoline engine?'

"We stepped proudly off in the dusk, me bould Tad houldin' himsilf very straight beside me and the gang marchin' at our heels shouldher to shouldher. Prisintly we came to a wharf and ridin' to the float below it was a big white launch, cabined and decked. Tad jumped down and the gang folleyed. Thin I lowered mesilf down with dignity and intered the miserable engine room.

“ I have run every sort of engine and machine made by experts and other ignoramuses. I balk at nothing. The engine was new to me, but I lit a lantern and examined its inwards with anxiety and superciliousness. Prisingly, by the grace of God, it started off. A very small bhoy held the lantern for me while I adjusted the valves and the carbureter, and this bould lad infor-med me with pride that the ‘ leader ’ had assigned him to me as my engine-room crew. And whin the machine was revolvin’ with some speed that individual thrust his head in at the door to ask me if I was ready. ‘ If ye are,’ says that limb of wickedness, ‘ we will start, chief.’

“ ‘ Ye may start any time,’ I says, with great respect. ‘ But whin we ’ll stop is another matther.’

“ ‘ Ye must keep her goin’ whiles we cross the bar,’ he infor-rms me, with a straight look.

“ The little gong rang and I threw in the clutch and felt the launch slide away. The jingle came and I opened her up. ’T was a powerful machine and whin I felt the jerk and pull of her four cylinders I sint me assistant to find the gasoline tank and see whether we had oil enough. Thinks I, if this machine eats up fuel like this we must e’en have enough and aplenty. The bhoy came back with smut on his nose and shtated that the tank was full.

“ ‘ How do ye know?’ I demanded.

“ ‘ I’ve helped the owner fill her up several times,’ says the brat. ‘ The leader insists that we know the insides of every boat on the bay. ’T is part of our prac-

tice and whin we get to be scouts we will all learn to run gasoline engines.'

"So we went along and the engines war-rmed up; and I trimmed the lantern and sat me down comfortable as a cat on a pan of dough. Thin there was a horrible rumpus on deck and some watter splashed down the back of me neck. "'T is the bar,' says me proud engine-room crew, balancin' himsilf on the plates.

"'They are shovin' dhrinks across it too fast for me,' I retorts, as more watter simmers down.

"'Oh, the leader knows all the soft places,' he returns proudly, this bould sprig. And with a whoop we drove through a big felley that almost swamped us. Thin, so far as I cud judge, the worst was over.

"Prisintly we got into the trough of the sea and rowled along for an hour more. Then the jingle tinkled and I slowed down. Me bould Tad stuck his head in at the little door. 'The *Gladys* is right inshore from us,' he remar-rks, careless-like. 'We will signal her to up anchor and come with us.' He took me lantern and vanished.

"Whin I had waited long enough for all the oil to have burned out of three lanterns I turned the engines over to me crew and stepped out on deck. It was a weepin' fog, with more rowlin' in all the time, and the feel on me cheek was like that of a stor-rm. I saw me bould Tad on the little for'a'd deck, swingin' his little lamp.

"'What's the matther with that scut of a skipper?' I inquires.

“The bhoys was fair cryin’ with rage and shame. ‘He cannot undherstand the signal,’ says he; ‘and ’t is dangerous to run closer to him in this sea.’

“‘If he don’t undherstand yer signals,’ says I, ‘’t is useless to talk more to him with yer ar-rms. Use yer tongue.’

“And at that he raised a squeal that cud maybe be heard a hundred feet, the voice of him bein’ but a bhoys’, without noise and power. ‘Let be,’ says I. ‘I’ve talked me mind across the deep watters many times.’ And I filled me lungs and let out a blast that fetched everybody on deck on the other launch. Thin I tould that skipper, with rage in me throat, that he must up anchor and folley us or be drowned with all his passengers dragging on his coattails through purgat’ry. And he listened, and prisintly we saw the *Gladys* creep through the darkness and fog up till us. Whin she crossed our stern me bould Tad tould me to command her to folley us into port.

“Ravin’s and ragin’s were nothin’ to the language we traded across that watter for the five minutes necessary to knock loose the wits of that heathen mariner. In the end he saw the light, and the passengers that crowded his sloppy decks waved their arms and yelled with delight. Me bould Tad went into the little pilot-house and slammed the door. He spoke to me sharply. ‘’T will blow a gale before midnight.’ He rang the bell for full speed ahead.

“An hour later I was signaled to stop me machines. I dropped the clutch and sint me assistant for

news. He came back with big eyes. 'The leader says the other launch can't make it across the bar,' he reports.

" 'Well?' I says.

" 'We're goin' to take off her passengers and cross in oursilves,' says the brat. With that he vanishes. I folleyed him.

" We were stopped right in the fog, with roily waves towerin' past us and the dull noise of the bar ahead of us. The *Gladys* was right astern of us and even in the darkness I cud catch a glimpse of white faces and hear little screams of women. I went to leeward and there found me bould Tad launchin' the little dingey that was stowed on the roof of the cabin. Whin it was overside four of me bould gang drops into it and pulls away for the other launch. 'They'll be swamped and drownded,' I remar-rks.

" 'They will not,' says Tad. 'I trained thim mesilf. 'T is child's play.'

" 'Childher play with queer toys in this counthry,' I continues to mesilf; and I had a pain in me pit to see thim careerin' on the big waves that looked nigh to breakin' any minute. But they came back with three women and a baby, with nothin' to say excipt: 'There's thirty-one of thim, leader!'

" 'Leave the min,' says he, real sharp. 'Tell the captain we'll come back for thim after we've landed the women safe.'

" I tucked the women down in the afther cabin, snug and warm, and wint back on deck. The boat was away



again, swingin' over the seas as easy as a bird. 'That's good boatmanship,' I remar-rks.

"'It's young Carson in command,' says me bould bhoy leader.

"'T was fifteen minutes before the boat came back and thin there was a man in it, with two women. Whin it swung alongside Tad helped out the ladies and thin pushed at the man with his foot. 'Back ye go!' he says. 'No room on this craft for min.'

"'But you're only a lot of bhoys!' says the man in a rage. 'Who are you to give orders? I'll come aboard.'

"'Ye will not,' says me bould Tad, and I reached into the engine room for a spanner whereby to back him up, for I admired the spunk of the young sprig. But the man stared into the lad's face and said nothin'. And the boat pulled away with him still starin' over his shouldher.

"The nixt boatload was all the rest of the women-folks and childher and Tad ordered the dingey swung in and secured. Thin he tur-rned to me. 'We will go in.'

"'Which way?' I demands.

"He put his little hand to his ear. 'Hear it?' he asks calmly. I listened and by the great Hivins there was a whistlin' buoy off in the darkness. I wint down to me machines.

"I've run me engines many a long night whin the divil was bruising his knuckles agin the plates beneath me. But the nixt hour made me tin years ouldher. For

we had n't more 'n got well started in before it was 'Stop her!' and 'Full speed ahead!' and 'Ease her!' Me assistant was excited, but kept on spillin' oil into the cups and feelin' the bearin's like an ould hand. Once, whin a sea walloped over our little craft, he grinned across at me. 'There ain't many soft places to-night!' says he.

" 'Ye're a child of the Ould Nick,' says I, 'and eat fire out of an asbestos spoon. Ye wud be runnin' hell within an hour afther ye left yer little corpse!'

" ' 'T is the scout's law not to be afraid,' retor-rts me young demon. But me attintion was distracted be a tremenjous scamperin' overhead. 'For the love of mercy, what is that?' I yelled.

" ' 'T is the leader puttin' out the drag,' says me crew. 'Whin the breakers are high it's safer to ride in with a drag over the stern. It keeps the boat from broachin' to.' And to the dot of his last word I felt the sudden, strong pull of something on the launch's tail. Thin something lifted us up and laid us down with a slap, like a pan of dough on a mouldin' board. Me machines coughed and raced and thin almost stopped. Whin they were goin' again I saw me assistant houldin' to a stanchion. His face was pasty white and he gulped. 'Are ye scared at last?' I demanded of him.

" 'I am seasick,' he chokes back. And he was, be Hivins!

" So we juggled and bobbed about and I wondhered how many times we had crossed the bar from ind to ind, whin suddenly it smoothed down and I saw a red light



“For the love of mercy, what is that?” I yelled.



through the little windey. Me assistant saw it too. 'That's the range light off the jetty,' says he. 'We're inside.'

"I shoved open the door to the deck and looked out. The fog lay about us thick and the wind was risin'; I cud barely make out the lights ahead. I stuck me head out and glanced astern. 'Way back of us, like a match behind a curtain, I saw a little light bobbing up and down in the fog. I took me crew be the ear and thrust his head out beside mine. 'What is that?' I demanded.

"'T is the other launch,' he says. 'I guess they folleyed us in.'

"We ran up to the wharf and the gang made everything fast; and then me bould Tad comes to me with a sheepish face. 'Wud ye mind tellin' the ladies and childher that they can go ashore and get to the hotel?' he says.

"So it was me that wint in and tould the ladies they were saved and helped thim to the wharf and saw thim started for the hotel. Thin I came back to the launch, but there was nobody there. Me bould gang had disappeared. Just thin the other launch came up, limpin' on one leg, covered with drippin' men and blasphemy. They did n't wait for the lines to be put out, but jumped for the float like rats out of biscuit barrels and swarmed for the hotel. Whiles I was watchin' thim the skipper of the *Gladys* pulls himsilf out of his wrecked pilot-house and approaches me with heavy footfalls. 'I'm tould that 't was bhoys that manned this launch,' he

remar-rks. 'If it is so I wud n't have come in and nearly lost me ship.'

"'If it had n't been for the bhoys ye'd now be driftin' into the breakers off yer favorite fishin' spot,' I retor-rts. 'I've seen many a man who'd found the door of hell locked against him swear because he had n't the key in his pocket. Nixt time ye try suicide leave the women and childher ashore.' And with the words out of me mouth the gale broke upon us like the blow of a fist.

"We took shelter behind a warehouse and the skipper of the *Gladys* said in me ear: 'I suppose the owner of the launch had to get what crew he cud. Where is he? I'd like to thank him.'

"'If ye will come with me to the hotel ye shall see the man ye owe life to,' I infor-rmed him.

"As we intered the hotel a tall man, with the mar-rk of aut'ority on him, observed me unifor-rm and addressed me: 'What do you know about this?'

"Aut'ority is always aut'ority, and I tould him what I knew and had seen, not forbearin' to mintion the gang and their wild ambitions. And whin I had finished this man said: 'I shall muster thim in to-morrow. I happen to be in command of the scouts in this district.'

"'But they have n't their dollars to put in the little bank,' I remar-rked. 'And they tell me without their dollar they cannot be second-class scouts, whatever that is.'

"At this a fat man reached for a hat off the hook and put his hand in his pocket, drew it out and emptied it into the hat, and passed it.

“And while the money jingled into it my respect for the brave lads rose into me mouth. ‘They won’t take it,’ I said. ‘They have refused money before. ’T is their oath.’

“The man with aut’ority looked over at me. ‘The chief is right,’ he said. ‘They have earned only a dollar apiece. Whose launch was that they took?’

“‘Faith and I don’t know,’ I said. ‘They remarked that the owner — Hivin bliss him! — had niver forbidden thim to use it.’

“‘Thin we must pay the rint of it for the night,’ says he. ‘But the bhoys will get only a dollar a piece. Where are they?’

“‘They disappeared whin the boat was fast, sir,’ says I. ‘I think they wint home. ’T is bedtime.’

“‘D’ ye know where the pathrol-leader lives?’ he demands.

“So we walked up the hill in the darkness and wind till we reached the house of me bould Tad. A knock at the door brought the missus, with a towel on her ar-rm. I pushed in. ‘We ’ve come to see yer son,’ says I.

“We stepped in and saw the young sprig be the fire, on a chair, with his feet in a bowl of watter and mustard. He was for runnin’ whin he saw us, but cud n’t for the lack of clothes. So he scowled at us. ‘This is the commander of the scouts,’ I says, introducin’ me tall companion. ‘And here ’s yer five dollars to put with yer dollar and six bits into the little bank, so ’s yez can all of yez be second-class scouts.’

“‘We can’t take the money,’ says he, with a terrible

growl. 'The oath forbids us to take money for savin' life.'

"'Don't be a hero,' I rebukes him. 'Ye're only a small bhoy in his undherclothes with yer feet in hot watter and mustard. No hero was iver in such a predicament. This gintleman will infor-rm ye about the money.'

"Me bould companion looked at the slip of a lad and said sharply: 'Report to me to-morrow morning with yer pathrol at sivin o'clock to be musthered in.'

"With that we mar-rched out into the stor-rm and back to the hotel, where I wint to slape like a bhoy mesilf — me that was sixty-four me last birthday and niver thought to make a fool of mesilf with a gang of bhoys and a gasoline engine — and that on a holiday!"



## III

## A PERILOUS PHILANTHROPY

CHIEF Engineer Michael O'Rourke was come back to us on Columbia River Light-Vessel *No. 188* from six weeks' leave of absence. He scrambled up the side ladder, waved his hand to the mate of the tender and dived below to his room, holding in the crook of his arm a very shiny new derby hat. Five minutes later he emerged from the cabin clad in an old uniform. He then consented to talk.

"I spint my lave of absince as a passenger on a big liner," he informed us. "For six weeks I've wor-rn the clothes of the rich and uncomfortable and aten the food of the supercilious and unemployed. I've scor-rned me infarions who wor-rked for a livin' and sworn with iligance at the flunkey that set tin cints' worth of fruit on me bed and char-rged me a dollar for the court'sy. Once more I'm an infarior mesilf, lookin' forward to Uncle Sam's payday; and if you, Mистер Lof, will bring me the little book of stores and the ingine-room log I will put you back in your place and assume again the duties of chief ingineer of this packet." Having gone through this formality, Mickey relaxed and remarked that travel opened the mind. As he spoke to seafarers, we took his statement as philosophical and not personal. He corrected the adjective: "'T is not philosophical I mean. Philosophy is for ould people who are too poor to be philanthropic. I've moved in

high society and I scor-rn philosophy. Me stronghould is philanthropy, the amusemint of the nobility of free Ameriky.

“ No; ye may some of yez be philosophers, havin’ to wor-rk for your wages and wid no money to spind in iligant ways; but philanthropy is two steps above ye. I ’m now a philanthropist and me mind is opened. ’T is poor wor-rk instructin’ thim that are busy earnin’ their pay, but I see that ye are an ignorant lot and deserve nothin’ betther than to be taught be your supariors.

“ None of yez remimber Tommy Stubbs, ’prentice boy on the ould *City of Brussels* — God rest her bones! — but all of yez know from the papers of Thomas Stubbs, the millionaire of New York. Ye know him for his philanthropy, which means that he has so much money that he cannot spind it honestly and therefore hires honest min to spind it for him. He was a passenger on the *Emperor*, on which I wint to China but just now. And I will tell you the story of Thomas, once Tommy, and elucidate to yer dull minds the perils that philanthropists suffer, which are greater than any perils on the deep watters.

“ In the first place, I found meself in San Francisco with three paychecks in me hat and still money in me pocket. Says I to meself, ‘ Me bould boy, ye are rich. How will ye spind your fortune?’ And meself answers, with wan eye cocked at a big placard, ‘ Ye will go as a passenger on a big liner for the first time in yer life and speak to no man widout the coin ready in his pocket to show his supariority to thim that wor-rk.’

“ So I wint in and bought me a cabin passage to Yokohama and return, with stopover privileges at Honolulu and a fine opportunity to visit Manila if yer money hild out. And the next day I wint aboard and a flunkey took me little grip and led me down across the carpets to a little room wid two other min sittin' on the edge of the bunks like gulls on a plank. I greeted thim haughtily and demanded to know the usual quistions asked be the first-class passengers. Havin' thus impressed the flunkey and me two fellow passengers wid me ignorance and pride, I wint on deck and surveyed the poor sailors as they got the ship out of her berth. And whin I hear-rd the ingine-room gongs ring I smiled and sat down in a chair like a gintleman.

“ Before we were outside the Heads they served us with luncheon and I found me place at a little table tucked away in one corner of the saloon. I ordered the things I could n't make out the names of and thin ate what I could of thim, which was little. Whin I had done me duty I looked around, and right across from me, at the captain's table, I saw Tommy Stubbs, who was a 'prentice on the ould *City of Brussels* whin I was in the black-pan watch. He sat there with his fine clothes and his gold watch, atin' slowly and wid the air of a man who had aten too much the week before. Beside him sat a lady in a green gown wid red hair and a look of sorrow on her face.

“ After the meal I wint on deck and to the smokin' room, where I lit me pipe and stared proudly forth out of me plush seat. And me eyes rested on the eyes of

Tommy Stubbs. I grinned at him and he grinned back. 'T is Mickey O'Rourke!' says he, suckin' his cigar.

" 'It is,' I responds. 'And whin did Tommy Stubbs quit an honest livin' and become a passenger?'

"He moved across be me side, spite of the looks of several of the American nobility. And the story came out of him like salt from the condinser.

"Tommy Stubbs had quit bein' Tommy whin his father, who was one of the owners of the ould City Line, had died and gone to glory. So much money had been left him be the executors that he did n't need to know anny more and so left the sea. Thin he was educated, which is learnin' to do nothin' widout excitin' the contimpt of your infariors. And after he was educated, me bould Tommy tould me, he tried to do good with his money. 'Ye see,' said the brave felley, 'I had almost been a wor-rking man mesilf and me hear-rt wint out to thim that toil. Bein' young, me hear-rt wint out specially to the women and gur-rls, so that I took little pleasure out of me club, me horses and me vally. 'T is awful to think of thim that must wor-rk for their bread and butter,' says he.

" 'T is cruel har-rd,' says I. 'And what did yez do?'

" 'I studied philanthropy,' says he. 'I'm known now as a philanthropist from Liverpool and the tame parts of Scotland to the wildest parts of Ameriky.'

" 'And what is a philanthropist?' says I. 'We had none in Ireland.'

"He ixplained that it was a man wid money who de-

spised other people wid money and tried to live decent, like the poor. 'Ye may have read in the paper,' said he, 'that I married a workin' gur-rl.'

"'Is she the redhaired gur-rl that sat beside ye at the table wid the sorrowful look on her sweet face?' I demanded.

"'It is,' says he. 'The sorrow is for the gur-rls that still have to wor-rk widout the advantages of wealth.'

"Thin he gave me a cigar which I smoked in silence like anny gintleman; and whin it was finished I wint to me room and found me two companions sittin' in their bunks houldin' their heads wid wake hands. So I rang the bell for the flunkey and expostulated wid him for the discomfort of havin' to sleep wid min widout stomachs and finally tur-rned in on the main deck wid Pat Riordan, chief fireman in the ould days whin I was runnin' in the Pacific Coast Company.

"In the mor-rnin' the first man I met was Tommy Stubbs. He greeted me heartily and we walked up and down the deck unmindful of the boys who were tryin' to clane it against the sharp eye of the mate. I inquired after his lady. He sighed. 'She is unhappy, Mickey,' said he. 'It seems as if she niver could forget the ould days and the poor gur-rls who wor-rked for their livin'.'

"And in the early mor-rnin' air, wid none about, he opened his heart as did young Tommy years before, whin a 'prentice lad looked up to a stoker and made frinds wid him for the sake of a warm place and a yarn. I tell yez the truth, as Tommy tould it to me that mor-rn.

"Whin he had come into his money — and it was

thousands of pounds — he had been educated till he sorrowed for thim that had less. And in his sorrowin' he met Lelia Toomey, an Irish gur-rl who was livin' down in New York on the six dollars a week she made be sellin' goods in a big shop. And it struck me bould Tommy that, if he was to be a philanthropist and do the right thing, he ought to marry Lelia. Which he did.

“ ‘ I married her because I found mesilf cheated and foxed at ivery tur-rn,’ he tould me. ‘ ’T was me part to do good among the wor-rkin' classes and so I married Lelia. She has been a wonderful help to me in me philanthropy, knowin' the ways of the gur-rls and their terrible sufferin's. Widout her I would a' been a poor benyfactor to the race through ignorance.’

“ ‘ Philanthropy is a new name for love,’ says I.

“ ‘ No, Mickey,’ says he. ‘ I did n't marry for love. ’T was merely a part of me philanthropy. A man of my high position cannot afford to consider himself. Ye see she could help me to give me money away widout scandal, knowin' as she did the ins and outs of bein' poor. Ye have no notion how wicked the poor are whin they think they can do ye out of yer fortune.’

“ And the felley sighed and looked away.

“ After breakfast Tommy hunted me out and said: ‘ Ye know no newspaper men, Mickey? ’

“ ‘ Divil a wan,’ said I.

“ ‘ Thin I will talk to yez,’ says he. ‘ For six years I've been silent and speechless because the papers put it all into print.’

“ ‘ I saw ye talkin' this minute to that fine lady wid

the diamonds on her fingers,' said me bould Mickey. 'And ye were talkin' free and easy as any gossoon of a dewey mor-rnin whira skirts are lifted high.'

" 'That is a lady of me own class,' says he. 'She is rich and says nothin' of what she thinks.'

" 'And I'm poor and cannot speak me mind,' I returns briskly. 'So, talk away!'

" 'But our talk amounted to little, being mostly mesilf reminberin' the ould days on the *City of Brussels* and how we used to enrage the skipper. And suddintly Tommy quits me and goes to speak wid the rich lady wid diamonds.

" 'I strolled off, free and easy, and in my walkin' passed Mrs. Tommy, wid her red hair and her green dress and her look of sorrow. I made bould to stop and address her. 'I'm Mickey O'Rourke, a shipmate of yer husband's,' says I. 'I knew him whin he was poor and no philanthropist.'

" 'She smiled at me sweetly and I sat down. 'He tould me yez were Irish,' I remarked.

" 'I still smell me father's pipe,' says she.

" 'I observe that yer husband smokes cigars,' I retorts.

" 'He is very generous,' says she. 'And he is rich.'

" 'And wid these wor-rds we fell into sociability and talked. She seemed to enjoy me bould Mickey's stories of her husband's young days and at the ind of it all she said: 'I wish ye could make Tommy reminber the times he had whin he was a boy.'

" 'God forbid!' says I. 'He was thin poor and in-

dustrious. Now he is rich and a philanthropist. Wid a fine wife like yerself and all his money, why should he remimber the days whin he wor-rked?’

“ ‘Mickey,’ says she, ‘ a philanthropist is no husband at all, at all.’

“ She was a lady and said no more. I wint down to me room and thrust out me two companions and hild me head in me hands to think.

“ ‘T was a poor broth to be made out of such fine game. Here was Tommy, wid his money and his philanthropy. There was a fine gur-rl wid her sorrow and her sweet ways. And they were farther apart than the divil and Saint Peter. Tommy, wid the ignorance of wealth, had married a gur-rl in order that he might give his money to other gur-rls widout being cheated. Lelia Toomey had married a philanthropist, not a heavy-fisted man wid a war-rm wor-rd and love in his heart. I hild me head so long that me neck had to be reminded be me stomach that it was meal time.

“ Several times did Tommy Stubbs have speech wid me. But he had speech more often wid the lady wid the diamonds. And Lelia Toomey sat in her chair and looked out on the sea. To comfort her I sat in a chair and smoked me pipe widout noticin’ the growls and scor-rn of the deck boys.

“ One day she spoke to me softly: ‘ Mickey, did me husband tell yez why he married me?’

“ I did not look at her for shame. In the silence she put her little hand on me rough paw. ‘ Mickey,’ says she again, ‘ did yez marry the gur-rl yez loved?’



“ And we sat there together wid nothing to say. But prisintly I spoke up: ‘ Have ye had childher?’ ”

“ ‘ No childher,’ says she.

“ ‘ Nor I,’ says me bould Mickey to comfort her. ‘ No father have I been excipt a godfather, and the priest swore I disgraced mesilf at the time.’ ”

“ ‘ Thin we are even,’ says she.

“ ‘ We are not even,’ says I. ‘ I have nayther chick nor child. Ye have a husband that is rich and notorious and a philanthropist.’ ”

“ ‘ We will say no more about it, Mickey,’ says she softly. ‘ A bed is a bed though the covers be thin. I’ve made me bed.’ ”

“ ‘ And no sleep do yez get,’ says I. ‘ But I am silent.’ ”

“ Which was a lie. For I wint and dragged Tommy away from the fine lady wid diamonds and pushed him up in a corner and said: ‘ Misther Stubbs, ’t is none of poor Mickey’s business; but I stole a spoon whin I was a babe in ar-rms and have stuck it into ivery man’s bowl since. Will yez tell me why ye married that fine Irish lass?’ ”

“ He tried to scor-rn me, but I would not be scor-rned. And thin he said: ‘ I have done a great service to the wor-rkin’ gur-rls of the wor-rld. I have ilevated thim. I have done iverythin’ that me wife advised. But I have me own class, which I long for at times. A man cannot live widout the society of his equals.’ ”

“ I saw that he considered Lelia Toomey no equal of his, being merely the wife of a philanthropist. So I shook him off and wint down to me room to think. Me

thoughts left the *Emperor* and returned to a place yez know nothing of and a gur-rl yez will niver hear the name of. At the ind of me meditation I wint back to Lelia and said: 'Do yez love yer husband?'

" 'T is mighty impudent ye are, Mickey O'Rourke!' says she, wid a blush on her cheek. 'But if it be concern of yours, I do.'

" 'Thin I will explain to yez how to put Mrs. Diamonds in her place,' says I. 'I have lied to ye, but now I will tell the truth. Tommy tould me he married yez to help the wor-kin' gur-rls. But I think he married ye because he loved ye. Philanthropy may do for society, but I knew him whin he had no money and the heart of him is good. The trouble wid me bould Tommy is that he does not know he has been in love, being blinded by his riches.'

"The woman drew hersilf up proudly. 'Mickey, I've given yez the privileges of a frind,' says she. 'Now ye go too far, interferin' between me and me husband!'

" 'I have seen manny a man made a fool of by a woman,' I retorted bouldly. 'But niver before have I seen a good woman made a fool of be money. And 't is you, Lelia Toomey, that are cheated out of your rights be the force of gold. Ye could have had your husband yoursilf and instid ye allowed his money to snatch him away from ye. Therefore I tell ye that ye are a fool, in spite of yer pretty face and yer philanthropy. What is philanthropy to childher?' And I scor-rned her.

"That night at dinner I heard Stubbs talking very

proudly to some other man at the table. 'I am very much interested in that form of philanthropy,' said he. 'I have made a special study of the troubles of the wor-rkin'-gur-rl class. Me wife was a wor-rkin' gur-rl. I have learned much from her.'

"I stared over and saw the eyes of people fixed on Lelia Toomey. Mrs. Diamonds looked at her specially tender and said in a sweet voice: 'How glad you must be, Mrs. Stubbs, to have the opportunity of ilevatin' the poor gur-rls such as you were!'

"And Lelia blushed and looked down, instead of givin' the woman an Irish answer. I was ashamed for her.

"Whin we arrived in Honolulu we first-class passengers all disembarked to take expinsive trips over the city and Tommy Stubbs left his wife to mail letthers about philanthropy and took Mrs. Diamonds to some beach. 'T was a scandal on the spot, for who had not hear-rd Mrs. Diamonds' open scor-rn of Mrs. Stubbs? And who had not hear-rd Stubbs himsilf refer to her always as a wor-rkin' gur-rl whom he had married in order to ilevate the poor and needy? So I wint nowhere and informed me companions that I knew all about Honolulu and despised it. So they departed to wonder at the beauties of Nature and spind their money. Whin all were gone and the coalies were at wor-rk dumpin' fuel into the *Emperor* I sneaked along the upper deck till I came in front of Lelia Toomey. She looked up at me out of her wet eyes and said: 'Mickey, are ye a gintleman?'

“ ‘ I ’ d do much for yez,’ I replied. ‘ But kape widhin me limits.’

“ ‘ Go away and forget that I am weeping,’ says she.

“ Whin the Irish weep the English get ready for more trouble; and with me eyes over the sea I stirred that young woman to more tears, knowin’ that whin they dried ’t would be in the fire that is Ireland’s sunburst. Prisintly she looked up at me. ‘ Mickey,’ says she, ‘ am I not as pretty as Mrs. Diamonds?’

“ ‘ I rayfuse to tell,’ I returns.

“ ‘ Is she more a woman worth while than me?’ she persists.

“ ‘ I have nothin’ to say,’ says me bould Mickey.

“ ‘ And why does Tommy like her betther and lave me to the empty glory of bein’ a poor wor-rkin’ gur-rl who married riches?’ she goes on.

“ ‘ Was it the gold that ye loved whin ye married Tommy Stubbs?’ I inquires.

“ ‘ Mickey,’ says she, ‘ ye will niver die unhappy for not havin’ asked too much. But a quistion is a quistion, though out of the mouth of a poor man. Whin I promised to be Mrs. Stubbs I knew little excipt that Tommy was big and strong and had a way wid him. What cared I whether he was a philanthropist? His ar-rms were big and his eyes bright whin he saw me. Mickey! Mickey! Why did I lose him?’ And she stared out on the wharves wid dry eyes.

“ So I sat and thought of one whose name ye will niver hear and I smelt the smoke of the mor-rnin’ fire in a place ye are none of yez worthy to see; and me toes

crept in me boots for lack of the turf under me feet. And whin I had thought I spoke.

“ ‘Lelia Toomey,’ says I, ‘yer husband spint much money to get ye; but, like Ireland, ye wint too cheap and thereby made yersilf unremimbered whin the bargain was past. ’T is betther for a woman to hold hersilf too dear than to yield too quickly. Make Tommy spind his wealth to keep yez.’

“ ‘And ye mean?’ she asks softly.

“ ‘Let us quit this plush packet and stop ashore a while,’ I returns bouldly. ‘Are ye afraid he will not come back after ye?’

“ ‘Ye mean?’ she repeats.

“ ‘I mean this,’ says I: ‘We will leave this ship immediate and leave no word. And whin Tommy comes back with Mrs. Diamonds and does not find ye he will think ye have gone ashore to shop. And he will say nothin’. But whin the ship sails, and he finds ye not aboard, what will he do?’

“ ‘God knows, Mickey,’ says she. ‘I am afraid!’

“ ‘Are ye afraid of Mrs. Diamonds?’ I says.

“ And the gur-rl’s blood turned to roses in her cheeks and her eyes sparkled. ‘I am not,’ says she. ‘But, Mickey, the ship will carry him to China and he will forget me.’

“ ‘Has he remimbered yez?’ I demanded.

“ ‘He is always kind,’ she replies, the look of sorrow comin’ into her sweet face.

“ ‘The rich can afford to be kind,’ says me bould Mickey. ‘A loving blow is betther than easy wor-rds.’

“ ‘Would yez have struck her?’ she asks quickly.

“ ‘’T would have been a great risk,’ I says, ‘for she was high-spirited.’

“ ‘I will go wid ye,’ she says. ‘But if he does not come back for me I shall niver forgive ye — and may God save ye, Mickey O’Rourke!’

“ ‘So I wint down and caught a hackdriver be wakin’ him up out of a sound sleep and the two of us sneaked down from the ship; and we drove to a hotel where Lelia got a room and said: ‘Mickey, sit on the steps and do not let me go back, for I am weak. Whin does the *Emperor* sail?’

“ ‘She sails at six o’clock,’ I tould her. ‘Till thin I sit here; and if ye value yer life ye will not timplt me to strike yez be tryin’ to escape to a man that cares nothing for yez.’

“ ‘And I sat on the steps and smoked me pipe till dark. Whin the *Emperor* was gone I wint inside and sint wor-rd to her room. The flunkey came back superciliously and waved at me. ‘The lady says she niver wants to see yez again,’ says he.

“ ‘Thus I knew that I had put a short spoon out to a pot beyond my reach across a hot fire; and I wint and got me a place to sleep, and sat up the night wonderin’ at the ways of philanthropists.

“ ‘’T was three days later that I saw Lelia Toomey again. She sint for me and whin I saw her I was for tur-rning away, but she called to me softly. I stood before her like a boy wid broken eggs in his little shirt-bosom and the fear of the switch across his shoulders.



'Twas Tommy Stubbs, dirty, forlorn, and desp'rit.

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'Mickey,' says she, 'will he think I'm worth the price?'

" 'If he does not ——' I began.

" 'If he does not,' says she, 'nayther you nor he will iver know the truth. And may Hiven save yez, Mickey!'

" Six days passed and once more I stood in front of her. 'Mrs. Diamonds is more lovely and is his equal,' says she. 'I was a fool and I hate yez, Mickey O'Rourke!' And wid that she turned her face full of sorrow away from me.

" I wint out and walked along the beach. I walked into the night and the moon rose; and I remimbered that I was an ould felley, long past love and soft looks. Wirra! 'Ye are fit for nothing but handling the machinery of an ould tub of a light-ship,' I thought. 'And ye have meddled with the wor-rks of a woman's hear-rt.'

" But me thoughts stood still, for a man wid salt on his beard and trouble in his eyes stuck a heavy fist under me mousers and said: 'Mickey O'Rourke, where is me wife?'

" 'T was Tommy Stubbs, dirty, forlorn and desp'rit. I swelled wid joy, but concealed it. 'She loves ye no more,' said I. 'Therefore I advise yez to lave her be. She despises ye.'

" 'Where is Lelia?' he persists, taking hould of me coat.

" 'She is at the hotel,' I responds. 'She is waiting for a steamer to take her back to Ameriky.'

" 'What hotel?' says he.

“What is the need of stirrin’ a hot fire? I tould him, and he turned and wint off, leaving me to look into the eyes of a poor mechanic in jumper and overalls. ‘Who are you?’ I inquires — ‘Who are you, to be listenin’ to the speech of your betthers?’

“‘I was an oiler on the *Emperor*,’ says he; ‘but I have been the keeper of an insane man for four days and four nights.’

“I drew him aside. ‘Spit it out!’ I encourages him. ‘Where did yez leave the *Emperor*?’

“‘Five hundred miles at sea,’ he tould me. ‘That crazy felley lost his wife and made the skipper stop the steamer and give him a gasoline launch and mesilf as engineer; and for four days and four nights have we been traipsin’ across the deep watters back to Honolulu. And now he is gone widout payin’ me wages nor givin’ me the price of a drink!’

“‘Ye drink on me,’ says I. And I dragged him to a café and ordered wid insolince and joy.

“Out of that poor engineer I drew the story of what happened on the ould *Emperor*; and it was more than sleep to a tired man. Tommy had missed his wife and discovered only after dinner where she had gone, whin the steamer was out of sight of land. ’T was his money and his reputation as a philanthropist that kept him from being put in irons as a crazy man. In the end he bought the big gasoline launch from the skipper and hired the fool of an oiler as crew and set back to Honolulu.

“Whin the man was full I gave him a dollar and wint

to the hotel and asked for Mrs. Stubbs. The flunkey returned wid Tommy at his heels. He stared at me haughtily. 'Me wife does n't care to see you again, Misther O'Rourke,' says he. 'And I'll thank ye to keep out of me way hereafter. What did you mean by informin' Mrs. Stubbs that I tould yez I cared little for her? Ye are a liar!'

"So I came away, knowin' that if he hit me 't would be from a full hear-rt — and I niver yet let a happy man hit me; for I am ould and me fighting days are past — wid all the rest of it!"

## THE UNWILLING WAR CORRESPONDENT

THERE was no dinner at Mrs. Hopkins's boarding house. While the landlady made profuse apologies, we felt that it was hardly any fault of hers. Hito, the Japanese cook, had departed suddenly, after the manner of his race, and there was none to take his office in the kitchen. We condoled with Mrs. Hopkins, swallowed the cold victuals she offered us on damp plates, and gathered on the porch to discuss the eternal question of the Yellow.

There did n't seem to be much to say that was novel. We were aggrieved, and said so, blaming the whole Japanese nation for the delinquency of Hito. From personal wrongs we gradually shunted to the main track of universal problems, and restated with emphasis what a great many politicians had voiced as the Public Demand of California. We ended with fervent regrets that Russia had not wiped Japan off the map of the world.

This was Jefferson's opening. He had been the San Francisco "Times" correspondent in the Far East, and we listened to the hundredth repetition of his adventures, hardships, and successes—the last barely recognized by a jealous fraternity.

When Jefferson came to a full stop, two hours later, we prepared to go to our rooms. The school-teacher caused us delay by remarking, in his mild manner, that he envied Jefferson his opportunities for a full and vivid conception of the Spirit of Japan. "I was by way of being a war correspondent myself," he ventured gently.

The school-teacher had never, so far as we knew from his conversation, been outside of the very mildest parts of the United States. If you had asked one of us whether Mr. Parsons had ever had an adventure, we would have stared and remarked that he was devoted to his work in the school. On the other hand, he was not a voluntary joker. True, he frequently raised a laugh; but it was usually at himself, and not because he placed anybody else in a humorous light. So we stopped in our general movement toward bedrooms and listened to this somewhat extraordinary announcement. Jefferson led out with a question:

"So? When was that?"

"During the Japanese and Russian War," Mr. Parsons said.

"I did n't know you were in journalism," said Jefferson. "Usually I know one of the brotherhood at sight."

Mr. Parsons's manner was apologetic. "I was n't what you might call a journalist," he said. "It was only to oblige a friend. I was, in fact, an unwilling war correspondent."

Jefferson, who had got up, sat down again. "That's

rather interesting," he said kindly. "I never heard of an unwilling war correspondent. Indeed, the anxiety of good newspaper men to go to the front was such that only the very best stood any show."

The school-teacher seemed uncomfortable. "I don't pretend to have done anything in the regular way at all," he explained. "As I said, my attempting to act as war correspondent for the 'American Scientist' was purely to oblige a friend. I was quite unwilling, I assure you. You see," he went on confidentially, "*my* line was flour, macaroni flour."

Jefferson nodded, and his comical glance assembled us around the school-teacher. "Let's hear about the unwilling war correspondent whose real line was macaroni flour," he said genially.

Mr. Parsons did n't smile. Instead, he flushed painfully, as he sometimes did when we laughed too broadly at his little ways. "I know it sounds ridiculous to you," he said humbly; "but I saw the Battle of Moriyoshi. That is, I was *under* it."

Jefferson flushed himself. "I never heard of that battle," he said curtly. "I presume it escaped all of us! I should enjoy being enlightened."

We all insisted, partly because we thought Jefferson's manner uncalled for; partly because we were really curious. The school-teacher seemed put out, but manfully stuck to his guns. "Of course you never heard of it," he said briefly. "I never wrote a piece about it. If you had heard of it I should never have ventured to mention it. I have already said that I was

unwilling at the time, and I certainly claim no honor for myself in having yielded to the importunity of a friend, Lieutenant Pettifer, J. P. N."

"May I inquire what 'J. P. N.' stands for?" inquired Jefferson icily.

"Japanese Navy, I believe," answered the school-teacher. "At least, that was the only impression I got while in China."

"Very likely," Jefferson assented, regaining his good humor. "Don't let me interrupt."

Mr. Parsons withdrew his slight form into his chair and appeared to favor the dusk which the light of the setting sun shot with dim fire.

My line was macaroni flour (he resumed). I studied chemistry at college and found a chance to go into the office of a wheat and flour broker in San Francisco who had a large export business. You may not know that macaroni, or Italian paste, is made from a flour peculiarly rich in gluten. The production of this wheat depends for success upon many elements of soil and cultivation. It had become a very valuable product, and my employer devoted a large portion of his time and capital to the business of exploiting this article of commerce. When he found that there was a fine market for it in the Orient, he decided that it would pay to discover whether a flour rich in gluten and with the other peculiar properties which make Italian wheat so valued might not be manufactured in China and Japan out of wheat grown there. He commissioned me to go to the

Orient and make investigations and experiments with a view to introducing this new industry.

I left San Francisco and spent several months going over the arable districts of Japan before the war broke out. At the time of the declaration of hostilities I was in Hakodate, preparing for an exploratory expedition into Yezo. Naturally, I found myself in a very embarrassing position. The Straits of Sangar, upon which Hakodate lies, are on the route direct to Vladivostock, and it was from the former point that the offensive preparations of the Japanese were largely made, as Mr. Jefferson can explain to you better than I.

Being a foreigner, though on a peaceful mission, it was explained to me with all politeness that I had better stay in Hakodate. My going into the interior would be misunderstood. In fact, the authorities could not allow it. Moreover, my explorations of the island of Nippon and its agricultural resources, it was felt, might easily be made use of by the enemy. To make the matter short, I was forbidden to leave Hakodate.

At first I devoted my energies to convincing the officials that I was not belligerent, and that my mission, being one of peace and for the advancement of the industrial interests of Japan, should not be considered in any way inimical to the government. But Count Hyashi, to whom I finally appealed, stated that as I knew the exact statistics of the crops and soil of Japan, my knowledge was too valuable to the Japanese Government to be overlooked. He begged me, in their time of stress, to devote my talent and experience to Japan. In fact,



he offered me a flattering position in the Imperial Bakery. Upon communication (through the war office) with my employer, I obtained permission to accept this offer. For the next six months I was very busy making a full test of the nutritive values of the various flours used in the baking of the supplies for the forces in the field, and had the honor of introducing a bread far superior to any then in use, and one which, on account of the non-variance in constituents, would keep indefinitely without loss of essential nourishing value.

The satisfaction of the Government with my efforts caused the officials to transfer me to Mororan, across the Straits, where a large force of men was engaged in baking several millions of rations for the fleet. Here I had a school of instruction in bread chemistry, and I may say that it was due to the quick apprehension of my pupils that the rations issued from that depot were acknowledged to be the best ever provided.

To pass over these small services I shall go on to the circumstances that led directly to my accepting the position of war correspondent and my consequent presence at the Battle of Moriyoshi.

On account of the vast quantities of coal available at Mororan, that port was used as a point of departure for many vessels of the Northern Fleet. It was also used as a place for such refitting as could be done without the use of a dry dock. And when eighteen submarines ordered from an American firm were delivered, they were delivered at Mororan.

I have heard it said, by those who know, that sub-

marines were not well known by the Japanese. However that may be, the firm that made those unloaded at Mororan sent with them a force of American workmen and experts to put them in order and to instruct the Japanese in their use and management. Among these Americans I found an old college mate, Pettifer, who was in the same class in field chemistry with me in college.

Of course I was glad to see Pettifer. We immediately got permission to lodge together.

I soon ascertained that the submarines were not, so to speak, a finished product. Pettifer explained to me that there were many chemical and scientific calculations in their construction and equipment that were by no means of settled expediency. He himself felt that their use in warfare was problematic, as yet; in his position as one of the experts in charge of them he would not answer for their behavior.

Having the common interest of chemistry, I devoted what time I could spare from my bakery laboratory to going over with Pettifer all the chemical formulas and processes employed in the production of power, conservation of oxygen, and so forth. Probably I weary you. I will pass on to say that six weeks after the arrival of the submarines the announcement was made to the Japanese Government that they were ready for service. There followed the further announcement that, in order to fulfill the contract with the Japanese, all the experts sent over by the constructing company were to remain in the employ of the Government as instructors in the use of submarines. I remember my roommate

coming to me with a very large sheet of paper inscribed with many Japanese characters. He said it had been handed to him by the depot commandant.

"Here is a commission as lieutenant in their old navy," Pettifer said. "Think of Willie, *Lieutenant Willie Pettifer, J. P. N.!*"

"What does it mean?" I asked him.

"It means fighting," he said gravely. "To tell the truth, Parsons," he went on, "this submarine work is still an experiment. Does anybody know whether *No. 6* (that was his boat) will behave according to specifications in service? I don't. The Japs don't. I'm blessed if I know anybody who *does* know. So the Government quietly makes the company put us fellows in to run them. And that keeps anybody from running around and telling the world that Japan has submarines. Oh, the Japanese are smart all right! But I say, Parsons, is n't this a nice job for little Willie Pettifer, to be put in charge of a boat like *No. 6*? Just think if we were trying to blow up a big Russian battle ship and a dollop of water should short-circuit the spark-coil!"

"What would happen?" I inquired.

"Either the torpedo would explode in the tube, or else it would miss its object by six degrees. I've figured it all out, you see. Take your choice. Or if we were using the gasoline engines, and one of the spark-coils short-circuited, we'd turn around before we could switch in another. That comes of having twin screws with separate engines."

"Two engines make it safer," I remonstrated.

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Pettifer was much put out by this argument. "That's not the question. It's a question of efficiency. We've got eighteen submarines here. If every submarine answers for one Russian war ship and goes to the bottom itself, the Japanese Government will think them a success. But it won't be satisfied if six months from now the Russians still have their battle ships and we still have the submarines."

I quote this remark to show that Pettifer was a thorough workman and wrapped up in his profession.

Nothing happened the next week and Willie put in his time polishing up *No. 6* and training his Japanese crew. When I asked him how the Japanese took hold he replied, "All right. Only they're not scientific by instinct, the lower class. They're impatient. My best man came to me this morning and wanted to know if it would n't be cheaper all around to simply run *No. 6* alongside the enemy, open the gasoline tanks and the oxygen tanks and then spark the whole business to kingdom come. It took me two hours to prove to him that a perfect mixture of gasoline and oxygen would n't exert enough force to dent the plates of a battle ship, not counting the fact that the experiment would cost the Government a good submarine and the services of trained men. I don't think the man sees it yet. I believe he has it in his head that I'm a coward and afraid."

"Are you afraid?" I demanded.

Willie Pettifer always was an honest chap. "You bet I'm afraid," he said. "I've just come from the admiral's, and I told him I would n't stand for any

such unscientific nonsense. I'll have discipline or run my submarine myself, I told him. I don't want any *banzai* patriot blowing me and my machinery up just to make a holiday. A 'marine is a scientific instrument and not a plaything for *banzais* to fool with. Either I blow up properly and in good order or I don't blow up at all."

"What did the admiral say?" I asked.

Willie laughed. "He did n't say anything. But he took my man and put him to work in the coal sheds. I guess the admiral is n't going to have any fireworks not scheduled by himself."

The next morning Willie came round to my office, hustled a couple of students outside, shut the door, and flourished an order in my face. "See that!" he demanded. "That's an order for fifty gallons of gasoline and five gallons of cylinder oil. I'm to take the 'marine to sea at five o'clock this afternoon and run out of the Straits eastwardly one hundred miles, submerged. Now that sounds like plain English, does n't it? But it's the imported article. Those few words mean that I'm to sink *No. 6* in her slip, periscope my way out of the harbor and down the Straits and out to sea one hundred miles."

"It sounds like it," I agreed. "What then?"

Willie nearly pulled his mustache out by the roots. "That's it," he growled. "That's the Japanese of it. Now, the admiral and everybody else that knows anything at all about these submarines knows that their radius of action submerged is exactly one hundred and

ten miles. In other words, when *No. 6* has gone her one hundred miles and comes to the stop, she's got just ten more miles to go submerged, or twenty miles on the surface. Will Lieutenant Willie Pettifer, J. P. N., kindly go to the top story of a twenty-story building and step off? That's the gist, sum, and substance of that order."

"Are you going?" I demanded.

"Of course I'm going," he said crossly. "I want you to go along."

"That's really kind of you," was my reply. "But I'm busy. I'll go with you some other day."

"I don't mean it the way it sounds," Willie protested. "The admiralty has got some scheme up, probably a big battle. I figure that when we run out there and come to the top we'll find a Japanese fleet busily engaged in taking off a Russian fleet. Maybe we'll have something to do. Anyway, we'll be brought home. Don't you want to see a battle? Besides I'll be the only white man on *No. 6* and I want company."

"I could n't get leave, even if I wanted to go," I said warmly. "I'd do a great deal to oblige you, Willie, but I can't go."

"If I get you a pass, will you go?" Willie insisted.

Now there really was no reason why I should n't go. Besides, he explained to me that I could help him in keeping track of the various apparatus used in maintaining respirable air, even temperature and so forth. And I felt sure he would never get the pass.

That was where I mistook Willie. He came back at

noon with a slip of paper signed by the admiral himself. "There 's your leave," he announced. "You are to go as correspondent of the 'American Scientist.'

"But the 'American Scientist' does n't know me from Adam," I said. "And I'm no war correspondent. Besides, they're not giving correspondents any privileges these times. Look at that crowd down the coast sitting on the club veranda with their caps over their eyes."

"The 'American Scientist' will be glad to get an account of the action of a submarine on service, written by a chemist," Willie insisted. "And when the admiral comes down off his high horse and does a favor for Lieutenant Pettifer, J. P. N., I want you to understand that it's not your place to make objections. If you will read that piece of paper you will find that you are under my orders."

There was nothing for me to do but take off my apron and go with him. I was really glad to go, too. It was a change from flour-testing and baking.

Willie made me take my pipe and tobacco out of my pocket and went through me to see if I had any matches on me. Then he gave me a cigar. "Smoke that while you can," he said. "We can't smoke in the 'marine."

I sat down on a pile of coal in the depot, while Willie went on an errand, and smoked till an officer coming by took the cigar from me and carefully extinguished it in a bucket of water. He told me smoking was not allowed and I had to show him my pass from

the admiral to keep from going to the guard house. Then Willie came by, riding on a coal car, jumped off, took me by the arm, and hurried me off down to the slips.

*No. 6* lay under a shed, the farthest in the long row of submarines. She looked unusually damp and dirty. Willie said he had been giving her a coat of grease. We went down through the little hatch in the top of the steering tower and Willie soon had his three men busy over the electric motors which ran the 'marine when submerged. Then he turned over the gasoline engines which were used on the surface.

"I've had her in apple-pie order for ten days," he said. "The batteries are up to their capacity and I can't think of anything else we ought to do. I wish we could carry more gasoline. But we can't. I guess we'll start. It's ten minutes to five now."

I went out on deck with him while some of the dockyard hands eased off the moorings. *No. 6* swung into the middle of her slip and Willie nodded to me. "Below with you, Parsons," he said quietly. "We're going to submerge in the slip."

Just then the admiral strolled up. Willie saluted. The admiral looked at his watch, but said nothing. A pump started clanking in the hull and *No. 6* sank slowly till the water was within two feet of the hatch. The admiral snapped his watch case and leaned over toward Willie. He handed him a slip of paper. "Steer that course," he said briefly.

Willie waved his hand and shoved me down the



ladder. Then the hatch fell into place and I could hear him breathe as he twisted the lock down tight. The electric lights came on and the pump increased its speed. Willie kept his eye to the periscope tube and suddenly the pump stopped and the motors began.

I could feel the hull start forward. I went off my feet at a sudden upward sway, much like the rise of a horse at a fence. One of the Japs picked me up, and smiled. Then Willie motioned for me to join him in the little steering tower — a steel cylinder about four feet in diameter, projecting about four feet above the upper shell of the vessel. “That was a shallow place,” he said.

“I’m glad it was n’t a rock,” I murmured, and Willie said he was glad, too.

“One has to trust to a clear channel,” he said. “But we’ll soon be out in the Straits, and then we’ll be all right.”

I can’t tell just how many times there was that sickening upward motion of *No. 6*. Each time I could hear the gentle swash of the water in the teakettle that sat on a little electric plate just below me, on a shelf. Then, in half an hour, the submarine settled down to a steady, slightly rolling gait. When she did that Willie told me to look into the periscope tube. I did so and discovered that we were going along with a bright light visible far away on the left-hand side. “That’s a lighthouse,” Willie said. “We’re submerged five feet. See anything else?”

I examined the miniature horizon carefully, but could distinguish nothing.

Willie looked again and nodded. "Over there on the starboard bow. Still there. The admiral's pretty clever, is n't he?"

"What's over there?" I inquired.

"A torpedo boat destroyer," Willie answered. "She's burning no lights, but I can see the glint of water along her sides. That boat, Jap though she be, is n't as clever as little Willie Pettifer, lieutenant, J. P. N. I can see her, but she can't see me. I *greased* my vessel, and there is n't any glint of water about *No. 6*. You could be right over her and not see a thing." Willie laughed. "She's coming cross channel to see if she can't pick us up. The admiral is smart, is n't he? He wants us to get away without anybody knowing we're gone, and then sends a destroyer out to look for a Russian submarine. Suspicious people, are n't they, Parsons?"

I agreed with him, but regretted that the destroyer was so close. "She might run onto us," I said. "Then what would we do?"

Willie grinned across the steering tower at me. "The admiral fixed that," he chuckled. "That destroyer has orders to destroy a Russian submarine that is reported to be hovering around. Upon consulting the paper the admiral handed me in the slip, I perceive that I am to use 'war measures in case of meeting an enemy or suspicious craft.' Consequently, if that destroyer gets too close, we'll just blow her up. The admiral will understand."

"But she's not an enemy," I protested.

“How am I to know that?” Willie remarked. “I’m taking no chances, Parsons. I’m Lieutenant Pettifer, J. P. N., and *No. 6* is going to do what she was told to do, if ten Japanese destroyers go to the bottom. I don’t intend her to run and tell the admiral she saw us. You understand? We’re running submerged. *Nobody* sees us. Do you understand? **NOBODY** sees us!”

I confess that this remark afforded me a new view of Willie’s character, and I reflected upon my foolishness in yielding to his importunity and going with him on so desperate an expedition. Such meditation was not pleasant, especially as there recurred to my mind Willie’s statement about the helplessness of *No. 6* when she should finally rise to the surface one hundred miles at sea.

My thoughts were interrupted by Willie calling down for the mate to come and take the wheel. The Jap elbowed himself up the steps, repeated the course he was to steer, and, as Willie and I started down the ladder, put his eye to the periscope tube. We climbed down through the curtain which kept the tower in comparative darkness and into the lighted hull.

The other two of the crew were busily engaged watching the flying motors, one with an oil can in one hand, the other with his hand on the switchboard. Willie paid no attention to either of them, but carefully went over the entire interior, from bow to stern. When he came back and sat down beside me on the grating, his face was placid. “She’s tight as a bottle,” he said quietly. “And the machinery is working first class.

Of course, we're using practically none of the oxygen as yet, as I'm taking air in through an elevated pipe forward. But I guess it's up to me to get rid of that destroyer now. She's fast, three times as fast as we are, and if she once catches sight of us and we don't know it, she can put us out of business in three minutes. There! Kujiro's seen her."

The mate was whistling gently, and Willie disappeared into the tower. An instant later the two men below answered an electric buzzer by starting a pump. *No. 6* settled quickly. There was a snap of valves and the click of starting fans. Then the pump stopped and Willie came down the steps. "We're thirty feet down," he said. "I guess Mr. Destroyer won't find us now. He was n't half a mile ahead. Maybe we'll pass under him."

The hours passed slowly, but not unpleasantly. Apart from the gentle sway from side to side one would have supposed the vessel to be at rest on the bottom. Willie kept going and coming while the mate stayed at the wheel. At midnight he wrote up the log and figured our position. That done, he handed me the slate. "We've made fifty-three miles since we left the slip," he said. "That leaves us forty-seven to go. We're just sixteen miles off shore. I wonder if that destroyer is still around? We'll sneak up at two o'clock and see."

At a quarter of two Willie called the mate down and went to the wheel himself. A little later he summoned me and I joined him in the cramped tower. "I'm

going to make a little dash up," he explained. "I can't waste time in pumping out and rising in dead water. We'll just make a little jump hurdlewise. Now keep on your feet and, whatever happens, don't say a word."

He pressed the electric indicator, pulled a lever with a jerk, and *No. 6* stuck her nose up at an angle of forty degrees. There was a roar of water overhead, the port glass foamed before my eyes and Willie jerked out an oath, putting the steering wheel gently over. *No. 6* slid from under my feet, dropped her nose, and the roar of the water died away. Almost instantly the pump clanked below. Willie leaned over, clipping the words with his teeth. "We nearly hit her. She saw us. *Now see the fun!*"

The machinery sang a new tune and I realized that the motors were slowed down and that we were rising from our second plunge. Willie watched the submergence dial and when it crept up to ten feet put his eye to the periscope tube. We turned slowly, as I could perceive by our altered motion. Suddenly he reached over and pulled another lever. The machinery started up full speed; there was a long shrill whistle of air through the hull, and the submarine's bow leaped up.

"Torpedo gone," Willie muttered. "Hope it does the work. Now look!"

The machinery stopped and Willie glued his eye to the periscope tube. I saw the thick glass opposite my eyes suddenly clear and a red flash appear. *No. 6* shook horribly and rose and fell so that I could barely

maintain my hold. I was aware of the hot breath of the mate on my cheek. Then a huge wave overwhelmed us and Willie laughed.

A moment later *No. 6* floated in the long swells on the surface and we were breathing the night air through the open hatch. A hundred rods away I saw a torn pillar, slashed with red, heave out of the sea and slowly sink, endwise. Kujiro, leaning over my shoulder, breathed through his teeth. "Japanese!" he hissed, clutching my arm cruelly.

Willie turned his eyes on the mate with a look I had not imagined possible on his face. "Japanese," he assented icily. "Go below and start the motors."

The mate did not stir. His black eyes fixed on Willie and his lips drew back over his teeth.

"Go below!" Willie ordered again.

Kujiro snorted and let out a wild cry. I remember a flash in my eyes and came to myself to find the mate a dead weight in my arms. In fact, he *was* dead. Willie put his revolver back in his pocket and called down the steps. One of the crew answered and Willie motioned to him to relieve me of Kujiro's body. "Throw it overboard," he commanded.

The man obeyed, very carefully. The body slipped off the grating we stood on, dragged a moment on the sloping curve of the deck, and then slid down into the water as a swell rolled us heavily in its trough.

Then I remembered the destroyer and looked about to see her. The sea was vacant except for a field of white 'way to starboard of us.

When we were once more in the steering tower, and the motors were going again, and the submergence dial showed twelve feet, Willie leaned over to say, "Those patriots don't understand modern warfare. But the admiral, *he* understands. He's scientific. Make a note of that, Parsons. You're seeing genuine scientific offensive operations this time. I just begin to see it myself."

The night settled down, it seemed to me, into quietness. *No. 6* hummed on her way through the water with satisfying steadiness. But somehow I could not lose sight of a big field of white foam heaving in the darkness where a moment before a steel pillar, slashed with red, had disappeared into the depths.

At four o'clock Willie called one of the crew to take the wheel, and entered his figurings upon the log slate. "We're seventy miles on our way," he remarked. "Thirty to go." Then he carefully wrote at the bottom of the slate these two items:

At 2 A.M. we torpedoed an unknown destroyer which attacked us. She sank at 2:06 A.M., bow first.

Kujiro, first-class gunner, mutinied and was shot by myself at 2:09 A.M. His body was thrown into the sea by my order.

W. PETTIFER, Lieutenant, J.P.N.

Daylight appeared in the periscope tube. Neither of us could distinguish anything on the gray horizon. But, as Willie remarked, the elevation of the periscope was so slight that we could not see more than a couple

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of miles in any direction. "We still have twenty miles to go," he said briefly. "Now, here's where we drop clean out of sight."

We apparently lost speed by this last submergence, and the motors hummed heavily, as if they were working against an overload. Willie examined them frequently, leaving me to steer by the compass. Each time he instructed me under no circumstances to touch any of the levers that lined the little tower. As we drew to the close of our journey he seemed disturbed, and I saw him repeatedly look into the huge battery tanks, as if to see how they stood the drain on their stored power.

"It's a tight pinch," he remarked, as the clock tinkled nine. "We shall make it to the dot. And we've kept our course like a liner, too, unless my calculations are at fault. But —"

His pause was so suggestive that I repeated his "but" questioningly.

"We shan't have power enough to maneuver fifteen minutes when we arrive," he said curtly.

"How about the gasoline engines?" I demanded.

"All right on the surface," he answered, "but I dare n't run awash with them going. And to submerge and rise again we *must* have electricity. I tell you, Parsons, that's where these boats are still in the experimental stage. Here we are going to bob up out in the Pacific, probably in a heavy sea, inside a thin shell, with not enough power to get back into sight of land even if we run our engines. And I see the batteries are



damaged. I'll have to use the engines to re-charge them. Otherwise we'll be helpless indeed and in a pretty bad fix."

I had learned enough about submarines during my sojourn with Willie in Mororan to know that they depended for every movement, for their very balance in the water, upon nicely adjusted electrical machinery. I could perfectly understand that, without power of that kind, we would indeed be helpless.

"What are your orders when you arrive at this spot in the ocean?" I demanded.

Willie seemed to regain his spirits instantly. He chuckled. "The admiral is a wonder!" he ejaculated. "There are no orders!"

"No orders!" I repeated. "How are we to get back?"

He tugged at his mustache. "How do I know? How do I know whether we are to get back at all? How do I know what the admiral has in mind? One thing, Parsons — just remember, we are part of a scientific calculation."

"I'd like to see the solution," I remarked, much nettled at the situation in which I found myself.

Willie paid no attention to me. "There are a good many factors in this problem of the admiral's," he went on musingly. "There's this 'marine and all the calculations behind it; there's me and those two human beings below in the hull; there was Kujiro; the destroyer; and then, my dear Parsons, there's you, the war correspondent of the 'American Scientist.' Oh,

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the admiral's a great man!" he concluded warmly. Then he said, "Here we are!"

The motors hummed into silence, and the pump slowly began to work. We listened to it, and Willie kept his eyes fastened on the indicator that marked the progress of emptying the ballast tanks. Presently he shook his head. "We can't make it under this pressure," he said crossly. "There is n't as much power left as I thought. The batteries have gone to pieces. We have n't risen an inch. I told O'Brien when he braced that for'ard tank that the skin was not strong enough. It's giving in, Parson's. Now I hope it holds against the pressure for another five minutes. We'll see!"

It was not comforting to realize that the great pressure of the water at the depth at which we were was crushing in the steel hull as fast as the water in the tanks was withdrawn. Far less comforting to follow Willie's steady finger and see by the submergence dial that we were, in fact, sinking. He called down into the engine room.

The motors started again, and *No. 6* quivered slightly as she gathered way under their slow impulse. Willie watched his indicators an instant after the swaying motion of the vessel steadied. Then he jerked a lever toward him. *No. 6* threw her prow upward as the horizontal rudders caught her. She surged slowly toward the surface. I heard the pumps gather speed. Willie chuckled. "That fetched her," he said. "Now let's see where we are."

*No. 6* came to rest with her hull just awash, as I perceived by the foam appearing and reappearing over the port glasses. Willie was staring into the periscope tube. He straightened up and smiled. "I guess we'll just pump out some more and go topside and have a smoke," he said.

When *No. 6* rolled easily in the swell, and when we were indeed afloat, we unscrewed the little hatch and climbed out and down on the slippery deck. I was surprised to find how fresh the air was.

"We've been using tank oxygen for several hours," Willie explained. "But I was sparing of it. Have a cigar and look round."

I took the cigar he offered me and was soon enjoying it. Willie, with another one between his teeth, climbed forward to the bowl-shaped bow and knelt there, running his fingers along the seams where the steel plates were riveted together. He came back shaking his head. "That upper tank is in bad shape," he said briefly. "I'd hate to have to submerge again with our weak power. I'm afraid that tank will collapse."

I had nothing to say to reassure him, and he soon had an extensible mast brought up and stepped in the deck. When it was stayed lightly he took his binoculars and climbed up to get a view all around the horizon. While he was so engaged I put my cigar aside and ate a plate of rice and drank some tea which one of the crew handed up to me.

Willie came down, had something to eat himself, went

below, and spent an hour going over his machinery. He came on deck, ascended the mast, came down immediately, and said grimly, "I thought so."

"Thought what?" I demanded.

"That I'd have to start those gasoline engines and recharge my batteries instead of using the gasoline to turn the propellers," he responded enigmatically.

In a quarter of an hour I heard the cough of the engines and the whir of a dynamo. I went below and found Willie covered with oil and grime. "Next submarine I build," he said crossly, "I'll not scamp machinery. I'll have a separate engine to run the dynamo. No sense in having to uncouple the main engines from the shafts this way. It makes the boat helpless for the time being."

This discovery bothered him for the next hour. Then he went on deck again and held some conversation with the man he had put on watch there. He called to me. When I reached his side he pointed far to the south. A plume of dark smoke lay on the sea's edge. "That's not a Jap," said Willie. "That's a Russ, burning compressed coal. And compressed coal means a war ship. And a Russian war ship in these waters means —"

"Means what?" I asked.

Willie winked at me solemnly. "It means that the admiral was most tremendously smart."

I failed to see the point, and said so. Willie was very patient and explained. "The admiral hears that there are Russian war ships coming in from the eastward, in-

tending to ship through La Pérouse Straits and across to Vladivostock. Now, the admiral does n't go and display his knowledge all over the town. He comes to his office and sends for me. 'I'll just have Lieutenant Pettifer, J. P. N., quietly take *No. 6* and leave Moran. Not even the ships in the harbor will know he's gone, for he's going submerged. And I'll just send Lieutenant Pettifer out where the Honorable Russian will pass by. Lieutenant Pettifer can't come back. He can't, unless he gets gasoline from Gabriel. We'll just see what Lieutenant Pettifer will do under those circumstances.' That," said Willie, "is what the old scientist said to himself."

"Will you please tell me, Willie," I interrupted, "why the admiral let me go along with you?"

He grinned. "You were sent, my boy. The admiral did n't want *anybody* to know *No. 6* was gone to sea instead of being merely submerged in her slip. So he told me to get you to go along. He said you could go as a war correspondent. In fact, I guess you are an unwilling war correspondent."

I agreed with Willie as to this, but reminded him that in reality I had only yielded to his importunity as a friend. "I'd never have come, except for that," I protested.

"All right," said Willie. "I appreciate that, and feel the worse because you came under those circumstances. But I'm glad to have you, anyway, for there is business ahead."

"What business?" I inquired.

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“Those war ships,” he responded, pointing to the fast-thickening smoke. “Hashi tells me there are two of them.”

“What are you going to do?” I said anxiously. “I thought you were helpless — that *No. 6* was out of business.”

“My orders read to ‘use war measures in the presence of the enemy,’” Willie replied briefly. “Now we’ll get ready.”

Getting ready consisted in pumping every tank out, examining the air-dryers and the apparatus for controlling descent and ascent, and in charging the batteries as much as we could. Willie explained to me, when this was done, that he had been inside the forward tank and had tried the seams. “It’ll have to hold,” he said. “If it don’t, I’m afraid the Russians will have the best of us.”

I did my best to expound to him the preposterous folly of attempting to grapple with two well-prepared battle ships in a submarine whose behavior was, to say the least, problematic. Willie heard me out, and asserted that he was responsible for the good name of the submarines. “I’m here for the builders in America,” he said. “And the admiral has figured it all out. It’s a scientific calculation, and we must do our part.” So far as I recollect, he said nothing else till he gave orders to close the hatch and to submerge. It was with deep regret that I saw the water surge over the port glasses. I was not reassured when Willie asked me to go below and see what the pressure in the compressed air tank

was. I reported, and he seemed satisfied. Later, as *No. 6* swayed gently along, Willie remarked that he would be glad of the room occupied by the two torpedoes remaining. "When they're gone we'll have less trouble with that for'ard tank. In fact, Parsons," I remember him saying, with a comical twist to his mouth, "we may have to get rid of those torpedoes in order to keep *No. 6* from going to the bottom."

He said nothing more.

At last, just about noon, he motioned for me to look through the periscope. I saw two war ships, about half a mile apart, both steaming slowly. The nearest one was, as nearly as I could judge, about a mile away. When I had looked, Willie glued his eye to the tube again and slowly turned the steering wheel. "I'm going to get the foremost one," he remarked, ten minutes later, as he pulled a lever.

*No. 6* lifted her nose and surged up as the missile left her. A moment later we swam upon the surface. Willie threw the wheel over and the submarine wallowed downward again like a porpoise, her whole frame rasping and quivering. At the instant she answered her rudders and rolled to an even keel the lights set in hoods by the indicator dials flashed and went out. Apparently I stubbed my toe and was flung headlong down the steps into the lower hull.

I regained my feet quickly, although *No. 6* was shuddering from bow to stern and her decks fairly heaved. I perceived, by the light of a dim lantern, the two Japs. One of them was bending over the motor casing on the

starboard side, while the other gaped, open-mouthed, at something I could not see. Willie dropped on his feet on the lower deck and called quietly, "Short-circuit, boys!"

It was then that I realized the discipline Willie enforced. The men responded to his voice like trained dogs, and, during the fifteen minutes ensuing, the war correspondent of the "American Scientist" stood on the steel plates, held to the railing on the steps leading to the steering tower, and perspired. The whole interior of the hull glowed with sparks of fire and flashes of electricity.

How they managed, I could not tell you. But the lights came on again, though dimly, and the motors started hesitatingly. With the instinct of self-preservation I went up into the steering tower. It was nearer the surface, at least. The first thing I saw was the submergence dial. We were 113 feet under water.

I stared at this, feeling that I *must* tell Willie. But I confess I had not courage to go below again. The little light illuminating the dial brightened slowly, and, as it did so, I saw the indicator needle move on to 114, then, with a sudden slip, to 119. Willie leaned over my shoulder. "I wonder if we got that battle ship?" he muttered. "The torpedo did n't have far to go and the explosion started some of our plates, I perceive. Messed my wiring up a little, too."

I laid my finger silently on the dial.

"Pretty deep, is n't it?" Willie remarked quietly.



“And that for’ard tank is full of water. But we must get that other ship.”

He dropped down into the hull and I heard the clanking of the pump. It didn’t sound very lively and when Willie shouted for me I decided that we had reached the end of our course. I went down feeling quite reconciled. I found Willie and the crew busily engaged.

“Hand-pump,” he said briefly. “Use your muscle on this.”

The two Japs were gearing up the pump, and in another minute I had hold of a steel bar which I worked back and forth under Willie’s direction. “It’ll get easier as we rise,” he remarked. “Keep on, even if you drop.”

The Japs, stripped to the waist, labored mechanically and efficiently. It would be impossible to tell you how laborious our toil was. We were pumping against the horrible pressure of the water in which we were submerged, and I assure you that within five minutes I heard nothing except the dull opening and shutting of the heavy check valves.

Willie went to and fro swiftly and noiselessly. His face, as he passed under the lights, showed as calm and serene as if we were in *No. 6’s* slip and not sinking in the bottomless Pacific in a leaky cylinder of steel. Once or twice he stopped and glanced keenly over us. The third time I noticed that the Japs’ faces were suffused with purple and that the veins in their necks stood out blackly. They toiled on, steadily. It struck me that

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they would soon give out. For myself I felt fairly strong though with a queer sense of giddiness, probably due to the unusual exertion.

Willie came by again and paused to say, "We'll rise stern foremost."

Another time he came and smiled. "You fellows are n't making much progress," he said. "I think I'll have to give you a drink."

My mouth dried up like a piece of paper in the fire at the very suggestion. Willie smiled again and reached overhead to a stop-cock. I heard a sharp hiss, and a current of cold air struck my shoulders. I took a deep breath and was amazed at the effect. I instantly regained my strength. I saw the Japs look up dully and then redouble their efforts.

No words I could use would convey the proper impression of our industry. You will imagine that men fighting for life would toil incessantly and desperately. But our prodigious efforts were not the result of fear or despair. We were exhilarated, elevated above all perils and disaster. Our strength flowed out into that pump gloriously. Our eyes shone. Our hearts beat strongly, evenly, and without pain. I swear to you we could have lifted *No. 6* bodily out of the depths to which she was gone. And so we drove those pump bars back and forth as if they were straws.

How long we labored I am unable to say. I had set my whole mind on my task. Occasionally I caught a glimpse of Willie peering through the heavy vapor that surrounded us. Once or twice I heard his voice, ringing

bell-like, saying some encouraging and unnecessary word.

Suddenly he loomed like a shadow over us. "We've risen to fifty feet," he said.

I smiled. The Japs drew their thin lips back over their teeth and smiled, too. How we drove that leaky shell upward from the ooze! How our arms sped and our hands grasped and the check valves thundered as we thrust the water out! What a din we made! The hollow cavern of the hull resounded. And as the clamor of our vast toil rolled back and forth *No. 6* surged upward.

Willie opened the hatch. The sunlight poured down upon us. The chill sea wind blew on our heated bodies. We cooled like irons in a blacksmith's tub. The pump levers suddenly were infinitely heavy. We threw our dead weight against them and they gave, creakingly. They stopped. We could not move them.

Willie came down the steps and stared at us. "That undiluted oxygen is great stuff," he murmured from a great distance. "Regular elixir of life!"

We fell away from the levers and slumped down on deck. The cold air played over me, stifled me. Then somebody poured a bucket of cold water on me and I died.

That is, I thought I died. As a matter of fact I sat up and swore at Willie. He reached down and helped me to my feet. "You may not know it," he said, "but you fellows have been pumping two hours and a half. Now, if you can wiggle your limbs, we'll try and

get this old tub into fighting shape again. That other war ship is lying two miles away, disabled. We landed the first one, all right."

He dragged me up through the hatch and to the little deck. *No. 6* lay almost awash, her bow canted downward. Just on the edge of the sea I made out the bulk of the surviving Russian. That apparition was enormous and appalling. I clutched Willie's arm in protest. "You aren't going to try to torpedo her?" I demanded.

Willie almost shook my hand off. "Lieutenant Pettifer, J. P. N., is in command of this fish," he said curtly. "Kindly go below and drive those Japs on deck."

They came, staggering, with bloodshot eyes. He received them with flying orders. They hesitated, glanced dully about them, and gradually, as though gathering momentum, went about their duties.

For an hour they worked out on the bow of the 'marine, Willie thrusting them around in the washing water like dolls. They came in, soaked through, dripping with perspiration in spite of the chill wind and chiller waves. "I guess those plates are fixed enough for another try," said Willie, dropping a heavy hammer through the hatch. "Now we'll pump her out some more."

My skin pinched my flesh at the words. But he drove us below with a smile, did Willie, and put our hands on the levers and — and we pumped. When we fell away from the bars, unable to exert another ounce of strength,

he smiled widely. "We're all right now," he announced cheerfully.

He coupled up the gasoline engines and investigated the fuel tank. "I guess we'll just about make it," he said to me as he passed into the steering tower. "I'll save what's left in the batteries for maneuvering when we get there. Lucky that battle ship is disabled.

*No. 6* gathered way through the heaving waves under the propulsion of the coughing engines. Down in the hull the heat grew torrid and the fumes of escaping gas choked us horribly. But the Japs stayed at their stations doggedly; and when I essayed to go into the little tower and Willie made room for me I found the air there far worse than below. The hatch was screwed down and Willie was peering through a little peep-hole set with thick prisms of glass.

I looked through the periscope and saw the huge ship rolling about a half mile distant from us. Her stern was toward us.

"They're pretty busy on that ship," Willie remarked, "otherwise they'd see us. Guess they ran into the wreckage of the first one and fouled their propellers. I hope the sun won't set right in our eyes."

He pressed a button and I heard the shifting of a heavy body below and the clang of a steel gate. "There goes our last torpedo into the firing tube," Willie explained. "And I've got to use oxygen to discharge it with. Compressed air is all used up. But these torpedoes travel anyway, once clear of the tube."

At that instant a puff of smoke rose from the stern

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of the war ship, and almost simultaneously a shell screeched over *No. 6*.

"In line, but too high," Willie said. "Seeing they know we're here I guess we'll scare them to death."

Once more *No. 6* settled in the water. The gasoline engines stopped and the motors began to rumble.

A vague terror seized me as I realized that we were dropping. I was aware that someone was clutching my leg and I kicked out violently. Willie glanced down and I saw his face suddenly harden. He reached over swiftly and picked up the heavy brass wrench used in screwing the hatch down. He dropped it. A muffled groan was emitted below and the hand let go of my leg.

*No. 6* swayed uneasily and as if ill-balanced as we groped along. Willie stared continuously into the periscope. "I'm getting between them and the setting sun," he said. Later he reached over and pulled the lever, releasing the torpedo. Instead of the upward surge nothing followed but the hiss of slowly escaping air. The submergence dial showed that *No. 6* was sinking.

"Not pressure enough," Willie said wrathfully. He pulled other levers and I felt the submarine struggle upward in obedience to her horizontal rudders. But the strain was too great. The motors slowed down and stopped. The lights grew dim.

We groped our way down the steps. As we reached the lower deck I felt the body of someone under my feet. I stooped down and laid my hand on the bare chest of

the Jap who had clutched my leg. The wrench had done its work.

After a moment's fussing with the switches on the part of Willie the lights brightened. "We've no use for the little current remaining," he said, "except to see to work by. I'm sorry I killed that fellow there. We need him to pump."

"What's the use of pumping?" I said. "We're down here to stay."

"There's still that Russian up there," he replied. "And we're not so deep this time, although of course we're going down all the time. I reckon we can get him yet. I'll help you."

The pump levers gave reluctantly to our first pulls. The Jap gave a couple of thrusts to his bar with his body and then rolled his eyes to his commander. I could not hear what he said. Willie's voice rang out wrathfully. "Not this time, my son! No patriots here! If you so much as make a move toward that switch I'll send your name to the admiral as a mutineer in the face of the enemy."

As the sailor sullenly thrust his weight against the pump lever Willie called across to me, — "These chaps are all for *banzais* and flowers. They ain't scientists. But the admiral, he's the lad for science. The idea of this blind patriot wanting to set that torpedo off in the tube when we don't know how close the battle ship is! Anyway, we're too deep down to do any harm if we were right under her."

After an infinite period of toil I saw Willie reach up

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to the oxygen valve again. He turned it on full. As he put his hand back on the lever I caught his smile. He nodded brightly. The cold blast struck down between my shoulders and flowed over my chest. I took a deep breath. Once more I was full of strength.

How our hearts beat! And at every full pulse we drove the bars over and back with endless might. We breathed fire and it poured out to our clutching fingers and into the steel levers. The dim interior of the submarine grew brilliant and luminous. The machinery stood out in shining masses capable of miraculous activity. The past and the future faded. For that hour we lived in the gorgeous, magnificent Present. And all the while Willie smiled.

It gradually broke in upon my rapt mind that the Jap was singing. His muscled chest shone behind the lever as he plunged to and fro with extraordinary agility, and his song, throbbing upward, rose and filled the sounding shell of steel. I have heard the strain elsewhere, on the coal docks and in the holds of merchantmen loading with cargo. But I shall always hear it as that sailor sang it over his pump handle in that sodden submarine, as we drove our glorious tomb upward from hell.

*"Hey-a ho-a hum! Hai-a hai-a ho!"* he lilted.

That tireless song in our ears, we labored with flooding energy. Ah, what an hour that was! Death's fingers at our throats, Death's arms about us! Death's cold waters burdening us down! And the Jap sang, and we flung the heavy steel levers back



and forth with gusto, with silent laughter, with full-throbbing hearts. . . .

The plates underneath our feet suddenly tilted. The long, luminous cavern of the hull soared, fell away like a pencil from a search-light. There was a rush of water overhead, the thud of waves breaking on the deck. The song died away. We dropped the pump levers. Willie leaped to the steering tower, and I heard the rasp of the hatch as he unscrewed it. A breath of air swept down upon us. I saw the Jap crumple up like a mechanical toy when the current is turned off. My own strength ebbed in a second. As I squatted on the pump I looked up. A single star peeped down through the open hatch. A bit of flying spray stung my flesh.

I crept up the ladder one step at a time. I paused by the steering wheel for breath. Then I slowly thrust my arms out of the hatch and drew myself on deck.

It was dark night. *No. 6* lay high among the shadowy waves that reared themselves against the horizon and swept under her with gurgling sounds like surf among the rocks. Willie, braced against the little railing that ran around the top of the tower, was staring out silently.

In my weakness I felt that we had reached the end, indeed. What end? I could not tell. But as I glanced up at the figure above me I saw the same still smile, discerned it in the gloom as though a light shone on his face. Then my eyes opened.

A hundred yards away, lifting her dark bulk upward above the heaving sea, lay the Russian. Not a light

showed; not a human sound drifted out to us. I surmised that she had been abandoned.

That surmise proved unfounded. A figure appeared at her rail — a careless and drowsy figure.

I managed to get beside Willie. He put his hand on my arm. "Hush!" he whispered. "We'll get them yet!"

Before I could seek an explanation a wave took *No. 6* gently up, heaved her forward a hundred feet, and dropped her back fifty. I held on and was silent. A second wave thrust us softly within a hundred feet of the vast mass of the battle ship. And as we rolled I heard, at last, a shrill cry from the deck of the Russian.

I was blinded by the glare that enveloped us as if in response to that cry. Willie dug his fingers into my arm. "Found us the first thing with their search-light," he muttered. "But they're too late!"

A third wave lifted us up in that dazzling blaze, poised us delicately. We slipped down its farther face. The nose of *No. 6* stopped a bare dozen yards from the enormous wall of steam. "Look up!" Willie cried.

I lifted my eyes against the gleaming light. Silhouetted in its cold brilliancy we saw a multitude of heads rising from a huddled mass of surging forms. It was the battle-ship's crew gathered at the rail. Amid that dark multitude gold flashed, the sheen of steel and the flicker of polished accouterments showed transiently.

The huge, silent, heaving concourse had but a single countenance. It was that of a man in night-clothes, one bare leg thrust part way over the rail, a *chapeau* on his

head, a sword in his hand. Roused from sleep, from lethargy, by a cry of dread, the commander of the immense ship stared down at us with an appalled and frightful look. His bearded lips moved in unspoken, useless commands. His sword waved in an infinitesimal arc. He comprehended *No. 6* wallowing in the sea; understood her errand. His gaze flickered upon Willie, leaning intently over the slight rail of our deck. I felt his eyes cross mine. Then he fixed his terrible, profound vision upon some one else.

In that enduring pause I looked round to see what this grotesque figure viewed with such astounding terror. I did not have to seek far. Beside me stood the last Jap of the submarine's crew. His bare legs straddled the open hatch cover. His white chest, streaked with grime, shone boldly in the white light. His bony face was turned upward to his enemy. Behind his grinning lips his teeth gleamed in ferocious triumph.

As these two, the prepared and the unprepared, met each other's eyes, while the silent crowd on the battle ship hung over the rail and Willie and I stared at them, a final surge lifted *No. 6* steadily up. For an instant we hung, balanced on the crest. Then the submarine slipped down the shining declivity toward her foe.

With a swift outstretching of his arm Willie encircled my shoulder. His voice rang in my ear. "We made it!"

*No. 6* thrust her bowl-shaped nose downward into the flanks of the huge battle ship. The deck crumpled under my feet. I saw the enormous wall of steel above us give

inwardly and then expand. The search-light snapped out.

I found myself clinging to a piece of grating in a very rough bit of water. The darkness was intense. An acrid odor suffused the air which I breathed. Then I was conscious of an arm about my shoulder. I heaved myself round and dragged at it. Willie's voice sputtered in my ear. "I didn't know whether you were worth saving or not," he said, spitting the water out of his mouth.

"What happened?" I asked, gathering my thoughts. "Where's the battle ship?"

"We got her," he said quietly. "That torpedo was still in the tube, you know."

I pondered this a while. "I don't see that we're any better off," I said presently. "We'll drown."

"You forget the admiral," he assured me. "We're part of a scientific calculation. We've done our part. And how is he to know whether his calculations were correct unless we report?"

I refused such comfort. Willie sat up on the rocking grating. "Look here," he said brusquely. "The admiral knows we're here. He's figured it all out."

I guess the admiral did know. Anyway we were picked up the next morning by a small torpedo boat whose commander took our presence on the grating as a matter of course, gave us a hot drink, and immediately steamed back into the Straits as if he had come out on purpose for us. I went back to my laboratory and my bakeries. In fact I never wrote anything about the

affair. Willie and I decided we'd call it the Battle of Moriyoshi, after a big mountain we saw the day we were picked up. But we did n't think it was worth a line in the paper. And I was n't really a war correspondent. My line was flour.

## THE BAD EGG

“ I THINK, sometimes, that we are prone to judge our fellowmen hastily,” the doctor said. “ We pass sentence thus: He is a fine citizen. He will never succeed. The man has nothing in him. Smith is a bad egg. So we go through life, labeling our companions without regard to the purpose of God, or Providence, or Destiny, as you may choose to term the ruling power. There is work in this world that has to be done; rude, rough, cruel work. Neither you nor I — being what we call gentlemen — could do it. We are n’t up to it. And when it confronts us we stand aside, and the bad egg, the condemned one of yesterday, jostles us to one side and we see the task completed. I knew a man — ”

. . . . .

It’s four years ago that I was appointed surgeon of the steamer *Princess Eugenia*, running in the mail and passenger service out of British Columbia ports down to the Colonies. It was a good berth. The *Princess* was a fine ship, an oil-burner, and one of the first trans-Pacific boats to use the new fuel which, as you know, is handled entirely by machinery and does away with the big stokehold crews of aforetime. On my first trip — and my last on that steamer — we left Puget Sound with about one hundred and fifty passengers, the royal

mails and general cargo. A man named Joseph McLean was master and Edward Rush was chief engineer. McLean was an old-timer on the Pacific, bore an excellent reputation with the company, and was popular with his passengers. His promotion to the *Princess* was as fitting as the choice of the chief engineer seemed strange. The engineer was not a man whom you would pick out for such a command, being a silent, hard, cruel character, commonly endowed by his subordinates and shipmates with half the dull vices and all the petty meannesses. I can't recall a tithe of the stories I heard of him. But he had used fire-room crews so scandalously that twice he had been in danger of losing his ticket. There was a dark rumor that he had killed a man. He had no friends. But no one suggested that he was not a skillful and competent engineer.

Physically he was a chap of about thirty-five years of age, well built, almost handsome in feature and with a very arrogant manner. His eyes were striking in their expression of self-assertion. He stared straight at you without winking.

Among the passengers were two young women. Mary Russell was a pretty, petulant girl accompanied by her mother, bound, I understood, on a pleasure trip that Rush had proposed. I know we were certain that the chief engineer and Miss Russell were engaged to be married and I, as the ship's surgeon, was told that the mother's health was not good. The other girl was an Edith Halsey. She was one of those slender, black-haired girls you sometimes see to admire. Oddly

enough she was possessed of a double beauty, due to the great difference between her full face and her profile. If you spoke to her you found yourself looking into steady, brilliant dark eyes; her cheeks were n't full, but gave one the impression that she was finely poised. Her mouth was clearly cut, red-lipped, and deeply indented. I tell you she was not only very lovely, but very alluring.

Her profile was that of another woman. The piquant nose here showed itself straight and slightly sharp at the tip. The full eyes became appealing, gentle, timid. The deeply-curved mouth gave an expression of fragility and suffering and faint sorrow. Add to these strange and incongruous perfections of face a fine form, a tuneful voice and the walk of a healthy woman. That's as much as I can tell you about Edith Halsey, except that she was educated and refined. With her on the *Princess Eugenia* was her father, a well-to-do, somewhat stupid old chap of eight-and-fifty. He dozed all morning till time to get up the Calcutta sweep, took a temperate interest in this and then relapsed into a game of whist with three cronies.

So you have us for the first few days: Edith Halsey walking through our little society gracefully pleasant to us all; McLean stiff and straight on the bridge; Rush silently vanishing to his engines or almost as silently standing beside Mary Russell's chair, now and then stooping over her to adjust a rug or pick up a book that had slipped to the deck; and myself, the doctor, watching them all with a paternal eye. Even now I like to recall that scene because of its peace and friendliness;



because Rush's arrogance was lost for a little in his devotion to the pretty, spoiled girl; because McLean was peacefully enjoying his new command; most of all, it is possible, because I see once more Edith Halsey's wonderful face and catch her quick, warm smile.

We arrived in Honolulu and passed on again for the South. There came no change into our daily life. We reached latitude six north of the line before a strange thing happened.

At two o'clock one night I woke up choking over fumes of what I took to be furnace gas. I got out of my berth, opened the lattice widely and was face to face with a grimy stoker. "You're needed below, Doctor," he said unceremoniously. "We're main sick in the fire-room."

I paid little attention to my own inconvenience, thinking that a whiff from the funnels had, by a breath of wind, been diverted into my room. We were all suspicious of the oil-burners, anyway, they being a novel affair. I hurried down into the engine-room and found Rush at the fire-room door.

"It's a funny thing," he told me. "Six of the men are on their backs. Of course, it's hot down here, but the boys have the draught and I don't understand this sudden sickness. One of them is dead. Be careful it is n't mere funk on the others' part." He stared at me with a peculiarly grim expression of determination as I nodded and passed in.

The roar of the furnaces took hold on my ears as I paused in the boiling heat that poured around me in that

stokehold. Flame spit out at me from the peepholes in the doors, and a curl of dark, bituminous smoke shot like water from a hose across my passage. Here and there the glow of the bellowing fires, fed with steam and oil, ruddied the sooty beams and bulkheads. Overhead the gauges throbbed and hissed. I was almost afraid to move, but a voice called me and I went over to where a man knelt under a pounding pump.

I stooped over beside him and looked down into the dark, swollen face of a man dead from heart-stoppage. This is nothing unusual in the tropics, particularly in coal-burners, yet I remember wondering at the sudden, rigid tenseness of the man's wide nostrils. Then, my inspection finished, I got up and went forward under the cool tanks where five other men lay gasping. At sight of them I knew my work was laid out for me and I ordered them carried up on the after-deck. When they were stretched out there, over the drumming screws, they gaped miserably up at me, their flesh quivering under the glare of the electrics. I did what I could, but they died.

As I've said, it is nothing out of the way for one or two men in the fire-room to develop bad hearts and die in the heat. But six men lay under the tarpaulin on that deck, and from all over the ship came calls for the doctor. Stewards pulling their white jackets over their shoulders hailed me as I passed, and I myself could hear a general complaint, the sound of people stumbling to open ports, the low moaning of the unawakened. Then a certain silent, intangible, invisible something clotted

in the air, so to speak, and while I hurried hither and yon with boys at my heels carrying soda water and ice, Captain McLean sent for me to come to him on the bridge. I went without jacket or cap.

On the bridge the skipper met me with expressions of perturbation. "What is the matter?" he demanded in a harsh voice.

"Heat and probably carbon monoxide from the furnaces," I replied.

"And — and they are sick?" he inquired, with an odd gesture of dismay.

"They are dead — six of the firemen," I told him. "The passengers are ill, some of them. There must be leakage of gas from the oil-burners."

While I spoke I observed that he stared up into the dark, starry sky, his face depicting bewilderment and dim horror. He shivered when I finished and said in a constrained voice, "It's up there!" and tossed his open palm heavenward.

You will understand that the *Princess Eugenia* was traveling quietly along over a calm sea and that we had had no premonition of trouble. The air was heavy and lifeless, to be sure; the sky seemed profound and unlit by the many stars; yet all this amounted to nothing. And all over the ship, I tell you, was a sense of uneasiness, of discomfort, of increasing pain, of positive horror; nothing that one could lay hands on, yet a distinct and universal feeling of evil. And six men were dead. And our captain was staring upward and reading in the dark heavens only this amazing legend: "It is here!"

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What was up there? I tell you, gentlemen, that was the horror of it: We did n't know; did n't know, in truth, whether there was anything "up there"; whether our skipper was mad; whether an invisible and awful death hovered over us in the deep vault of the firmament. All that was certain to me was that the ship was awake at three in the morning, and that six men had turned their swollen faces to eternity under some mysterious and mortal impulse. I left the bridge and went back to my duties.

Day came, as it dawns in those waters, with brilliance and splendor. We hastily buried the dead, while the stewards clattered the early-breakfast dishes in the saloon. And when the last man was over the side the chief engineer asserted to the captain — who still held the prayer-book open with his thumb — that he would have to work his men double watches to keep steam up. "If something is wrong with those oil-burners," he growled angrily, "I'll find out what it is."

But McLean laid his lean hand on Rush's sleeve and repeated, with great emphasis, looking upward: "It's not your furnaces; it's up there!"

Rush looked inquiringly at me, but I refused to diagnose the captain's mental state, even by a glance. In turning my eyes away I caught sight of the first officer's face. It changed in a flash from an expression of steady vigilance to one of extreme misery, pain and terror. He breathed sharply, with a wheezing inspiration. Then the dull purple of quick suffocation rose to his temples and I ran for him. I caught him as he fell.

As my arms went around him there entered my nostrils a faint whiff of an indescribable odor, — an odor of infinite smoldering fire and smoke and combustion of poisonous materials. To my fancy it seemed that a small spiral of a horrible, noxious gas had been wafted across my face; the pain in my throat struck clear down into my vitals. I heard the captain muttering: "Yes, it's up there!" We got the mate below and revived him. An hour later he was on the bridge, a little shaky, but composed and vigilant. The second engineer, however, was dead. He had gone to take a look at the condenser; there he had been stricken down mysteriously.

At the end of the next twenty-four hours the *Princess Eugenia* was steaming slowly over the sea with barely enough pressure in her boilers to give her steerage-way. The fire-room was empty, the stokers and water tenders huddled on the after-deck in sullen mutiny. Of the engineers Rush alone was left, and two of the passengers had been choked by this incredible death. We knew at last what it was. Not gas from the furnaces, but gas from above.

Floating on the lower air lay a great pool of poisonous vapor, jetted up, I suppose, from a submarine volcano. In the still, windless atmosphere it hung in an invisible and fatal cloud, eddying hither and thither to the slight impulse of the sluggish rollers below it. And whenever a tiny stream of that mortal fluid came down upon our ship some one strangled, stared up — and died.

The horror of it was that this great sea of poison was settling down. Hour by hour it lowered upon us. Gulls

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soaring upward in the swift arc of their flight would stop, flutter and drop like stones to the water. Then there were no more gulls. Occasionally we passed a whole school of flying fish, lying on a wave like a handful of torn paper.

What were we to do? was the question.

Apart from the passengers, now thoroughly scared, Captain McLean, the mate and I continually discussed this, throwing uneasy glances to the cloudless sky. The skipper was for keeping on; the chief officer advocated turning from our long course southward to hasten out of such waters into the north. "We're running deeper and deeper into this," he would say, with a shake of his head. "We'll run square into the main body of it soon, and inside of ten minutes no one will be left alive."

"We can't — no one can say as to that," McLean would contend, wringing his fingers. "There's always the risk of doing worse. We're on our course now. It's all in the dark, at best. I could n't explain to the company. Let's steam on toward our port and trust to God."

"But the engines are almost out of commission," we would both urge on him. "Nobody is left on watch below but Rush. The steam is going down hour by hour. The stokers are openly mutinous, and no one seems to see any way of setting them to work again. The propellers are barely turning. How shall we keep the fires going?"

In the end the captain sent for Rush. He came, grimy, white-lipped, clad in greasy overalls and a sooty

undershirt. I see him yet coming up the clean deck, stepping among the silent passengers, a quiet, arrogant figure of a man, and as he passed in his dirt and uncleanness they groaned. When he had mounted to the bridge McLean looked steadily at him and said: "Mr. Rush, I have been taking advice. I may state that I am firmly convinced that we should keep on our course. This phenomenon may cease at any time. But I understand that your department is crippled, that you can't keep your men at work."

Rush nodded in his insolent way. "There's only myself left to stand a watch," he told us. "My fire-room crew is gone by half and the other half is sucking thumbs on the after-deck. Give me authority and I'll keep the engines going, captain."

"Alone?" McLean demanded. "What authority do you need more than you've got?"

"Alone," Rush replied, gazing at us all. "As for authority, I want you to back me up when I take my men below. I've suggested a couple of times that I would take them down and put them to work, but each time you've been afraid for the passengers. The passengers are none of my business. If you want the engines kept going, I'll look out for my crew."

McLean was horribly disturbed. "You have a hard name, Mr. Rush," he said finally. "I might find it hard to explain when I get ashore that I'd allowed you to — to —"

Rush took him up boldly. "Do some killing?" he remarked. "Is that what you're afraid of? If you

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want your engines started full speed again, please allow me to manage my department."

"But the passengers!" McLean said. "Think what they will say! And it is death to stay in your fire-room."

"I stay there," he retorted, smiling coldly. "And as for the passengers — you are in command, sir. I have said that I would keep the engines going and I will, so long as a man's left alive. But unless you give me a free hand I can't do anything."

I suppose the skipper pondered the question — with occasional distrustful glances at his chief engineer — for a half-hour. Then he shook his head. "Enough men have died already," he announced. "I can't authorize you to use strong measures, Mr. Rush."

Rush's smile was an inclusive one, condemning us of faint-heartedness, of inefficiency, of incompetency. He turned away and went back, down the white deck among the silent passengers and into the dark hole that marked the entrance to his engine-room. I was following him and I saw two women glance after him. One was Mary Russell. Her pretty, petulant face was pinched and drawn. She seemed almost afraid of Rush, so distinct was her shrinking as he passed by. But Edith Halsey did n't shrink. She gazed after him with a thoughtful, brilliant expression of admiration.

For some hours that day the death hovering above us did n't descend. During that time we kept our eyes ceaselessly on the splendid and deadly sky till immunity gave us courage and we smiled. Old Halsey even tim-



idly suggested that we make our usual sweep on the day's run. "It's so small that it will give us a wide range for betting," he told us. But we discouraged him by lack of enthusiasm. Yet the daily life was resumed sufficiently on deck to make it apparent that a great change had come over Mary Russell and Edith Halsey. Mary was permanently disenchanted with the sea. Its cruelty, its sternness frightened her. She hated it. And in that weak, peevish hatred she came to include, as I saw, the man whose influence had led her to embark on this voyage. She did n't conceal her aversion, and when he snatched a moment from his duties below to come up and call to her from the engine-room doorway she pettishly turned her head and refused to notice him.

On the other hand Edith Halsey suddenly became thoughtful, no longer tripping around among us with her smile and her low-toned voice. She sat in her steamer chair near the engine-room door, her chin in her hands, her eyes fixed on the horizon. Now and then she listened, with an imperceptible tilt of her head, to the sounds of steel on steel in the bowels of the ship. Where others cast their sick eyes upward she was serene and undisturbed — only thoughtful.

Here Edward Rush astonished us. Remember that the poisoned air still floated overhead; that people still choked when a bit of its fume trickled down; that McLean was openly in doubt; that the mutineers of the fire-room crew still idly sat on the after-deck, refusing duty. And in all this wordless confusion the

engineer came out among us and paid court to Edith Halsey. One would have thought shame would have restrained him. The least of us was horrified that he passed Mary Russell calmly by and sat — dirty clothes and all — insolently by the side of the loveliest woman of them all. But he did this. He lounged in a chair, cast his cold and arrogant eyes over us and talked to Edith as if no one else breathed. You could n't mistake his manner. His fancy had been caught by her poise and her serenity. He courted her openly, turning his sooty face to her fair one with an incredible assurance, as though he met her on even ground, had a claim on her, knew that she liked his company. Even McLean was wrathful. We recalled old tales about our chief engineer. Many of us pitied Mary Russell and took pains to show her that we disapproved of Rush's change of allegiance. All to no effect. He quietly scorned us, and the engines turned more and more slowly till, at last, they stopped. The *Princess Eugenia* floated on the still sea, turning her blind bow first to one quarter and then to another. The last of the engine-room crew came on deck. Rush sat and talked to Edith Halsey.

And that night death struck down among us again. A man and a woman died in their staterooms. The dawn found us all peering helplessly into the clear, tainted sky — every man but Edward Rush, who sat beside Edith Halsey and talked, with cold eyes watching us and unmoved face upon the blank sea. What was he saying? I don't know. But the girl's brows

were contracted as if she were slightly puzzled. Now and again she threw him a swift glance. But she did n't move. She accepted his society.

When it was daylight and McLean knew exactly what had happened — and might happen again — he looked us all over from the height of the bridge with a set and austere gaze in which one read a growing determination. I went up and reported to him and he whispered in hoarse, reedy voice: "Doctor, your skill is of no avail. I think —" He paused.

I remember interrogating him by a look and he answered me: "We must get the ship on her way. The engines are stopped. If we get them to going again —"

It did n't take much to read his mind. I went and called the chief engineer. He followed me and confronted the skipper on the bridge. McLean hesitated and then said: "Can you get the engines going again?"

Rush smiled at him. "I told you I would put the crew to work if you gave me authority. You seemed to think it might interfere with the comfort of the passengers if I — if I urged them too harshly."

"But you have abandoned your post!" McLean burst out.

Rush's face did n't change. "I quit when there was no more need of me," he replied. "Why should I go down there and die — uselessly?"

McLean weakly grasped at a straw of his authority. "Do you refuse duty?"

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“I tell you, I’ll get the machines to working inside of an hour if you will give me my men,” he answered boldly. “I’ve got only six men left. But that’s enough.”

For a moment McLean seemed to be figuring on what would happen. But the shrewd, insolent expression of Rush’s face settled his determination. He waved us from the bridge. “Turn your crew to,” he said abruptly. “Start the engines again.” An instant later he ordered me to accompany Rush and help him.

The passengers surmised from the colloquy on the bridge that matters had taken a new turn, for some of them followed us aft — at a discreet distance — and a buzz of conversation rose. To this Rush paid no attention. He strode directly down the deck, past the long rows of staterooms and to the after-deck. Once there he called out to the group of firemen lounging under the awning: “Look lively, men! Get down and to your work!”

They instinctively stirred at his sharp command. One or two of them even prepared to obey. But the others growled a coarse refusal. The volunteers slunk back. Then Rush showed himself in his real nature.

I was standing by him while his cold eyes traveled from one man to another. I caught something of the profound menace of his quiet manner, but I also saw something that I did n’t understand for the moment: a kind of careful appraisal of the sullen firemen, as if he were measuring them up to some standard — possibly, I surmised, against his own sheer ability to

handle them. For the moment I thought he was afraid of them. I was mistaken. His survey finished, he nodded his head and repeated his orders for them to go back to their duty, this time in a tone that brought them to their feet. Still they hung back, cowed by the fear of that death that so frequently struck into their midst, stimulated by the dull sense of their own power of numbers. Rush stared at them a brief moment and then remarked to me, over his shoulder: "These brutes are getting out of hand. And I can spare only one of them."

That last phrase was emphasized and the men looked darkly at him, wrinkling their brows in the effort to make out what he meant. The chief engineer repeated it: "I can't spare more than one." His voice shot out sharply: "Get forward, you men, and get to work!"

One of them lurched out from the group and said: "We ain't goin' to work. It's sure death down there."

"It's sure death here, too," Rush replied calmly. "Which will you take? A chance in the fire-room, or no chance at all here?"

The fellow's slow wits did n't catch the menace. "I guess we'll try it a while here," he laughed.

I saw the hot color slowly flood Rush's forehead. "I did n't mean that you should mistake me," he said. "Will you go to work, or will you die here — now?"

"I guess we'll stop right here," the man replied, settling back against a water cask.

With the precision and certainty of a machine Rush pulled his revolver out of his pocket, shot the staring

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man through the heart, and said again: "You men get forward and below to your work. Lively now!"

Those poor firemen gazed into his arrogant, cruel face and shrank from him. They started forward all together and fell back, shufflingly, only to feel the keen imperious command in his eyes and once more surged along the deck toward their station. As they passed us Rush swung round and followed them with his eyes. As the last man broke into a ragged trot he stepped out, meeting Captain McLean's blanched face. "I'm sorry you shot him," McLean stammered. "I think —"

Rush smiled harshly. "I could spare one man," he said. "That fellow was no good, anyway." He passed on, through the huddled passengers, past Mary Russell and her averted face, holding his head high, his steady stare boldly confronting them all till it met the gaze of Edith Halsey. To her he vouchsafed a word: "We'll soon be on our road again. Never fear!" With this he vanished after his men into the engine-room.

It was over an hour before the *Princess Eugenia* was again under way, and in that period there were several cases of choking, none fatal. Then the steamer headed to her course and a faint breeze fanned us into hopefulness. Yet with the darkness came another catastrophe that nearly ended our voyage. Our first warning was the sudden outrush of firemen, yelling in terror. It appeared that some wandering breath of the poisonous vapor had stolen down among them and while no one was dead from it, all had been half-strangled. You could tell at a glance that this time it would take more



“You men get forward and below to your work.”





than a show of revolvers to return them to their duty. Fear, plain and stark, held them in its frozen grasp. McLean came down and tried to argue with them, the chief officer at his elbow. They answered his words with gapings and shudders, speechless, nerveless, almost mad with terror. Rush's advent moved them not a jot. True, he said nothing, but merely held up a lantern and looked them over as if they were sheep. McLean fussed across to him and said flightily: "What is to be done, Mr. Rush? What can we do?"

"Get them back to work," was the answer.

"But they won't; they are afraid," McLean said.

"I'll make them work," was the confident reply, but the skipper seemed more put out than ever by this. "I forbid you to touch them, Mr. Rush," he stormed. "There has been death enough on this ship and, please God, we'll go about things differently now. Don't touch them!"

For the first time Rush lost his temper. "How do you expect me to keep my engines going?" he said hotly. "Is there nobody on this ship capable of taking command?"

"Mr. Rush! Mr. Rush! your words require an explanation," mumbled the honest old captain.

The chief engineer's snarl was n't a pretty thing to see. Watching his livid lips, his steely eyes, his cruel mouth, it came over me that, after all, Rush was the solitary man left among us of capacity to deal with the situation. Even the terror-stricken firemen shrank from his wicked glare, muttering to themselves that no one

could be expected to work when it was sure death. Their hoarse protests made no impression on Rush. He seemed to have lost all thought that he stood alone. He gritted his teeth, clenched his fists, stood tensely ready to spring upon them. McLean was prodigiously perplexed. In all his life he had never confronted such a situation, and between the mysterious death above and the fear below he stood lost, like a man bereft of all sense of direction, saying empty warnings meant to assuage the wrath of his chief engineer and the terror of his crew, and to maintain his own dignity. In the very midst of his ramblings Rush swung on his heel, left the circle and strode off into the darkness.

He went down the engine-room steps, I at his heels. Once on the working platform he called the solitary man still at his post and told him to go into the fire-room and do his best. "Keep the pumps going and I'll help you," he ordered. "We must n't let the steam go down again."

The oiler nodded, went slowly away and came back. But Rush's stare seemed to freeze what he intended to say on his lips and he went off and into the fire-room. Then Rush turned to me. "I know you're needed on deck, Doctor," he said. "But everybody's crazy up there. If you'll stay with me to-night down here, I'll try to keep the engines turning. I'll show you how to fire under an oil-burner."

My place was on deck with the passengers, of course. I can't explain why I stayed below. Possibly it was the dogged will of the man, the imperious heart of him

demanding and getting help. I followed him into the stokehold.

The fire-room of an oil-burner is a roaring, spitting, red-hot furnace. Where coal is burned one hears only the suck of the drafts, the slash of the heavy bars, the slurring of the coals, the clang of furnace doors, all against the deep diapason of the steam. But in the bowels of the *Princess* it was a continuous and horrible blast, as if one stood in the very throat of an incredible gale blowing out of hell. The lurid glow was shot here and there by jets of black smoke from the vents, by spurts of hot carbon that reduced to ashes one's clothes wherever it struck. Again, under the impulse of the hot steam that sent the heavy oil over the grates in a vast spray, sharp detonations of flame and gas would fill the whole resounding fire-room with blinding heat, driving us huddlewise into corners with our hands over our eyes. Into this inferno Rush took me, invested me with some man's cast-off garments, showed me the gauges, pointed out to me the pumps that must be regulated. My sole companion, the oiler, he charged with instructing me in my duties.

I imagine it must have been the excitement of it, but we kept the steam up by awful exertions. We tore back and forth like bedlamites, twisting great valves, swinging on the big chains that raised and lowered the dampers, watching the jumping needles that proclaimed a temporary victory or imminent defeat. Suddenly — how, I can't explain — we caught the trick of it. The pumps worked smoothly. The great fountains of oil

played steadily into the fires. The steam pressure rose pound by pound. The throbs of the propellers increased, the deck under our feet shook to the vibrations of the heavy engines. I and the oiler wiped the sweat from our eyes and grinned vacuously at each other, like a pair of idiots.

Rush appeared, his cold face lit with approval. "It's daylight, Doctor," he told me. "You've done famously. But you can't keep it up. Please go and see Captain McLean and tell him to send my men down here. Tell him if they don't come I'll come up and get them."

Instantly I felt my strength leave me. I was completely exhausted. It was all I could do to scramble out of the fire-room into the cool engine-hold, almost too much for me to make my painful way to the deck. Once there I stared round like a dazed man till the skipper, catching sight of me, rushed down and cried: "Where have you been? What is the matter?"

"I've been in the fire-room," I told him with some pride. "We've kept the steam up. Mr. Rush says for you to send him down his men."

McLean was very angry. My place was on deck with the passengers, he said. What business had I in the engine-room? He would speak to the chief engineer about it . . . preposterous . . . Wasn't a man to command his own ship? . . . The engineer seemed to think . . .

"But the men?" I reminded him. "The steam will go down."

“ I won't send the men back there,” he said with sudden decisiveness.

“ But the engines will stop,” I protested. McLean stared at me. “ That 's no business of yours,” he said sharply.

I remember my dismay. You see, I had been violently active for hours, feeling that the steamer's safety depended on my exertion. I had really got excited. And to be told bluntly that all this was of no account, that it did n't matter, flattened me out. I decided — quite justly — that the skipper was crazy.

As I stood there, very likely with my mouth open in my sooty face, Edith Halsey came up. “ What has happened ? ” she demanded, drawing me apart from the curious.

“ The engines will stop,” I told her. I tried to explain and I am sure I let it out that I thought the skipper had lost his mind.

“ Is Mr. Rush all right ? ” she asked presently.

“ All right,” I told her. Then I burst forth with my inner thought. “ I wish he were in command. Then — ”

“ Then we should all be saved ? ” she finished for me. “ But they say he's a cruel, murderous man. They say — ”

It struck me that while I'd been working, while Rush had been keeping the machinery going, people had been talking about him. Very likely McLean, with nothing else to do, had blamed his chief engineer to this girl. While Rush was standing down there on the

platform with death breathing on him, they had been talking scandal on deck. Our appalling plight suddenly appeared to me in its clear colors. Here we were, two hundred odd of us in the heart of the South Pacific, on a steamer almost helpless, overhung with a cloud of death, under the command of a man who did n't know what to do, who talked petty scandal about his chief engineer while half a dozen grinning mutineers loafed on the after-deck under the awnings. There was nothing to say. I shook my head dismally at Miss Halsey. It did n't even seem worth while to justify Rush.

While we stared at each other there was a shout from forward. I saw the captain on the bridge grab his glasses. A moment later the big gong clanged in the engine-room. The vibration of the machinery ceased. Rush appeared on deck, the oiler behind him. "What's the matter?" he demanded of me. I shook my head.

The sun had been risen a couple of hours at most and now shone upon us out of faint haze that whitened it into a huge, silvery disk. The *Princess Eugenia* was fast losing speed, and the sluggish rollers were heaving under her quarter with sullen persistence. We saw the passengers pour out of the saloon and run up till they stood under the bridge. Somewhere a woman was crying hysterically. Rush and I made our way forward. The skipper, the chief officer beside him, was standing rigidly by the rail staring ahead into a slight, reddish mist. As no one paid any attention to us, Rush said sharply: "Here we are, sir!"

McLean turned on us with a look of gentle surprise on his face. He said: "I think we are at the end of our course, Mr. Rush. Will you look ahead and tell me what you see? Look, Doctor, if you will."

I can tell only what I saw myself. Lying low on the water was a strange, smoky mist that seemed to encircle us at a distance of about a mile. On the edge of this floated a small schooner with her sails set. No one was at her wheel, and the booms banged and slatted to her every roll. That was all I saw. McLean's voice in my ear said: "Do you see any signs of life?"

That question answered any query you might have put to us. There was no one alive on that pretty vessel. The reddish mist was a poisonous emanation. The shadow of death fell circlewise about us. To run into it meant destruction.

I remember staring at the captain and then turning and consulting the sea about us. On every side I saw the gradually-lowering cloud of ruddy fog. Then Rush spoke: "We aren't sure that this is it. Let's go ahead and see."

Some one caught the words below and there was a tumult. A hoarse voice yelled: "We won't go!" Another answered with a fluent curse. There followed a wild stamping of feet and, before McLean could leap to the deck, those of the crew that could make it had piled themselves into a boat and lowered it away with a run. The chief officer leaped to the rail and pointed a revolver at the men, but McLean called out: "Let them go!"

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Why did they do this? Don't ask me. Panic, I suppose; the fear that comes over men who have labored till their bodies are exhausted. And they floated there, in a frail craft, a few hundred feet away from the *Princess*, not knowing which way to go, what to do, how to avoid sudden death. I counted them through the glass. The six firemen were among them, half a dozen of the steward's boys, a couple of sailors. Rush leaned over my shoulder and said bitterly: "There go our men. Let's get them back."

"What for? How?" I demanded angrily.

My question, natural as it was, seemed to bring us up all standing. McLean bore an expression of bewilderment. The chief officer, revolver still in hand, scowled at the crowding passengers. Rush stared at us all. Then Edith Halsey appeared below us, fixing her big dark eyes on the chief engineer. "Does this end it?" she asked in her full, low tones.

Rush turned his grim stare down on her. I can't tell you how odd he looked in his charred clothes, his face and arms sooty and scorched, his hair crisped at the ends where the fire had seized on it. And yet as the girl put this momentous question McLean, the mate, myself, all of us, had to withdraw, so to speak, and listen to our fate. Rush opened his lips briefly: "They're coming back to work."

And they came. I could n't tell you just how he did it. But he brought them back. His voice carried far out over them in strict commands. He directed them in the very management of their oars, and like children



they answered the quiet assurance of the man and scrambled back on deck, swearing at each other. He herded them down into the stokehold.

Half an hour later we looked up at the funnels and saw fresh volumes of black smoke pouring out to mingle with the almost imperceptible shadow that hung over the *Princess*. Then the sun reached the meridian, descended the western sky, sank into the sea. Still we did n't move. The colors changed swiftly in the sky. Darkness came. And we saw something that horrified us. The schooner showed two lights, the red and the green. They twinkled out from the invisible cloud with a message of routine method, of regular, unquestioning obedience to the law that rules the traffic of the seas.

"There's some one alive on that vessel," said McLean.

But the mate would n't believe it. "They were caught by the poison last night," he said. "Those lights have burned all day. There was nobody to put them out this morning."

An hour later Rush reappeared to ask what the captain intended to do. McLean did n't know. "Possibly . . . the passengers, you see . . . great responsibility . . . in fact . . . ." The skipper mouthed mere phrases that signified nothing but a perturbed mind. Rush touched me on the arm as he passed back and said: "Come down and help me. I want to tell you something."

The engine-room seemed strangely dark and silent

as we descended into it. Rush had hung lanterns here and there where a ghostly gleam could fall on some steel face, or throw the huge shadow of a pillar against the darkness. At the working platform he stopped and we gazed up at the stolid dials of the gauges and telegraph signals. Then Rush began: "McLean does n't know what he is doing. We've been close to losing our crew this day and we're a good week's sail from anywhere. I'm the only man left on this ship that can even start these engines. Whuff! and I'm gone! Then, man, this ship will rot before anybody finds her. This is no time for dallying. This is the time to be moving along and out of this sea. Go and tell the skipper what I say, Doctor."

I started to answer him when I was aware of another with us. I peered up the steel ladder and saw Edith Halsey standing there, one white arm outstretched on the hand-rail. Rush caught sight of her at the same time and gave utterance to a groan.

"I came down to see whether I could n't help you," she said quietly.

"You!" Rush burst out. "Are n't there any men left on this ship?"

I discerned the shadow of a smile on her face. She looked directly down into the engineer's eyes while she simply answered: "None but yourself, Mr. Rush."

"This is no place for you," he stammered. "You might — you might get hurt."

She refused to listen, but repeated: "Is there anything I can do?"

“She might go and tell the captain what you say,” I suggested stupidly, and to my astonishment she accepted the mission instantly. We watched her go swiftly back up the steps. Then Rush went on into the fire-room.

Miss Halsey returned in a few minutes and stopped on the platform beside me in evident excitement. She demanded to know where Rush was. I told her and led the way down and forward into the fire-room. As I opened the door Rush came toward it, the glow of the fires red on his face. He motioned Miss Halsey back, in alarmed solicitous fashion, but she paid no heed to him. “The captain is afraid,” she announced quietly. “He is afraid of the mist ahead of us. He thinks we had better wait.”

Rush would have answered, but the men behind him shuffled up menacingly. One of them growled: “We don’t stay down here any longer. We’re hungry and we’re tired. We quit right here.”

Involuntarily, I suppose, Miss Halsey and I ranged ourselves with the engineer in front of the only exit. Rush’s face showed a moment’s worry. “You men will stay here and work,” he said, above the roar of the boilers. “I’ll kill the first man that refuses duty!”

They backed off, but we heard their protests: “The skipper would n’t stand for having them abused. Enough of them had died already. The ship was being abandoned. They would go on deck.”

On the eve of their onset Rush backed firmly against the iron door and thrust a revolver out toward them.

"I'm running this engine-room," he told them coldly. "The man that does n't get back to his work is a dead one." And while they hung in the wind he turned to Edith again. "I've got plenty of steam up," he said. "We could get a good sixteen knots out of her now if McLean would only make up his mind and run for it." His eyes carried a message of helplessness.

She balanced herself on the reeling plates, ignoring utterly the grumbling crew. A smile lit up her face. "I said to myself that you were the only man left on the ship," she said. "It's true."

He returned her smile. "That's nicely said, Miss Halsey. And I know what they've been telling about me up on deck. I kill men when it's necessary. I'm the original devil, that's what I am. McLean's all right, but he's not up to his work. He's thinking of the company, of the passengers, of the people ashore who'll want to know all about it."

"Whom are you thinking of?" she demanded.

A shrill cry from the hold pierced through the murk.

A man staggered out, swinging back and forth to the roll of the steamer, sought for some handhold, choked horribly and fell. While I bent over him I heard Rush's unshaken voice say: "I'm thinking of you. Say the word, and I'll save you."

"Why?" I heard her ask breathlessly.

"Because I want you," he answered. "All my life I've tried to find a woman worth my while. I'm a brute and I'm down in the books for all sorts of things. But that does n't matter now, Edith. I love you."

The man on the deck slowly got his breath and I helped him to his feet. Possibly I missed something they said to each other. But as the men once more surged forward, this time mad with pain and fear, she jerked the revolver out of Rush's hand, drove it into the very mouth of the leader of the mutineers and said: "The man that wants to die, come on." She turned her dark eyes on the chief engineer. "I'm going to do it," she told him. "You start the engines. I'll keep these fellows at work."

Without a moment's hesitation he passed her and adjusted a valve. Then he opened the drafts wide and motioned to the men to get to work. You would have thought he would have had something to say, but he merely gazed round at us all and then, taking my arm, opened the engine-room door. As we went out he said, over his shoulder: "I leave them to you. I'll do my part." And she answered him with a pitiful look of obedience.

I can see him yet swaying easily over the many obstructions till he came to a halt under the big signal dial that marked the orders from the bridge. It pointed still to STOP. He looked at it and then reached up with a determined gesture and put the lever over to full speed ahead. There was a clashing of gongs about us and slowly the engines rose and started on their toil with flash of steel and hiss of steam, as he opened the big overhead valve.

Almost immediately the indicator traveled back to STOP and the gongs clamored again. McLean was on

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the bridge. But Rush refused to answer the command in kind and jammed the indicator over to full speed ahead once more. The engines picked up their gait, and we felt the big steamer surge slowly along through the water.

Still again the gongs yelled at us their imperative message to stop. Again Rush deliberately thrust the answering lever back to full speed ahead. Then he turned on me and smiled. "Doctor, suppose you go in and help Miss Halsey keep the fires going. You know a little about it. If the men balk, you know what to do. We'll need all the steam we can get."

Miss Halsey had picked up a dirty jacket discarded by some choking stoker and stood in the midst of the toiling men with unconcerned eyes on the gauges. The heat tossed her hair about her forehead and scorched her cheeks. A puff of carbon burned the hem of her skirt away. But she paid no attention to it. Now and then she would look straight into the eyes of some hulking fireman, and the man would fall to his work again with an expression of puzzled subjection.

Rush came in after a while and gave calm directions and orders. He did n't exchange a word with the girl about her being there, offer her sympathy or thanks. As he went back to his engines I caught him by the sleeve and remonstrated with him for allowing her to stay longer down there. "She's all right," he said gruffly. "She's helping. But—" he paused a moment considerately and went on, "but if she dies, call me."

A moment later Miss Halsey came over to me and said: "What did he say?"

"He said for me to call him if you — if you were taken ill," I told her.

Her eyes shone and I saw the gentleness of her profile as she turned away. I thought I heard her say, "God help the man's sweetheart!" but I was n't sure.

I can't tell you what was doing on deck all this while except as I heard about it afterward. It seems that McLean finally acquiesced in the maneuver so mutinously forced on him by Rush, and took the wheel himself. In fact, he straightened the *Princess* out just in time to avoid running down the schooner. The mate told me they looked down on her decks and saw white faces staring up at them through the darkness, the faces of her dead crew. Then McLean fell over, choking, and died, with one foot caught in the grating on which he had been standing.

Down in the fire-room we knew nothing of the dawn. Miss Halsey was still standing among us, still vigilant, though scorched, grimy, her eyes circled by great rings of soot. The steam gauges registered fifty pounds — the best we could do. The clock marked six o'clock when Rush looked in on us, gave a hand on the chain that raised the heavy draft-shutters, stood a moment silently staring at the girl and was going out again. Suddenly we heard cries on deck, the sound of them floating down to us through the lofty gratings. Miss Halsey dropped her revolver, for the cries were of joy, of relief, and down through the ventilators came a faint,

delicious draft of air, bearing the scent of the fresh, open sea, of leagues of frothing waves, the sharp odor of pure winds. Rush smiled. "It's all right now. The breeze is freshening." He picked up the revolver and dismissed Miss Halsey and myself with a curt "That will do for you two."

Two hours later the *Princess Eugenia* was once more trim and in such order as the crew and volunteers from the passengers could put her. The captain had been buried and the chief officer was in command. The steward made his little force do double duty, and under a fresh, blowy sky we were pursuing our feeble way down to port under what steam we could keep in the boilers.

Among the first to revive and resume an interest in daily life was Mary Russell. She dried her tears and came down to luncheon. On her way she passed Rush, grimy as ever, white with exhaustion under the soot, clad in filthy rags of uniform, altogether a dull sight and a reminder that the ship had suffered. She stopped to speak to him. "Why don't you clean up?" she demanded, with a frown. Rush stared and laughed, but he didn't answer; merely turned back to his engines.

Close behind Miss Russell, Edith Halsey entered the saloon. She was freshly gowned, trim, serene. Telltale blisters on her slim hands, scorched flush on her cheeks, curled eyelashes, crisped hair alone told her experience. And when she came in all the men looked up and smiled and called out greetings, openly recognizing that



what she had done for them all was known and priced at its high value. She responded quietly, her great dark eyes fixed on the distance in a profound and inscrutable expression of sorrow, of some sort of suffering. She ate sparingly and was soon away.

Luncheon over — I was master of ceremonies at that meal — we left the saloon for the deck, climbing up the big stairways with jests and laughter. But as we emerged on deck we came fairly upon Rush and Miss Halsey. He stood on both feet, in his filth and grime, leaning against nothing, his hands clasping nothing, like a man ready to fight. Before him the girl stood, looking at him with her full, intense gaze. A little apart Mary Russell crouched in a chair, her chin in her hand and her scared eyes fixed on them both.

“I don’t care how dirty you are,” Miss Halsey was saying slowly. “I know what you’ve done and I want to be fair to you. While the rest of us are enjoying ourselves you are still at work seeing to it that we get to our destination. But while I respect you for that, I wish you to understand distinctly that your attentions and your presumption are distasteful, Mr. Rush.”

“But you were anxious enough to share my watch with me,” he returned, in apparent perplexity.

“I thought I ought to do my part,” she replied, biting her lip. “And you told me that you would save the ship if I would help you. I’ll admit,” she went on hastily, “that you meant to offer me your affection and that I allowed you to think that I might accept it. But I did it — I did it to save us all!”

"I see," he said. "As long as you were afraid for your own pretty life, you hunted up the only man on the ship that you thought could save it for you, the only man with wit and nerve to go ahead and pull the ship through. And when he's done it, you turn up your nose and confess that you led him on just to save yourself. Now, Miss Halsey, I want you to understand that I usually get what I want. I ain't afraid, either, as you know."

She waved us back with an almost imperceptible gesture. "I didn't intend to say what I'm going to say now," she answered bravely enough. "You are a coward. You are a murderer and a thief and a liar. Because you are in a position of authority, and because your passions have rein over your subordinates, you play the man. You have killed. You have lied. You have even made me offer myself as the price of your saving the ship, the great price, Mr. Rush, of becoming your wife. But I know that you are a coward. If you were a stoker like the poor fellow you shot, you would have been sniveling on the deck, cursing your officers, afraid for your poor, worthless life. Being the chief engineer you have done your duty, no more than your duty, because it gave you a chance, you thought, to buy a woman, and allow your cruelty and your lying to have some little glory all of their own. Oh!" she cried out softly, "to think that you are such a coward!"

The man's sooty face became almost chalk-white. He drew back a step, curling his lip like an angry dog. All his arrogance had changed into rage. "I'll show

you who's the coward," he said violently. "I'll show you, my fair lady, just —"

Some one should long before have closed the rascal's mouth; but we were still under the spell of his arrogance, you understand. We had n't forgot the brilliancy of his achievement. It remained for Edith Halsey's father, red-faced, breathing heavily, to push forward and strike him full in the mouth. "Get back to your machinery!" he roared at him. "If you dare to address another word to my daughter I'll kill you!"

The fellow's temporary ascendancy over us vanished like a soap bubble. He did n't even try to reply, but slunk off, muttering to himself, craven, shaking with impotent rage, all the structure of his insolence and his bravado crumbled about his shoulders by old man Halsey's clean wrath. Really, you see, spite of his doing a big thing, the man was a bad egg. So, having done that thing, he was thrust back from the company of his betters, once more a known scoundrel, infamous, mean, contemptible. Yet Providence, juster than men, rewarded him with the affection of Mary Russell. She married him in Auckland. To start her off in her new life happily the passengers presented her with a splendidly-engrossed memorial, stating in fine words that Edward Rush was a hero and had saved life on the high seas. Among the first signatures was that of Edith Halsey, who thus proudly abjured her great share in the good works of a thoroughly bad egg.

## NEIGHBORS

ROBERT TALBOT, of the Talbot Navigation Company, leaned back in his office chair and looked steadily at the captain of the schooner *Suisun*. "Watson," he said abruptly, "how do you get along with the sailors' union?"

Watson hung his cap over one knee and leaned back, too. "I've never run foul of the union yet," he answered. "You see, it pays most of its attention to the steamers. Of course I have a union crew, but I've never had any trouble."

"What do you think of it, anyway?" Talbot continued.

"I don't know," was the reply. "You see, I never got mixed up with it. But I reckon it's a mighty good thing for the men. Wages have just doubled, and that means better sailors. But I don't know as I have any particular opinion about the union as a union."

The owner of the *Suisun* sat deep in thought for a while. When he spoke it was with decision. "Our line has never had any trouble with the union," he said curtly. "We've never had any difficulties at all with the men, as you know. Our employees have been well treated and they've reciprocated, I must say. But trouble has come. You know how freights are now —

'way down. In the two years you've had the *Suisun* you've probably figured for yourself that there's mighty little money in lumber. And lumber makes the market. Our little profit in carrying it comes from handling the cargo ourselves with the ship's crew. The union has said we sha'n't do it any more, and that we shall employ longshoremen for all loading or stowing. You know that usually we load lumber with the crew and pay them time and a half for it. But we've never paid time and a half for putting on the deck load and we can't afford to. It means running our vessels at a dead loss. We can't stand for it, Watson."

The skipper pondered this and then cast a shrewd eye on his chief. "We never have done much lumber carrying, sir," he suggested. "Our line has always gone its own way. I can see how that new demand from the union hits the big companies hard, but why don't they fight their own battle? It's really none of our concern, Mr. Talbot, for you don't take lumber charters twice a year. Why does the Talbot line have to stand for the first struggle and the hottest row? For it'll be a hot row. The union is wise and would n't run the risk of losing much for little unless they thought they could put it through. Why, they've got to win, or else they're up against it. And why are we shoved in right in front to take the first licks?"

Talbot's face darkened at his captain's frank speech. "I may as well say that it's just because we've always stood apart that we've got to do the hard work now," he remarked grimly. "The big fellows can afford to

hold off and fight and lay their ships up. We can't, and they know it, and so we've been picked out to start the ball. See? We've always been friendly with the union, but the shipowners have us cornered. If we go with the union we can't make a cent, for the big companies will shove freights down to zero, and we'll be frozen out of all our trade. So we've got to fight the union and do it alone, too, Watson, for a while."

"It is n't fair," Watson said bluntly. "It's a skin game."

"It's fair so far as fighting the union, Watson," Talbot returned. "It's true that their demands have got to be put a stop to somewhere. They are getting outrageous. We've got to be able to run our own business. But it is n't fair for the McBeths and the B. & H. people to stand out and shove the Talbot line into a fight for existence when we are n't directly concerned. But I suppose we must all hang together. The men stick to the union and the owners must stick to the association. But what I want to know is, do you think you can keep the *Suisun* going? She's under charter to take lumber out of the Columbia River to San Pedro. She'll carry a good million feet if you stow the deck load properly."

Watson nodded. "I see the point. We load at the mill and then drop down to another mill for a deck load, which will be dumped aboard and stowed — by my crew. And the union says —"

"The union says that the vessel's crew sha'n't touch a stick of cargo in port, and out of port not unless they

are paid time and a half. We can't afford to pay time and a half, captain."

There was a silence, broken when the *Suisun's* master remarked, with a chill light in his blue eyes, "This is October. Nasty weather ahead. I hate to take a vessel to sea with the cargo ill stowed. But if I try to force the crew into stowing it from the slings they'll walk off, and we're out a crew and probably can't get another. If I sail with the lashings off it means a good bit of risk before I can persuade 'em to work without time and a half."

The owner's eyes met the captain's. "Do you think you can persuade them?" Talbot inquired.

Watson's eyes grew chillier than before. He rose. "I'll try," he said coldly. "And if they mutiny, why, I've been in mutinies in my time."

"I don't want —" Talbot began, and stopped under the quizzical glance of his subordinate.

"I know what you don't want," that individual returned half humorously. "But if this pudding has got to be eaten it's got to be served hot." He put his cap on. "I'm a man of peace," he added, almost savagely. "I like quiet aft and no grumbling forward. But orders are orders, and if you say fight the union, why, fight it is. I'll engage a tug for to-morrow, sir." He opened the door, letting in the roar of San Francisco, looked back with a glance of reassurance, closed the door, and left Talbot to stare into vacancy and murmur: "I hate this business — always friendly with our men — What will it end in, anyway?"

Vacancy refusing to answer, he plunged wearily into his mail.

Not many blocks distant from the office of the Talbot Navigation Company six men sat in a rather rudely-furnished room listening to a tall, stoop-shouldered enthusiast whose shrill voice rose and fell with the swing of a speaker used to addressing small audiences. "They 've all joined together to lick us," he was saying. "Every company on the coast has agreed to fight us to a standstill on this time-and-a-half business. The McBeth people and the B. & H. line say they'll tie their boats up indefinitely, and you know what that means — forty-odd vessels not needing crews, and increased assessments for you boys that are still at work. But all this time has been under cover. They have n't made no answer to the union's demand. They ain't said a word to show whether they're goin' to come through or not. But I know: it's all cut and dried. They've picked out the Talbots to stand us off for a while. The Talbot line has always been fair, and everybody on the water-front knows it. So if they get the Talbots into line against us they get more 'n a few vessels: they get public sympathy, and that's a heap. And I know their scheme, too. They're goin' to bring us up against time and a half on a Talbot boat and see if we've got the nerve to stick to it even when our friends is in a pinch.

"Boys, we gotta get in and fight. This ain't a question of friends and it ain't no question of Talbots, either; it's a question of the union. This ain't no picnic. This is war. And we gotta win." His voice



dropped suddenly and he became businesslike. "The *Suisun* has asked for a crew this afternoon and tomorrow she sails for the Columbia River for lumber. You're the crew. I've picked you boys out because I know you and I can trust you to hold up your end. Nobody can't say that you ain't a good, competent crew and all family men livin' right here in the city. The big owners are all the time throwin' it up to us that our men ain't citizens and don't pay no taxes or have families or live in houses. That talk won't go this time. You men have all got wives and children in this man's town and you pay taxes. Now you just go and show the Talbots that nobody can run schooners and steamers on this coast and walk over the workingman that earns 'em their profits and looks out after his own kin as well." He stopped and looked at them.

The six men glanced at one another steadily, without moving a muscle of their faces. Then one of them said: "Watson is master of the *Suisun*."

They digested this remark before another added: "He's an awful hard man. I sailed with him once deep water. He never stood no nonsense."

"I've heard he was a hard man at sea," said a third. "I never sailed with him. We're neighbors. I live next door to him. My wife knows his wife."

Their director's sour looks recalled them. "That ain't the question," he told them. "This is a question of the union. No man can stand in the face of the union, and Watson has got to knuckle under. If he gets away with you, boys, and you turn to and work

cargo for him, then you 've undone the work that we 've been doin' for ten years, and your wages 'll drop, and it won't be banks for you nor money for your wives, but back to the old wet dog's life and hell ashore. Now you boys had better be gettin' down to the Commissioner's and signin' on." He dismissed them with a wave of his hand and turned back to a desk where he sat him down, a lean, gaunt, ill-kempt man whose gnarled fingers bore evidence to years of harsh toil. The sailors filed out, a steady-looking lot, sturdy-legged, neatly-clothed, bronze-faced, carrying themselves with dignity as befitted the representatives of the great Sailors' Union of the Pacific.

On the sidewalk they halted awkwardly till one of them said: "Oh, we don't want a drink. Let's go and ship. I've said my good-by to the old woman and the kids."

"That's right," said another. "I said mine, too; but if any of you mates has to go home for a minute, why, I'm for waiting." A glance round brought headshakings. "All set," then said the speaker. "Let's go down and get to work."

The next day, walking back and forth on the quarter-deck of the *Suisun*, Watson carefully surveyed the crew and nodded approvingly to his first mate. "That's the smartest lot ever sailed with me," he briefly commented.

"Good men," the mate agreed. "But what gets me, captain, is why are they here? Higgins has been bos'n of the *Elder* for several trips, drawing good, fat wages. Smith has been working 'long shore for the union at

Seattle, and Oleson was secretary of the Oakland local. What are all these first-class men doing here on the *Suisun*?"

Watson's frosty eyes met his officer's. "I'm not worrying my head about that," he remarked. "Get that hawser flaked down and then set the spinnaker, Mr. Martin."

Three days later the *Suisun* crossed into the Columbia after one of the fastest passages on record, was picked up by a towboat, and within forty-eight hours was lying by a sawmill wharf, ballast out and lumber swinging in. Watson put the crew to bending new and stronger sails and clearing the decks for the top cargo. When the hatches were on the *Suisun* was again picked up by a huge sternwheeler and taken into the lower Columbia and to a wharf jutting out at the foot of a lofty green cliff.

Watson called the mate. "We'll take on one hundred and fifty thousand feet here on deck," he stated. "Set the crew to stowing it as it comes aboard in the slings, Mr. Martin."

Half an hour later Martin stuck his head into the captain's berth and said: "Crew refuses to handle cargo, sir. Says it's against union rules."

Watson laid down his book and followed his chief officer on deck. His quick eye caught a sling of yellow lumber swinging idly above the deck and two or three men looking curiously down from the wharf. The manager of the mill was gesticulating to attract his attention. "We're ready to deliver you your cargo," he called down. "Are you ready to receive it?"

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“Lower away!” Watson commanded, and then glanced at his crew, gathered closely about the foremast. He looked up again to the mill manager. “Send the stuff aboard as fast as you can,” he told him. “We’ll handle it.” He turned to his crew, walking slowly toward them. “I understand that you refuse duty. I know why, and I won’t beat about the bush. Your union has made a demand on Talbot & Co. to pay time and a half for such work or else hire longshoremen. There are no longshoremen here, and the mill, of course, is only concerned in getting the stuff off the wharf. The ship will not pay time and a half. Just consider that settled — Mr. Martin, cast off that sling and turn the men to stowing.” He stared at them all masterfully and went back to his cabin.

Inside of five minutes the mate was in the cabin, boiling with rage. “They refuse duty,” he roared. “Sassed me to my face! What’ll I do?”

Watson closed his book again. “I see,” he remarked calmly. “Mr. Martin, we can’t do anything at present. I don’t want to lose my crew. We’ve got to get that deck load aboard some way. We won’t stow it at present. Just dump the slings as best you can. The men can’t refuse to unhook the slings.”

Martin glared at his superior with open mouth, seemed about to say something, thought better of it, and retired. Almost immediately a loud thump told the captain that a second slingful had reached the deck.

All day long the lumber piled up on the long deck of the schooner, at first in some order, owing to the agility

and angry industry of the two mates, then in a disorder that reached ten feet up the mainmast, overflowed the little half deck, and generally made the neat *Suisun* look like the slab-pile from the mill. Watson at various times surveyed it without remark and, to the somewhat acrid comments of the mill manager, made the single reply that Talbot & Co. had contracted to deliver so many feet of lumber to San Pedro in good order and that it was nobody's business how it was done. "Finish us up to-night," he concluded.

So at sundown they hung big lusters along the wharf's edge and the slings of lumber still swung down upon the unwieldy mass on deck. At midnight Watson went ashore and receipted for one hundred and fifty thousand feet, and the crew, retiring to their quarters, puffed quiet pipes and nodded to each other. "He'll try and make us restow it when we're out of the river," said Smith, wiping his mustache with a huge hand.

"And we'll ask for time and a half," Oleson added, with a wag of his flaxen head.

"And he won't give it," Smith went on. "He'll find himself at sea with his decks in awful shape. He'll have to give in. He dassent run her down with this stuff in such shape. We'll see."

"I live next door to him in 'Frisco," Higgins said irrelevantly. "My wife knows his wife."

"I rec'lect when I never had a home, and the old woman used to live in one room, and when I was gone pretty long she'd have to go down to the office and sit around two hours to beg five dollars advance out of my

wages to buy grub with," Smith ruminated. "Them days I got twenty-six dollars a month and all days in port mostly docked. Then the union came, and last month I drew down eighty-seven dollars. It went into the bank."

Oleson suddenly laughed loudly. "I put one hundred and twenty dollars in the savings-bank last month," he said, opening his mouth in a vast grin. "And my girl is in school."

From the shadows of the fo'c's'le came another voice, full and powerful. "And the companies are trying to break up the union," it announced. "Watson thinks we're goin' to knuckle under to him when this hooker gets to sea. Wha'd they think we are, anyway? Ain't we got sense?"

"I live next door to Watson in the city," Higgins repeated meditatively. "He's building a new house out in Sunset addition. That's where all his money goes, his old woman told mine. He's a neighbor o' mine. But, of course, he's run up against the union this time. They say he's a hard man."

They considered this solemnly, gazing out over the inconglomerate lumber to the wet stars above the hill, thinking of all the ships they had known, of the hard skippers, the bucko mates, the cruel sea, the centuries of sailors who had starved and toiled and died unrewarded and unfriended and homeless. And from one and then another came the muttered words, "the union," as they climbed into their bunks and turned their stern faces to the dingy planks above them.

One day sufficed to get the *Suisun* into Astoria and cleared for San Pedro. A tug swept alongside and passed a hawser, the mate left the forecastle head and climbed back to the poop over the unkempt deck load. The schooner headed round against the flood tide and for the open sea.

While the bar threatened them for a quarter of an hour Watson watched the lumber on deck and imperceptibly shook his head. His clear eyes met the mate's. "It won't last long," he remarked. But they finally got across without mishap and out upon the long, sullen rollers of the Pacific. The tug cast off, rounded to, whistled farewell and dived back into port. Watson steadied his vessel on an easy course westward while the crew set the topsails. As he steered he flashed unreadable glances at the dull-gray southern sky.

When all was snug Watson turned the wheel over to the mate and walked forward to the break of the poop. Standing there he called loudly: "Smith! Oleson! Higgins!"

They answered and struggled aft over the almost impassable deck load till they stood on a level with the captain. Watson commenced abruptly. "This deck load must be stowed and lashed shipshape," he said quietly. "It's all right for the union to try to hold the ship up in port. But we're at sea now, and I don't intend to stand for any monkey business. You starboard watch turn to now and do your trick at it. When the port watch relieves you they'll bear a hand."

There followed silence. Oleson spoke up. "The

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union won't stand for it," he said boldly. "We can't do it."

Watson's chill glance rested on the big Scandinavian a fraction of a second. "You men understand that I'm not asking you to load ship. That's the business of the union and the owners, I suppose. I'm demanding that you do your watch on deck, and during your watch do exactly what I or Mr. Martin direct you to do. If you refuse —" He stopped short.

Oleson's blue eyes met the captain's steadily. "This is a trick," he answered firmly. "We can't stow that cargo unless the ship pays us time and a half, same as the rules say."

Watson glanced at the southern sky a moment and then turned an undaunted face on the three men. He swung on his heel. "Mr. Martin," he said formally, "put a hand at the wheel and turn the other two men of your watch to stowing that lumber. We'll have it overside if we don't look sharp."

Martin slung himself across the little interval between poop and deck load and cried out an order. Higgins clambered aft and took the wheel, in response to it. Again the mate yelled, and this time the other two men shook their heads, though with a hint of respect in their attitudes. Martin stared at their failure to respond and bawled once more: "Clear that lumber away from the pumps and stow it on the starboard side."

Smith and Oleson calmly turned their backs and started forward without a word. The mate snatched a belaying pin from the rack and started after them.



Watson called him sharply back. "None of that, Mr. Martin!" he said severely. "The men will come to their senses before long."

"But that stuff is working round already," the disgusted officer grumbled. "And one good souse will skihoot the whole lubberly mixture into the water."

"The hands will come to their senses after a while," repeated the captain.

Mr. Martin ended his watch on deck, was duly relieved by the second mate and went below. A moment later he reappeared, this time with an expression of intense dissatisfaction on his face. "D'ye know what the barometer is doing?" he demanded of his junior. "No? Well, it's dropping a tenth an hour, that's what it's doing. And before long, m' son, it'll be blowing like billy, and our main deck is a clutter of lumber that 'ud make any self-respecting seafaring man sick at his tummy. Oh, this is a sweet voyage and a sweet crew!" He glowered at the helmsman and retired again.

At sundown Watson refused to acquiesce in the mate's suggestion that they take advantage of the east wind and put south. "We're not far enough off shore," he told him quietly. "This storm may break out of the sou'west, and unless we've got a good offing we're up against it."

"We'll lose our deck load first shot," said the despairing mate. "The bulwarks are edging and starting now when it sags down on 'em."

Watson stared out into the darkness. "See whether the crew are ready to turn to and stow it," he said.

Mr. Martin dived forward and stuck his head in at the fo'c's'le doorway. "Say, you men, pile out and stow that lumber!" he bellowed. "Wind's rising and sea's getting up! Come! Hustle out here and get busy!"

Higgins emerged into the light that streamed from the big lantern swung from a beam. "Will the ship pay time and a half, sir?" he asked civilly.

The mate's fists clenched, but the sailor's calmness showed him that this was no time for a trial of physical prowess. He tried to argue. Higgins, reënforced by Oleson, shook his head. "The union won't let us stow that stuff unless we get time and a half," said Oleson.

"All right!" yelled the mate in a fury. "Don't, then! Drown, like the rats you are!" He clambered aft, swearing fiercely.

To Watson he snarled: "Your crew ought to have sugar to eat with their cake — I'd sugar 'em!"

"They still refuse to work that stuff?" the captain inquired coolly. "All right. They'll come to their senses after a while. Stow your tops'ls, Mr. Martin."

The darkness in which the crew worked was broken by flashes of lightning before the task was completed. A squall laid the poorly-laden *Suisun* far over, and the men cursed roundly as they scrambled for their footing on the loose lumber. A clatter of planks and a yell came from where the cook had been nearly nipped and caught under a slipping pile. The mate maintained a grim silence.

Captain Watson gave no sign that he observed his

vessel's plight and paid no attention, apparently, to the constant reports made by his officers that the glass was still going down rapidly. Finally he said: "One can expect a smart gale from the sou'east'ard this time of year. We'll make well off shore and ride it out comfortably."

Morning showed the schooner close hauled and dipping heavily into a southerly sea which ran higher and higher as each gust of the coming gale whitened the ocean to windward. Both watches were called and the men slipped and stumbled over the loose lumber, reefing, snugging down and making things fast. The mate, swearing tremendous oaths that nothing could save the schooner from becoming a total wreck, busied himself passing feeble lashings across the raffle. "This stuff will get a start and then take off the bulwarks and clean away the half deck and cut off the hatch combings and spring the deck beams, so that she'll open up like an old cracker box. One sea'll do it, spite of all the lashings in the world. Then the masts will go out of her," he continued, driving a knot tight with his heel. "Then you men will learn your business." He glared at them and cursed them individually and collectively. Oleson's big face slowly flushed till his anger boiled over. He confronted Martin. "It's the ship's fault," he roared. "The ship ought to pay us time and a half, or else have stowed this cargo before we came to sea. It ain't the union's fault if the owners send the ship out in an unseaworthy condition."

The mate thrust his savage face into the Scandi-

navian's. "She would n't be unseaworthy if she had a crew," he croaked.

At this moment there was a call from the poop for all hands. Martin went aft, followed by the men of both watches. Watson, in oilskins and boots, faced them briskly. "You men had better decide what you are going to do," he announced. "The gale will break inside of an hour. This schooner is practically helpless with that deck load unstowed and not lashed and wedged. It will be a good six hours' job, but we had better make a start at it if we are going to do it at all. Now, will you men turn to under Mr. Martin's direction, or do you still persist in refusing duty?"

Oleson was about to speak when Watson held up his hand. "I've heard enough from you," he said coldly. "This is a question for all of you. I'll give you five minutes to think it over. Get for'a'd."

Relieving the man at the wheel and ordering him to join his mates, the captain watched them tumble toward the bow of the schooner and gather at the foot of the foremast. He could just see their shiny sou'westers bobbing above the yellow lumber. Inside of the allowed five minutes Higgins climbed back upon the deck load and started to scramble aft, the other five trailing after him. Watson turned the wheel over to the second mate and came to the rail. "What do you say?" he demanded.

Higgins looked up at him solemnly. "If the ship will pay time and a half we'll stow this lumber, Captain," he said.



“If the ship will pay time and a half we’ll stow this lumber, Captain,” he said.



"The ship won't pay time and a half," was the reply.

There was a silence. Higgins searched the countenances of his companions and found nothing thereon written but stolid determination. "The union rules won't let us," he said hoarsely.

"That will do." Watson dismissed them calmly.

During the forenoon the gale broke furiously, and the schooner, stripped of most of her canvas, yielded slowly to its violence, burying her bows stiffly in the seas that crashed over and flooded the main deck. For half an hour she kept her course, quivering in the iron grip of the storm, striving, ill-laden and unweatherly as she was, to do her best. But her best was too little. A slithering comber threw its terrific mass against her, swung her up and high to leeward. As she rose, Martin shrieked a command and dashed down on the deck load, waving furious arms toward the foresheet, which was parting under the strain, as his quick eye had seen. The men swarmed after him, balancing themselves on the teetering planks. Then the *Suisun* was flung on her beam-ends, a second sea poured over the weather bulwarks, the foresheet parted with a bang, and the whole deck load sagged bodily to leeward. Some plank on which the mate stood sprung up, and he seemed to dive headlong into the sea, describing a short, swift arc. As the schooner recovered herself and lurched to windward Watson saw the tangled wreckage blow to leeward, but he discerned no human figure amid it. There was a jagged break in the bulwarks.

Under his booming orders they hove her to, stripped

to the barest rag that would keep her to her position. When they were done, it needed no cursing second mate to inform the crew that, unless the deck cargo were promptly swept overboard or securely lashed, the life of the *Suisun* would be short. Buoyant as she was, her terrific surges and wild dives threatened any moment to plunge her decks under or to snap the masts out of her. A constant flood of water raced across the deck and foamed out from under the mass of lumber in which the great planks and heavy timbers heaved and slipped to every roll. The weak lashings the mate had passed over it gave one by one, merely prolonging the agony and further endangering the vessel. Watson called the crew to the binnacle and put the grim question once more: "Will you turn to and stow that lumber?"

This time it was Smith who promptly replied: "The union rules say we must have time and a half, sir."

Watson's rain-swept face assumed a cold imperiousness. "You men know what you are doing?"

"The ship won't pay time and a half?" Smith demanded.

The captain shook his head. With one accord the men shook their heads and withdrew to the rail, then started to make their way forward. For the moment the schooner was riding more easily, and the first two leaped down on the lumber and ran briskly to the mainmast. But here they lost their footing. A sousing sea swept them overside amid a raffle of broken planks, upended timbers and tumbling bundles of lath. As



they bobbed to leeward Watson flung a useless life-buoy toward them, hurling the rope's end after it. Then he leaped to the main-deck ladder and caught Oleson's arm as that struggling man dragged himself painfully to safety. Together they fished out Higgins and Smith. The second mate made his way to them and bawled in Watson's ear: "Cut away the lashings and let the rest of the deck load go, sir?"

The three able seamen, balancing themselves against the force of the screaming wind, listened for the answer that might mean a solution of their great, insoluble problem. Possibly Watson had a sense of their anxiety and hoped that if he maintained his stubborn demeanor they might finally acknowledge themselves beaten. Possibly he merely refused this last chance to compromise. He waved his hand in definite negation, drew his sou'-wester more closely about his head and took his stand once more to windward, whence he composedly watched the wild leapings and sickening plunges of his laboring vessel.

Nightfall brought no surcease. The shivering cook served them with what cold victuals he could find in the cabin pantry, his galley being now inaccessible. Master, mate and men ate silently and hastily to the thump of the rudder-head pounding beneath them. When they had wiped their mouths, Watson addressed his crew. "This gale is n't well started yet," he told them simply. "The glass is still going down. There's a bare chance to save this vessel if you stow that—what's left of the deck load."

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The men met his steady eyes as steadily, shaking their heads. They knew, as he did — and they knew he was n't mistaken about their knowledge — that to attempt to make fast the slipping, sliding mass of lumber on deck meant certain death for somebody — or all. But, being seamen of tried worth, they refused to consider that. "We'll do it if the ship'll pay us time and a half," they croaked.

A frosty gleam of admiration lit Watson's eyes as he shook his head, and that gleam did not die till the last man had filed out, leaving him swaying to the roll of the deck, sipping cold coffee out of a tin cup in a composed manner.

So, little by little, the storm wrought out unhindered its furious will. The dark, devouring seas took the lumber ton by ton. The lashings parted to the last strand. The bulwarks were slowly bitten away. The shrouds sang and shrieked to the impact of heavy masses flung against them by rushing waves. Suddenly the foremast went over the side and with it the head gear. As though satisfied, the gale yielded suddenly, and the *Suisun* was left leaping wildly to the rise and surge of the sea. The weary men made their perilous way forward and cut clear the fallen stays that held the foremast up under the bows, where it beat trip-hammer blows on the planks of the hull. This done, with wild swinging of axes in the darkness, Watson set them to trying to put tackles on the booms which were threshing across the deck load with deadly violence. But the wind piped up out of the west before the task

was well begun, and the schooner heeled far over to hard, vicious squalls. They sought the poop again and no sooner had regained it than a comber swept the deck from fo'c's'le head to after cabin, and with its thundering passage went the rest of the deck load, deck house, pumps and the lee main shrouds. The mainmast broke off a few feet above the deck, the mizzen lurched after it, and the *Suisun*, wholly unmanageable, wallowed high in the careering seas, a wreck. Her master, mate and the four remaining men of the crew huddled by the wheel and waited for the end.

For some time the buoyancy of the dismantled craft saved her from being heavily swept, though sea after sea broke in spume across her hulk. Then a flying spar was flung from the windward darkness across the poop. In its passage it took the second mate, Oleson, Smith and the helmsman. Dragging a broken leg, Higgins clawed his choking way to the crushed wheelbox and yelled at the figure clinging to the stump of the wheel-pillar: "Smith! Oleson!" The cook, lugging a huge lantern, burst out of the cabin and staggered across the tilted quarterdeck, crying shrilly into the night. For one instant Higgins saw the pallid face of the captain framed in the swirling darkness, then the light vanished before a swooping wave which smothered the cook's last cry. Higgins caught a rope's end and passed it round the captain and the pillar, afterward lashing himself. Watson nodded and said in a strong voice, "Smashed a rib, I think."

As day approached the schooner's stout frame com-

menced to give. She filled, and as her sides sank deeper into the water the sea, though falling, made a clean breach across her main deck, and even the poop was continually washed by broken water. Dawn came, a gray, spumy light that made plain the wallowing hulk to the two men straining to hang to their little refuge. And with the light the wind veered into the northwest and blew shrilly and bitterly, laden with sleet, armed with the steel of driving hail. Watson, without a word, extricated himself feebly from his lashings and crawled to the smashed skylight. Higgins, watching him with dull eyes, knew from the expression on the captain's face that all below was awash and that neither food nor water nor warmth was to be theirs. He cleared his eyes and peered forward.

The schooner's bows rose like a ragged island, unapproachable except over the broken deck that now and then emerged from the foam to display gaping hatches and splintered planking. He could see that one of the anchors was still there, safe in its lashings. Higgins threw off the rope and dragged his stiffened body forward. Watson turned his head and saw him. "You and I are the only ones left," he said.

"The rest of the boys are gone — with the deck load," Higgins returned huskily. "I thought I'd get for'ad and cast off that bower, sir. It might make her ride easier." He made a wild clutch at a handhold as a sea creamed over the rail.

Watson's blue eyes gleamed slightly. "Your leg broken? You can't make it, Higgins. Nobody could

get along that main deck now. We'll stay here. The sea is going down." He rose painfully to his feet, picked up the rope and made it fast around the helpless seaman. Then he sat down beside him, breathing harshly into his crushed chest, his booted feet waggling in front of him to the end of the deck. So they waited while the gray light grew into white and a rift of blue appeared in the north. Then Higgins stirred. His pallid face was set in stern lines. His hand, swollen by salt water, went out, and he touched his commander on the knee. "Is there any chance for us, sir?"

"There is no chance," was the calm reply. Then Watson went on: "We can't be more than thirty miles off shore. If this wind holds we'll be ashore by tonight — on the rocks to the south'ard of Tillamook."

"She's not drifting very fast," the seaman said presently. "And if we could get that anchor overside and pay out the cable it would keep her head to the sea and bring her up when she got into shallow water."

Watson shook his head. "There's time enough for that," he remarked, staring into the cold sky.

In the afternoon Higgins drew himself closer to the pillar. "My wife knows your wife in 'Frisco," he said thickly. "I live next door to you."

Watson nodded. "I know it," he croaked. "We're neighbors. My wife got a recipe for cookies from Mrs. Higgins last time I was in port. . . . Good cookies . . . good neighbor . . . sorry to move away . . . we've a little place out in Sunset."

Higgins considered this, working his swollen lips.

"My old woman won't starve," he said presently. "We've got a little in the bank . . . the union will look out for her . . . the union, you know . . ."

Watson's white face suddenly flushed and he broke out, repressing his agony, "I know. The union is all right for you boys . . . we're on different sides. Talbot has always been square with me . . . he'll see that the wife don't suffer . . . good man, always treated me white . . ."

They were silent.

As the ruddy sunset lit up the waste of water they both twisted their chilled limbs into easier positions and Higgins offered the skipper some of the sodden tobacco from his pocket. "Can't smoke abaft the foremast, sir," he said, with pale humor. "But we can chew."

Watson smiled a wintry smile and accepted the gift. "About that deck load," he said abruptly. "The ship could not give time and a half."

It was simply said, a statement of fact, without hint of apology or contrition. As such Higgins received it, meeting his old superior's eyes with frankness. "The union won't give an inch," he retorted. And without further words they settled down to the long night.

The northwester blew itself out to a gentle breeze. Higgins slept, his broken limb curled grotesquely out from his body, his stertorous breathing rising and falling, it seemed, to the slow surge of the wreck. But Watson, kneeling on the little deck, gasping for each painful breath, one arm around the broken pillar, peered open-eyed into the darkness to the east. Once or twice

he brushed the spray out of his eyes and strained his vision to catch something on the horizon. At last he exhaled chokingly. "Yaquina Head light," he muttered. "Due east. We are n't over ten miles off it." He figured in silence and then said, aloud: "She'll go ashore on the beach near the Siletz — maybe. There's a chance, if I can get that anchor over."

His mind worked rapidly. To get forward was, even now that the sea was smooth, a task of peril for an active man. For him, bruised and crushed, it held impossibilities. "But," he thought, "if I don't we shall go ashore in the surf and both of us will be drowned. Nobody will know why the *Suisun* was lost. Talbot may not know that I obeyed orders. All this may have to be done over again. He won't see that Mary does n't suffer." He looked at Higgins a while and his face assumed an expression of interest. "Mary says the Higginses are good neighbors," he went on, formulating his thoughts more slowly. "And he's a good man. He and I have done our best. He's stuck to the union and I've stuck to owners. We're neighbors. It is n't rightly any quarrel between us. And he'll tell it straight. . . . His wife knows Mary, and that'll make it better, so if I don't get ashore alive, maybe he'll do the neighborly thing." He awakened Higgins and said: "There's a light showing inshore. It's Yaquina Head. The wreck'll drift into the surf. If you get off all right just tell your wife to tell my wife that I did my best and that I stuck by the ship. . . . Don't tell her the ship could n't pay time and a half . . . she and

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your wife are neighbors . . . women don't understand . . . you see, the ship could n't pay time and a half . . . well . . .”

Higgins nodded, shivering in the chill. “And the union would n't give an inch,” he proclaimed. “If you get ashore and I don't, sir, just tell the boys we stuck to the union . . . tell my old woman . . . she'll understand that much . . . and if Mrs. Watson could just —”

“I reckon Mrs. Watson will do the neighborly thing,” the captain answered harshly. Higgins drowsed off feverishly.

With great exertion Watson added his own lashing to that about the sleeping sailor. Then he rose on unsteady legs and reeled to the break of the poop. Here he swayed, clinging to a bit of rail, and gazed searchingly into the shadows below him. When he had got his numbed limbs slightly warmed he let himself down till his feet touched the main deck, jerked his arm clear and turned and lurched forward, stumbling over the broken planks, clinging desperately now and again to some stable bit of wreckage while a wave thrashed around his waist, and so he struggled on toward the fo'c's'le head. He made it, throwing himself up the ladder just in time to escape a sea that almost tore him from his precarious hold. A moment more and he was on the little deck, clawing his way over the raffle of twisted and useless gear to the big anchor. A wafer of moon showed through the drifting clouds to light him to his final stopping place. With infinite pains he



managed to get his big knife out of his pocket. With it he hacked at the lashings.

For a quarter of an hour he worked pretty steadily, stopping now and then to lay his chilled hands on his bruised chest to limber the fingers. The huge anchor was partially loosened and worked slightly to the pitch of the hulk. He ceased and crawled to the windlass and knocked out the stoppers. Then he went back to the anchor. To get at the last ropes that held it in the chocks he must crawl to the edge of the deck and, he perceived, when that lashing was cut, the anchor in its plunge must inevitably drag him with it into the sea. He stared back into the shadows where Higgins, invisible, lay snoring and unconscious. "One of us or both," the captain thought calmly. The sailor's grim words came back to his ear: "The union ain't givin' an inch." All the firmness and resolution of the man's strong nature came forward. He shook his head fiercely. "Five of 'em went, not giving an inch. It was the smartest crew that ever shipped with me. They're gone, but I'm still here and still master. They would n't give an inch. . . . Here's another!" He dragged himself across the cold bulk of the anchor and, half clinging to the broken rail, half clutching at the slippery deck, he did his final duty, feeling at each roll of the wreck the great, overpowering, sullen thrust of the ton mass of iron.

Higgins was roused from his troubled sleep by a roar of steel links tearing through the hawsehole. He sat up and saw a shower of red sparks shoot into the dark-

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ness far forward. As he watched, the great anchor reached the end of its cable and brought up short, sending great vibrations through the waterlogged hulk. He stared into the blackness and yelled, "Captain! Captain! Captain!" There was no answer.

The wreck of the *Suisun*, now tumbling within soundings, brought up slowly, as the anchor dragged, and settled with her head to the seas. The bright light on Yaquina Head shone from the invisible shore. Higgins' experienced senses caught the significance of the changed motion of the hulk and he ceased to cry out. "Him and me was neighbors," he muttered. "My wife knew his wife . . . the ship could n't pay time and a half . . . the union would n't give an inch . . . why —" In the light of death he sternly considered the problem of life.

## THE SCHOONER MARY E. FOSTER: GUARDIAN

THE AGENT of Lloyd's Intelligence Department, the detective bureau of the world's sea police, listened to the smoking-room gossip of the wreck of the *Hester Fox* with occasional knowing nods. When the captain had finished his story the agent lit his pipe and seemed on the point of drowsing off when the purser mentioned the name "Mary Foster."

I have totally forgotten what the connection was, what the talk about it was and the conclusion of it, but I sha'n't soon forget the interest of the Lloyd's man, who finally asked me to his own cabin to chat. It was the beginning of my acquaintance with the most remarkable and secretive department of police and of my friendship with Samuel Garfinkle, one of its shrewdest agents. Garfinkle told me, in the course of time, the inside of many strange affairs. He was an indefatigable investigator; the most indomitable collector of facts I ever knew.

"Sonny, me lad," he would say when I gaped at his sureness of assertion, "the big seas are no place not to know your facts. There's no policeman on every corner and no court across the way to settle a thing while it's warm. I've got the rascals from Tristan

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D'Acunha to the Runn of Kutch to watch, and I've only got facts to go on — facts picked up on steamers like this, hunted down in public houses in New Zealand, caught out of the ruck of people on the bund in Shanghai, sucked out of the whirlpools of London and Hongkong and New York. Facts, me lad, facts, facts and nothing but facts. Two facts, ten thousand miles apart and ten years distant have saved my people a hundred thousand pounds."

"But you must use your imagination a lot, too," I insisted.

"Imagination is only one form of belief," said Garfinkle. "You can't make up what never was nor can be. You say you imagine it; that means you would believe a man who told you just that thing as a fact. For instance, I could tell you where three men imagined something and it was a fact for ten years. It cost Lloyds ten thousand pounds to find out that it was n't a fact; and when they found it out, and I told them it was all a falsehood, they had paid the insurance money just the same as though it were a fact, and that made it a fact, which it never was and never will be — though it is, now."

"Go 'way," I said flippantly.

Garfinkle never liked to be treated lightly. He seemed to think that he should be respected, if only for what he contained — a remarkable collection of facts. So now, after going to the trouble of allowing me to bring him to a point, he insisted on proper demeanor. He lifted one eyebrow gently and said,

“Then you never heard the true story of the schooner *Mary E. Foster*, *Guardeen*?”

“No,” I replied.

“It was that that was in my mind when I made the remarks you have just sneered at. Of course, if you don’t know anything about the case, you could n’t be expected to understand a plain statement.”

I humbled myself at that moment and have rejoiced ever since. In all my later profitable acquaintance with Garfinkle I do not believe I ever heard him tell of a matter that so completely explained his prodigious activity in the search for the ultimate fact; a search most wonderful and exacting in view of the bigness of the world and the unbridled passions that plot and play upon its far-spread seas.

You will understand (Garfinkle began, pulling out of a fat wallet five newspaper clippings and spreading them upon his knee) that this is *not* the story of the *Mary E. Foster*, *Guardeen*, until the very last. In the beginning it was simply the story of the American schooner *Mary E. Foster*, of San Francisco, 450 tons register; James Foster, master. Her history, like that of all other craft that carry a flag, was told in the marine columns of the newspapers under “Arrivals and Departures.”

It was sixteen years ago, while I was down in the West Indies looking into the wreck of the Norwegian steamer *Ilda*, that I was called to Kingston and told to cross the isthmus, hurry to San Francisco and settle

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up the matter of the insurance on the hull and cargo of the schooner *Mary E. Foster*, which had been lost on a passage from Honolulu to Astoria. Remember, I had never heard of the schooner before and all I knew was that too many American schooners were being lost in the Pacific and our department was beginning to take note of them all. It is a fact that this loss was a perfectly simple one and my going personally to examine it was merely a matter of formality.

Now when I left Kingston for Colon on a Royal Mail steamer I took with me this clipping.

(He laid the first slip of printed paper in my palm.)

You observe it is from the marine columns of the New York "Herald" and reads:

The Oceanic steamship *Mariposa*, arrived in San Francisco yesterday from Tahiti, reports picking up small boat and three of the crew of the schooner *Mary E. Foster* which foundered 300 miles east of Koke Head on June 12. The *Foster* was laden with shell valued at \$115,000 and sailed from Honolulu June 1, meeting with good weather till the morning of June 2, when she was caught in a squall and thrown on her beam ends. The survivors state that the vessel sank very suddenly the next day in a heavy sea. Captain Foster and the rest of the crew were drowned.

Sounds plain enough, does n't it? It certainly sounded all right to me, and I walked into the office in San Francisco a month later ready for the simplest kind of an examination into the items of the manifest and the particulars of the wreck. On the table in the office was an old "List," and I picked it up and turned to the name "Foster," as a man will in the way of

business. There I found the schooner, all right, and it was only a sort of mental memorandum I made that she was marked "Dismantled" — it was the 1889 "List," and two years old. A vessel, as you know, sonny, me lad, is often laid up and then afterwards refitted for a new series of voyages. But it stuck in my mind that she was laid up in Oakland Creek.

Then I went to business, which was comprised in the depositions under oath of Thomas Richards, A.B., Henry Hoke, A.B., and Passiah Mint, cook, picked up at sea, June 16th, 1891, while adrift in a small boat, by the steamer *Mariposa*. They all told the same story, which was that the *Mary E. Foster*, laden with shell from the Paumotus, had put into Honolulu for supplies and they had joined her there for the voyage to Astoria. Owing to the smell of the rotting shell, there had been considerable trouble with the crew, but nothing to amount to anything until the night of June 11th, when a squall struck the schooner during an altercation between Captain Foster and the man at the wheel. The schooner, being broad on the wind with her topsails set, heeled over on her beam ends. The cargo shifted and she did not recover herself. They passed the night working in the rotten shell, trying to right her, but in the heavy sea could do nothing. On June 12th, by these fellows' stories, the *Mary E. Foster* suddenly sank and they barely escaped in a small boat. They did not know what had become of the captain and the rest of the crew.

Then I went to see the owner of the schooner. I

found him at the "Bowhead." He was a big, heavy-handed sailorman, one of those chaps that take shore life as a solemn luxury. He showed me his papers and a copy of the manifest signed by the American consul at Suva. He proved easily enough that his schooner was worth \$25,000 and the cargo was worth probably double the insurance on it—which was \$50,000. The only peculiar thing about him was that he was the sole owner of the schooner, whereas on the Pacific coast a captain is always supposed to own a "piece" of the schooner he commands. I asked the owner about it and he told me Captain Foster had sold him his interest that voyage. "The skipper needed the money to send his daughter to school with," I remember was part of the explanation.

You observe how regular it all was: the vessel in Lloyd's "List," mentioned in the newspapers, a bona-fide owner, all the papers correct, the loss authenticated by three seamen picked up by a mail steamer in mid-ocean. Of course the insurance companies paid the \$75,000 when the *Mary E. Foster* came to her last Wednesday of life and was posted as "Missing."

I went my way on other matters, but, as is my custom in every transaction, I never entirely lost the case from my mind. Then, one day in Singapore I picked up a copy of the "North China News," and here is the clipping I made:

Passengers ex SS *Fingal Bay* from Vancouver via Hawaii, Miss Mary E. Foster and Henry Hoke, Esq. Proceeded same day.



That is dated in 1895, four years after the loss of the schooner *Mary E. Foster*. But I knew right away that those names, joined for the second time, meant something. I looked up my notes again and assured myself that one of the seamen picked up after the foundering of the vessel was named Henry Hoke. You see how these facts work out: What had Henry Hoke to do with *Mary E. Foster*? Was she the daughter of the captain and former part owner? If Captain Foster sold his interest in his ship to send his daughter to school, how did she have money to travel in the style that this clipping inferred? Where did Henry Hoke, a common sailor, get the money to travel first cabin in the same ship? Did Henry Hoke and *Mary E. Foster* get part or all of the insurance money from the schooner?

You see what a beautiful series of problems it set for me. You will say immediately, "How did you know these were the same persons?" I will say that it was because I know that a part of a circle, if continued, will meet itself. I was as sure of the identity of this *Mary Foster* and *Henry Hoke* as I was of my own.

But I could n't get to Shanghai to trace them. The loss had been paid, too. However, I made up my mind that some day I would know the history of the wreck of the *Mary E. Foster*.

In the San Francisco "Chronicle" of May 12th, 1898, I found this paragraph, the third of my series:

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It is rumored along the water front that the owners of the dismantled hulk *Mary E. Foster*, which has been lying in the mud up Oakland Creek for many years, will refit her to take a party of prospectors and their outfits to the Alaskan gold fields this season.

Now, schooners of the same name are unusual, specially hailing from the same port. I put my three clippings together, and then I went and hunted up the owners of this *Mary E. Foster*. They were a little crowd of Greek fishermen who had bought her for junk. I found that they had purchased the hull and fittings in 1890, after the schooner had been laid up since 1888. That was all the satisfaction I got, except that I measured the old craft and found her dimensions were exactly those of the vessel lost off the Hawaiian Islands in 1891 on which the underwriters had paid \$75,000.

Then I came to the true conclusion: The only *Mary E. Foster* that ever existed was the one lying up Oakland Creek — that had lain there ever since 1888. An insurance company had paid \$75,000 on a schooner and cargo that never existed and consequently never could arrive in port. Nice conclusion, was n't it?

I took my three clippings to the agent in San Francisco and we went over the whole affair again. It was plain that something had been done in the way of a big mystery, for we could find no trace of any *Mary E. Foster* except the one lying up Oakland Creek dismantled. No real trace, I should say. We did find this, a clipping from the San Francisco "Call" under date of June 7th, 1891:

Honolulu, June 1. — Sailed, Am Sch *Mary E. Foster* for San Francisco. From Suva, May 29.

You see the point? There was no cable to the Islands then and that item was brought up by the mail boat. So much had been made evident that I made a report to the home office and started out to solve the mystery that these four clippings had woven. And that begins the story of the schooner *Mary E. Foster*, Guardeen.

The first thing I did was to go to Honolulu and look up the records in the Harbor Master's office relative to the sailing of the schooner *Mary E. Foster* on June 1st, 1891. I may state that no schooner of that name entered Honolulu in that year or departed from it. The latest record of the *Mary E. Foster* was in 1887. You have observed the clipping from the "Call." Isn't it business-like? But it was all a lie. The *Foster* never sailed from Honolulu that day in June, 1891; therefore no schooner of that name was lost 300 miles east of Koke Head twelve days later. That is one fact. The others were that three men in a small boat had been picked up by the *Mariposa*, that they had told this story of the *Mary E. Foster* and that the San Francisco "Call," on June 7th, several days before the *Mariposa* arrived with the survivors, had published a false item of news.

Nothing could change these facts. But there was another truth that they indicated: the man in San Francisco who had placed the insurance knew the inside history. If he was not one of the three sailors,

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that made four men concerned in the mystery of the *Mary E. Foster*. I knew the names of three of them. I knew that one, Henry Hoke, still kept the name he had gone by in this transaction. Also I knew that a woman called Mary E. Foster was alive and knew Henry Hoke. I was puzzled, sonny, me lad. There were a dozen possible explanations and all I could do was to wait for another fact to turn up. It loomed up while I was in Honolulu. Here is my last clipping. It is from the Honolulu "Commercial Advertiser" of June 14th, 1899:

An application was made yesterday for a transfer of record in the matter of Mary E. Foster, Guardian, to the consular court in Shanghai. The property of the estate is being administered by Bittle & Company of Honolulu and the application is made by them as attorneys for the closing up of the guardianship matter as the ward has reached her majority.

I called on Bittle & Company and was referred to their attorney. I do not know just how to tell the various stories that finally united in the solution of the mystery, but I beg you to listen carefully. There is a certain amount of interest in the matter from the standpoint of a student of humanity. The great interest, I may say, is in the logic by which a keen mind may solve riddles woven through many years by men vitally concerned in secrecy.

The attorney was very reticent about the whole matter until I showed him my credentials. He then took me down to see the manager of the bank. He, too,

was very non-committal, but as a business man he felt compelled to afford me some opportunity of gaining information. You will understand that I did not tell them my object. I assumed for the time the rôle of a man who had a pecuniary interest in the estate and who demanded satisfactory proof that his interests were being safeguarded.

"We are acting solely as the custodians of the funds of the estate," said the manager finally. "It was put into our hands in September, 1891, upon the application of Thomas Richards and Passiah Mint to the court of the Kingdom of Hawaii for the appointment of a guardian *ad litem* for the minor Mary E. Foster. The estate consisted of \$75,000 in cash invested in English securities. We have taken charge of this investment and made our annual report as required by law. The minor has now, we understand, reached her majority and we are prepared to turn the property over to her at her request."

That was the extent of the statement and I felt that I must have some details to go on. I asked the address of Messrs. Hoke and Mint. "I think that these gentlemen, being the applicants in the matter," I said, "will be most capable of telling me the exact status of my claim."

"I would suggest," the manager said, "that you communicate with the guardian, whose agents we are."

"And who is the guardian?" I demanded.

"Mary E. Foster," he answered.

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“But I thought that that was the name of the minor?” I remarked.

“Of the guardian, also,” was the response.

“Are you acquainted with the guardeen?” I insisted.

“We are,” he replied. “Our duties have been merely those connected with the conserving of the estate’s interests in this kingdom and the investment of the moneys intrusted to us at the application of the gentlemen named.”

I saw that there was nothing to be gained by pursuing this course of action and I plumped out: “Representing Lloyd’s agency, as my credentials will show, I shall be compelled to enter suit for the whole estate in your hands in behalf of the underwriters who paid the loss of the schooner *Mary E. Foster*, alleged to have foundered in mid-ocean on June 12th, 1891.”

I shall never forget the look on the manager’s face. He seemed to have been hit in the face and the color rose to his ears. Then he got up and walked back and forth a moment across the steaming hot office. “What do you mean?” he demanded, at last.

I told him in five minutes and he listened like a man harkening to a message told in a whisper. When I had finished he and the attorney stared at each other and then, to my amazement, laughed.

“So that explains it,” the attorney said, controlling himself.

“Explains what?” I demanded.

“A thousand things, Mr. Garfinkle,” the manager replied, his face growing solemn again. “I shall not

longer keep from you the address of Mr. Henry Hoke. And when you have had a talk with him, I wish you would bring him down to the bank. I should like to know what your course of action will be. You understand that we have had nothing to do with anything except the custody of the moneys of the estate and that those moneys are ready in our hands to be delivered to whomever the courts may determine."

"Mr. Hoke is living at Palama," the attorney interposed, with a look of genuine concern on his face. "I should be glad to go with you to see him, if you do not mind."

Now banks like Bittle & Company are not to be suspected of evil doing and their attorney must necessarily be an honest and upright man. I would need impartial assistance in my next operations and I gladly acquiesced in the attorney's proposal.

As we walked down King street towards Palama, which is the district of Honolulu across the river, the attorney, my companion, seemed oddly disturbed. I noticed it and finally demanded of him whether he would prefer not to accompany me. He replied that it was his duty, with my permission, to go along and see that his client's interest suffered no harm. "Not that I think you would willingly put us in a false position, Mr. Garfinkle," he went on. "But in circumstances so remarkable I hope you will excuse me if I defer my full agreement in the facts that you assert until after we have interviewed Mr. Hoke."

We turned off King street and went through the

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windings of Aala Lane under the palms until we came to a small house set back in a very neatly-kept yard. This, the attorney informed me, was the residence of Hoke. "And there he is," he said, "sitting on the *lanai* taking the air."

Sonny, me lad, Hoke was the owner whom I had seen in 1891 in the "Bowhead" saloon and the man to whom the insurance had been paid. I stopped at the gate to make sure of it and I tell you I was of two minds whether to go in or not. I have met many desperate men, and I have gone down under more than one fighting felon. But of all the malignant and baleful countenances that I ever confronted I shall give first place to that of Hoke.

He rose when we entered, and shot his chair back to the wall with one swift straightening of his knee. Then I was sure that he knew me, recognized me after all the years. And, more than that, I knew he had been expecting me. Sometimes, at night, I think of the people who are expecting me — people in cottages out pretty roads from London, men in public houses on the outskirts of Sydney and Auckland, skippers tooling up and down the inner seas in broken vessels, mates guzzling gin in San Francisco dives, pompous chaps in fine linen and broadcloth sitting in pews in fine churches, all waiting for Samuel Garfinkle to come in and say, "I've come to ask you —" Grim-faced, sodden-eyed, busy-minded, drunken, boastful men, waiting for Samuel Garfinkle . . . retribution . . . Destiny — the End!



And here I walked in this little gate a hot afternoon in Honolulu, the roar of the surf on the reef beating through the palms and Henry Hoke waiting for me, with his heavy face set in desperation and defiance and murderous purpose. And all I said, sonny, me lad, was, "Mr. Hoke, I've come to ask you —"

He hardly noticed the presence of the attorney, but stared at me, his big frame stiff and menacing. I picked up a chair that sat near the end of the *lanai* and seated myself. "I've come to ask you about the loss of the *Mary E. Foster*," I finished, holding myself calmly.

"What about it?" he managed to demand, relaxing by an effort.

"All about it," I responded, tilting my chair back and pulling out some cigars.

The attorney took one and I handed the other out towards Hoke. He stared at it a moment and then took it, slowly. I heard his teeth crunch through the end of it.

"Yes," I said quietly, "I am very much interested in the case. You remember you proved a loss of \$75,000 in San Francisco in 1891 and we paid you. Now, we understand, there was no schooner of the name of *Mary E. Foster* on the high seas that year, or any time since. On what schooner did we pay that loss?"

He might have denied it and I would have had to spend a year proving that he was the man who had sworn ownership to that vessel. But, as I say, he had

been waiting for me, and he thought, of course, that I was ready for him. So he came direct to the point: "What are you going to do about it?" he asked.

"I have just informed the attorney of Bittle & Company that I am going to the court and ask for the principal and interest of the sum you defrauded us of," I responded. "Then I am going to put you in jail, you and all concerned in this fraud."

"What do you want of me, then?" he sneered. "If you've got it all cut and dried, why bother me with questions?"

"Because," I said frankly, "I am curious to know why you did this — you and Thomas Richards and Passiah Mint. I find that the money has been left practically untouched and is in the name of Mary E. Foster, the daughter, I take it, of the man who, once master of the schooner of that name, sold in 1899 to certain Greek fishermen in Oakland. Evidently, you have not profited directly by your crime. Mary E. Foster has profited. It will make it easier for you if you will tell me how she used you as a tool to gain this wealth."

Even the attorney was alarmed by Hoke's aspect at these words. His huge fist doubled up and his arm stretched toward me as if he would catch me in some fatal grip and crush me. But I did not move. "I am advising you to make a clean breast for your own sake," I repeated. "A full confession will have much influence with the court."

To my amazement — and I was prepared for almost any demonstration — Hoke rose to his feet and walked

away from me to the edge of the *lanai* and then back, his face as he turned it toward me working like that of a child trying to stifle a sob. He strode thus for a full five minutes while the attorney and I watched him curiously. At the end of that time a second man came in the gate and came up on the *lanai*. He was a short, greasy-looking man with a fat and placid face. He stared at Hoke and then took in the attorney and myself with a slow and unperturbed glance.

Hoke stopped directly in front of him and shook his fist in his face. "They're after Mary Foster," he bellowed with surprising volume of tone.

"Mary!" echoed the new-comer.

"Yes, Mary, Passiah Mint, and it's neither your old carcass nor mine that'll serve instead."

Nothing more ludicrous could be imagined than these two men glaring at each other, Hoke's face expressing the very deepest of anger and Mint's slowly developing a bewilderment, a chagrin and a despair that nearly set me to laughing. But I was on business bent and I sharply brought them to a realization of it. "I have n't any time to waste," I said briefly.

At this moment there was an ejaculation from Mint that gave me my cue: "Mary!" he gasped. "And she never knew anything about it!"

"If she did n't," I cut in, "she never need know, if you will kindly tell me the circumstances of this extraordinary crime."

"You mean that?" said Hoke with a sudden quietness of voice.

"I do," I said readily, feeling that I now had my entrance into the mystery. "If the girl you speak of knew nothing of this most remarkable affair — from which, I gather, you profited immensely — I give you my word she cannot be brought into it."

I will not detail the particulars of the methods I used to extract from these two men the history of their crime — for such of course it proved to be. But it finally was exposed, in full, by Hoke and Mint. I venture to state that a more peculiar case has never come under the cognizance of my department. To appreciate the oddity of the whole matter, I must give you the statement of Hoke and his companion, together with their explanation of the genesis of their plan and the details of its execution.

"We were sailormen with Captain Foster," Hoke said, looking at Mint.

"In the old *Mary E. Foster*?" I demanded.

"The same. There was three of us, me and Richards and Mint. I reckon we stayed by Captain Foster about three years, before he was struck by the main boom and died in a blanket in the lee of the wheelbox." Hoke stopped and stared at me, his heavy face set in deep and rebellious lines. And then, as he did many times during the piecing out of the story, he suddenly cried out to know why he should tell me these things. I brought him to his task again each time by speaking of the girl. "I shall have to go straight to her and find it all out," I would say.

"Captain Foster was a hard man," Hoke told me.

“He would run his schooner without a mate, to save money and I can see him yet sitting on the weather rail with his chin on his chest and his eyes half shut for lack of sleep while his ship plunged along. It showed how hard he was that he never rigged boom tackles to save his schooner from the wrecking jar of the big booms coming inboard. ‘Short-handed schooners make better time without them,’ he’d growl.”

Mint took it up: “Yes, and I’ve stood in the galley watching the sails crumple up when the wind shifted, and then hung on while the three booms started in, crossed the decks and brought up on the sheets with that force that the *Mary E. Foster* would jump the oakum out of the seams. You could n’t sleep for the thunder of ’em and the yell of the tops’l men shifting the tops’l sheets up there on the buckling masts while the gaffs thumped them in the ribs. He was a devil, Foster was.”

“So you see,” Hoke went on, “it was somewhat of a surprise to us when he came down Clay street in San Francisco one day with a baby girl in his arms. He took her into the galley and I heard him say to Passiah here, ‘Cookie, the old woman’s dead. Here’s the kid. Look after her.’”

“That was all he said and a little later we were scooting out the Golden Gate bound for Hilo for sugar. And there was where the boom tackles might have saved the old man his life and you and me, Passiah, all this *pilikia* (trouble). Think, sir, of a little girl playing on the quarter-deck under the traveler-block, with the

sheet dancing and thrumming out to the boom-end and never a tackle to keep that lump of timber from swinging inboard! And one day she had her little legs curled up under the creaking block and her little ear to the humming rope listening to 'the b'ass band' when the schooner fell off and the big boom hovered doubtful and the big block started to come home. The old man saw the kiddie and that if the boom swung she'd be crushed by the traveler like a biscuit in a dog's mouth, and he jumped. Jumped, by Heaven, a good thirty feet and threw her back. But the boom came home and we picked him up and he died in a blanket in the lee of the wheel-house with the little girl pulling in his beard."

Hoke hummed a while, tilted back in his chair, and the ex-cook gazed at me, shaking his head. "Go on with the story," I commanded.

"We were n't any of us navigators," Hoke remarked. "But we brought the schooner on down here, burying the skipper out there between the coast and the islands. And when we got here, they took the schooner away from us and in a month we found we had just ten dollars between us and the girl kid. Her share of the schooner went into the courts and never came out. It was right here in Palama that we came that day we went broke and the three of us sat down there on the bank of the stream and the little kiddie sat in the middle and cried into her little frock. But we three were n't going to abandon her and we swore to a paper that we would go to sea and turn over our wages to

the girl. That was just fifteen years ago. Here's the paper."

Hoke handed out to me a piece of paper which is not among my records, for a reason that I shall explain in due time. But I know its wording, for it was very short. It was as follows:

*"We swear to this paper, so help me God no harm is to come to Mary Foster till she has growed up and knows her own mind, and we will pay all our pay day each time to the old woman living in Aala Lane to buy her frocks and send her to school.*

"THOMAS RICHARDS, A.B.

"HENRY HOKE, A.B.

"PASSIAH MINT, Cook."

Funny document, was n't it? And when I read it Hoke folded it up and tucked it away as careful as if it were valuable.

"Well," I said, "so far so good. But what happened after that? You're pretty slow coming to the point."

"That paper's the point," Hoke replied, buttoning his jacket. "We took the little one to the old woman that lived here and told her, says we, 'You feed this little girl and dress her in nice frocks and keep her away from the natives and we'll pay you twenty dollars a month.' Then we went away and shipped. Richards, he went to Shanghai and Mint here got a berth on an inter-island steamer as cook and I went back to the coast in the bark *Irmgarde*. And every payday we sent the money to the old woman here for the kiddie."

"I take it that Mint kept his eye on the girl, seeing

he was traveling from here to the other islands and back," said the attorney, helping him out.

"Yes," says Mint. "I ran from here to Molokai and Hilo and every Saturday I went up here to see how the little one was getting on. She used to like to pull my whiskers."

You may imagine my impatience to get to the end of the account. So I brought Hoke up with a round turn and told him I didn't want any more extraneous details, but the straight story of the loss of the *Mary E. Foster*.

"It was all right for some years," he said, "till Richards got on a drunk in Belfast and drank up his pay day out of an English bark from the Colonies — a good forty pounds gone like smoke out of a pipe. And the girl was growing all along and had stopped being dressed in little frocks and had taken to shoes and long socks as well. The old woman told us she needed double the money. 'And she ought to go to school down in Auckland or Sydney,' she says, 'if you don't want her to take up with the natives here. She is growing into a young lady.'

"That was all true, and Mint and I — I came down on the *Falls of Clyde* to see about how things was going — talked it over and we decided that the little girl should have as good as any: 'Boarding school, bonnets, silk handkerchiefs and a purse with little gold pieces in it,' says Mint, 'and you and me can't make it on our pay days. First we drink too much and buy clothes and then Richards swills the proceeds of a ten



months' voyage in Ireland. If we did n't drink and did n't buy so many clothes when we came down to see her so she can sit in our laps without getting all over tar, we might make the school over in Lahaina. But I get ashore and take a drink for luck and before I knows it half my pay is gone on that and clothes,' says Passiah.

"I felt the same way, and we were n't doing the little girl justice, so when Richards turns up, after his letter, we took turns making him see how rotten he had acted and then we sat down to plan ways and means of sending Mary Foster to school and letting her have a good time.

"It would n't interest you, sir, to know how we figured it out, but we did figure it that the easiest way was to make it out of the insurance companies. We knew they had the money and we did n't want any mistakes about that end of it. So we got it."

That fellow (Mr. Garfinkle waved his hand with an indescribable air of comic chagrin) plumped out with this in the most matter-of-fact way, as if, by Jove, all they had had to do was to decide on the sum they needed and ask the insurance company for it. And I had nothing to say, for they had got it. So I simply waited for the rest of the story.

"We had heard the old schooner *Mary E. Foster* was laid up and dismantled, and Passiah, here, thought that was the best vessel to use. 'The little girl never got her rights out of it,' says he, 'and I think we can get 'em for her. And besides we'll tell her it was

coming from her father's share.' You see, Mary was very questionable in her manner and always wanted to know everything about what we did. And we had sworn we would n't lie to her except about ourselves for her own good, we being not exactly proper to know for a young lady.

"So Richards went down to the Fijis and Passiah stayed here and I went to San Francisco. I took a letter up with me saying that the schooner *Mary E. Foster* had rescued a lot of missionaries out of Rarotonga and had taken them to Tahiti. That went into the paper. Then Passiah got to sending up items from Auckland and the Colonies by the mail boat, all about the *Mary E. Foster* going about with cargo. And then I went and got the *Mary E. Foster* insured with a cargo of shell from Suva by way of Honolulu to Astoria. Then Passiah and Richards met me here in Honolulu and we waited till we thought it was the right time and Passiah handed the purser of the *Chica* a letter to the newspapers announcing the sailing of the schooner *Mary E. Foster* from here to Astoria.

"Of course, being in the mud up Oakland creek she would n't arrive, would she? But everybody, having seen her name in the papers for some time, was sure she was sailing the seas. And we were going to wait a while till she was overdue and then go up to the coast and collect the money.

"But Richards thought it would be better not to have to wait so long and so we shipped on the Norwegian ship *Hildegarde*, out of Hilo round the Horn.

We had it all figured out, and when we had got pretty well off shore we took the quarter boat and stole away in the middle watch. Two days later the *Mariposa* came up over the edge of the sea and took us aboard, and it was all fixed then. We told of losing the schooner, put our names down on a paper and shipped outward again, all but me. I played the owner and collected the money — \$75,000 in good money.”

That was their story. Simple as addition and subtraction. But you were saying, How about the *Mary E. Foster*, Guardian? This was the way of that, just as Mint told it that afternoon at Palama.

“ We had the money, all right, and we did n’t know just how to fix it, so one day Hoke and Richards went to the bank and told them about Mary E. Foster having some money left and she was a little girl and was going to school in Auckland with other ladies, and how would we fix the money of it? And they told us about the law and the rules about all little girls having guardians. Right there Hoke spoke up, ‘ The schooner *Mary E. Foster* is her guardian.’

“ The bank people laughed, and when we ’d explained that the money was her share out of the courts, and she ’d come down and talked about her father and sat on our knees and smiled at everybody, the bank said all right, and the money belonged to the schooner *Mary E. Foster*, Guardian.

“ So Hoke paid over the money and the bank people promised to send her a good sum of money every month and see that she was given good frocks and little gold

pieces for her little purse to give to beggars and poor boys on the crossings, like any little lady. Hoke took her down to the Colonies in the *Ventura*."

Hoke squirmed a little and explained that he went as quartermaster, just to keep an eye on her.

"But you landed in Shanghai out of the *Fingal Bay* four years afterward," I suggested, just to let him know I was up on the facts. You should have seen Hoke look at Mint. "I knew they had an eye on us," he said with a groan. "We made a bull somewhere."

"What were you doing in Shanghai?" I insisted.

"I was taking her back to school," said Hoke promptly. "She came back to Honolulu on the sly to see us without letting us know, and I had to see her safe to school again."

Mint laughed for the first time. "You were a toff," he remarked. "Hard hat, black shoes and full shore rig and a handle to your name!"

"On my own money," Hoke interrupted sharply. "And the little girl was going to be taken in style, every time, and it was up to me to do it. I didn't like the togs nor the cabin."

"It was a tony trip," sighed the cook, shaking his head. "And you was the only one could ha' carried it off in style, with the little lady calling you uncle and sitting beside you on the upper deck with her little hand on the arm of your chair. I saw you."

"You saw him," I interjected, puzzled.

"I was in the galley," Mint said, relaxing again, "and Richards was one of the deck stewards. And

nobody knew but the little lady, and she smiled and thought it was a joke. Told Hoke, here, to call me down one day for making her coffee too hot at tiffin. But we saw her safe to school, and when we all got ashore at Auckland she kissed the lot of us and tripped away up the steps with her little purse on her wrist and the tears in her eyes."

They fell silent and the four of us sat there a long time, tilted back in our chairs. I was thinking about just how to get the thing in shape for the courts, when it suddenly occurred to me that it might be worth while to find out where the girl was. I inquired.

"She's in San Francisco," said Hoke, "and you'll have to take it all out of us."

"When is she coming back?" I asked.

"Never," Hoke said quietly, "and we're just waiting till the guardeen case is settled before we start out again. She's growed up."

"We're only sailormen," said the cook, drawing a long breath, "and we've done all the paper we swore on. She's a-going to be married to a swell up on the coast, a real swell, with lots of money."

"But he's all right," interposed Hoke hurriedly. "We saw to *that*."

The attorney spoke up at this. "He is a young man of good family and excellent prospects, Mr. Garfinkle. There are several features about this case worthy of careful consideration. I may state what these men have omitted to state, that they have neither of them, to my certain knowledge, profited personally by one

cent in this transaction. Indeed, they informed me yesterday that as soon as the money was turned over to Miss Foster and the guardianship closed up, they intended resuming their seafaring life as of old."

"We won't never see her again," said the cook, simply.

I had observed that Hoke was trying to speak, but seemed at a loss how to begin. Finally, he blurted out, "She'll be married in a month. Let the thing go till it's over with. *She* didn't never know anything about it and she's getting a man that can look out for her, so you can put us in jail then and she'll never know." He stooped and strangled. "You might tell her," he said, catching his breath, "that — tell the little girl that — I stole it and ran away." He stopped.

Mint's face flushed and he shook his fist at Hoke. "We stole it," he bellowed. "You ain't any better than me and I'm going to do my whack. Yes, sir, you take the money and the lawyer here can go up to the coast and tell her Passiah Mint and Henry Hoke was no good, after all she'd done for 'em, and stole the money. Then we'll go to jail and she'll not be bothered."

"How about Richards?" I suddenly thought to ask, when they made this extraordinary proposal.

"Richards ain't in on this affair," said Mint, savagely. "We have n't told her about Richards, because she thought a good deal of him. But when you tell

her about the stealing the money you tell her Richards is dead and tell her he wrote his love to her from the hospital. Hoke, give the lawyer his letter."

That letter (said Mr. Garfinkle), I have with me. It has nothing to do with the case. I have it here, though.

It read thus:

*Deer little mary, this is to say that im not feellin vary wel and must say good by and be good becuz a pakin case in Liverpool fel on my belly and im in orspitel. i hav the blue riband you tied my whisker whith last time i was in hanalooku. bee a good gell. Hoke and mint i kept what i swor. im sorry fer that spree in belfast but that was al i don & it was too bad. She was a luwin litel gell when she tide my whisker whith the riban. im dyin hard on acct of my belly bein stove in.*

*respy*

*Thos richards.*

The lawyer took the letter and gave it to me and we sat a while longer. Then Hoke got up and started walking back and forth again, growling in his beard. I will confess that I was somewhat puzzled to know what course to pursue, and during my meditation the attorney who was with me suddenly said, "Hoke, don't you think you and Mint had better make the *Sonoma* to-night? She sails at eight o'clock for Pago-Pago. Captain Hilbert told me this morning he was short-handed."

I realized that I was helpless, and I tell you I sat on that *lanai* and watched those two scoundrels walk down Aala Lane with their little kits without trying to stop them. When they had stamped out of sight

the attorney had the impudence to smile at me. "I forgot to inform you," he said, "that the matter of the guardianship of Mary E. Foster, a minor, was closed in court this afternoon. We decided not to transfer the record to the consular court in Shanghai, which Hoke and Mint insisted on for the sake of secrecy. Will you join me at dinner?"

We walked down to King street and took a car. As we sped along I observed two bowed and laggard men tramping along the sidewalk. The attorney waved a hand towards them and said to me, "I think that the matter of the schooner *Mary E. Foster*, Guardian, may be considered purely as an historical incident."

I considered this for a time and responded, "I shall, of course, have to make my report."

He took me up: "Your final report?"

I turned and looked back up the hot, bustling street and discerned the figures of two men, evidently seamen, tramping side by side. From over the roofs of the warehouses I heard the roar of the surf on the reef. The attorney spoke again: "They will never see her again."

"Then I might state, informally, that I see no good ground for proceeding further," I said. "The facts in the case show that they acted in what one might call a purely unselfish capacity. I believe the law does not contemplate the punishment of fools for their folly."

I have often thought over the affair (Mr. Garfinkle said, folding up the clippings and putting them back



in the wallet) and I do not see what interests would have been subserved by a course of action other than I followed. But I wish you to note that legally the schooner *Mary E. Foster* foundered on June 12th, 1891, about 300 miles east of Koke Head.

## T. HALDANE'S BEQUEST

"HE'S worth millions," Captain Buffle told us, with a straight glance at the bulky figure treading the white main deck of the *Solano*. "That's T. Haldane, the big broker."

"Why is he traveling on this schooner?" Mrs. White inquired. "I should think a man with his money would take the *Mongolia* or the *Miowara* at least."

Buffle ignored the implied slur on his own small vessel and shook his head. "They say Haldane counts every minute and makes it into money," he remarked with some awe. "When he took passage yesterday in Honolulu I told him we might be three weeks making the voyage to the coast. All he said was, 'I'm traveling for my health.'"

We all stared forward at the coarse, scrupulously clad man who was marching back and forth below us. He was almost eminent for pure physical massiveness. His body was columnar; his short, swinging arms gave the impression of strength. We heard the fall of his heavy feet on the planks. When he turned toward us, at the end of his journey to the foremast, we saw a great, pallid face, cleanly shaven, set with heavy-lidded eyes that peered out over his puffy cheeks with a gross and imperative glance. Mrs. White, thinned by years

down under the line and strained by the mental effort to overlay a mosaic of heathenism with the good lacquer of religion, allowed an expression of distaste to show in her face. Her husband, flushing slowly, said only: "I wonder if he could be induced to give our mission enough money to insure its growth? Possibly this is providential, this meeting. In three weeks I can present —"

(Buffle laughed harshly. "If you get a penny out of Haldane you'll do more than all the widows and orphans in the United States. Haldane eats 'em alive. They say even the big men in New York are afraid of him."

"How did he make his money?" the missionary asked.

"His father was Haldane of the old Cross Line across the Atlantic. Old Haldane was a hummer, he was. Shipmaster, mate, or sailor — he beat 'em all. I've heard the yarn that one voyage, when he was already worth a million, he shipped on one of his own vessels out of Boston as carpenter just for the fun of licking every man aboard. 'I need exercise; I'm gettin' too fat,' they say the old man remarked. And T. Haldane got his father's money, and went right into New York and doubled it. You bet he don't go to sea; not much. He stops ashore and drinks his wine behind the plate-glass windows and watches the poor people go by. That's Haldane for you." The skipper cocked an eye to the topsails and shook his head again.

"No matter," said the Rev. Mr. White. "In his

good time the Lord can draw money from the rich even as Moses drew water from the rock. Surely this is a great opportunity."

We were clear of Molokai channel and out in the full blast of the trades before Haldane descended into the stuffy cabin for his first meal with us. At table one saw the astounding bulk of the man. He overflowed his chair, and his huge hands, resting on the cloth, were purple monstrosities. He ate sparingly and drank immoderately, much to the disgust of Mrs. White, who took pains to sniff loudly each time that Haldane tilted the black bottle over his glass. But such rebukes did n't even penetrate the man's skin. He said nothing, looked at no one; merely ate, drank, and peered into space through his shuttered eyes. When his meal was finished, he got up without apology, trod the creaking steps to the deck, and resumed his walk.

For a week we dozed, slept, ate, and lounged under the awnings. The warm breath of the wind blew constantly over us, filling the sails and sending the schooner swinging to the north. All that time Haldane walked and drank. The sun seemed to have no effect on his unwholesome skin, and the pallor of it sank in and in, as a bone whitens. He exchanged no words, even with the missionary, who timidly made advances at every opportunity. Usually these attempts at conversation were met by a stare; once in a while Haldane would stop, look over the bulwarks at the running sea, and grunt inarticulately.

But when the wind died and the *Solano* rocked on

the mirror of the ocean with crash of swinging booms and occasional loud clatter of gear, the millionaire, as we now called him, ceased his walks perforce and took refuge with us under the quarter-deck awning. Here he sat stubbornly in a big chair, his purple hands on his knees, his eyes fixed resolutely on vacancy. Once, or twice, it may be, he acknowledged Mrs. White's presence by a nod and a dull glance. The rest of the time he broke the silence only at midday when the captain got up from his seat on the bitts with his slate in hand and announced the day's run. Then Haldane would say, very loudly, "We must have a breeze pretty soon." He did not say it as a suggestion, a prophecy, or a hope; he gave utterance to it as a command.

Each dawn found us swinging in the midst of the windless circle of the sea.

A week of it brought even Mr. White to nervous irritability. He fumed and fussed, very gently, to be sure; but still his mood was one of wrath and rebellion at destiny. He would peer at the chart and ask the captain questions without end, shaking his gaunt head at the skipper's crabbed replies. We all of us burned with dull indignation and sought some vent for it. We pitched on Haldane.

You would have supposed that we were afraid of him. He represented wealth and power and condign cruelty. But somehow, out on the Pacific, we grew a vast contempt for him. We scanned his crude bulk with scorn hardly concealed. We talked over him; threw our remarks around him; ignored him mali-

ciously. And all the time he sat motionless in his chair, his pallid face glistening with sweat, his purple hands swollen on his knees, and drank and drank and drank, as though the liquor that poured down his throat went to cool a terrific thirst that was infinite and unappeasable.

Oh, we knew him thoroughly inside of eight days. We had plumbed his greed and estimated his power. He might impose upon crowded people in cities. New York might be afraid of Haldane, and men might cringe to him. But we knew him too well, the upstart! He had been left money by his father, and by dull tenacity he trebled his fortune. But he was a dunce and a fool. He was hardly human. He had no soul. He was an immense parasite, that's what he was, we said. He had grown like a mushroom on a muck-heap. He was an unwholesome embodiment of stupid greed. He was a mere gross body inhabited by an impure and avaricious spirit.

We said so openly. Mr. White directed his prayers against him. Mrs. White talked before his face of drunkenness and vileness. Captain Buffle sneered at the degenerate son of the respected shipmaster of the Cross Line. Even I, used to torrid weeks on a small sailing-vessel, took a peculiar pleasure in seeing how close bitter personalities could come to moving the stupendous conceit of the fellow. We baited him like a bear in a pit. But without result. He continued to stare out of his flesh-enfolded eyes with a stony and imperturbable look. He drank thirstily.

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The ninth day of the calm a slight darkening of the East gave us hope of wind. The oily swells began to ripple a little. Far up above us hairs of cloud floated on some imperceptible gale. Buffle watched the swinging booms with anxious eyes while the mate leaned over the bulwarks in the breast of the schooner and viewed the water with surly intentness. Myself, I consulted the barometer and found it falling. At sun-down it had dropped a half-inch since noon, and still there was no wind to fill the sails. "We'll get the breeze about midnight," Buffle announced.

But midnight came, and the booms still swept back and forth clangorously. The watch came on deck sleepily, and the mate stared upward with an expression of doubt on his face. "I b'lieve I'll take in them tops'ls," he announced to the captain. Buffle shook his head. "The glass is going down very slowly," he responded. "It's only a breeze and we must make the most of it. It ought to be along now, too. If she's anyways fair, set the spinnaker, too."

I slept on deck after the watch had been changed. Across from me Haldane dozed in his chair, his big head on his breast. I could hear his stertorous inspirations. Buffle went below, and the mate sucked at his pipe by the weather rail.

Four o'clock came and the *Solano* still rocked on a breathless sea. Above us overcast stars glimmered with feeble light, and the sharp edge of the horizon was dimmed by exhalations of vapor. Captain Buffle came on deck and smelt the air. The mate growled some

inarticulate words, and then I heard Buffle's sharp answer. "No; we'll take in nothing. Let the watch go below. Is the spinnaker bent?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply. "But I'm afraid of the looks of the weather, sir. I think it will break out of the south'ard."

"So much the better," retorted Buffle. "It'll give us a good shove on our way. We ought to make the coast in a week."

The dawn kindled, sent up a spurt of light, glowed furiously, and then died down again in extraordinary fashion. Buffle, his mouth open, witnessed this, peered along his ship in the fresh darkness, and then yelled an order. The men clambered out of the forecandle. Even the cook came in answer to that fierce cry. I saw him emerge from the galley with a pot in one hand, stare aft, and then set the pot on the deck with a deliberate motion, exactly in the way of the mate plunging forward with a roar. Three men appeared (very dimly) in the weather shrouds. Then the sky immediately above us opened slowly, allowed a tremendous light to flash on us and closed again with a terrific peal. I jumped to the cuddy steps and stuck there, clawing at the side rail. For the *Solano* was being forced backward by some overwhelming and silent force.

The blackness was appalling. I could barely see the sheen of the sails above me, but I could distinctly hear the crack and give of the masts, the slow tearing of the cordage, and the gurgling of the water under the





Garrit H. Becker

Even the cook came in answer to that fierce cry.

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schooner's stern. The wind had come on us like an explosion, from dead ahead, the boom tackles had not been cast off, the head sails were not abroad, and we were being driven astern while the shouting crew tried to cast off tackles and give the schooner a chance for her life. The comparative quiet was very odd.

While I stood in the cuddy-way a huge bulk suddenly got in front of me, and I caught a glimpse of Haldane going down on deck. He could hardly have reached it when with a roar the gear carried away forward, the foretopmast went by the board, and the schooner swung round slowly to the tune of banging canvas, crashing gaffs, and ripping shrouds. For the second time the horizon grew light. The sun rose through a mass of whirling cloud and lit up a foamy, wind-swept circle of sea through the middle of which the schooner sagged sickly along, half dismantled. The squall went by and we rocked wildly in broken water for five minutes. Then the gale burst upon us from the southwest.

We worked all morning to get the poor vessel in shape. But we made little progress. The foremast quit us, the main topmast was broken off and flung completely clear, and the mizzen tottered between shivering stays. The main gaff stuck up out of the smashed deck by the pump, just as it had brought up after plumping clean through the planks endwise. Forward a few rags of canvas beat on the bowsprit. On the forecastle-head the spinnaker boom lay across

two boats which it had split into kindling-wood as it fell.

This was not so bad, but the rising sea soon showed us that the schooner was leaking. We tackled the pumps, the fly-wheels spun, and two streams of muddy brine flowed out over the deck. The carpenter reported six feet of water in the hold. For the first time I heard Haldane's voice. He was across from me, his great hands on a pump-bar, his vast shoulders going up and down as we pumped. "We shall have to take to the boat," he said in a loud, commanding tone. He pumped on, as though he had spoken and that finished it. I was amazed at the man's strength and energy.

In a few hours the gale had blown itself out and we were leaving the wreck in the single boat left uninjured. The cook had stowed it well with provisions and water, Buffle had passed down his instruments, and the mate was fending us off from the schooner's low side with the steering-oar. "Why does n't Haldane come?" Buffle demanded, looking down at us.

"I am here," said Haldane, appearing behind him.

We watched him slip over the side and deposit his great weight in our little craft with many misgivings. One of the seamen went so far as to scowl at him and murmur a protest. Haldane turned with amazing quickness and stared at the poor fellow with paralyzing fixity. Then he sat down. Buffle swung himself down among us, the mate thrust the boat away, and we dipped off on the next swell. Then the men got out their oars and we started on the long, toilsome voyage

to the coast, eight hundred miles away. There were twelve of us crowded into the boat. We had food and water for two weeks. Owing to the smallness of the boat — the others could not be repaired — nobody had been able to bring anything with him, except Mr. White, whose Bible stuck out of his pocket. Haldane held a small wallet in his hand.

The next three days passed with intense slowness. The principal memory I have of this period is that the moon, being in the full, shone down on us with great brightness at night and that Haldane insisted on sitting under the paltry shade of his handkerchief, which he elevated above him on three slivers of wood stuck into his hat. We laughed at him and he said nothing, except that he nodded when Mr. and Mrs. White followed his example, using a bit of sail cloth. "I have observed," the missionary explained, "that the light of the full moon is bad for people with poor circulation."

Probably he was quite right, for I think it was to the effect of the dazzling moonlight that our troubles of the next days were due. First, our food spoiled. It had to be thrown overboard. Then the water went bad in the cask, leaving us only enough for two days in a smaller receptacle. As we rowed constantly — there was no fair wind and the sun was broiling hot — the lack of water became a serious business in a very few hours. Very likely it was lucky that the food rotted first, or else we should have had more trouble than we did go through, which was horrible enough,

of course. I shall not enlarge. At the end of the sixth day in the small boat there were just six of us left: Mr. and Mrs. White, Haldane, Buffle, the mate, and myself. The good water was all gone, except a single quart. There was nothing to eat but a few biscuit crumbs. Buffle was dying of a wound he had received in a struggle with a crazed sailor, and the mate was only half conscious and continually combed his grizzled hair with his fingers, like a sleepy child. The missionary crouched on a thwart with his Bible open before him. His wife lay quietly back on a bit of sail cloth, her blue-veined face turned to the sapphire sky. In the sternsheets sat Haldane, his great pallid countenance set upon some invisible point to which we were making. Haldane had taken command when Buffle finally gave up the struggle to lie and think of his approaching end. It had been Haldane's bull strength that saved us from the vicious attack of thirsty madmen, his calm authority that forbade the wasteful excess which the remainder of us would have indulged in as a sort of defiant revel before dying. Now, as the sun went down the western sky, he held the loom of the steering-oar in a powerful grasp while I rowed. Our progress was infinitesimal. That, Haldane had said comfortingly, did not matter. "We shall be picked up by a passing vessel," he rumbled.

The bottle containing the fresh water and the bag of biscuit crumbs lay between his huge legs.

In the night Buffle died, White praying fervidly through cracked lips for his departing soul. The last

moments were broken by Mrs. White's attempt to spill our remaining water down the dying man's throat. Haldane had silently grasped the bottle (she had it already tipped over Buffle's gaping mouth) and put it back with the crackers. "But he is dying!" Mrs. White sobbed wildly. "Give him water!"

"Water!" Buffle gasped, his head rolling on the thwart.

But Haldane was deaf, and simply gazed out across the sea through his puffy-lidded eyes.

When Buffle was dead, Mrs. White stumbled to Haldane's feet and reviled him. "You will see us all perish, you brute!" she cried at him. "You use your strength to keep the water for yourself!"

He did not notice her.

When it was dark I drew in my oars and dozed. I wakened many times and saw Haldane still at the steering-oar, still silent, still immovable. Just before dawn he held out the bottle of water to Mrs. White. "Drink one swallow, and give it to your husband," he said.

She put the vessel to her lips and I expected to see her gulp down a cupful. But instead she merely tasted it and passed the bottle on to her husband. He sipped a little and returned to his Bible. I then drank a little and was handing it on to the mate when Haldane said quietly, "Pass the bottle to me."

I don't know why, but I obeyed. The drowsing mate made no sign that he had heard. Haldane corked the bottle and tucked it between his legs again. Later

he opened his lips to say: "If the mate can hold out long enough, that water in the keg will be good again. Rotten water always gets good again."

"But you have n't had a drink yourself," I suggested. He did not answer me. In the afternoon we got a fine breeze from the westward and Haldane and I hoisted the sail. That night Mrs. White and her husband finished the fresh water.

At noon the next day the mate got up slowly, washed his face and hands in the sea water, scanned some invisible tops'ls in the sky, croaked out an inarticulate order, and fell overboard like a stone. In the silence that followed the missionaries' ejaculated prayer, Haldane emitted a calm sentence, "He could not wait."

The next forty-eight hours we spent in the miserable business of waiting for the water in our remaining cask to clear up. I suppose it had never been very good. It seethed and gave up vile odors to our parched nostrils; it even foamed in filthy scum over the staves around the bung. In that period we drew closer, White and his wife and I, to the strong, swollen-visaged man who ruled us. For he gave us hope and somewhat of his own infinite endurance. I fancy that we drew out of his very heart those hot hours. I see him yet, his unwieldy bulk squeezed between the gunwales of our little boat, his blistered, purple hand on the oar, his hanging jaws set in grim, harsh lines, his eyes looking out of their fat sockets with incredible and serene confidence. He was gross,



drunken, cruel, selfish, greedy, soulless, predatory. He looked it. And yet he poured round us the supreme mightiness of his self-centered spirit. He enveloped us in the garment of his own sufficiency against God and His world. He scorned even the ravenous sea. He lifted no eyelid at Death. He seemed without thirst, without hunger, without weakness, eternally confronting destiny with imperturbable and astounding calm.

Even White would involuntarily release his eyes from the pages of the Bible and seek that huge visage as a child looks for help in a man's face. Mrs. White, whose heart flamed within her as she, woman-like, thought over all that had happened, now and again peered up at him with a tremulous glance of hope. And at great intervals — hours apart — he would say, without looking at her, "We must wait till the water is good." He steered steadily eastward.

In the cool of the third night after the mate left us the water in the cask subsided. At dawn I dipped into it and brought the bottle up filled with clear liquid. We drank sparingly. White croaked a thanksgiving.

Two more days passed and still the westerly wind held, and we slowly forged our path toward land. Then the wind settled down in the east and our frail craft tossed miserably over the chop. I noticed that Haldane no longer took his share of water. Besides this I saw a strange thing about him — his great pallor seemed to be breaking up like a shell. His skin hung in folds over his shrunken features. His hands alone

kept their former size. His forehead assumed a glassy look, as if it were polished. But he gave no sign of weakness. I cannot even say that he slept. None of us ever saw him close his eyes.

Lack of food now made itself felt. Mrs. White was too weak to sit up, and lay in the bottom of the boat, sighing. Her husband read his Bible by fits and starts, but mostly stared out to the eastward as if he, too, caught a glimpse of the invisible goal on which Haldane's eyes were set. Yet his mind wandered. Now and then he prayed with startling unction. Again he would mutter texts in an unknown tongue. At such times Haldane would stare more profoundly than ever across the windy sea and his shrunken face would assume a faint color, as though the blood were driven by an effort of his terrific will into the outer vessels.

I cannot tell you how long we had thus suffered when I woke from my doze over the oars to hear White's voice rising energetically behind me. I glanced over my shoulder and saw the missionary kneeling on a thwart, his closed Bible under an arm, the other arm stretched out toward Haldane. He was preaching.

An odd sermon it was, too, directed at Haldane, the millionaire. White described him as he was — a cold, heartless, money-grabbing capitalist. He didn't spare him. Having laid this foundation, he warned him of the consequences of hardening his heart against the cry of the Lord's poor, read him the law in words of fire, and wound up by asking him to contribute ten thousand dollars to the Kaukama Island Mission.

It sounds comic. But it lost that aspect inside of three days. For after the sermon was over, White delivered part of a prayer, slipped down beside his wife, and stared sightlessly at the heavens for hours. Then he got up and delivered the sermon all over again. Again he fell back by his wife and was speechless. Again he suddenly roused up and repeated his sermon. Inside of three days Haldane had listened to that appeal a dozen times — and never fluttered an eyelid.

At the end of the third day I dished out the water all around and answered Haldane's inquiring look by answering, "Still living, both of them." He nodded. At midnight he stirred in his seat and said in a hoarse voice, "We are within forty miles of the coast of California. If you use the water sparingly and steer due east as well as you can, you will be picked up before to-morrow night."

The sun was setting behind him and its effulgence glorified him for a moment. I could not distinguish his face. But he reached out his huge hand and dropped a paper and his wallet on my knee. The movement of the boat waked White, and he stretched himself up and croaked, "Ten thousand dollars for the saving of heathen souls!"

The sun dipped, and Haldane's face started out of the glow, distinct, pallid, serene. His steady eyes fixed themselves on me with a profound and searching look. "Steer to the east," he said in a strong voice. "You will be picked up. See that my will is duly executed."

I started up weakly as the loom of the oar rose

slowly as his hand released it. The huge, pallid face darkened swiftly. The eyes in the heavy-lidded sockets became sightless. A sigh — resolute, deep, final expression of an immitigable will — breathed out over us. Haldane was dead.

He was too heavy for me to shove overboard. So I let him stay as he was, a stern figure of death. In the morning a steamer sighted us and took us up, White murmuring snatches of his greatest and most effectual sermon, while Mrs. White sighed interminably into the faces of the pitiful rescuers. The next night we were in San Francisco, and two days later I deposited with Haldane, McCoy & Pitts the last instructions of their superior. It was written as follows:

“I instruct my executors to pay to the order of Rev. J. White the sum of \$10,000 to be used by him in his mission work at his own discretion. The further sum of \$25,000 I direct to be paid to Mrs. Henry Buffle, widow of Captain Henry Buffle of the schooner *Solano*, as payment in full for one drink of water contributed by her husband to Mr. and Mrs. White’s missionary cause.

T. HALDANE.”

When they had read it, I stopped a moment for a question: “I suppose that is all right? The money will be given to the Whites and Mrs. Buffle?”

McCoy and Pitts looked at me coldly. “Such are Mr. Haldane’s orders,” they announced together. “And Mr. Haldane always had his own way about things. The money will be paid. I believe no one would care to dispute Mr. Haldane’s wishes, even if he has unfortunately been taken from us.”

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Later I attended Haldane's funeral. They buried him with pomp. Mrs. White, sitting weakly in her hired carriage, mourned the dead man sincerely. "He must have been such a lovely man!" she whispered. "I should have liked to have thanked him!"

She wept bitterly on the edge of the solemn and tearless crowd.

# THE OLDEST JOURNALIST IN THE SOUTH SEAS

## I

### THE PERSISTENCE OF THE UNINSPIRED

THE Oldest Journalist in the South Seas had just come into the hot reporters' room of the Honolulu "Advertiser." The screen door, outside which the night mosquitoes hummed, slammed on the flying tail of his linen jacket, and the librarian came forth from his dusty den to see what stirred. His voice — he was incredibly old — met the Oldest Journalist as he crossed the cramped room to his desk. "Has the *Mauna Loa* got in?"

The new-comer nodded his head, tucked his rescued coat-tail into his breeches pocket, scowled at the electric light, and addressed the librarian. "Yes. Beastly trip. Have you got a cut of old Simpkins in that graveyard of yours?"

"Simpkins? Simpkins?" repeated the keeper of our Colonial exchanges, London "Times," and copper "cuts" of the famous and infamous. "You mean Simpkins of Lanai?"

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"I do not," replied the Oldest Journalist, throwing a raffle of papers to the floor and squaring his elbows to write. "I mean Phineas Simpkins."

It was truthfully said that our librarian, whose life was a tissue of memories of the tropics, could, if given time, remember anything about any person who ever impinged on the sphere that contains the three social circles of the Missionary, the Trader, and the Native. So now he paused, his hand on the screen door that separated his closet from ours. His dim eyes sought the skylight, through whose wired squares the stars peered in. "Simpkins, Simpkins," he whispered gently.

God knows the name is nothing to conjure up thoughts; and yet, as that unbelievably old gentleman stood there murmuring that pair of ridiculous syllables, his face marked the course of the backward tide of remembrance. I dare say he saw odd figures of whalersmen, gaunt missionaries, sallow traders, pompous attachés to forgotten envoys from big powers to petty princes — a long procession of Simpkinses; at any rate, he stood there a full five minutes, while the Oldest Journalist growled over his pencil and vociferated about the drying up of his paste-pot. Suddenly the librarian gave vent to a queer sound. It was half chuckle of glee at finding what he sought, half grunt of incredulity. "There's only one Simpkins on the Islands now," he said, tapping his nose with his eyeglasses. "Ha, ha!"

The Chinese copyholder, awaiting a correction on

some proof, reminded us of his presence by a feeble, tittering "Hee, hee!" a shrill echo of the librarian's laugh. At its sound the Oldest Journalist suddenly flung himself upon a "Marine Register," hurled it at the Chinaman, picked up his empty paste-pot, and slammed it on his table, bellowing: "Simpkins! Simpkins of Molokai!"

The copyholder fled. The librarian chuckled again and withdrew to gaze through his screen door at the Oldest Journalist. "My dear fellow," he said calmly, "of course I have n't got any cut of Simpkins of Molokai. I have the pictures of many villains and some fools in here, but this paper is not spending money in buying copper half-tones of buffoons."

"Buffoon!" thundered the other, to our intense amazement. "Why, you senile old scrapbook maker, how dare you?" And the Oldest Journalist flung out of the office. He did not return for fifteen minutes, and we heard the librarian pottering over his files, muttering continually and scornfully, "Simpkins of Molokai!"

The next quarter of an hour saw the staff vanish, except myself, who had to see the paper to press after deciphering and expanding the cablegram from San Francisco. It was very warm, and the mosquitoes hummed under the lights, while I sought refuge in tobacco. The Oldest Journalist came back quietly and resumed his pencil. The librarian slipped out of his sanctum, looked at the Oldest Journalist (they were



thirty-year friends) with a glance of mild pity, and vanished, as the extremely old and emaciated do, with a delicate and paperish sound. The "late watch" had begun.

I picked up the last number of the Shanghai "Bund" to read of the doings of a Council in which I had no possible interest and puzzle at the initials of scandalous personages of whom I had never heard. The Oldest Journalist's pencil scraped on. The Chinese copyholder emerged from time to time and inquired in his shrill English as to the spelling of ponderous words in the "old man's" leader; the foreman came in to inquire about the "cable," and its probable lateness, and to anathematize, as he had done nightly since we had been united to the Coast by a "wire," the slowness, ignorance, and presumable inebriety of the man in San Francisco whose duty it was to summarize the diary of the world in seventy-five words. The proof-reader, gentlest of souls, whose wife in Denver was his sole thought—apart from the mosquitoes—dropped in to inquire when the next steamer with mail from the States might reasonably be expected. The telephone rang to announce that a Japanese on trial for his life at Hilo had been acquitted *per* wireless. Still the Oldest Journalist wrote on.

"You'd better rush if you're going to get your last car for Kaimuki," I suggested finally.

He threw down his pencil and bit savagely at the end of a woe-begone cigar. "Did that imbecile librarian find a cut of Simpkins?" he demanded.

"He scorned you," I said tranquilly. "He pooh-poohed you and Simpkins for a quarter of an hour and faded."

"I've got to have a picture to run with this story," said the Oldest Journalist decidedly.

"Is it a good yarn?" I asked, professionally interested.

"Not so you would see it in print," was the curt answer.

"Who was this Simpkins?" I continued.

"He *was* the great example of the Persistence of the Uninspired," the Oldest Journalist responded, pushing the shade back from his eyes and lighting his cigar. "He *is* dead."

"Funny I never heard of him," I mused, "in view of the fact that you are writing columns about him and asking for a picture to embellish the obituary. Was he a prince or potentate?"

"Of course you never heard of him," was the tart rejoinder. "That's why I'm writing all this. *This is news.*"

He resumed his pencil for a moment and then paused, looked over at me, and slowly leaned back in his chair. "I wish you'd go into old Scrapbook's sanctum and go through all the cuts to see if there is n't one of a fat man with a chin whisker and bald head," he remarked. "An old picture of Napoleon III might pass. Nobody here will know the difference."

It happened that we did have a dusty copper engraving of the lamented Emperor of the French. The

Oldest Journalist blew the dust off it, gazed at the lineaments depicted on the metal, and nodded. "That'll do all right. Just write a caption to run under it: 'Phineas Simpkins, who died widely mourned by the community in which he lived and bore a prominent part.' Get that?"

He took off his jacket and returned to his writing. A little later he glanced up to remark, "I'm not as crazy as people will think I am to-morrow."

"You evidently ignore my opinion of to-night," I replied.

The Oldest Journalist stopped, picked out of the mass of papers on his table a small clipping, and tossed it over to me. "Read that," he said.

I read the item, apparently cut many years before out of some country weekly in the interior of the United States. "This is the obituary of Thomas F. Adams," I said. "He died on April 14th, 1879, in Libertyville, Iowa, on his farm, after a long illness. He was much lamented, a good father and a careful business man, and was a deacon in the Methodist Church. That's all I see in this. What has it to do with Simpkins of Molokai?"

"The late Thomas F. Adams," the Oldest Journalist replied, "never knew Phineas Simpkins, nor was Simpkins in any way related to him, nor did Simpkins know Adams or ever see him alive, nor had he any earthly interest in his death, burial, or obituary, that you or I could ravel out. But that eulogy, printed in that little weekly, is the reason I'm writing this eulogy

in the tropics, and the whole affair is the direct result and outcome of the Persistence of the Uninspired."

The speaker was not a man used to talking riddles. Indeed, his language was usually not only plain, but bald. I pinned him down. "Who is this Simpkins you're talking about, anyway?"

"Did you ever see a man who never could say an interesting thing? Who never had a glance of the eye that betokened anything behind it? Who invariably did the most commonplace act possible under the circumstances? Who bored you in a crowd and staggered you with his vacuity when you were alone with him? Did you ever know a man whose circle of thought would pinch the waist of a peanut, and who incessantly attempted to converse by using the worn phrases of any fool who had been with him previously? Did you ever, my son, have to spend three days on a rolling inter-island steamer with a man incapable of anything but exasperating dumbness or maddening loquacity?" The Oldest Journalist's vigor was extreme, and he thumped his paste-pot on the table resoundingly.

"What did Simpkins do to you?" I pursued, assuming his interrogations to be rhetorical.

"Everything!" was the response. "He achieved the impossible, and I'm going to give him a column in to-morrow's paper. Listen. You won't get *this* in the 'Advertiser' of to-morrow's date. . . .

"I can only approach this thing chronologically. Simpkins was born, apparently of commonplace parents, in a small town in the domestic part of Illinois — or

what was, in his day. I spent a year of my young life in the Middle West, as they call it now, and I tell you that no people under the sun have more virtues or less curiosity about vice than those folk who live back there where we never know what's going on. And Simpkins came from there; with his little religion, his neglected education, and his dullness. God knows what brought him to the South Seas. He had no romance in his make-up, and you could n't have explained the word 'adventure' to him. He just came. It happened to be the utterly commonplace thing to do. And down here he merely 'stayed,' as they say of people whose movements are directed by no visible emotions or desires.

"I made his acquaintance years ago. You could n't use the expression 'got to know him.' One never *can* know a fence-post. I laughed at him, just as that librarian laughed to-night. But he took a terrible revenge. He made me a victim of the Persistence of the Uninspired!"

It was comical to see the Oldest Journalist's disconcertment. He was tremendously put out, and tore at his cigar savagely.

"Time has nothing to do with such people as Simpkins, except to record their movements and decay. But still, there was a chronological sequence to this history. First Simpkins came to Hawaii. He stayed. He worked in an utterly uninspired way at a most prosaic trade. He made money. Then he went back to the States. Did n't go back 'home,' as everybody else does. He merely 'returned.' Then he came back

here, and in due course I was shut up in the same cabin on the *Likeli* with him for three days with nobody to talk to.

“He was speechless for three hours, and then dug up from memory a sentence about the weather. He talked weather — and there is no such article this thousand miles either way — till I was almost insane. Then he maundered about something else. In a thousand sentences he could n’t wake a single idea. His voice, his tone, his manner were uninspired. He was incapable of anything like human variety of thought. I loathed him as I would a street piano I had heard for an eternity.

“The third day came, and the gale that was piling the surf up on Molokai moderated. Simpkins came to me. ‘If the wind goes down awhile, the sea will be smoother,’ he said.

“‘Are you going ashore along here?’ I demanded.

“‘At Kalaupapa,’ he returned.

“Now you don’t always feel like asking a man why he’s going ashore at a leper colony. In those days you could get a permit to go to Kalaupapa almost any time. It’s stricter now. So we lay off that amphitheater of polyglot misery, and Simpkins got his baggage together. As we waited for the boat, he came to say good-by. ‘I’m going to live there,’ he said. ‘I think the climate is good.’

“For an instant I thought Simpkins had really a brain working in his head. It was a ghastly joke he had just cracked. But I actually liked him the better

for it. Then I found out that it was no joke. He had n't the leprosy. He had nothing but his poor witless head and money. Do you know what he had done? Listen:

"He had gone to the Health Officer here and announced that he wanted to go to Molokai. 'Sure,' said the doctor, thinking he was urged by curiosity, and gave him his pass. In due time he landed through the surf and walked into the strangest town in the world. The steamer sent the last boat ashore, and the mate yelled for Simpkins. He did n't appear. The steamer left, and a couple of weeks later the Health Officer got a letter from one of the *lunas* of Molokai that made him tear his hair. Simpkins had actually settled in the leper colony, spite of the laws of the kingdom and of society.

"Now, my son, you're thinking of Father Damien, the missionaries, and such. Forget all that. Simpkins was uninspired. He told me why he did this thing, and you will probably laugh when you hear it. Fancy this dull chap fixing his eternal abode in an accursed vale where one hears only the cracked voice of the leper and sees only the hopeless living dead. It makes your heart beat a bit faster, does n't it? But look at that obituary of that obscure late lamented in Iowa. It was scribbled one afternoon in Libertyville when the willows were budding along the muddy creek banks, and the children were making whistles — children who have whistled many tunes since and gone their ways apart. The editor probably thought when he wrote those

words that he would attend the auction of the deceased's livestock and maybe buy a horse or a cow. But Simpkins is dead in Molokai because of that paragraph."

The Oldest Journalist made an extraordinary grimace at the ceiling and flung his cigar butt against the screen door. "Laugh!" he cried. "But I must get it off my mind. I have moiled over Simpkins till I am fair crazy. I am a victim, and my only hope of release is this column article in the paper to-morrow morning."

"Don't get worked up over it," I remonstrated. "It is too hot. Out with your story."

"There is n't any story," he wailed. "It's positively the dullest affair you ever heard of. There is n't any inspiration in years of it."

"When Simpkins had got pretty much a fixture on Molokai, and his reputation was hopelessly compromised, and various claimants of his wealth were agitating having him declared incompetent and a guardian appointed, I went down on the annual trip of inspection. You know the sort: officials, some reporters, and a few friends of the Kalaupapans go over for a day's riding through the settlement, auditing of accounts and visiting."

"It was my fate to go, a few years back. I had not seen Simpkins nor heard much of him, but one of the first men I saw in that town of pestilence was he. He waddled along under a ridiculous sunshade, his fat arms bulging from a thin jacket, his whiskers blowing in the breeze, his bald head shining with perspiration. It was the most incongruous sight I ever saw. The maimed shuffled by with bound feet; the wind



brought odors of antiseptic and balm. Chinese chattered along the way, flat of voice, shriveled of limb. Kanakas barked out greetings and smiled miserably. White men, carrying themselves with a final jauntiness, waved their dry arms. Babies played under the papayas, played silently. And through this throng waddled Simpkins, obtrusively healthy, his full face flushed with clean blood.

“He insisted on talking. I don’t remember what he said. He bored me intensely. The visitors scattered, and by some mischance I fell into the hands of Simpkins, alone. ‘You must come up to my house for dinner,’ he insisted. ‘I have had some good chickens killed. We must hurry, because I don’t know whether you like them stewed or baked.’ And he talked chicken all the way to his gaudy house.

“It was a queer mansion to rise among those groves of pain. It was painted a vile red, with yellow trimmings. No vine grew over its nakedness. It sat in a bare yard, through which a gravel walk ran as straight as a string. He took me in and immediately sat down on a porch. ‘How do you like our town?’ he demanded.

“I could have struck him for the sleek tone of those outrageous words. But he wiped his forehead and went on: ‘We have made many improvements the past year. We have built a theater with a ball room over it. We had a wedding there two months ago. A fine young couple, too. I think they enjoyed our little festivities.’

“Travesty of mercy! I got up. I could not eat the bread of such a man. It suddenly occurred to me that he had a most devilish rancour against his race. He was the Satan of this unspeakable hell. But he was warmly hospitable when I rose, and called for a drink of beer. The servant — a leper — shuffled out with it, and we drank. Simpkins nodded over his beer and sighed. ‘I understand they say in Honolulu I am crazy,’ he remarked abruptly.

“‘They don’t see why a well man should bury himself in this asylum without any object,’ I paltered.

“‘Hum!’ he ejaculated, with an indescribable ponderousness. ‘Hum!’

“‘Personally,’ I continued, ‘I fail to see what you came here for. You came for no charitable purpose. No one but a brute could enjoy the sight of this organized misery.’

“Simpkins looked at me with a puzzled face. ‘I don’t catch your meaning,’ he said.

“‘I mean,’ I recollect saying, ‘that your coming here is offensive.’

“His flat face became drawn in a violent effort to disengage my intention from my words. I rather enjoyed it. He squirmed in his chair, and the sunshade (which he had deposited by his side) rolled away and off the porch. He waddled over and with prodigious exertions recovered it. Then he sat down again and stared at me. ‘I have no intention of being offensive to you,’ he said. ‘You are a friend of mine. Why,

my dear fellow, I had no intention whatever of being offensive, none whatever!’

“What could I say? I retreated. I enlarged on the fact that personally I had nothing against him. I mentioned that outside, in Honolulu, the people who had known him did not understand his sudden departure and voluntary descent into a living death. Then it came out. I don’t know whether you will understand it at all. But I shall try to be plain. Frankly, I am not sure of all this myself — that is, I sometimes think I fail to catch some vital point, some point in the Persistence of the Uninspired.

“Simpkins drew closer to me, hitching his chair up the porch, with various expressions of regard. He finally came to rest and gazed at me with a look of importance. ‘You see,’ he said, ‘I have a place in the community here. Really, my dear fellow, I am one of the principal men of Kalaupapa! I was the head of the committee on the new theater, and I was chairman of the floor committee of the first ball. The paper mentioned me here in flattering terms.’

“I am not going to bother you with the details of his talk, except to state that I firmly believe Simpkins had never in his life had a home. No, he did n’t come from Libertyville, Iowa. He came from Illinois. From that village in which he had first lived, to the boisterous streets of San Francisco and the dissipations of Honolulu, he had been Simpkins, plain Simpkins, waddling on his uninspired way, meeting men whom he bored, viewing other men honored, liked, loved; the universal

word of praise had never fallen to his lot. You would never have suspected it. He was lonely."

The Oldest Journalist lit another cigar and smoked in silence a moment. Then he repeated his last word: "Lonely. You are young and can occasionally catch a friendly eye in the crowd. We both have our profession, our work. But sometimes in these warm seas, under these gleaming stars, I pause an instant and know what loneliness is. Maybe it's bred in our bones, this Anglo-Saxon feeling, in the dumbest of us, for our social life. Anyway, I think I understand Simpkins. He wanted a place in a community, to be somebody — to be chairman of the floor committee at the ball of a leper settlement.

"Don't imagine he said all this. He was an unutterable bore that afternoon. Only I was convinced that Simpkins, in his childish and unreasoning desire to have a place, a social position, a funeral with mourners, an obituary, had picked out, of all places in the world, Kalaupapa on Molokai!

"You saw old Scrapbook giggle when I said 'Simpkins of Molokai'? That is the attitude. That seeker after a place was incredibly dull and offensive. I believe he never did the right thing in his life. He did not even catch the leprosy, but lived blatantly healthy among the dying, waddling around that afflicted city, pursing up his lips importantly over his petty affairs, purposely content. 'Really, my dear fellow, I am one of the principal men of Kalaupapa!'"

The foreman looked in to ask whether the cable had

come. The Oldest Journalist resumed his pencil. "How about the obituary notice you showed me?" I demanded.

"Simpkins saw it in a paper and cut it out," was the response. "In a moment of confidence yesterday, when he was dying, he showed it to me. He was infelicitous to the last. 'Something like this might be appropriate,' he told me. Thrust it into my hands, you know, with an anxiety worthy of a little politician crazy to have his name in the paper. I suppose he had nursed the hope for twenty years that some day he would have an obituary like that. But imagine the audacity of his insisting that I write it so. Pah!"

I mused over this, and the foreman came in again. "Look here," he said angrily. "Is this the best picture you've got for the front page to-morrow? Simpkins of Molokai! Why, he was crazy! People will laugh at the paper."

The Oldest Journalist looked up. "I've got a column story to go with that," he said severely. "What business is it of yours, anyway?"

The foreman shuffled his feet, grumbled something about the insanity of all newspaper men, and departed. As editor in charge, I felt justified in a question. "What are you writing about Simpkins?"

He threw the sheets together and tossed them over to me. "Just what Simpkins asked for," he said. "There is a first-class, stereotyped obituary, with everything in it, from 'the lamented citizen in our community' to 'widely mourned by a large circle of

friends.' I have described the theater, the ball-room, and the festivities he fathered, in the best journalese. It is a final example, my son, of the Persistence of the Uninspired."

"But a column! And a picture of Napoleon III!" I protested.

The Oldest Journalist turned on me with a snarl. "He earned it, did Simpkins of Molokai! He had no inspirations, I grant you, and he was a bore such as heaven spare us another. But his life was harmonious, and his end came fittingly. By the Lord, if he wanted all through his dull life a word of friendliness said over his grave, it's not *your* business."

"It is my business," I remonstrated. "I'm here to see that the public get the news and nothing but news. I'm not here to give a column to the death of a crazy fool who was the laughing-stock of five islands. You're indeed the victim of his persistency in the uninspired if you try this scheme."

The snarl melted into a chuckle. "You're the victim, too," said the Oldest Journalist, putting on his jacket. "Simpkins left all his money to the lepers, and that's news worth a column any day, with a full-sized picture. I have the will in my pocket."

So Simpkins of Molokai got the reward of his perseverance on the first page of the "Advertiser," graced by a picture that I am informed looked strangely like him. And the final paragraph of the Oldest Journalist's article ran thus:

With the passing of Mr. Simpkins there passed away the single citizen of the unfortunate colony on Molokai who pursued the avocations of a friendly life without any reference to the misery and despair about him. Mr. Simpkins did not make many close friends, but the streets of Kalaupapa will be the sadder for lack of his untroubled countenance, and the pale festivities of the settlement will move less joyously for want of one participant who never by word or act or glance gave any reminder to his fellow citizens of their infirmity or their separation from the world of the active and healthy. Without making protestations of charity, single-hearted in his desire to bear an honorable part in the life of his chosen home, he did more, it is possible, than he will be given credit for.

## II

## ON KINDILINI

WE HAD been gossiping idly on the *lanai* of the big hotel, and our budget of scandal was exhausted. Harper leaned back, waving his hands impatiently at the moving crowd that circled and hummed under the lights. "There is something devilish about all this," he muttered. "Why do we excuse things down here that we would strongly reprobate at home? I am very near to belief in what a shocked Briton said last night about there not being any God in these latitudes."

"Manners are different," I paltered.

Harper breathed out a strong "Pah! Right is right! Society ought to punish —"

The Oldest Journalist in the South Seas raised his eyes. "It's not altogether society's business," he said. "You and I can punish only after hearing all the evidence; society — sometimes — has to yield to Fate, or God, if you prefer that title. And I have come to think that God knows best and punishes most severely. And it is more merciful to leave it to Him; for when He punishes He pardons, too. You and I never pardon. We miss the kernel of the law."

"Nonsense," Harper put in brusquely. "You see people going free every day. If society does n't exact her penalties and execute her laws, there is no punishment at all. I judge —"

"I'm not so sure that we — you have a right to



judge," went on the old man thoughtfully. "Now, I was just thinking about Honoria McLean and Kindilini."

"Who was she?" we demanded.

"She was the woman that Henry Plicott ran away with twenty-five years ago. It was all before your time. But it shows that when a man and a woman have evaded society, they are face to face with — with destiny, or God; or is it themselves?"

"It was, as I've said" (the Oldest Journalist went on), "something more or less than twenty-five years ago. Henry Plicott came from the States to sell machinery to the sugar-planters. I recall him as a spare, solemn fellow, with hungry brown eyes. He had the usual vices, I believe; he also cherished, at times when business did not prosper, a whimsical, almost comic taint of philosophy. As I understood it, it was a childish belief that 'some good woman would be the making of him some day.' That's probably definite enough. You've heard wastrels mouth it before. Plicott was not offensive about it, though. He merely offered it to you, over an intimate cigar, much as a man may admit to a friend that he hopes to make a winning on the next turn of the market.

"Plicott had been on the islands a year when he met Honoria McLean. She was the wife of Alexander McLean, head of a small commission house. Old residents — *kamaainas* like myself — remember Honoria. She was a big, splendid, red-haired woman thirty years old; full of exuberant vitality that a humid climate

and a broiling sun seemed unable to weaken. McLean had married her in Scotland two years before, going back to fetch her after he had made a little fortune here. She was waiting for him. We understood that they had been sweethearts since he was a young fellow and she a kiddie. Alexander was short, wore a neat, dry beard, and took snuff; a stiff man, starched with the rules of virtuous conduct, and ever ready for a bargain or an argument.

“Plicott and Honoria met at the Palace, as everybody did then. If you ’d go up and look in the register of the royal receptions and levees of those days, you ’d find Honoria’s genteel script and Plicott’s scrawl among the signatures of envoys, attachés, and visiting admirals. But it was a full year after they met that some one said one night, ‘Plicott is making love to Honoria.’

“Of course that opened the eyes of us all. We looked across the lawn, and saw Honoria’s fine figure shining like a white statue of marble under the trees, and Plicott standing before her with his hands clasped behind his back and his big, hungry eyes fixed on her. Later I’ve been swimming at Waikiki, and heard a steady, powerful beat of arms just behind me, and swerved aside to let Plicott and Honoria plunge by, round white arm and lean brown arm reaching out overhand with the regularity of perfect strength and accord as they drove in from the reef. Again, one would see Alexander in a brown study in a parlor, snuff-box in hand, gazing under bent brows at some invisible object, while the constant talk of his wife with Plicott

must have poured into his ears. It just missed being a scandal.

“ Later we observed that Honoria and Henry were n’t seen together as formerly, and when they met they seemed to look at each other silently, Plicott with a grave perplexity in his eyes. At such seasons I’ve caught a glance of Honoria’s that expressed a profound bewilderment, a searching sorrow that was feeling round in her heart for something to feed on; a very subtle glance that avoided us, Plicott most of all, like an involuntary sob that must find no one’s ear.

“ Then there came the day when we heard that the barque *Golden Gate* would leave Honolulu for Panama, whence one could catch the steamship for New York and Liverpool. What plans we made! I myself thought of the folks in Maine, and decided to go. Others grew hilarious at hope of reaching home without all the delays of the trip to the Coast and overland from San Francisco. Inside a week every cabin on the *Golden Gate* was taken, and the list was closed. We frolicked like children, we who had been down here for years without a taste of hominy, a sup of maple syrup, or a buckwheat cake. And those who did n’t go snarled at us emigrants, forming a defensive alliance against our forces of good cheer and hope and enthusiasm.

“ It was n’t till we were well down Molokai Channel that we found that among us were Alexander and Honoria McLean and Henry Plicott. Even then it did n’t strike us as anything worth comment, for of late the two of them had n’t been seen much together, and Honoria

had even avoided the usual routs and balls. But inside a week our eyes followed them, for Henry quietly took Honoria as his constant companion, and Alexander, snuff-box in hand, sat by the wheel and stared out upon the ocean with a sullen, hurt look. Honoria was resplendent.

“We were really a strange company, though I suppose our being thrust together in cramped quarters had much to do with our incongruity. Out of thirty passengers there were, besides Honoria, only three women. Two of these were wives of men on board; the third was a slim, shy girl going to some place in Connecticut to be married. Her name was Susan Hays, and she sat in the shadow of the long-boat at night and warmed her engagement ring against her breast. I suppose she thought no one observed her.

“Indeed, I flattered myself that it was I only who had been shrewd enough to read the story of this girl’s brooding affection. But one night, sitting on a hatch and watching the moonlight on the upper sails, I heard Honoria’s voice, from some shadow, saying unsteadily, ‘I threw my betrothal ring into a drawer when I got it. I could n’t wear it, Harry.’

“Plicott (for I recognized his voice) muttered, ‘One can get rid of the engagement ring, but the wedding ring sticks fast, does n’t it, Honoria?’

“That was all I heard. But I knew, then, that Alexander McLean had better look to his wife or lose her. The *Golden Gate* was swimming eastward slowly through warm, breezy seas, under dark skies where the

stars hung in a certain gorgeous detachment and a woman's face in the dusk was more than all the commandments. A few days later I went forward at sundown, and found Honoria and Henry sitting on the big anchor, quite forgetful of the dinner-gong. When I appeared, she looked up with a defiant glance, and Henry dropped her hand. Later he came to me and said glowering, 'You understand, I suppose, that it is none of your business?' Well, of course it was no affair of mine. The elderly chap with the snuff-box had the whole burden on his shoulders.

"Thereafter I thought Henry dropped some of his reserve. Whenever Honoria came up on deck, with her hair glowing in the light and her firm, white hands shading her eyes, — her invariable gesture, — Plicott would leave whatever group he was in and walk slowly and steadily to meet her. They would sit down, silently, together. Now and then one would see her brush her warm lips with her fingers and glance abroad with a frightened, tremulous air, like a child in trouble. Henry would glower out of his hungry eyes, and his lean, dark face would redden. Now and again Alexander walked by, his starched face rigid with disapproval. So far as we observed, neither man ever addressed the other.

"You understand that the course taken by our vessel was lonely beyond expression. It is extremely probable that not one ship in ten years cuts across that desolate expanse of the South Pacific. It is a sea of baffling winds, of unending blank reaches that weary the eye. Day after day the horizon recedes before you, present-

ing a constant, definite line, broken once in a while by the uprising of a distant wave or the column of a cloud. Overhead the winds echo in the profound vault, a measured, faint thunder that is forever exactly above you, invariable and incessant, like the dim din of vast wheels.

“The *Golden Gate* gained an atmosphere of intense and eternal solitude, much as if she had become fixed in space, and the earth were rumbling under us like an endless treadmill, midway of which we were traveling, without an inch’s advance. I suppose we all of us expected this to last forever. I don’t think one of us looked for the barque to arrive at any port. Honestly, as I review it, I am convinced that we did n’t dream of ever missing the sight of Honoria, elbows on knees, eyes on the distance, feeling beside her Plicott, whose dark face was forever ruddied by the thought of his love for her. . . . Susan Hays was eternally to slip across before them, holding her gentle left hand in the palm of her right in order that no breath of this fiery passion might sear the tender love that warmed her small betrothal ring. . . . For ages Alexander McLean was to skulk in the shadow, tapping the lid of his box of deadly venom. So when, one night as we sat about the deck, the yards shivered, a shroud snapped high up, giving forth a vibrant, shrill *tang*, and the *Golden Gate* stopped dead on her course, we stared at each other like men wakened from a dream.

“An hour later we knew the extent of our disaster. In that uncharted sea a reef had intercepted us. The

barque had slipped upon it under the gentle impulse of her sails, nosed into it, and swung round broadside to the sharp coral. Our vessel was a total loss, lying almost awash to the long, low rollers that passed over the sunken reef without breaking.

“The next day was an anxious one. The captain pored over the charts and fingered the ‘Handbook and Sailing Directions for the South Pacific,’ while the mates cleared away the boats, broke out provisions, and did what they could to prepare for the long trip to land. Toward evening the captain assembled us and said: ‘The reef we are wrecked on is not down on the chart. Apparently the nearest land is seven hundred miles away. I have figured out our course, and we shall leave the ship to-night in five boats. If the weather holds fair we shall make land within one week.’

“We were then assigned to the different boats, and the water and food was carefully measured. During this operation the moon rose. By its light, boat after boat was lowered and its passengers embarked in it. Plicott and I were assigned to the second mate’s boat, a small one manned by three sailors. With us was a passenger named Howard, an old man who insisted that Susan Hays go with us, as he knew her people and felt a responsibility for her safety. When we were all on board, and the girl had been handed down to us, we pulled off a few fathoms and lay to, swinging up and down on the sluggish surges.

“The moon had reached the zenith when we were all embarked. The last boat was riding just below the

rail of the quarter-deck. In it were half a dozen passengers and Alexander and Honoria McLean. The captain's instruments were in the stern-sheets, a seaman held the chronometer on his lap, and the captain himself was staring up at the tangled rigging with an abstracted, mournful look. Then, with a determined and manly gesture of resignation, he stepped briskly over the rail, dropped into his place, and the boat drove away.

“A cable's length from the wreck, the boats came together for orders. The captain gave his plans. ‘I'll keep the lead and show a light at night,’ he said. ‘The course is east by north. God bless us all! Give way, men!’

“His boat swung up to the one Plicott and I were in, and the captain leaned out to speak to the second mate, who commanded it. In that instant Honoria rose slightly in her place, and I heard Plicott draw a long breath. Before one of us could raise a finger, he had bent out, caught Honoria's white hands, and with a vast effort heaved her into our boat.

“It was so suddenly done that the captain did not catch the purport of our exclamations. When he saw Honoria beside Plicott, he seemed on the point of saying something; instead he stared at Alexander, who stared back at him with eyes blazing in his contorted visage. But the moonlight was deceptive, and the captain listened for him to speak. I suppose that that moment, which seemed long to us, was really a second of time. In that instant Plicott had called out, loud and command-



ingly, 'Give way, all!' and our sailors instinctively had driven our boat ahead. I think the captain cried out sharply, though I'm not sure, for the very next thing (our eyes were fixed on Alexander), McLean stood up, snuff-box in hand, as we could plainly see, and with his other hand drew a small pistol from his pocket, which he fired point-blank.

"The report had not reached us before the second mate roared out an order to pull harder, and our boat rushed off, out of range of the madman's weapon. It must have been several minutes before we felt safe, and the second mate, whose name was Gridley, gave the order to lie by. We looked back and saw nothing, the moon, now past the zenith, being in our eyes. We heard a hail, quite faint. One of us answered it. Then came silence, and Gridley ordered the sailors to fall to their oars again. 'What did that man mean?' he demanded angrily. No one replied, and he bent over his compass. When he had found the course and fixed a star in his mind, we started slowly and painfully out to the eastward.

"It must have lacked but a couple of hours of dawn when we left the barque, for, as we went along, listening occasionally for the voices of some in the other boats, or peering out to pick up the light that the captain had promised to show, the eastern horizon suddenly grew white. Later there appeared around the declining moon a great circle of darkness; the stars faded. Then a ribbon of fire flamed on the edge of the sea, and in a moment the sun burst up. When it was high enough

for us to see under its beams, the other boats were not in sight. We thought to discern the spars of the *Golden Gate* far astern, but that was all. Gridley was much put out. 'We were set wrong by that mad fellow shooting at us,' he exclaimed. 'And the other boats pulled directly eastward. They are ahead of us. We'll keep the course and maybe overtake them in a few hours.'

"An appalled voice came from a man forward: 'The water-cask has leaked, sir!' An examination showed that McLean's bullet had clipped one of the wooden hoops of the cask, cut it in two, and allowed the staves to open up slightly. Of the hundred gallons of fresh water we had started with, we might have a dozen left. We accepted this growlingly, but the mate assured us that we must soon pick up the other boats and from their casks we would replenish our supply. In the meantime a sailor carefully stopped the cracks in the cask with strips of cloth in order to prevent further loss.

"During that day and the following night we failed to sight the other boats. The sea had swallowed them up. Gridley refused to alter the course to search for them, alleging that it might delay us in reaching the land. 'And an hour may mean life to some of us,' he said grimly.

"The third day our water was exhausted, except for a few ounces apiece for the ten of us. Our plight, now that we had lost track of our companions, was desperate. Gridley, observing a strong current setting to the southward, assumed that it was the action of this

that had parted us, and he said that we might now do well to follow this current, doubling our speed, in hopes of sighting some land. 'These are uncharted seas,' he told me. 'If that reef was there without having been discovered, it is possible we may find an island.' He changed the course.

"The horizon still presented a faultless rim when our thirst had mounted high. In our growing misery we looked askance at Plicott and Honoria. They, we argued, had caused our disaster. And seeing our anger, Plicott drew her apart and held her beside him, glowering at us in a truculent and determined manner. We should doubtless have set him to the last test, had not a gull passing overhead dropped from his bill a seed which floated on the water and was caught by Gridley. He examined it and said cheerfully, 'It is a fresh seed. Land is close by.'

"'But where?' we demanded.

"Gridley smiled upon us gallantly, recovering his courage and ascendancy. 'We'll soon find it,' he assured us. 'Everybody keep a good lookout.'

"That night we found it — a small, wavering shadow on the southern horizon. At first we thought it an illusion, a mere blot of cloud. But as we studied it, sniffed the air, and felt of the water, it came over us that it was truly an island. The mate carefully calculated the force and direction of the current, diverted our course by a few points, and we gradually drew up to it, dawn breaking while we were three miles away and rapidly approaching it over a windless sea. It was

noon when we ran the boat up on a barren white shore and stumbled out, saying to each other, 'We must find water.'

"I'll pass over certain episodes of little moment and bring you to the hour, late that night, when we knew that there was no water on the island. We had searched it, scanned it inch by inch, knew its configuration perfectly, and were gathered in despair at the foot of the only eminence in its small area.

"The extreme breadth of the islet was a half-mile. In length it extended for about two miles, running almost directly north and south. In the middle of it, dividing it in two, rose a long, steep, sharp ridge of rock, rising precipitously from the white, barren sand for nearly the length of the island. This rock was very much like a wall, or a backbone. On either side of this ridge the sand was verdureless except for a small clump of bushes huddled at the foot of an abrupt cliff on the east face. These formed a thicket possibly a score of feet through, none of the bushes being over a dozen feet high. Above them the rock rose vertically for fifty feet, glaring white. I assure you that we knew what we were talking about when we agreed that there was no water. We had even dug in the coarse, white, sharp coral sand. We had tried to scale the spine of rock, and failed. We had almost pulled the stunted shrubs up in an effort to find whence they sucked their moisture. And now, lighted by the rising moon, we gaped at each other, mumbling our despair through swollen lips. Apart from us sat three people:

Susan Hays, her hands clasped in her lap, and Honoria and Plicott, silently staring at us, driven from us by the consciousness that to them we owed our lamentable death.

“I don’t know what would have been the outcome of our despair if a cloud had not suddenly overspread us and poured down a flood of rain. For an hour we drank out of our palms — out of any vessel we could find; we soaked our bodies in the warm water, lifting our faces to it in a sort of ecstasy. Yet, when dawn came we had managed to collect only a few gallons, and a cloudless sky and burning sun mocked us.

“We worked and built us a camp, with a fireplace, a cellar dug in the sand in the rock’s shadow for our provisions, and a little store place for the scanty fuel the sailors gathered. Then Gridley divided us into watches, and we prepared to stay till we could accumulate enough water to fill the cask, which we repaired, and so continue our voyage to the mainland. Our circumstances were not pleasant: we were a thousand miles from land, the climate forbade us to expect many showers, and there was no hope of a passing vessel. Under these conditions, we settled down as best we might, relying on the possibility of soon being ready to take to the boat again.

“The seamen instantly accommodated themselves, and Gridley relapsed into sullen taciturnity. The old man, Howard, sat first on the west side of the rock of a morning, panted during the flaming noon, and then, when the sun had passed the meridian, crept over into

the shadow on the westward side. With him, constantly silent, shy, thoughtful, went Susan Hays. Plicott and Honoria had withdrawn themselves to the edge of the thicket, where they sat, her hand in his, while he glared out into the great sunshine with stormy eyes. Honoria seemed pensive, with a subdued demeanor.

“Our water again gave out, in due course. We sought the implacable heavens for a cloud. Gridley tried to make a rude still to distil the sea water into a drinkable liquid; he failed. Once more we searched the islet for a trace of water, digging into the hot sand with our fingers. Plicott came with us, furious in the hunt for two days. Then he desisted, and lay in the shadow of the thicket, gazing seaward, or staring at Honoria, now sunburnt and with blackened lips and bloodshot eyes.

“The next night thereafter I wakened from an uneasy sleep, hearing a rustling sound in the thicket, outside which Howard, Susan Hays, Honoria, Plicott, and myself had laid us down. I was at the foot of the rock, and when I opened my eyes I thought I discovered a figure clambering painfully up the cliff, out of the tops of the bushes. At first I supposed I was dreaming; but I finally decided that some one was trying desperately to find water. There was nothing unusual in this, for each of us at some time or another wandered off in that hopeless quest. However, I had not thought it possible to scale the rock. I stole away and into the thicket. There I waited till a slight, scrambling

noise, warned me that a man was coming down. I drew aside and listened. Whoever it was dropped softly upon the sand and sank down, breathing heavily. Waiting for the moon to rise and give me light upon him, I fell asleep. When I wakened again it was to hear the whisper of a man's husky voice. It was Plicott, saying, 'Drink it all, Honoria. I've found it for you.'

"Gradually I made out that they were standing a few feet from me, the woman with one hand supporting her against the rock. She was whispering, 'I must n't Harry. Give it to the others. It's wicked! Give it to the others!'

"'The others shall have some when you're done,' he insisted. 'You are first.'

"'And there is plenty?' she demanded.

"'Plenty,' he told her.

"Presently she sighed, and drank. A moment later Plicott crawled past me, and then Honoria stepped out of the thicket. When I returned to the rest, I saw her seated a little distance off; Plicott was back in his old place.

"You see what I had discovered: Plicott had found water. While I was debating what to do, the dawn broke. Scanning the blackened, swollen faces about me, I kept silent. Instead of speaking a word of what I knew, I followed Henry down to the boat, and when he turned on me with a look of inquiry, I made no bones of my intentions. 'You've found water,' I said. 'Where is it?'

“He snarled at me like an animal. ‘You’ll never know,’ he muttered.

“‘I will,’ I said loudly. ‘I suppose you think that you and the woman you have stolen can have it all. But it is on account of you and your guilt that we decent people are dying. Do you suppose we will endure it?’

“I can’t describe the look that altered his face. He stood there, staring at me with a hurt, puzzled expression, a man suddenly confronted with an inexplicable problem. ‘But you don’t love her!’ he managed to say.

“‘Of course I don’t,’ I retorted. ‘Why should I? But I’m going to have some of that water.’

“You can give what explanation you like of his next move. He took me by the arm and strode back to the thicket, pulling me into its shade after him. On the ground lay Honoria, asleep. He motioned to me to pass her, and as I crept up beside him he laid his finger on a small grove in the face of the rock.

“‘Look!’ he said.

“The depression, a very shallow one, extended vertically up. It was still damp. It was the channel of a stream.

“‘I found it,’ he told me savagely. ‘It’s mine. Somewhere up the face of the cliff there is the outlet of a spring. When the sun shines and heats the rock, all the water that issues evaporates before it comes down within reach. But at night, after the face of the rock has cooled, it commences to trickle down into a little basin twenty feet up there. When that basin



is filled a few drops trickle down to the ground, but then the sun rises and heats the rock and instantly evaporates it, so that a few minutes after sunrise there is only this slight dampness to mark its course. It's mine!'

"'But if one should climb up to the spring — to that basin,' I said eagerly, 'then we could get water all day long, for all of us.'

"He laughed feverishly. 'I've measured it. Working for hours last night, I got — how much? A cupful! All told, less than a pint! Enough for only one!'

"'And that's you!' I stormed.

"'No,' he replied dully. 'Honoriam.'

"I went away, quite undecided. I was of a mind to tell the rest. But what good would that do? The scanty pint a day — a cupful — would not moisten the lips of all of us. And, besides, I had a profound fear of Plicott. He was capable of murder; he would kill us all, if it came to the question. I did not doubt his ability. While we had silently made these two, the guilty man and the guilty woman, apart from us, separated by an invisible strong line, they dominated us. Keeping to themselves, forced aloof by some unspoken reprobation of ours, they, however, seemed to have the balance of power with them. Yet I cannot tell what I would have done had not an opportune shower drenched us and given us half a cask of water again. This reprieve strengthened us. But at the end of twenty-four hours we wakened to find that the three sailors had stolen the cask and our boat and vanished, leaving

Howard and the mate, Plicott, Honoria, Susan, and myself with but very little victual and no water.

“Day after day passed. Our little rations of food would not go down our throats for dryness. We lay in the shadow of the rock, after soaking our bodies in the surf, and muttered insane blasphemy at the pitiless and shining sky. When I say ‘we’ and ‘our’ I refer to those of us who had thrust Plicott and Honoria into a separate society. I did not disclose their secret — yet. We were all weakened and nerveless; Plicott and the woman were strong, unwithered by the heat and the drought. But I saw to it that they got nothing of our scanty food. I recall smiling across at Plicott and daring him to demand his rations. And he smiled back, magnificently.

“Gridley grew violent within two days after the desertion of the seamen, went off by himself, and maintained a steady and vigilant watch over us, like a vulture. Howard, old and dried up anyway, did not seem to need water as much as the rest of us. He sat against the rock, as he had always done, changing from shadow to shadow as the sun swept overhead; and Susan Hays leaned on his knee and dreamed, her hands clasped over her bosom. Apart, Honoria sat like a splendid goddess at the entrance of her sacred thicket; sunk in dark meditation, Plicott sat beyond her, sullen and silent, now staring at the woman, now gazing upon the ground.

“I think about two days more had passed when I was wakened in deep night to hear a harsh voice saying,

‘Get back! Get back!’ I got up and ran round the edge of the rock toward the thicket, and saw Gridley on one knee, fighting off Plicott.

“As I came up the second mate called out through the dark, ‘They’ve got water! Kill them both!’ He rolled over under a blow, his voice dying in his throat.

“The tumult brought Howard, and he and I stormed at Plicott, who confronted us under the bright stars, pistol in hand. I admit it was not a pretty scene. But Plicott’s pistol subdued us, and we went muttering away. As we stumbled back, looking over our shoulders and cursing, the old man pitched forward. Gridley, stooping over him, stared into his set face and rose, croaking, ‘He’s dead.’ So he was.

“This brought matters to a pass. The girl, Susan Hays, came and sat through the morning by the side of her only protector and friend, dry-eyed, serene, her cracked lips parted in a gentle smile. Far off, Gridley huddled in the wet sand at the water’s edge, while Plicott stood on the other side, pistol in hand. After hours of hesitation, I got up and drew my knife, intending to go and kill Plicott.

“But at this moment Honoria came, walking easily and slowly, calling out, ‘Susan! Susan!’

“Plicott made a sudden attempt to stop her. But she merely smiled at him and came on, splendid and beautiful, white arms swinging at her sides, her cheeks fresh and dewy. She saw the girl crouched over the old man’s body, and halted. Then she ran up to her, crying, ‘Susan! Susan! What’s the matter?’

“The girl lifted her quiet, dull eyes and said simply, ‘He’s dead.’

“Honorina swept down beside her, drawing her into her arms. ‘How did he die?’ she cried. ‘What’s the matter?’

“I broke in: ‘Can you ask? How dare you ask! Can’t you see we are all dying for lack of the water you are using?’

“She stared at us; then, suddenly stooping over, she brushed her white finger-tips across the old man’s parted lips. His open eyes and protruding tongue would have told any one the story. And Honorina got up slowly, drearily, and walked away. Plicott met her and tried to say something. She shook her head. ‘Why did you deceive me? I didn’t know,’ I heard her say. ‘Why didn’t you tell me that they had no water?’ She stared at him a long moment, and then said, ‘We are guilty, Harry. We can never get away from it.’

“She went into the covert of the thicket and came out with a cup in her hand. This she carried to Susan and held to her lips, with little murmurs of comfort. The girl, suddenly waking, so to speak, gulped the water down, looking wildly over the scene, and fell to sobbing bitterly. Honorina put her arms about her.

“‘I’ll never see Tom,’ I heard Susan whisper. ‘He’s waiting for me in Connecticut.’

“‘Yes, you’ll see him yet,’ Honorina returned, while Plicott and I stood by dumbly.

“‘No, and I’ve waited for him all my life — till

he made money enough. And now I won't see him ever! Oh, Mrs. McLean, you've been married and had your life and the man you love! You've had your husband! And I'll never have Tom!

"Imagine that slender, plangent voice talking to the brassy sky, through pale lips, over a dead body. It shook me. I seemed to see before me all the misery of the world suddenly drawn down into the heart of a young girl. To Honoria it carried a different message; she rose, with infinite gentleness, and caught Plicott's eye.

"'I understand why you did this, Harry,' she said to him, shading her eyes with her hands. 'You did n't tell me the rest were dying for a drink of water. But you and I have come to the end of things, Harry. I ought never to have loved you. I'm a wicked woman. But now that it is all done, and you and I have nothing else, we'll keep our love. We'll deserve it, Harry. We'll earn the right to carry it to God and tell him it was n't all false, it was n't all unworthy and mean and dishonorable. . . . Bring her in and put her in the shade.'

"Plicott stooped over dizzily, took Susan in his arms, and carried her into the thicket. Honoria went in then, and we stood outside, panting and thirsty and desperate. When Honoria came out she walked to Plicott and put her fingers in his. 'Now we'll die together,' she said calmly, and sat down.

"That night we buried the old man, and Gridley drew me aside to say, 'I know that Plicott and that

woman stole our cask of water. Look at their wet lips! Let's kill them!' He made this proposal with earnestness; and when he had made it he lay down, struggled a little with phantoms, and later died in a burning pain.

"Without any help I dragged his body into the shadow of the rock, and went and told Honoria and Henry. She looked at me quietly. 'I'm guilty of his death, too,' she said. 'But I did n't know. You would n't stay with us; you looked at us as if we were too wicked, and we stayed by ourselves. I did n't know you were not having water to drink. Harry showed me how to get the water at night, and there was only enough for the two of us. Why should n't we have it?'

"'But Plicott owed it to the rest of us,' I said brutally. 'He had no business to snatch you into our boat and get your husband to shoot at us and spoil our cask of water.'

"'That is so,' she replied. 'But I am glad Harry loved me that much. Now we'll let Susan have the water, so that she can meet that fellow in Connecticut.' She crept into Plicott's arms, and we sat together through the night. At dawn, gently disengaging himself, Plicott drew me aside to say through cracked lips, 'I did n't drink any of the water. She thought there was plenty.'

"'But what became of it?' I demanded.

"'There was only a cupful,' he answered, walking on beyond the thicket.

"But something caught my eye. Pinned against

the hot face of the rock, I saw a pair of long stockings spread out to dry.

“To my exclamation he croaked: ‘She washed them. She thought there was plenty of water. You could n’t expect her not to . . . a delicate woman. . . . The sea water, she said, made them sticky . . . she wanted to be beautiful for my sake. . . . She said she would have made me a tidy wife . . . men like tidiness . . . she washed them. I lied to her . . . she went thirsty herself, so ’s she could have her stockings clean . . . she . . . *Honoriam!*’ He suddenly fell forward, clutched his fingers into the sand, and sighed, blowing the coral dust out of his parched nostrils in a final puff. And, as he relaxed, a gentle draught of air picked one of the lace stockings from the rock and let it fall across his lifeless hand.

“It was a week later, or two or three weeks later (time passed by us with tremendous irregularity), that I dreamed that it rained. I started to my feet, and in my wild eagerness stumbled over something and fell, being at the end of my powers. There I lay, sucking at the very air for moisture till I slept again. I was roused at daylight to see Susan standing over me, sobbing. ‘She’s dead! she’s dead!’ she cried again and again.

“I remember that I looked up into the blue sky and felt my dry clothes about me. When I cleared my eyes, I saw, a few yards off, *Honoriam*, lying on her back, her glowing hair shrouding her white face, her parched lips and shrunken throat. Beyond her I saw

the white surf. Yet beyond that gleamed the sail of a vessel.

“I forgot everything, and ran down to the shore and shouted in a thin voice, while Susan stood before me, her hands clasped over her bosom in an agony of suspense. It was n't till I was sure the schooner was heading up for the island that I turned round, and realized that Honoria was quite dead in the barren sand that covered the lean, burnt body of the man who had loved her lawlessly.”



## STRANGE PORTS

WE sat on the wheel-box of the *Mary E. Timms*, smoking our pipes in the glitter of California sunshine. The schooner lay before us empty and deserted. Up the gaping main hatch came soft sounds of water gurgling along the planks of the hull. My companion took his pipe out of his mouth, cuddled it in his huge fist and shook his head at a straw-haired man who peered down at us from the wharf. "Don't know where she's bound for!" he rumbled. The man nodded and retired, sinking behind the edge of the wharf till only a round hat bobbed within view. When this, after several erratic movements along our wooden horizon, disappeared too, the mate resumed his pipe. "Sailors always want to know where you're going," he remarked.

"That's natural," I suggested.

"It is," was the reply. "But I remember when young fellows weren't so curious about where the vessel was cleared for. But sailing was sport those days. Now it's business. There are n't many strange ports left, so to speak."

The phrase caught my ear. "Strange ports? You talk like a sailor out of one of Magellan's ships. Who ever thinks of setting sail for strange ports nowadays?"

“Oh, well,” the mate answered with some signs of embarrassment, “that’s just a manner of speaking. Only I was thinking of Silas Everett and the voyage of the *El Dorado*.”

“Did you go to strange ports?” I demanded

The mate sought the mizzen truck with dreamy eyes. “We sailed for ’em,” he answered me slowly. “You see —”

Captain Silas Everett quit the Pacific Mail line, and a first-class ship, one day about ten years ago. Nobody could exactly make out why he left the *San Juan*, for Everett was a steady, skillful, quiet skipper, not more than middle-aged, and he would sooner or later have been given one of the crack express steamers. But one day — I was third mate with him — he went to the superintendent and resigned. Then he came back to the *San Juan*, emptied his lockers, told the steward to hang a fresh towel over the mirror and came up on the bridge where I was fixing the compass. “Just hand me out those glasses of mine, Grindley,” he said. “I’ve left the ship.”

I got him his binoculars and that was all there was to it. Naturally, I was surprised; but Thompson took the steamer and I did n’t think much more about it till next trip into San Francisco, when Everett hunted me up. “Would you like to go mate with me in the *El Dorado*?” says he.

“*El Dorado*?” says I. “I don’t know her.”

“She’s a brig,” he told me.

“Where bound?” I asked him.

Everett just looked at me with his steady eyes and said, “Are you game for a voyage anywhere?” Funny, was n’t it? But I climbed right down, so to speak, and said, “Anything for a change. I’m sick of the smell of steam and the same old road year in and year out.”

“I thought so,” he said. “I stuck to that route for twenty-three years. Come over to Meiggs’ Wharf and have a look at the *El Dorado*.”

So I went and drew my pay and turned in the buttons and badges on my uniform and we walked down to Meiggs’ Wharf and I had a look at my new ship.

She was n’t very big, and was old-fashioned as a whaler. She was about five hundred tons burden, heavily built, with good lines, and a half deck. She was oversparred, and the canvas was all new, I could see. Brasswork shining, decks like cream and new dowells looking up like bright dollars out of the low quarter-deck. “There does n’t seem to be much for a mate to do,” I remarked, and Everett nodded. “I’ve tended her myself,” he told me. “She’s all ready for sea. I’ve got half a crew, and I reckon we can pick up the rest in a day or so.”

That night I threw my blankets into my bunk on the *El Dorado*, cut up some tobacco into the soap dish and felt at home for the first time in six years. It’s pretty fine to step out on deck of a nice evening and smell no steam and see no passengers and not feel that

from six to sixteen ventilators are swung the wrong way. I turned in and slept like a full bottle — without a gurgle. Next morning I turned what hands were aboard out at dawn and scrubbed the decks. Then I drank my coffee and wondered where Everett was. I had n't heard him come aboard the night before. He hove in sight just as I set my coffee cup down, and he had two more hands in tow. He shoved them up the plank, gave them a twist toward the fo'e'sle and came up to me, rubbing his fingers together. "Three more men will fill us up," he remarked.

Now I had taken a good, fair look at the hands already signed on, and I had a glance at the two he had just brought. I spoke my mind. "Of all the rough, rum, piratical, filibustering, throat-cutting, knife-eating, nail-chewing, impolite sons of Neptune that I ever laid eyes on you've got the pick, cream and eelight," I said. "The very largest sized cuss-word would n't half go round with 'em."

Everett smiled, apparently much pleased with himself. "Can you handle them?" he inquired very civilly.

"I've been third officer and kindergartner on a mail boat for six years," I said. "My hands are soft. But I once sailed with a Nova Scotia crew out of Pictou and I had callouses on my shoes. I understand I am mate of this brig."

No more was said or was needful to say, though the last three seamen that Everett signed on struck me as being fellows that no skipper in his wits would have

more than one of in a crew — tall, hairy, scowling, sullen chaps, the biggest of whom Everett made bos'n on the spot. I merely pondered to myself the probability that the *El Dorado* was going as a pirate or on a sealing voyage in the Jap islands. But it was none of my business and I kept my mouth shut.

We sailed the next day without any fuss, and twenty-one days later I came up during my watch below and tackled Everett to know where we were bound for. "We've toddled out into the Pacific a thousand miles and dropped down toward the Equator another thousand, and now, as I understand it, we are rocking along into the places where the maps are plain blue without any specks on them. I've spent my days licking the crew and my nights trying to get up strength enough to lick them again the next day. You have twelve hands on this brig, and each of the twelve would occupy the entire time and attention of three policemen. Look at your second mate over there; he has n't knuckles left to wipe his eyes with. How many days more?"

Everett took all this in and then invited me into the cabin, where he called the boy and ordered him to bring glasses. He reached out a large bottle himself and presently we were discussing it without too much ceremony, while the shadow of the spanker swept back and forth across the open skylight. "I might as well explain some things to you," the skipper told me, brushing his hair down on both sides of his head. "But

possibly even then you won't understand. You will see that I am trying to make up for my lack of advantages in my youth." Everett stared at me anxiously.

"I'm listening, sir," I said encouragingly.

"I suppose you ran away to sea?" he inquired.

"I did," I said. "I perspire when I think of it."

He nodded his head vigorously. "Now there you have it — real adventure, Mr. Grindley. As a boy you ran away to sea." He smacked his lips. "Now I had no such luck. My father apprenticed me when I was fourteen years old, and I spent five years in the same ship trading across the Atlantic. Then I was offered, through my father's interest, a berth in the Pacific Mail, and I stayed on the Panama run for twenty-three years, one month and eight days. When I quit the *San Juan* I had had no more experience on the sea than one of the steward's boys, — not so much. I resolved that when I had the money I would do what I longed to do when I was a lad and —" Here he looked at me in a scared way and brushed his hair down again.

"And what, sir?" I helped him along.

"And run away to sea," he finished hastily.

Well, I stared at him for an hour or so and he stared back, a prim, clean-faced, neat whiskered captain with a gold watch chain strung across his stomach. Odd, was n't it? So I stared, and all the foolish thoughts that I ever thought came up over the horizon of my mind and settled in the sky like peculiar, impudent stars. Were you ever eleven hundred and sixty-five

miles from land with a lunatic? And yet Captain Silas Everett was n't a lunatic. You could see that he had been thinking of this thing for years and years, while he was taking his sights from the *San Juan* and telling the chief officer to be sure and not load coffee and sheep-dip in the same hold. He was sane, all right. But it occurred to me that one of us was crazy and it was evident that I was it. So after a long while I managed to say, "And you're running away to sea now?"

"Exactly, Mr. Grindley."

"But where are you going?" I demanded.

He came back at me with another question. "Did you know where you were bound for when you ran away to sea?"

"I did not, and I was an —"

"Of course you did n't," he announced, cheering up. "Neither do I. Lord, Grindley, have n't I earned this? I slaved on a steamer for twenty-three years. Now I'm going to have what all you chaps had and I never did. I'm going to have a little adventure. Just fancy" — he combed his hair up this time — "just fancy: here we are with a tight little brig, free as air and with the whole world before us. Why, man, it's the real thing."

A thought struck me and I kept quiet and let him talk, which he did very sensibly except for his notion about running away to sea, which was all rot and I wished I had never done it. But that night when I saw the chance I sneaked out the ship's papers and

looked up her clearance. I'll bet no other vessel ever cleared from San Francisco like the *El Dorado* did. But there it was all written out — “for Strange Ports.” Then I went topside and stared at the chart a while. The *El Dorado* was blowing down into the blank South Pacific.

There was one thing, however, that I was entitled to know and I went right to the skipper about it. “It's all right about where we're bound for,” I told him. “If you're yachting it suits me. Kindly enlighten me as to the reason you had for raking the cinders of hell for your crew.”

He gave me no satisfaction, though I found out afterward, and I'll tell you about that when I get to it. In the meantime please consider me conducting a free fight through several thousand miles of latitude and longitude, up one side of the world and down the other, cross all the tropics, through every oceanic current and thwartships of the mundane sphere for eight months. Have you looked in your geography lately? Well, the surface of the earth is said to be two-thirds water. That is a lie. It is nine-tenths water. We did n't sight even an island from the time we left the Golden Gate till nine months later, when Everett looked up at me from the chart and said quietly, “I wish you'd correct this course here. I make it sixteen hundred and eight miles.”

I jumped. “To where?” I asked.

“To Hué,” he said.

“Hué? That's a new one to me,” I remarked,



planting my fists on the chart. "But land is land and a port is a port the world over."

When my eye lit on Hué I felt funny. Look for it on any chart of Indian waters. It is in Cochin China, not so far from Saigon. The *El Dorado* was swinging along in the southern equatorial current, and ahead of her lay a mess of islands. Well, time enough to tell about it when we get there.

Did you ever sail in those waters? Don't. Just a week later than the day that Everett handed me his figures, our little brig was plunging bows under in broken water. I swear that all the water in the world piles up on the shoals and into the channels off that coast. It swirls up from the bottom, rides down in smoking rollers, whirls in vast pools that suck and suck and suck at the fringes of smelly islands. Lord, what a seaman Everett was! Day after day we rocked along among these currents and tides. Now and then I could see the exact place where the great stream of water forked and divided. Moon and stars and sun together pulled and hauled and drew and drove that hot, scented sea amid the flocking islands. One hour we were racing on the crest of a tidal wave; the following hour we were close hauled and beating up into the thrust of a torrent of water pouring round some headland. Not a watch passed but what the men threw themselves down where they stood and panted and slept till eight bells struck again. Everett and I did n't sleep at all, conning that little, stanch brig through the welter of rocks and water and shoals and whirlpools and long

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reaches, where the waves ran ruddy tipped into the flaming sun.

Once in a while we would sight a steamer coasting carefully into some hidden bay, or a native craft boiling along in a tide-rip. But we won through, and the monsoon silenced the sails and we drove across the China Sea toward Hué.

Everett was jubilant, like a boy out of school. He would smile like a father on the sullen, sweating, cursing crew, and then his face would light up, and he would draw in a long breath of the spicy air as much as to say, "I'll have another of the same, please."

Right here occurred a small incident. It was a first-class mutiny. Sun, warm water, hard work and nine months at sea took the frazzled loose ends of our piratical crew and twisted them into a knot that was like to have finished us all. We all knew it was coming as soon as we fetched smooth seas and open going. It broke at midnight when the bos'n did n't relieve the wheel. The man steering quietly left his post and the brig came banging up into the fresh wind.

I was just turning things over to the second mate when this happened, and the skipper was standing in the stairway to the cabin in his pajamas. Of course one of them jumped for the wheel, while I ran forward. I got exactly as far as the corner of the deck-house when a long hairy arm shot across my shoulder and a knife tickled my windpipe. But Everett was too smart. Something burned my cheek, and the man who held the knife seemed to lose his balance and went

down, grabbing at my legs. I ran back, the report of a revolver in my ears.

It was a night of velvet set with spangled stars that shone with a sort of splendid blue flame. The wind was fresh and the sea smooth. You could see a man's bulk plainly, but you could n't see his face or his hands. That made it bad. But Everett simply walked forward, with his revolver in his hand, and the second mate and myself back of him. I shall never forget that walk down the jumping deck of the old *El Dorado*. It seemed hours that we were stepping through the clinging darkness under the thundering sails, and all that time Everett was whistling gently to himself. The second mate's head was rocking regularly on his shoulders as he peered first over one of the skipper's raised arms and then over the other.

Our slow advance must have scattered the wits of the men, who likely expected to end it all in a rush. At any rate they did n't break in a body, but slithered here and there like men dodging bricks. But the bos'n — and he was a man indeed — saw that this would n't do, and slipped out and drove his big knife full at the old man's throat. Everett let out a loud, surprised whistle and his gun went off. The bos'n's knife clattered against the bulwark and he himself clapped down on the deck like a board. The old man fired again, stared at the threshing yards and let out a yell, "Man the braces!"

Yes, sir, they turned to like little children with their thumbs in their mouths, leaving their dead on the deck

where the hauling queues of men trampled them to the tune of *Sant' Anna*. And when the dawn burnt up the darkness the crew was done for. Everett looked 'em all over carefully and then told the sailmaker to sew the corpses up in canvas. Then he drank his coffee and smiled.

That afternoon we buried them, the two dead men, with prayer book and all. When the brig was on her course again Everett went down into his cabin and called me. "I hope I did what was right, Mr. Grindley," said he. "In a way I am responsible for this outbreak."

"I told you these hands would make trouble," I said.

"That's one reason I signed on such men," he remarked quietly. "In all my time at sea I never had any such trouble, and I wondered whether — whether I could handle such a crowd. It was an experiment of mine. Remember Ferguson? He quelled five mutinies, they say. Good man, Ferguson. I merely wondered if I was up to it, that's all. Well, poor fellows! All my fault, too."

Sounds crazy, does n't it? Getting a crew of cut-throats just to see if one can manage 'em? But I want you to understand that I did n't see anything crazy about it at the time. I had got used to Silas Everett and his ways. He was going on a picnic he'd missed when he was a kid, and it was n't my place to cut the rope to his swing or eat his banana or hide his clothes when he was in swimming.

Next day we sighted a lump of land that struck me as being first-class in every particular, quite different from the bits of islands we had seen so far. "That's China," says Everett solemnly. "I've never seen China before." He sat down by the wheel and enjoyed it. Later he remarked that we would lie in Hué a long time. "I'm going to see some of this China," he said.

"You'd have done it easier by taking the *Peking* to Hongkong," I suggested.

He shook his head. "I've done with liners, Grindley," he said familiarly, as it was n't my watch. "I missed all this when I was a boy. Think of landing in a small boat in a town you never saw before or heard of till you saw it on the chart."

"It's a strange port, all right," I said, not thinking till I caught Everett's blush that I had given myself away.

"That was the way Columbus cleared his ships," he told me solemnly.

"Well, you're the Columbus of Hué, anyway," I said. "I wonder how long it's going to take us to make it? Tow in?"

"There is n't a tugboat there!" he said triumphantly. "We're going to see China *right*, my son."

That sea is worth looking at. The next day I watched the water foaming under the bows, the sky like thick blue glass overhead, and smelt the sharp, moist air and enjoyed it. Native junks tooled along like pictures on a revolving ribbon. Odd canoes slunk

out of little bays, and an ancient tub of a paddle-wheel steamer went in and out of openings in the coast like a big bumblebee poking its bill into flowers. We stood on up the sea under plain sail.

I was called at four o'clock the next morning to relieve the second mate, and when I came on deck I found that we were out of sight of land again. The skipper pointed to the chart. I saw the wind had hauled and we were a good forty miles off the coast, which here entered into a big bight. Pitch dark it was, and a strong current setting against us. I took the deck.

Just before dawn I thought I saw a vessel's lights to windward — the wind set off shore — but I could make nothing out till the first light came. Then I saw it was a big junk, painted a gaudy red and black like a chimney sweep's cart. It was moseying along under a hugeous big sail, and the steersman was perched far out, hanging to the end of his rudder sweep. That was all, except that the junk was being edged over toward the *El Dorado* by the swift current. Everett came on deck and watched it a while. Then he got his glasses. The strange craft was apparently forging ahead of us.

Half an hour later it was n't a cable's length away and Everett was staring at it with puckered brows. "I don't like the looks of that affair," he told me, over his shoulder. The words were hardly out of his mouth when he jumped for the wheel, calling the watch to the braces. I saw a score of bare-chested men climb-

ing up the bulwarks of the junk with knives in their teeth and the steersman was jamming his helm over so as to thrust the junk in towards our brig. I let out a roar, and all hands piled up out of the fo'c's'le. The old man lifted his upper lip over his teeth and said in a loud, clear voice, "They're pirates. Give the hands knives."

The second mate caught the last words as he dived up the steps, tumbled back, and ten seconds later was spilling a heavy rack of big knives out on the deck. The seamen grabbed at them, I took the wheel, and the second mate jumped forward to keep the Chinks from cutting away our headgear. The junk swung up against the brig with a bump and Everett ran down among the men, revolver in one hand and knife in the other.

For twenty minutes I sailed the brig, single-handed, while that hellion crew of ours, with the old man and the second mate in the thick of them, slashed, bit and mauled those Chinks as they piled up and on our decks. Thank God for those nail-chewers I'd licked across ten thousand miles of open water! I prayed for the resurrection of the bos'n and his fellow corpse. I kept the brig full, steered her like a small boat and watched.

You understand that the first thing these pirates tried to do was to cut away our gear. They knew that if they could render the brig helpless they had all day to finish the job in. With an ordinary white-headed crew we would have been goners in ten minutes. But our men were boiling for a scrap, tough as knots, filled with ginger, gall and grit. I saw whole rows of claw-

like hands clutch our rails as the Chinks piled up tooth and nail. From where I was I could catch a glimpse of the crowds on the deck of the junk waiting their chance, and the boss of them, in a bright yellow shirt, yelling and shrieking at them from the after-deck. Then I'd see knives flash out and the hands drop off, one by one, and I'd hear great, agonized cries of pain. But they had managed to get a chain hooked over the port channels and it held, with the weight of the junk pulling on it. And the more hands were cut and mashed the more men seemed to swarm up the poor brig's sides.

I could see that we were fighting with the odds against us, and every now and then a Chink managed to stick his toes in, hold on for a second and drive his ugly cutlass into one of the hands. Two of our men were groaning on the hatch already, and I could see that the pirates below were loading a round-bellied cannon, and the yellow-shirted fiend was passing out guns. Something had to be done and done quickly. I dared not leave the wheel, for the breeze was freshening and we were in a perfect tide-rip. But fortune took it out of my hands. A dozen of the pirates managed in some way to pull round our bows in a small boat and they piled over the lee bulwarks like a swarm of flies. I dropped the wheel, grabbed a handspike and tumbled down on the main deck to do my best. Inside of five seconds I was sorry I had come.

Ever fight with a dozen hyenas? Those Chinks were the worst men I ever ran up against. They bit, tore,



scratched, knifed, shot, kicked and spit. I was naked to the waist in a minute and my shoes were gone in two. But Everett had seen what was happening and he edged his men round, back to back, and yelled to the second mate, who was nearest the cabin, to run there and hold it so that the Chinks could n't get to windward of us that way.

Our leaving the bulwarks had allowed still more pirates to scramble up, and they cut the braces in a minute. I saw Everett's face settle into a hard, wicked knot when he glanced up from the middle of the scrimmage and saw the yards banging. But that saved us.

The brig lost headway, was caught by the current, swung back, and then the sails filled for a moment, and I saw the junk slide away from us and drag ahead. The sails emptied again, and as the brig rose on a big swell the junk was jerked bodily up under the cutwater. The crash of the collision threw us down on our hands, the whole boiling of us. Assorted yells came from the junk, the pirates ran to the sides of the brig and our sweating men jumped on them and the rest was a slaughter. In half an hour the decks were clear of the living pirates, and on the wreckage of the junk were floating a few Chinks whom the second mate potted from the fife rail.

We had lost two men killed outright and every man jack was wounded. I had a rotten slash in the arm myself. I saw Everett grinning over us, his hand wiping at the breast of his torn shirt. "Mr. Grindley," he called out clearly, "please turn the men to to clean

up. Overhaul the running gear and get the yards braced. Tell the cook to get breakfast for all hands."

"He's dead, sir," said somebody, and Everett frowned.

"How many are dead?" he inquired in a very loud voice. I answered him. "Two,—the cook and the carpenter."

"Tell off two men as cook and carpenter," he croaked, and started to step slowly toward the poop. But he did n't get far. One of the hands leaped forward and caught him as he fell.

We laid him on a bit of sail on the after-deck and stared down at him, careless of the threshing yards. Across his chest ran a deep cut, and every breath he took sent bubbles out of it. He looked up at us and rocked his head. "Turn the men to," he said in a whisper. "Get the brig under way again. Don't mind me."

The damage to the ship was slight, and half an hour later I came back to the quarter-deck and looked down at the skipper. He smiled up at me and I knelt down so as to catch what he was trying to say. "It was a great fight," he whispered. "What luck! I would n't have missed it . . . after twenty-three years on a mail boat. . . . I'd like to see China. But I sha'n't. Take the brig home . . . neither wife nor child . . . I suppose folks won't understand, but it does n't matter, my son . . . a great lark. Bury me in Hué."

He was passing, and the shadow of the spanker

shaded his face wet with sweat. I listened. He was smiling to himself. Suddenly his eyes flashed over me and toward the thick, blue sky. "I'm clearing for the last time . . . for a strange port," he muttered. He was silent again for an interval, then suddenly raised himself on one elbow. His right hand shaded his steady eyes; he drove his sobbing breath out in a loud cry, "*Land, ho!*"

I threw a spare sail over him and laid the course for Hué.

## JAMES GALBRAITH, ABLE-BODIED SEAMAN

WE were talking idly, leaning back in our chairs on the *lanai* of the Moana Hotel in Honolulu. My companion was telling me about the loss of the bark *Quickstep*, whose captain sat across the lawn, gazing stupidly out at the gaudy Pacific, with an expression of bewilderment.

“Yes, they fired him. The local inspector went for him, I can tell you! Just sailed into him and told him he was no seaman at all! Took away his master’s papers for one year, by Jove! and nearly kicked him out of the office. A shame, too! Look at the man’s reputation: never had an accident before. Because he abandons a leaky old tub that’s sinking under his feet, they disgrace him.”

The speaker lit another cigar, flinging the match away with a nervous and scornful gesture. “It’s a shame!”

Across the *lanai* came Thomas Price, master of the tank steamer *Murray Wells*, and my friend hailed him jovially. “What you doin’ out here at Waikiki, you old fraud? Is the *Wells* in drydock, that you’re free for an hour?”

Captain Price smiled gently, shook hands quite formally, with a vast grip, and sat down. “The ship’s all

right," he announced. "But that wharf-pump is choked. Been choked two hours. So I thought I'd run out here." He took off his cap and laid it on the table.

"Yes, of course something happened." The speaker turned to me, tossing his head to emphasize the satire of his remark. "The *Wells* has been crossing the Pacific for three years, carrying crude oil, and in all those three years Captain Price here has n't been ashore an hour at either end of the run. Think of it! Gets into Monterey eight days out from Honolulu, ties up, and the pumps start throwing oil into her hold again, while Price skips out, buys a morning paper, gets a box of cheap cigars, hands in his accounts and papers at the office, comes back, and sails for Honolulu after being just four hours in port after a voyage of twenty-five hundred miles. Crosses the ocean and gets into Honolulu at 10 P.M., pumps the oil out, buys an evening paper, turns in his accounts, buys six sacks of rice, and is off for Monterey again before daylight. Wah! Why don't you quit and be a street-car conductor? The sea's no place for a man any more."

"We keep pretty steady at it," Price agreed gently, looking at me with a slightly humorous glance, as much as to say, "Listen to the lad!"

"Why, they run ships nowadays just like the old Fifth Avenue busses in New York. Up and down and up and down. Then they fire you if they don't like the color of your hair or you're sassy to a lady passenger. Look at poor old Stuntser, there. Left the *Quickstep* just half an hour before she foundered. Did his best,

by Jove! And they take his ticket away from him — disgrace him! Punish him as if he were a thief! It's a rotten shame, by Jove!" He looked at us with great ferocity, chewing on his cigar and evidently enraged to the last degree.

Price nodded slightly and thoughtfully. "Well," he said gently, "I suppose they looked at it this way: he did n't bring her in."

"Bring her in! Man, she *sank!*"

"Well, then, he let her sink," Price went on imperturbably.

"My heavens, Price, what sort of a machine-made man are you, anyway?" came the cross demand. "Would you have had the man go down with an old tub like the *Quickstep*? Ain't one man's life worth more than ten *Quicksteps*? Say, ain't it, now?"

The captain of the tanker looked at us meditatively. "Oh, of course," he said presently, digesting the matter thoroughly. "If they were passengers. Certainly, of course."

"Passengers!" roared our companion, in huge disgust. "Are n't sailors worth saving? Say, are n't they? You're a sailor. Answer me."

Price flushed faintly. "Stuntser was the captain. He was paid to bring the *Quickstep* into port."

"Look here," was the response. "The *Quickstep's* cargo was plain cement, worth something or other a barrel. She carried a crew of sixteen. She was sinking. Stuntser quit her three hundred miles offshore — came in in a little open boat, without the loss of a man.

By Jove! after all that, — saving his crew an' all, — they *fire* him. It's a burning shame! And you run your old tanker like a street-car, at the beck and call of some little clerk in Monterey and another little clerk in Honolulu. Say, do you ring in a time-clock when you get in and when you leave?"

I almost got up, the tone was so insulting. But Price simply flushed a little deeper and shook his head mildly. "You're young," he said very gently. "I used to think just that way. But I always remember Galbraith — James Galbraith, A.B."

"Galbraith? Galbraith? Don't remember him. Who was he? What did he do?"

The captain of the *Murray Wells* glanced at me apologetically. "He shipped with me once. I was very young at the time; really had no business with a command. It was a long time ago. It doesn't matter."

For the first time I interfered. "I'd like to hear about him, if you don't mind," I insisted.

"Mind? Oh, of course not. Why should I mind? Well, this was the way of it.

"I was a youngster on the steamship *Ardmore*, one of the steel wool-ships the Yellow Funnel line ran years ago to the Colonies. I was fourth officer — just out of my 'prentice days, you know, and quite lucky to get a start in so good a line. We carried coal up to Vladivostok that voyage from Japan, and found no place to discharge our cargo. It was in the fall, cold and a little stormy. We lay there for a month.

"Just above us I used to see an ancient, dingy, bark-

rigged steamer, lying to a weedy cable. She was small, top-heavy, and miserable-looking. Her name — it was in white capitals across her stern — was the *Patrick Dare*. I understood she was a sealer that had been caught by the cruisers off the Pribilof Islands and condemned as a poacher. She was waiting to be sold.

“They found us a place to discharge our coal, and we set to work, sweating through the short, chilly days, up to our eyes in dust and grime. I did n’t like the job. We of the second mess used to complain bitterly at night. Not where the old man could hear us, though. We were afraid of him. One morning the captain came and called me out of the ’tween-decks. ‘Do you want to take the *Patrick Dare* to Honolulu?’ he asked me. ‘A Japanese has bought her and loaded her with stuff for his firm down there. There is n’t a man in port who can or will take her out. They came to me about it. You’ll have command, of course. An ugly job — pick-up crew. Will you go?’

“I am amazed now that I took it. But I was young. I had never commanded a vessel. That old, weedy sealer suddenly became magnificent in my eyes and utterly desirable. I left the *Ardmore* in an hour, looking back at the cloud of grime and dust that hung over her, with pity for the men who were condemned to stay with her in their vile and commonplace toil. I even thought a little scornfully of the old man, who would continue in his decent, unadventurous position, conning that big steel hull through commercial waters, with freight rates



at one end of the vista and engineers' indents at the other. While I —

“ Well, I saw my new employer. He was a delicate-fingered Japanese, quite alert and businesslike. ‘ You had better sail immediately,’ he told me. ‘ The ice will soon freeze here. You will make the voyage in nineteen days. Leave to-morrow. That will get you into Honolulu on Wednesday, the thirtieth of November. See?’ He laid it out for me with his pencil on the blotter that lay on the counter. And when he was done, he went and counted out a small bag of gold coin and handed that to me. ‘ For the ship’s expenses. I have engaged a crew. The engineer is an American; the mate also. The rest are Japanese, Captain.’

“ I left that little office with the last word ringing in my ears. I suppose I strutted through the bazaar with the air of an emperor or a freshly commissioned ensign. I took a sampan and started out on the bay for my new command, with the bag of coin in my pocket, my instruments on my lap, and the ship’s papers in a tin case at my feet. My pride received a slight setback when I told the Chinese boatman, ‘ The *Patrick Dare*,’ for he glanced at all my paraphernalia, my uniform (minus the insignia, which I had turned in to the steward of the *Ardmore*, of course), and then at the rotten craft I was bound for. The final insult was when he took his fare and turned away without the usual demand to be my sampan-man for the ship. Evidently he thought that the *Patrick Dare* could not afford a sampan during its stay in port.

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“The mate received me at the gangway, and the engineer thrust his tousled head out of the half-deck with watery eyes fixed on me. ‘How-do, Cap’n,’ he greeted me. ‘When are them stores comin’ off?’

“Now, this was a natural question which I should have been able to answer. I knew it, but I knew nothing of the stores. Nobody had said a word about them. I carried it off with a ‘Stores will be off this afternoon. Got all your coals?’

“He nodded apathetically, and I turned to the mate with relief. He was a slight, energetic-looking, sharp-faced fellow, about my own age. He told me the crew was on board and that what things he could find to do he had done. ‘We’ve all Japs, sir,’ he informed me.

“‘This is a Japanese vessel,’ I responded with dignity. ‘Cargo stowed?’

“‘Yes. This old tub leaks.’

“‘What did you expect?’ I demanded.

“‘Nothing,’ was the sulky answer, and he went off cursing the Japanese roundly.

“You have no notion how disappointed I was as I inspected my new craft. The solitary virtue that I could find in her was possibilities of speed. The engineer, who cursed her from keelson to truck, admitted that she was heavily engined and that her lines were good. ‘But she’ll shake the plates out of her,’ he asserted loudly. ‘She’s got high-speed, single-actin’ machines, and they’ll chew and chew and chew till the hull opens up like a rotten orange or she drops her propeller.’ The boilers were bad. The starboard water-tank leaked like

a sieve. The donkey-engine was wholly out of commission from rust and disuse. The bunkers were filled with the vilest of coal.

“I left him and went ashore, after long signaling for a sampan, to fetch off some provisions which the Japanese steward said were to come to us. They had not arrived, and I was bent on sailing at dawn. So I went after them.

“I found the *comprador*, and made him understand that there was no pay coming unless the provisions were on board by sundown. Then I went up to the Admiralty Building to get my correct time.

“As I came out and was hurrying through the bazaar, an old man met me. He looked at me a moment and then said, ‘Captain, want another hand?’

“I stopped and stared at him. I saw an aged, rather feeble-looking European. His hands were stubby-fingered, and the backs of them tattooed. His face was big, round, with a fringe of white beard. He took off his cap, and I saw that his hair was thick and gray. But he gave every appearance of being too old to work. I told him so.

“‘I’ve got good discharges, sir,’ he croaked, reaching into some huge pocket and dragging out a tremendous book of them. ‘All V. G., sir.’

“Now, I was in a hurry. However, it suddenly ran through my mind that here was an old seaman who might have to starve all winter if he did n’t get a ship for the outside. I knew the *Ardmore* would n’t take him, and the only other craft in port was the American ship

*Charles F. Sargent.* She had been laid up, for my mate had been third on her and was taking this chance to get out of Vladivostok. The old man held out his preposterous bunch of papers and repeated, 'They're all V. G., sir. In sixty years I never got a bad discharge, sir.'

"Why didn't I tell him he was too old? you ask. God knows. Because I was young and pitiful and puffed up with pride and anxious to show my capacity, I nodded to this ancient shellback, and he followed me into the sampan and out to the *Patrick Dare*. Here I turned him over to the mate. 'I guess we'll take this man with us,' I told him. 'Put him on the articles, will you?' Then I was busy till dark.

"I had had my supper alone in the dingy saloon, when the same old sailor came into my cabin cap in hand, and croaked out, 'Speak to you, sir?'

"'What is it?' I demanded crossly.

"'Mr Buxton wants to sign me on as ordinary seaman, sir. I'm A.B., sir; I've been A.B. for sixty years. James Galbraith, A.B., sir.'

"I fancy I stared at him a long while, for he started to draw out his bundle of discharges again. I capitulated on the spot. 'Present my compliments to Mr. Buxton,' I told him, 'and ask him to come here.'

"When Buxton came I ordered him to sign the old man on as able-bodied seaman.

"'He's too old to be any good,' the mate protested. But I insisted, and he went off grumbling.

"Before turning in I went out on deck to see that all

was well. The engineer was sitting in his cabin scrawling on his slate. In response to my inquiries, he said that he was all ready to go, as ready as his engines ever would be — giving me to understand that he had doubts of our arriving anywhere, on account of the weakness, inefficiency, and general worthlessness of the *Patrick Dare's* machinery. On my way back to my room I passed the old seaman. He was busy over a boat-lashing and paid no attention to me.

“I was up shortly after midnight, and at dawn the *Patrick Dare* had sixty fathoms of grassgrown cable dripping on her forward deck, an ancient wooden-stocked anchor was at the cathead, and down below the rusty, high-speed engines were whining shrilly. From my place on the bridge I saw the harbor-lights swing a little and then begin to drop astern. The mate joined me, and wanted to know what to do with the anchor-cable. I told him to stow it as best he could, regardless of its weeds and barnacles. Then I rang to the engine-room for full speed, and we trundled off into the eye of the belated dawn, making something like twelve knots an hour, I reckoned. As we passed the *Ardmore*, standing out of the dark water like a huge building, I pulled the whistle-cord, and an appalling guttural blast of sound rose into the chill air. Ten minutes later we signaled the guard-vessel below and tooled out into the lower bay.

“Three days afterward the mate and the engineer and I sat at table, at our meagre supper. We were disgusted with the ship and with each other. Buxton, the

mate, threw his roving eyes about the saloon and openly cursed the whole outfit, easily and freely. 'By heavens, I never thought I'd get down to this,' he told me. 'Now, you've got a good berth waiting for you, Captain, when you get this old tub into port. But, I swear, I'll be ashamed to look for another ship. Who'd have thought I'd ever work for a Jap?'

"The engineer glanced up from his plate, and his watery eyes held a doubtful, sly look that offended me. 'If she breaks down we'll have a devil of a time getting to shore,' he said, almost menacingly. 'And it'll serve these stingy Japs right, too. Just serve the villains right to lose this old tub, blast 'em. Nobody but a heathen would send such a craft to sea. And of course she's not insured?' He glanced carefully at me. I nodded, and he burst out, 'Yes, that's the way! Could n't trust their own dirty countrymen to take this hooker to Honolulu; had to get white men! We get nothin' but wages, and they rake in the profits!' He shook his head threateningly and departed to his engine-room, quivering with rage.

"The mate glanced at me and winked. 'Booth ain't stuck on his job,' he remarked. 'Well, if we don't fetch her in, there's no harm done. What's a Jap, anyway? Let 'em run their own coffins.' And he strolled away.

"I sympathized with my two officers; they were the only two white companions I had; I really was much of the same opinion as they. I cursed my first command and the Japanese that owned her. Really, she was a scandal.

“ But we mugged along, and as the engines recovered from their years of disuse we made steadily better time. The weather grew fine after we were out of the Japan Sea and into the Pacific, and the days grew fewer that I must count before I handed the *Patrick Dare* over in Honolulu.

“ My only recreations these days was James Galbraith. The mate had watched him about his work for a day or so, and then dubbed him Able-bodied, a grim jest on his rating on the articles and his real physical weakness. The doddering old chap pottered round the deck, did odd jobs, kept himself incessantly busied over useless tasks. As the rest of the crew were Japanese, I accepted with great formality Buxton's jesting remark that we ought to make him second mate. I can see the old chap's face when I called him up and told him I had decided to have him act as a second mate, and for him to move his luggage (he had only a little bag of it) into the empty room next to mine. He fumbled his cap, stared up at the stubby masts of the *Patrick Dare*, and croaked, ‘ I never was an officer, sir. I've stood the second mate's watch, but I'm no officer, sir. I've discharges, sir, to show that I've always done my duty. If you say so, I'll act as second mate.’

“ ‘ Certainly,’ I responded curtly, and Buxton, with infinite humor, promptly handed him over my watch, as the mate and I were standing watch and watch. ‘ It will give the captain a rest,’ I heard him explain solemnly, when I had stepped away. It was a great joke, of course.

“The old fellow took it all seriously. For two days we enjoyed it, and at the end of that time I was slightly astonished to find that it had ceased to be a joke. Old Galbraith was a good officer. He was far better than Buxton. He handled the crew in an easy, masterful style that even I envied. And the Japs seemed perfectly satisfied to jump when he croaked at them. Now and again he would say in all seriousness to me, ‘I’ve never been an officer, sir, before. I’ve always been an A.B., not having the learning required. My discharges will show that I have done my duty well, sir.’ And I’d respond, ‘You are doing all right, Mr. Galbraith.’ Then the old chap would stare out of his old eyes and clasp the bridge-rail in his worn old fingers and stand a little straighter and throw a little more volume into his queer, husky voice.

“Once Galbraith insisted on showing me his discharges. I sat at the little desk in his room while he stood hovering over me, handling the musty, stained, crackling papers that recorded his sixty years at sea. By Jove! you ought to have seen that prodigious mass of papers! Old discharges written by some long-dead captain by the light of a torch on some East Indian wharf fifty years before; others with the neat scrawl of Her British Majesty’s consul in some port you never heard of — an endless succession of slips of paper testifying under oath that James Galbraith had done his duty as an able-bodied seaman with good will and good judgment.

“‘I’m getting old, now,’ he said suddenly. ‘It’s



hard to get a ship these days. They tell me I'm too old, sir.'

" 'How old are you?' I asked him.

" 'Seventy years old,' he croaked, gathering the papers up in his shaking hands.

" 'That's too old to work,' I said carelessly. 'Why don't you quit it?'

" He glanced at me apologetically, with a feeble shake of his gray head. 'I'm only an A.B.,' he muttered. 'What would I do ashore? I never stopped ashore.'

" What was there to say to him? Nothing. I looked at him. His years of arduous and ill-paid toil were heavy upon him. He was losing the strength that had fought and vanquished so many seas on so many ships. His eyes were dimming. He was old. What could he do? What was the reward of this outrageous task that destiny had imposed on his manhood and which he had accomplished? It made me think, I tell you. It occurred to me that each day some seaman suddenly reached the limit of his inglorious activity, was no longer signed on by mates or picked out by anxious skippers — passed up forever by the users of the sea. And what had he learned? What had his life amounted to? It was a question, wasn't it?

" Day after day I watched Galbraith about his self-appointed duties and wondered what would become of him when he 'signed clear' in Honolulu. Probably this was his last voyage. Nobody else would be so foolish as I. What would become of him?

" I am not sure that I determined that all this was

an injustice to Galbraith. In those days I accepted most of what was as right and proper. I might try to explain, but I don't remember questioning the justice of fate or Providence. I was young, and why should I? Age brings the doubts that hurt and destroy.

“One thing did impress itself slowly on my mind: the difference between Buxton and the acting second mate. Buxton was cock-sure, able, alert, loud-mouthed, quite fancy at times in his language and his notions of his own dignity. Galbraith was silent, slow, impassive, inexorably busy, never giving utterance to a thought, an imagination, or anything but an order. The endless spangles of stars in the sky, the rolling horizon, the changing sea never seemed to call up a single abstraction in his mind. He seemed to move in a world where things came up in regular order to be done and, being done, passed into the preterit forever. Now and then he displayed an odd skill or silently employed a daring manœuvre that showed that he had studied his profession with thoroughness and understanding. But otherwise he was simply an old man, fast declining in strength and able-bodiedness.

“I set our course so as to enter the Hawaiian archipelago much farther south than is usually done. In fact, I made so that I would see the island of Laysan, which is very far out of the ordinary course. But I reckoned that we should lose little time by doing this, and, to tell the truth, I did n't trust the seaworthiness of the *Patrick Dare*. First, she was ill laden; second, she was leaking badly somewhere aft. I thought it

would do no harm to run among the islands in the case of accident.

“We sighted Laysan and headed east for Honolulu, engines going full speed, smooth sea, fair breeze. Then, with the suddenness of an explosion, the engines jarred off the propeller, sent the tail-shaft grinding after it, and stopped with a roar of steam and a leaping of decks. Booth, the engineer, crawled out on deck, hanging to a Japanese oiler, and swore feebly. The firemen and the assistant engineer followed them with yelps of fear.

“It was mid-afternoon, and Galbraith was on watch. Buxton was asleep in the saloon, and I was reading a book. I came on deck with a jump, Buxton hard at my heels. Galbraith was staring down at the engineer, flinging questions at him which that scalded artisan answered with groans and tossings. It did not take us long to estimate the damage. It was irreparable. The water was pouring in the broken stern-bearings, flooding the engines. In time the *Patrick Dare* would sink. True, she might live for a day. She might live for a week, could we get the pumps going. But the pumps were below, clouded in hot steam. And the white plume on the funnel showed that the fires were going out fast.

“While the crew stood round with gaping mouths, Buxton and I talked it over. ‘We gotta quit her right away,’ he said. ‘Laysan is astern there, not over a hundred miles. We can make it to-morrow in a small boat. We gotta do it, and do it quick.’

“Really that seemed the only course. I ordered him to get the boats ready, and went about the work of

saving the papers, finding out the particulars of the breakage, and assuring myself the case was hopeless. I must say, had we been in any steamer track I would have held on, waiting to be picked up. But we were a hundred miles out of the usual track. We might lie there a month without sighting a sail.

“The poor old craft settled very gradually, by the stern. Now and then she rolled in a queer, distressing way. Buxton passed and repassed with anxious face. The engineer was squatted on the deck, oiling his burns and wrapping his arms and neck with waste. Galbraith was on the bridge, silent and apparently asleep, so far as any comprehension of what had happened was concerned.

“It was just sundown when Buxton reported that all was ready. He had our three boats swung out, with provisions and water in them, and the crew mustered. The *Dare* was riding, her bow a-cock, tumbling wildly in the heavy swell. ‘She won’t last long, sir,’ Buxton rattled off. ‘We’re all ready to go now. What’s the course, sir?’

“‘West by south,’ I told him.

“‘All right, sir. We’ll follow you. — Mr. Booth, take *No. 2* and keep just astern of the Captain!’

“I suppose I hesitated, for he snapped out, ‘Shall you take Galbraith with you?’

“‘Certainly,’ I replied, and looked around for him. I did not see him, and turned and told them to clear away their boats and start out. ‘I’ll follow later,’ I said.

“The two boats pulled away, and the six or seven Japanese who composed my boat’s crew waited impassively. I went in search of Galbraith. I found him nowhere on deck. I searched the ship for him, and at last I heard the sound of a hammer tinkling on metal, somewhere in the hold. I went down the engine-room ladder to the ’tween-decks and yelled, ‘Galbraith! Galbraith!’

“Far below I saw a sudden gleam of light on the shallow water that swept back and forth as the *Dare* rolled in the seaway. A white face was turned up to me, and the old fellow’s croak ascended: ‘Send another man down here, Captain.’ The face was withdrawn, and I heard the tin-tink-tinkle of metal on metal again.

“Now, I fully intended to order Galbraith up and into the boat. Instead, I went on deck and ordered two Japs down to help him. They went without a word, lowering themselves into the dark engine-room swiftly and silently. I sat down on the nearest hatch and wondered what Galbraith was doing. A pretty thing for the master of a ship to do!

“Presently it struck in on me that I had better be doing something myself. Four sailors were still standing round, watching the departing boats, which were now mere specks on the fast-darkening ocean. I set to work to hoist what sail I could to the freshening breeze.

“An hour later the *Dare* was swinging along to the westward at a very fair gait. I put a man at the wheel and took a lantern and went below. It was not till I reached the platform far below that I saw Galbraith’s

light. There were three or four feet of water washing about the engine hold, and I saw that he was at work far in the shaft-tunnel. I managed to find sufficient footing to claw my way to him. He was jamming some calking in about the edges of a plank shutter he had made to stop the tunnel. The water was squirting round him, and he swore as he worked.

“When he had braced it to suit him, he croaked out, ‘That’ll hold a while. Now let’s get them pumps a-going.’ He saw me and waved his hand respectfully. ‘She was leaking down this tunnel over the shaft, sir. So I stopped it up. Not enough’ll come in now to hurt, just so we can get the pumps going. Where’s the engineer? He can get his fires going again and pump her out.’

“‘The engineer’s gone,’ I told him. ‘But the assistant is here.’ I turned and ordered the Japanese machinist to start the fires, get up steam, and clear the pumps.

“Without a word those heathen went to their task alertly and energetically. As Galbraith climbed up the ladder and I followed him, I looked back into the hold and saw the lanterns glow out into the murk as they lit them. Then came a rattle of orders in Japanese, and the grunting song of the men swinging to their gear.

“On deck, Galbraith glanced at the sails, nodded, spat over the side, and asked, ‘Where’s the mate and the engineer, Captain?’

“‘They thought the ship was sinking and skipped out with two boats for Laysan.’

“ He pondered this, and shook his head, with profound wisdom. ‘ The mate’s too young,’ he rasped mildly. ‘ Does he think he’s a passenger?’

“ His voice rolled along the deserted deck to the bridge and the man at the wheel: ‘ Full and by, you ——!’ He followed it with a bellow into the engine-room: ‘ Come up here, two of you, and set the foretopmast stays’l!’

“ I was amazed. You could not have imagined such a volume of tone issuing from so feeble a frame. And it carried the note of command, of insistent and relentless discipline. Two men rushed up and on deck, staring round fearfully, muttering, ‘ Foretopmas’ stays’l, sir!’ as though suddenly wakened from a deep slumber.

“ They ran the staysail up smartly; other sails, too. I saw Galbraith dive into lockers and drag out huge rolls of clumsily bound canvas. His men sweated under his quick orders, and the slender, ill-stayed masts of the *Dare* were clothed, yard by yard, with drumming sails. And as each new cloth went aloft and was spread, she drove on more swiftly.

“ By midnight we were under all plain sail, and the assistant engineer reported that the leak was under control. Galbraith was on the bridge, conning the little vessel with skill and prudence, his gray head barely crowned by his old cap, now rakishly on one side. His great bellow filled the decks when he hurled an order, and I saw his pale eyes steady like those of a youth whenever they caught something amiss.

“ Dawn found us hastening along with a big curl of

white water under our bows. The wind was gradually hauling and we headed the *Dare* up for Honolulu. Galbraith smiled as he saw how close to the wind we sailed, and muttered, 'Better'n steam, any day.'

"I had difficulty to get him to turn in and sleep. His long-slumbering spirit seemed to have wakened. He betrayed no sign of fatigue or weariness. His hands still shook, to be sure, but they obeyed his muscles easily. Now and then he glanced at me with a triumphant, respectful glance, as much as to say, 'You still have a mate; don't worry because Buxton is gone.'

"After his sleep he came on deck, and we determined on our course for Honolulu. When that was done Galbraith said hoarsely, 'Them other fellows must have thought they was passengers! What did they sign on for? Heh? Scared! Heh? But we'll take her in, sir.'

"Another time he approached the subject from another point of view.

"Some of these young chaps think their bally hides are too precious to risk. What'd that owner sign 'em on for? To save their own skins? Heh? No. *To take the ship to Honolulu.*'

"Now I have confessed that I nearly left the *Dare* myself — my first command, too. But I could not have explained why I stayed, or why Buxton's going was so paltry an affair, till the old seaman's words rang in my ears: 'What did the owner sign them on for? . . . *To take the ship to Honolulu.*'



“ During the next three days, as we beat up for Oahu, I pondered this long.

“ At my elbow was James Galbraith, for sixty years a sailor before the mast, unhonored, ill-paid, cared for by no one, yet doing his single duty with great steadfastness of purpose and simplicity of heart — earning his wage. I, in the heat of youth, had been willing to throw away my trust and save my own life, thinking that it was worth more than the business I was on. I had been saved from that. The big lesson had been written before me — by James Galbraith, A.B. Because he had learned this, and lived it, his pocket bulged with insignificant papers, discharges from a hundred ships that he had served well. Now, at the end of a long life, he passed on to me the duty of earning my wage, handing over to me the sum of his laborious toil: to take my ship to its port.

“ It is a hard lesson. You will find many who value a human life above all else. That is right and proper. But at sea you are not paid to live: you are paid to do your duty, as others do it, without repining, steadfastly, earning your wage.”

“ And you got in all right?” I demanded, when he paused.

“ We did. I left Galbraith to look after the ship, and I went to the office of the consignees. I'm afraid I laid some stress on the shape the *Dare* was in, but the Japanese merely nodded and paid me off, after my accounting. Never a word about my bringing in a steamer that was practically a wreck. And, after all, he was

quite just. I recall that I said nothing about the six hands who had stayed with us because we had needed them."

"And James Galbraith?"

The master of the *Murray Wells* put on his cap and prepared to go. "Galbraith? I don't know. Shipped out for some place or other, I suppose. Good man, too. I gave him a first-class discharge to put with all the others in his big book."

"Nothing more?" I demanded incredulously — "after all his work and —"

Price glanced down at me with a faintly puzzled expression. "More? What more? He was paid for it."

He left us, striding back to the big tanker and his incessant industry, leaving me and my companion to stare at the disrated master of the wrecked *Quickstep*, still bowed down by the weight of a punishment he could not comprehend.

## THE VOICE OF AUTHORITY

THE captain of the *Gaelic* stood in the doorway of the smoking-room, a trim, quiet figure. His eyes met the glances of us all steadily and then fixed upon the judge's face. "The engineer reports a tube blown out of one of the boilers," he said calmly. "It may take some hours to plug it up. We shall be on our way before long."

The judge nodded and the captain vanished, leaving behind him a subtle effect of having stopped us midway of our course of conversation. Somebody spoke. "What did the captain come and tell us that for?"

The judge turned on the speaker and shook his head. "The captain has a great responsibility. A steamer stopped in mid-ocean presents unusual possibilities of trouble. Nobody worries over broken machinery. It's the people. We're six hundred persons, capable of strange things. So long as the ship goes on and we hear the trundle of the screw, we yield to the subtle manifestation of authority, we obey the captain because it is he who keeps the ship on her course. It is his only hold on us. If he fails to steer true, if he does not, day in and day out, maintain the harmonious working of all the machinery, we lose confidence in him. And six hundred people offer prodigious possibilities of anarchy."

"But he can depend on a lot of us to help him," came

another voice. "I guess we could keep things in order on this ship if worst came to worst."

"Perhaps," the judge answered. "But where would we get our authority? From the captain? You see, it all depends on him in the end."

"But he would manage to call on some one who would help him," the last speaker objected. "If trouble were brewing he would certainly call for help."

The judge gazed at us all and replied heavily. "I was on the *Parthia* ten years ago."

Interest blazed up among us. "She lost her propeller off Oonamak" — "You were three months adrift" — "I understood that there was killing" — "How was she brought in at last?" — "Who was the unlucky skipper?" — "Is it true that murder — ?" — "You were there?"

We tossed scraps of that famous tragedy of the Pacific back and forth about the judge, vying with each other in throwing suggestions to him, innuendoes, hints of horror and terror. And he gazed austerely at us till we fell silent. Then he said, "I'll tell you what I know of it. But I can't attempt to justify my opinions. As a matter of fact, we were saved by a man sixty years behind the times, a missionary to the heathen who was scorned even by his own sect. But he had authority. That is the only explanation I can offer you. When you have heard the facts you can form your own judgments.

"You remember that the *Parthia* sailed from Yokohama in August of 1898 and was not heard from till the 17th of December of the same year. I gather

that none of you have heard anything more definite than rumor as to what occurred during those months when the *Parthia* was lost to this world. So I shall start in at the beginning and give you some details.

“ We left Yokohama in the morning and our destination was Seattle. The *Parthia* was not a large vessel and she was crowded with passengers, not of the tourist variety; but mainly professional men and their families, clerks homeward bound on a holiday, captains going to the Coast to take charge of ships, a few officers *en route* to a new station — the crowd that throngs eastbound steamships from Oriental ports when fares are low. I myself was going to Maine after three years' service as consul in an interior city. The captain of the *Parthia* was an experienced man who had formerly commanded sailing ships; a taciturn, diffident fellow getting well along in years. The crew was made up of Europeans, except in the steward's department where Chinese were employed.

“ The passage was expected to consume twenty-four days.

“ When we were five days out from the Japanese coast, at four o'clock in the morning, the propeller struck a floating log and was broken off. The racket of the racing engines, the hissing of steam and the clatter of rending steel was terrific, and within ten minutes after the accident three hundred men, women, and children were huddled on the dripping decks of the *Parthia* peering out into a wet, clinging fog. There was not what you could reasonably call a panic, the officers of the ship

behaved excellently, but it was half an hour before we were finally assured by the captain himself that the steamer was uninjured and would not sink. In that space of time the nerves of us all were thoroughly unsettled and we went back to our staterooms convinced that a gross deception had been worked on us. We dressed, and by six o'clock we were all out on deck again, prepared to demand explicit answers to our questions.

“ Captain Myers, unused to dealing with a throng of passengers, failed to satisfy some of us that we knew the exact truth. He admitted that the propeller was gone and the engine disabled, but he made the mistake of asserting that ‘ everything was all right,’ and that it was ‘ only a matter of time till the steamer would be under weigh again.’ In short, he allowed his consciousness of having to depend on himself to influence him too far. He refused to recognize what we thought were our just claims and threw all the weight of his authority upon us to make us keep silence and accept his unsupported statement as to our present and ultimate safety.

“ Had the morning been bright and clear, or had the accident happened at some hour in the daytime, it is likely that we would have been in a different temper. But we were profoundly conscious that we had barely missed being drowned in our beds. We attributed our safety to luck, to Providence, and therefore suspected Captain Myers of plotting against us. In short, where as individuals we would have congratulated ourselves, as a crowd we were sullen and distrustful.

“ I have a notion that the captain, inside of twenty-

four hours after the accident, knew how we felt. He had got some sail on the steamer, all, in fact, that she would carry, and it did n't give her steerageway in the baffling foggy breeze that blew down from Kamchatka and chilled us. But he stuck to his assertion that we were all right and, as I view it now, kept his head excellently.

“During the next week we passengers got acquainted with each other in a fashion impossible on a speeding liner. Now that we were finally assured of the soundness of our vessel, seeing that our meals were regular, our sleep uninterrupted and the discipline of the crew unrelaxed, we drew together and made the best of it. Really, we were quite contented that week. True, the fog still eddied about us and the inefficient sails flapped drearily on the slender yards and the *Parthia* rolled in the trough of the easy swell. But we were engaged in finding out who we were.

“I recall vividly the gradual emergence of the Reverend Jonas Hampstead. I presume that none of us would have noticed him under ordinary circumstances. But we were isolated, for an indefinite period, and we dug into each other's history and possibilities and characters with unwearied zest. Among three hundred decent and colorless folk the Reverend Mr. Hampstead stood apart, both by manner and by action.

“He was a spare, pale complexioned, elderly man who clothed himself in black, rusty garments of ancient cut. He had never been handsome and age had accentuated a meager jaw, thin nose, and stern eyes. His hands were

crooked, apparently from some form of malnutrition, and his voice was harsh and nasal. He was by no means retiring, but he seemed indifferent to all the rest of us. At times he was a blanket on our mild festivities. Not that he talked, or argued; he simply overlooked us with a calmness that irritated. For some time we knew nothing of him, except that he had been a missionary for some Presbyterian society in some out-of-the-way city in the inside of China.

“But as we turned expectantly from one to another for amusement our eyes constantly fell upon the Reverend Jonas Hampstead. He aggravated our restlessness. He tempted us to impertinence, with his air of indifference, of contempt, of scorn of our little bustling activities. And one by one we pitted our audacity against his reserve and drew him out, word by word, till we gathered a faint sketch of his history.

“He was seventy years old, and for fifty years had been preaching the gospel to the heathen. In all that time (we learned), he had visited the United States but twice, both times to raise funds for some obscure mission work. The last time he was home had been ten years before. His contempt for the state of his church in America was profound.

“You see, Jonas had left the theological seminary years before you and I were born. He had been taught a stern, hard religion, the religion of your fathers and mine; in those days men were not afraid to believe hard things. Jonas had gone from the seminary filled in every corner of his narrow soul with dogmas of predes-



tion of saints, damnation of unbaptized infants, salvation by grace — a whole category of things we no longer dare believe. And he had gone out to the heathen, carrying to them the message of an unbending and harsh faith. Can't you see him, in that forgotten inside city of China, preaching hell and the condemnation of sinners? And he had been constant and industrious. He had taught what he believed to the placid and unastonished heathen day in and year out, for a score of years, for twoscore years, for fifty years. And all the time the world from which he came had moved on, dropping by the wayside the doctrines he cherished as immutable and eternal. His church had passed by him, hastened on to broader things, to easier doctrines, to popular dogmas, toward liberality. I suppose nobody had ever taken pains to tell him that Presbyterians did n't teach election of saints any more. I doubt whether he would have listened, anyway. He was n't that kind of a man.

“ So here he was among us, on the drifting *Parthia*, and we studied him gleefully and several young missionaries shook their heads at him pityingly, and we all laughed in our sleeves at a relic of a time we had never known. Of course he did n't catch the point of our chatter. We were pert, disrespectful almost; and he stood there unmoved by it all, austere contemptuous of our business, our gossip, our petty philosophy. Once in a while he would open his mouth and say something, when one of the young missionaries stepped too boldly. I wish you could have heard him. Jonas did n't argue. He

merely restated a fact, coldly, firmly. And I have seen the younger man flush angrily and turn away uneasily, as though somebody had whispered a caution in his ear.

“You observe we had the foundation for an infinite jest. We had Jonas, an antediluvian in faith and belief, a ridiculous, unmodern figure, and we had all the leisure in the world in which to taste the joke and roll it under our tongues and talk it over and laugh. But in some way the jest failed to march. If the old man would have argued I think we might have made our joke good. But you see he never offered to debate a matter. He settled it calmly, stating his doctrine as a fact indisputable and exactly true. One could n't hold one's face against that. It shook one's whole knowledge of the world when Jonas laid down his preposterous, incredible dogmas as with authority. One felt that, after all, one ought to keep one's beliefs. He made us feel as though we were deserters, children run away from school, truants from faith.

“Possibly all this bores you. But I must impress on you the general character of the Reverend Mr. Hampstead, for he suddenly did something so amazing, so unexpected that we gaped.

“I must confess that one week put an end to our acceptance of Captain Myers's optimism. The eighth day dawned and the *Parthia* still swung in the trough of the swell, and at the head of the saloon stairs the chart bore testimony to the fact that since the screw had been twisted off we had drifted, sailed and sagged just sixty-seven miles, and that to the southward and not eastward.

We knew that it would take a gale of wind to give the poor sails we could spread power enough to send us along toward our destination at even the slowest pace. Also we had figured out that our chances of being picked up by another vessel were slender indeed. Few vessels take any route we were traversing, and in the constant fog we feared to think of an approaching ship.

“I was one of the committee appointed in the first cabin to confer with Captain Myers and explain to him our feeling. It was a dreary meeting. Myers confronted us, outwardly at ease, but displaying at intervals an un-sureness, a hesitation that did not fail of its effect. He went at length into the fact that the ship carried provisions enough for five months, that we were comfortable and safe, that he was doing his best, that in due time we would be missed and a steamer sent to look for us. He had it all figured out on a slip of paper. He promised us relief within thirty days.

“We went back and reported in the saloon. Mothers sat and listened to our statement of the result of our mission while their babies cried or gurgled or played on the carpet under the feet of the silent, unaffected Chinese servants. Some bitter words were said. I'm afraid we were pretty despondent. But we agreed to put up with our plight for thirty days.

“It was an interminable month. The ship steadily grew uncomfortable. We stood harshly on our rights. I recall that we were always complaining to the captain that the second-cabin passengers infringed on our deck-room, that they were overbold and paid no attention to

the usual notices restricting them to certain portions of the ship. Myers listened to everything pleasantly, quietly, silently, his gray head always neatly covered by his spotless cap, his long uniform coat carefully buttoned across the chest. But he did n't do anything — but wait.

“No steamer came to our rescue. The thirty days passed and a week besides. The committee waited on the captain again and insisted that something be done. A boat should be sent off. The engines should be repaired. We commanded him to take us to port. This time Myers listened frowningly. He explained that it was over a thousand miles to the nearest inhabited land. All the resources of a shipyard would be needed to fix the machinery. He was doing his best. We must wait.

“Then we exploded.

“It should have been avoided at any cost, that loud, angry debate between the master of the *Parthia* and us, the outraged passengers. Our hot words carried all over the vessel, clear down into the second cabin, into the engine-room, into the quarters of the crew. I confess that we were in the wrong and Myers was right. But it was a difficult *impasse*. It ended in the captain's peremptorily ordering us out of his cabin.

“That night the ship seethed with discontent and even mutiny. The crew hung round the saloon doors. The firemen sneaked on deck and listened to our red-hot arguments in favor of seizing the ship and working her (God knows how!) into some port. Women wailed. Children wakened and bawled piercingly. Men cursed violently and we welcomed the second-cabin passengers

when they came in a body to back us up in any desperate measures.

“ You can see that it only needed a match to explode the magazine. The next morning a seaman refused duty. He stood by the saloon door and cursed the mate. The captain came and spoke curtly. He ordered the rest of the watch to put the recalcitrant in irons. No one moved. We all stood, silently waiting for the outcome of the struggle. It seems to me that the whole ship was voiceless, while the grayhaired, immaculately dressed captain stared down at the grinning sailor. It is unbelievable, but nobody of us all raised his hand or gave a sign in favor of authority. Let the captain fight it out.

“ For the second time the old man said austerely, ‘ Put that man in irons.’ No one moved. The seaman, drunk with insolence, laughed loud and long, staring round at us all as much as to say, ‘ Look at me! I’m the man to talk!’ And Myers, without a tremor of hesitation, without a look at any of us, quietly drew a revolver from his pocket and shot the man through the forehead.

“ For the moment we were silent. We saw the dead man curled up on the deck, and we went back to our rooms. The whole situation was changed. Our informal agglutination was dissolved. In the presence of death it was every man for himself. We avoided the saloon. We came to dinner scatteringly and viewed askance the figure of the captain at the head of his table, imperturbable, silent, steady-eyed. Women peeped at him through half-opened doors. One heard now and then, from some curtained cabin, the sound of stifled sobs. We men did n’t

speak to each other. We moped apart, shaken by mysterious forebodings, staring at the gray, cloudy sea. Now and then some man would come out into the middle of the smoking-room, light his cigar with a flourish and start to say something. But we would look aside, get up and leave him to mumble inarticulately to himself; we were afraid.

“The next morning we rose from a half-eaten breakfast to hear the sound of the ship’s bell tolling. Heavy feet tramped by. There was the low swish of canvas dragged along the deck, the hoarse voice of the chief officer muttering commands. We came out, blinking, and saw the captain standing on the lower bridge, in his immaculate uniform. His low, quiet tones met our ears: ‘Present my compliments to Mr. Hampstead and ask him to read the burial service.’

“I feel yet the sudden surprise that we evinced. Why Hampstead? Why this solemn, stern old man with the crooked hands? Why not some of the other ministers? Why not the man in sleek bands and proper cloth who read prayers on Sunday in the first cabin saloon? Why Hampstead?

“The old man came out, his worn Bible under his arm, and took his stand by the plank on which the canvas-swathed body lay. And as he did so we realized that Hampstead, the old Presbyterian, had kept himself apart from us. He had taken no share in our discussions. He had silently refused to censure the captain, to blame Myers for our great, appalling mishap. We recognized an enemy in him. He was not one of us. He was neither

shocked nor moved to priestly rebuke. We scowled at him. He approved of a murder.

“So fancy to yourselves our bitter amazement when Jonas opened his Bible and read in a harsh voice: ‘*Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.*’ Ten minutes later they tipped the plank and the body of the sailor slid off into eternity and, if Hampstead was to be believed, into hell.

“We listened with dark looks. I see Hampstead’s austere, colouress face bent on us in stern admonition, while on the bridge Myers contemplated us all with unperturbed countenance. The ceremony ended and I think many of us caught the glance that passed between the two men — the captain who had killed the body and the minister who had condemned the soul. It was a brief, poignant interchange of steadfast purpose, as if Hampstead had said to the captain: ‘I will do my part. Be strong,’ and Myers had returned, ‘I am still strong.’

“I think we did n’t lack a certain courage ourselves, for we took pains to intimate to Hampstead that we detested him, that we thought him the degraded tool of a murderous despotism. Not that our attitude affected him. He was unmoved. He looked out upon us with his stern old eyes and gave us to understand that he *knew*; that he regarded us as pettish children, who had to be beaten with stripes into obedience to right, and to authority.

“Of course, we left him out of our discussions after

that, carefully avoiding him and warning one another against him. By this time we looked upon the captain as a monster, bloodthirsty, cruel, desirous of outrage and rapine. It sounds ridiculous in the telling, but we honestly had lost all sense of law and order. Out on the dull, fog-shrouded Pacific we were three hundred people battling for elemental life. And our first and hottest wrath was toward the embodiment of authority, against the calm, immovable soul who gazed down at us from the bridge and controlled us and ruled us and governed us by the power of authority.

“So we went from hot talk to cold plotting. Discreetly, silently, we went about organizing ourselves into a band to seize the ship from the captain and take her into some port. How? We had a dozen schemes. Only let us get the upper hand, we stormed, and we’ll save ourselves. Were we to stand for murder and slow starvation? Not we. We were American citizens. We were able to look out for ourselves. We were n’t going to stand Myers’s insolence and incapacity any longer.

“Some of us (I’m ashamed to say it) tampered with the crew. We were mad, of course, but then, we were in a hard plight and the constant view of women crying, the incessant sound of women whispering in distress, gets on one’s nerves. And the steamer still rolled in the trough of the sea, and the chart still showed that our infinitesimal progress led no whither.

“I sha’n’t go into details, but one night, when the deepest of us in the plot did n’t suspect it, trouble broke out. In that bitter, disillusioning half hour we



learned our lesson, — the lesson taught by a crew out of hand, drunk with stolen liquor and maddened by release from long restraint. The *Parthia* became a hell. The wildest of us were terror-stricken at sight of the lawless, blazing passions of the men whom we had ourselves approached with proposals of a mutinous character. As we trampled on each other to get within the shelter of the cabin, as we heard the shrieks of fleeing women, the oaths and wild uproarious laughter of pursuing fiends, as we rushed out only to be hurled back by rough arms and crashing fists, we realized that between us and our women and our children and the worst of fates, there stood only the arm of Captain Myers and his authority.

“It was dark night and we could see neither friend nor foe. I recall that I myself stood on the saloon stairs, clinging to the banisters, staring upward at the closed door beyond which the battle was raging. Now and again a sharp report echoed down to us and we held our breath, knowing that death was abroad.

“Gradually all of us huddled round the stairs, gazing up at the huge door that gave and strained under the impact of hurtling bodies. We wondered how we should come out. One man would whisper across to his neighbor to know whether one might count on the officers standing by the captain. Another would groan, licking his dry lips with trembling tongue. Women, holding their children to their breasts, swayed among us, wide-eyed, ready to scream when the big door between them and unspeakable outrage crashed inward.

“You will say that three hundred of us should have mastered the crew. But you must remember that we were unnerved, shot through with suspicion, struggling in the net of fear and horror and weakness. And the crew outnumbered the men of us. Oh, it was a sweet plight that we had got ourselves in!

“The door opened — at last. We held our breath and peered miserably at the blank darkness it disclosed. No one appeared. From outside came the sound of sighs, of odd, choking groanings. Some one hurried past, with firm, heavy step. A voice from way forward called out, ‘Turn on the deck-lights!’

“The order was obeyed and we caught the reflection of the rising glow of the electric lamps outside as the current poured into them. Then a figure appeared in the open doorway, — the immaculate, calm figure of Captain Myers. We heaved ourselves toward him, shouting.

“But he paid no attention to us. His crisp tones cut over our heads. ‘Mr. Hampstead!’

“We surged back, peering over our shoulders. We saw the old missionary rise from his seat far back in the saloon and set down a little girl from his arms. He walked forward quietly and looked up at the captain. ‘I am here,’ he said simply.

“‘The purser and the chief officer have been killed,’ said Myers quietly. ‘I rely on you to look after the passengers. The steward will report to you. Please allow nobody on deck.’ And after a cool stare at us all the captain stepped back and disappeared.

“I wish I could narrate the small events of the night, but I can only state that the old missionary took command with a definiteness, a sureness, a silent imperiousness that balked any opposition. He herded us to our cabins, listened to the complaints of women, soothed with crooked hands weeping children, within an hour had cleared the saloon and was sitting placidly beside the steward, reading his Bible through large, iron-rimmed spectacles, while the Chinese boys slipped around cleaning up the mess of dirt, torn clothes, and shredded matting that marked the tumult and conflict of the mutiny. Now and again Hampstead would cease reading and enunciate a Chinese sentence in a harsh, nasal voice. Each time the boys would gather quickly and then separate on their varied errands.

“In the morning we learned something of what had really happened. We saw splintered wood-work about the decks, strange, bluish splotches on the white planks, an uneasy and shamefaced alacrity in the movements of the crew. In the shadow of the bridge four bodies lay under a tarpaulin, and we understood that the chief officer, the purser and two engineers lay there awaiting burial. They had been on the captain's side. There were whispers that a dozen bodies had been thrown overside during the night, that down in the recesses of the ship mutineers were dying of their wounds. But no one spoke openly of all this. We were left to surmise, to innuendo, to glances.

“At noon Hampstead buried the four faithful officers, praying fervently over them for the rest of us.

Myers stood on the lower bridge, vigilant, spotless in garb, apparently undisturbed. And when the short ceremony was over we went down to luncheon.

“The days after this are, to my remembrance, dream-like. I observe Hampstead austere, vigilant, fulfilling his duties without ardor or word of mouth. I recall that our food gave out slowly, having been sadly wasted by the mutineers. We came to the day when we had no fresh milk, the cows having gone dry. Babies suffered. We had no meat. Curry powder failed. We were on an allowance of water, supplied by the condensers. The dark winter of the North Pacific settled down on us. We read much, sitting in the saloon and warming ourselves over the steam coils.

“But we had one satisfaction. High winds had been availed of to drive the *Parthia* into the great Japanese current which flows in a huge arc from the coast of Asia to the northern coast of America. The chart showed steady progress eastward, of fifty miles one day, of one hundred miles another day. The sails were filled with sleety winds. The ship wallowed along on a course. In time we would gain a port.

“As the horrors of the mutiny faded, we slowly picked up spirit enough to enter into certain pale amusements. We sang at night over the saloon piano. We gave a concert to the second cabin and that dark part of the ship blazed with lights in honor of a grand reception to the first cabin. But, after all, our principal interest was in Jonas Hampstead's nightly prayers. In taking charge of the passengers at the

captain's orders, he had taken over the cure of our souls as well. He was instant in season and out of season. He said grace at meals. He prayed over the sick children. He labored earnestly with the doubting. He preached fervently to the sinners.

“Never did ship drift across the foggy, gloomy Pacific under such circumstances as did the old *Parthia*. From daylight till midnight we were under the spell of the old missionary's zeal. True, he preached an outworn, neglected doctrine, a harsh and forbidding creed. But he believed it. Somehow we perceived that his strength flowed from it. He thundered out against all sin, making no distinction between the venial and the mortal. He held before us the prospect of hell-fire. He adjured us in the name of an angry and jealous God to come to the Mercy-Seat. He mocked our worldly hopes. He refused to listen to our arguments. And with it all he offered us no sure salvation, but left us to face eternal condemnation should our election not be made sure by Divine Grace. I suppose that he taught us the sternest dogma of a stern sect. But in those shadowy, murky days the religion he lived appealed to us. It was strong meat, but we needed it. Driving about on a stormy sea, with little real hope of living to set foot on land, we faced with equanimity the prospect that we could not appease by any sacrifice a righteously wrathful Deity. We gained (but transiently, I fear) a glimpse of that enduring hardihood that smiles at God even when He smites.

“I fear I weary you. So I pass on, merely saying

that during those miserable, half-starved weeks we bent to the will of two men: the immaculately dressed, steady-eyed captain, always vigilant, taciturn and ready, and the gaunt, crooked-handed missionary with his fiery spirit and ceaseless importunity to mend our wicked ways.

“On the second of December, the *Parthia* then riding out the end of a severe gale at two o'clock in the afternoon, Captain Myers stepped inside the saloon door and said quietly, ‘The *Armeria* of Seattle has answered our signals and will tow us into Puget Sound.’ On the seventeenth of that month the *Parthia* was slowly warped into her berth in Seattle and we went ashore.

“But I have still something to tell. Possibly it explains more than one would think. At least I like to suppose that, at the very last, I caught a glimpse of that ultimate strength, that ultimate base of authority which we have been discussing here while the engineers plug that boiler tube.

“We had entered the Sound, and two large tugs made fast on either quarter of the *Parthia*. A booted and waterproofed pilot lolled on the bridge. All through the steamer we were packing up our belongings, writing letters, chatting excitedly over the past. As night fell I walked out on the dripping deck and stared at the misty hills of Washington, starred here and there by glowing lights. In my tramping I re-passed Captain Myers's cabin several times, and my ear caught the sound of Jonas Hampstead's voice.

When I had made the round of the deck and passed again I saw through the partly opened shutter the missionary and the captain facing each other. I heard the captain say, in a curiously modulated voice, 'There was nothing else to do. If I did not kill the mutineers, I should have failed in my duty. But I am a murderer just the same. I have lost my soul's salvation.'

"Blame me for listening if you will, but this is what I overheard Hampstead answer, in a harsh, untuneful voice: 'My brother, we are both miserable sinners and unworthy of any saving grace. Let us pray.' I confess that I stood there, opposite that partly opened shutter, and looked in upon the two old men. Myers, his gray head bared and bowed, listened while Hampstead raised his seamed meager visage to the invisible sky and said in a firm voice: '*O Lord, we two miserable sinners stand before Thee to-night knowing that Thou hast out of Thine own good pleasure chosen some to everlasting life and joy with Thee and others Thou hast in Thy just wrath elected to eternal destruction. We are blood guilty, for the burden Thou hast laid upon us has been heavy. We beg for the infinite gift of Thy saving grace. But we know that Thou art a sure foundation for our faith and if there be no health in us and Thou hast judged us unworthy of salvation, we are content. But, O Gracious Lord, grant us strength to save others to Thy honor and glory. Amen.*'

"When this extraordinary petition had been offered there ensued a silence. It was broken by Captain

Myers. He said quietly, 'I suppose that is quite right. I must answer for my own acts. One must do one's duty without reference to consequences to himself. After all, what do I matter — compared to a shipload of people?' He opened the door and passed out with a brisk, assured, authoritative step. As the door closed after him I saw the missionary raise an agonized face and heard him mutter, clasping crooked hand in crooked hand, '*Lord, Thy will be done, not mine.*'

"You understand," said the judge, "that I'm not defending their theology. I am only stating the fact: those two old men saved three hundred lives by virtue of their belief and reliance in an impregnable and unswerving authority. After all, if we are to do anything quite worth while, we have to believe in — well? — possibly even in our own damnation." He was silent, and from the deck we heard a woman's rapid wail, "Captain, if anything should happen, remember I have my baby!"

The captain of the *Gaelic's* quiet tones reached us. "That relieves my mind of much responsibility. I shall entrust the baby to you. I know you will look out for it. We shall be going in a quarter of an hour." The woman passed the open door with face alight, calling to a companion, "We're all right! The captain says we're going to start in a quarter of an hour!"

The judge nodded his head. "You hear it? The voice of authority!"



## THE DOG

“LIFE is too complex,” he insisted. “I admit that I am a weak sister, that I’ve reached Part II of what the missionaries call a Ruined Existence. But then — why have Ten Commandments? Let the strong and eager and virtuous observe all ten — or a dozen, if they are able. But I’m not equal to it. I could easily keep one commandment, and I might keep two. But when you mix things up beyond that, I confess, I quit. If life were simple, as your American poets sing, I should be among Those Present. But I fail to solve the problem in terms of  $x$ ,  $y$ , and  $z$ .”

The speaker stared with sunken eyes at the clean bank clerk.

“Get to work!” was the eager answer. “Mix in with the good folks down here — you used to know ’em — and get acquainted with some of the nice girls and make some money. Stop drinking. You could do it, Reynolds. Half the men in Honolulu would be glad of it.”

“You are making things complex again,” Reynolds returned. “You say, ‘Stop drinking.’ Done! But am I saved? No. I’ve got to do that and then mix in with nice people and make some fine girl think I am all right, and then I’ve got to make some money,

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and so on, and so on, for ever and ever. Too complex. I can do something simple, but I'm no juggler. I can't keep ten commandments and six social must-nots in the air at once. Have a drink? No? Well, so long!"

Archibald Thomas P. Reynolds finished his third "dog's nose," glanced carelessly at the morning's *Advertiser* and walked slowly out of Cunha's into the bright Honolulu sunshine. On his way two men nodded coldly and a third took pains to cut him.

In King Street he consulted the bulletin boards, stared in the shop-windows and conducted himself inoffensively as a man of leisure for two hours. He then carelessly strolled up to a café, where he lunched on whisky and crackers. An hour later he was trudging slowly down Kalekua Road to the beach, under the hot afternoon sun, a byword and a scandal to all who saw him. For he wavered and had lost his hat. Oddly enough, this was Archibald Thomas P. Reynolds's last appearance. With rambling steps and staring eyes he passed out of the complexities of a civilization which he could not appreciate at its true value into that simplicity for which his soul yearned. For one hundred yards beyond the grass hut that is pointed out to tourists as the residence of the former kings of Hawaii a very small girl clung to the step of a carriage and screamed shrilly as Reynolds came by.

A woman, leaning out of the carriage, jerked at her daughter's arm and scolded her vigorously.

"Of course you can't take the dog," she said.

“Hurry and get in with me! We’re going to catch the steamer and go home!”

“I won’t leave my dog!” wailed the child, kicking up the dust.

“Get in,” her mother commanded wrathfully. “If you don’t,”—her wary eye discerned the shameful figure of a drunken white man by the roadside,—“if you don’t, that bad man will get you!”

The girl stared interestedly at the Bad Man. Then, jerking her arm from her mother’s grasp, she darted over to him. At her heels galloped a small, wizened animal with a string around its black neck.

“Please!” she begged. “I want somebody to be good to my dog!”

“Is this your dog?” he inquired.

“Yes! I founded him myself! And nobody is good to him! Will you be good to him?”

Reynolds straightened up and looked over to the lady in the carriage.

“It is a very simple matter, madam,” he said with an air. “I am not much—as you perceive. But your daughter is correct in her judgment. I believe I am equal to being good to a dog. It is a simple matter.”

He took the dirty string out of the little girl’s hand and bowed as deeply as a dizzy head would allow him.

“I’ll be good to him,” he said hoarsely. “Now run on to your mother.”

The child seemed satisfied and retreated, backwards,

with loving eyes upon her late pet, who, to do him justice, seemed very loth to be left behind.

“Be very good to him!” she cried in farewell.

“Trust me!” he replied gravely. “And thank you for the confidence!”

As the carriage sped on he looked down at his new charge. The dog, a miserable mongrel, sat on its haunches and looked at him, blunt ears a-cock. Then, as Reynolds resumed his slightly erratic course down the white road, it fell behind resignedly.

The strange pair wandered on and on, past bright villas, through laughing crowds of tourists, into the spacious shadows of Kapiolani Park. There, under a tree, the man subsided to the grass and fell asleep. The dog, after snapping at mosquitoes without success, howled miserably. Then it curled itself up between its new master's feet.

The sun dipped into the ocean and the shadows in the park deepened. The electric lights along the trolley line sparkled out on the poles and under them the gardeners passed homeward. Out on the beach the shark, threshing in its concrete tank behind the aquarium, sipped the cool water flowing in with the rising tide over the pool's lip and relapsed into silence. The crescent moon, swung delicately in the unfathomable sky, threw down a faint radiance and roused the night-birds. A brushing wing awakened the man and he sat up. His aching eyes saw nothing. His parched throat called loudly for a drink. He thrust his hand into his pocket, and was rejoiced to find a coin. He

got to his feet to start off. The tug of a string on his finger stopped him. He stared down at the dog.

“The little cur!” he said to himself. “And she wanted me to be good to you! Well, that’s easy. Come on!”

He wrapped the string afresh around his finger, and walked away towards the city.

Just as he emerged from the park Reynolds crossed the road to a small shop where a huge Portuguese woman dozed among bottles of soda-water and baskets of fruit and provisions. Extracting his solitary coin, Reynolds effected the purchase of some ginger-ale and a piece of dried fish. With these in hand he went back into the park. Under the shadows he emptied the bottle and fed the fish to the dog. When the animal, its hunger satisfied, licked its lips and wagged its crooked tail, he addressed it solemnly.

“Now, that was simple, was n’t it, pup? Life, dog, is very complex. But one can always be good to a dog. Now run along.”

He unknotted the cord from round its throat and set it loose.

“Run along!” he ordered.

But the mongrel, wagging its tail again, pursued a centipede under a root, barked at a rat on some nocturnal hunt, and returned to curl up between the man’s knees.

Reynolds considered this at length. Finally, without disturbing his new charge, he took off his shoes, threw his socks away, tore collar and cuffs from his

shirt and thus began his new life. They slept together, mongrel and man, till the dawn blazed over Palolo. Then they went down to bathe together.

Two months later the manager of Bishop & Company, bankers, remarked that Archibald Thomas P. Reynolds did not call for his mail any more.

"He's dropped out," said the manager, thrusting the few letters into a pigeonhole. "Poor chap! he was of little account!"

"Probably," was the reply. "Better return those letters to the writers. We'll never see him again."

And thus it came about that Archibald T. P. Reynolds did not return up the white road that he went down.

Instead, a man answering to the general title of "Jim" was living in a hut back of the cable landing, helping the assistant superintendent, who had never heard of Reynolds, watch the safety of the big, snaky cable that plunged out over the reef and into the depths of the Pacific. The work was not hard, but it meant long watches at night, sometimes, and consequent consumption of much tobacco. At these epochs the assistant superintendent railed exceedingly at the miserable cur that followed Jim, the handy man, and refused to be separated from him even for a minute. But in the midst of his objurgation he would find Jim's eyes sharply fixed on him.

"Anybody can be decent to a dog," said that extraordinary laborer.

And the assistant would become silent, much to his

own amazement. Latterly he got to bringing the dog lumps of sugar, which were gratefully accepted and assured double service from the animal's master.

One night the assistant kept the laborer working till early morning over the foundations of the long carrier-conduit that took the tender cable out over the jagged reef. The trades were strong and chill. When the work was done, the superintendent pulled a dollar out of his pocket and laid it down before the dog.

"Take it to your master and tell him to get a drink for himself and a bone for you," he said.

Jim, from the other side of the room, nodded his thanks.

"I don't drink," he said briefly.

"Anything you like," was the reply. "But — pardon me — what are you doing out here, if you don't drink? Excuse my bluntness, but you're up to better things, if you're a sober man."

Jim stared moodily out into the crisp morning twilight.

"I'm doing one thing at a time," he said slowly. "Just now I'm trying to be good to the dog."

At daylight Jim considered the pup for some time, as they enjoyed their breakfast among the palms.

"We've got a dollar that we don't need, and while I don't usually take tips," he said, "I guess you've got a treat coming. Now what'll it be?"

The dog cocked one shapeless ear and panted, his red tongue quivering out of his jaws. A sudden thought struck his master.

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“By jove!” he said loudly. “We need a good swim, both of us, pup. We’ll go down to the sand beach and swim with the rest of the good people. Come on!”

The walk to Waikiki seemed very short. Reynolds (or Jim) strode along barefooted, active, lean and with the faint glow of health on him. Now and again he glanced curiously in upon the green lawn of some villa, or drew aside as an early picnicking party fled by with jesting laughter. When he emerged into the open of Waikiki proper, and saw the Moana Hotel, and the motors chugging outside, and heard the footfalls echoing on polished floors and smelt the odors of cooking, the perfume of wines and the scent of cigars, he stopped.

“I don’t believe we’ll go any farther, pup,” he said. “This business has got to be kept simple. If it gets complex and tangled up and mixed with various commandments, you’ll get the worst of it. And I’m not much, pup. It’s about all I can do to be good to a dog!”

As for the animal he addressed, after turning one inquiring glance back on his master, he trotted on. Reynolds, gazing after him, hesitated, was about to whistle a recall, started on, halted, swore, and then continued on his way.

Several people, seeing the lines of perplexity on the lean, healthy face of the barefooted *haole*, glanced at him interestedly. But no one recognized in him the man who had once been prominent in Honolulu, first



as a young business-man, lastly as a drunkard. The dog turned in under a big gateway bearing the sign "Japanese Inn."

"That settles it," Reynolds remarked weakly. "They'll serve me, no matter how many bare feet I have."

He cursed the dog and his own failings. He quickly crossed the lawn, avoided the main entrance, and dived down an alleyway. At the end of this a Japanese, dressed in white apron and jacket, received him smilingly. Half an hour later Reynolds lolled on the seaward *lanai* of the inn, glowing with liquor, flushed with new dreams, his full, handsome face set on the shining ocean. Now and then he replenished his glass out of the bottle.

"I'm going to get away," he told the waiter. "Just you wait! Odd how a good drink simplifies matters, once you get 'em straight in your head! I'm going back home! Decent citizen! and all that!"

The tide crept in from the blue ocean, flooded the white beach and covered the reefs, and at the same time another tide, of humanity, flowed slowly down from the city to meet it, filling up the hotels, the parks, thronging the roadways with men and women drawn by idleness, curiosity, thirst, or more innocent desires. In a secluded part of the *lanai* Reynolds finished his bottle, watching the pageant. Now and again he stared round him, as if he would go somewhere. But each time he relapsed into his seat. When the bottle was empty and the canoes began their rides over the

breakers, and the surf board-riders yelled and laughed outside, and the people along the beach hummed like a vast swarming of bees, he suddenly remembered that he had come for a swim. It was true that he might have gone swimming down by the cable landing, among the rocks, but it was n't safe for the dog. One must look out for the dog. Where was the dog? He whistled. It crept out from under a bench, and together they left the *lanai* and started down towards the water.

Heedless of his clothes — for how could a wetting injure them? — he walked into the warm sea. As he made his slow way down the shelving sand and the water rose to his knees, to his waist, to his shoulders, he forgot the dog in the pure comfort and refreshment of it. He looked longingly out. He had often swum to the reef before. It would be just the thing now. He stretched himself out gently on the water.

A yelp behind recalled to him his charge. He turned and saw the mongrel, half drowned, plunging towards him with pitiful, straining efforts. He reached out, picked it up and set it on his shoulder.

“Poor little pup,” he said commiseratingly. “You never came of a swimming breed. But you've got pluck all right. You swam.”

He scanned the expanse between him and the shore. It suddenly came over him how far the dog had struggled before he heard its cry and heeded it.

“By jove!” he said admiringly. “You certainly have pluck, pup!”

The animal, perilously balanced on his steadily heaving shoulder, licked his briny cheek.

On a pinnacle of coral far out Reynolds rested. About him the long rollers of the Pacific heaped themselves high, shook overhead like huge billows of blue cloth, and swept downward in crashes of foam and spray. Now and then he had to struggle to maintain his position on the bit of coral. Each time he recovered himself in the broken water he felt the dog's trembling body pressed closer to him.

A wave lifted him up and he felt the cruel scrape of a coral branch along his leg. He regained his perch with difficulty, rescuing the dog with a sweep of his arm from the swirling brine. It struggled up in his arms and licked his face. He suddenly felt sorry for it.

"You swam a dickens of a ways," he muttered. "You saw me headed this way and you just came, too."

He mused on this a long time. Then he felt weak. A dull pain made itself felt in his leg.

"That coral's poison," he said. "And we must get away while we can."

He glanced behind him, saw his chance and slipped down into the water. He struck out for shore very slowly. His right leg was stiff.

What seemed to him interminable hours passed resoundingly. As he swam, with great strokes, buffeting the waves with amazing vigor and address, but making infinitesimal progress, he continually heard the shout of surf-riders behind him, rose into the bosom of breakers and was suddenly overwhelmed. Each time he came

to the air to see the riders flitting towards the far beach on the crest of the wave that had just overpassed. Once in a while a ponderous canoe, laden with shrieking white women, thundered by, careening down the smooth slope of a wave, the brown, intent faces of the canoemen fixed immovably upon the distant shore towards which they sped. Later a fishing sampan, rocking wildly in the broken water, was borne slowly by him in a vast smudge of foam and spray.

Gradually the blood pelting through his arteries slowed up, as the liquor died in him. Perspective returned. Instead of swimming forever in a boundless sea, he was thrashing wildly around within a few hundred feet of the shallows. And behind him he heard a scream. There was the impact of some heavy flat object on the surface of the water, a raucous call, a bellow of rage, of command, of encouragement. He turned his face quickly seaward.

Caught under the arch of a wave he saw a small canoe, its bow swung up, its stem tilted downward. With great deliberation, as he craned his neck to watch, a woman slipped from her place in the bow, clutched methodically at the thwarts as she descended and plunged into the water beneath the uphung canoe. The wave seemed to tremble forward, to totter. Foam suddenly blossomed on the crest. A huge kanaka, poised across the little craft, bellowed again, driving his paddle deep into the wave.

“That takes a long time,” mused Reynolds. “The woman will likely be hit by the canoe and she will be drowned.”

The wave broke. Reynolds, clutching the dog to his neck with one hand, thrust the arm down and dived. He felt the wrecked canoe wallow overhead. Something struck his leg, his right leg, too, a sharp, painful blow. He emerged to face the kanaka who was plunging around looking for his passenger. A second canoeman, spilled some moments before, swam a hundred yards away. Before his eyes the woman reappeared, rolling slowly to the surface. The native, grasping her, started for the beach with great, swift movements, raising the water before his breast in a girdle of foam, traversing the long swells with frantic and incredible speed. From the sea a second canoe swept in, its crew shouting terribly, beating the water with their paddles. Reynolds exhaled his breath with a long "A-ah!" He understood. A shark had crossed the reef and was hunting. This was what had demoralized the men in the wrecked canoe, the source of the terror in the oncoming craft.

A second wave slopped the broken canoe directly across Reynolds's path. Something underneath a thwart caught his eye. He reached out his hand and took hold of the side. He looked in. A little girl's upturned, white face met his glance. He pondered quickly. It was a hopeless undertaking to try to take the canoe in. The girl lay in water that washed over her lips and swept her hair round her throat. Any moment another wave might turn it all upside down. And there was the shark — somewhere. He drove his feet down, thrust his arms in and drew the child out. The canoe was flung far from him by the rush of a surge. But he had the girl safely in his grasp.

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Dazed, he started slowly to swim on toward shore. He made a few strokes and his limbs failed him. By himself he could with difficulty make the distance. Burdened with the child, it was impossible. His eyes darkened. His lips sucked in brine. He was perishing. But his dulled ear caught a sharp, imperative, pitiful sound behind him. It was the yelp of his abandoned dog. It was swimming alone. With infinite pains he turned and saw it, perceived dimly the pleading eyes, the upturned muzzle, the blunt ears. Shifting the child slightly, he thrust out stiff fingers to save the dog. The animal puffed and struggled. It yelped again. It choked. And beyond them he saw the swiftly rising crest of another breaker. The child in his arms suddenly struggled, too.

In that instant he saw the faithfulness of the dog. It had followed him. It had asked neither reason nor cause. It had simply followed him. It had trusted him. In his arms he clutched a child. Something familiar in the girl's face moved him, how he did not know. The thought came to him that she might, at some time, have wished that people would be good to a dog. Bitterly, quickly he made his decision. With a huge intaking of breath, he dived, without one look behind him, without a sound to signify that he heard a feeble yelp as the breaker engulfed the floundering mongrel.

Ten minutes later he strode out of the water and up the beach to a woman who sat shrieking for her child. At sight of him she rose and threw herself forward.

Men crowded around, with orders, with commands, with warning.

In the midst of this clamor he stood, holding the child. His wet clothes dripped. At his feet gathered a dark pool of blood.

Somebody stepped up and took the little girl from him, calling out loudly, "She's alive! She's all right!"

Another man, staring keenly at Reynolds, touched him on the arm.

"The shark!" he said.

Reynolds shook him off. Without a word to the astonished people huddled circlewise round him he turned and strode back towards the sea. They called to him. A man, waving his arms menacingly, ran toward him. He shook his head. Gathering his strength he plunged into the water, hastened out into it till it rose to his waist, to his shoulders. Then, with a sigh, he yielded himself to it, swimming seaward wearily, out towards the crashing breakers, to the place where he had heard that last piteous yelp of his dog.

"It's so simple," he mused. "Anybody can do that. Just —" his calm face grew peaceful, as the warm tide flowed over it — "just be good to the dog!"

And with this solitary and ridiculous substitute for a morality too high for him, Archibald Thomas P. Reynolds swam on — and on — out of that sea into another, seeking a black, blunt-eared, clumsy mongrel — a cur.

## A PERIODICAL PROSELYTE

Oh, art thou fool or madman?  
Thy port is but a dream,  
And never on the horizon's rim  
Will its fair turrets gleam.

— *Sealed Orders.*

HE maintained that pure religion was to be found only in San Francisco. "The export article they have here in Honolulu," he said, "may be all right for the *kanakas* and *pakés*. But it don't bite in on a white man like the genuine, domestic, Peniel Mission, Kearney Street, brand. I admit I've been *poopooli* [crazy] from gin for three months. It's because the religion down here has n't got any real hold. You just get me an order on the transports to San Francisco and give me the ten dollars I need to pay my meals, and I can get saved *right*. Look at that time in '99; was n't I on the beach, then? And I went to 'Frisco and the Peniel people took me and converted me and I quit liquor and was decent for a year — till I came to Papeete and these parts where religion is thin."

The man he addressed shook his head. "Nothing for you, Jim," he said. "The Coast article may be a bit stronger than we have down here; but you're too far gone this time. You have taken your pitcher too



often to the well. You are n't worth saving any more. Clear out!"

So James Hughes, formerly respectable but now vagrant, staggered out of the cool office into the hot street, his dirty linen trousers flapping about his bare ankles. He attempted jauntiness of demeanor, but some tourists, *ex* steamship *China*, drew aside at his passing with expressions of disgust. Farther on a Chinese hack driver, lolling in his vehicle, scoffed loudly at the drunken *haole*. The offcast tried to assume dignity enough to resent such familiarity, but his failure was evident to himself and he rolled round the next corner holding a shaking hand over his face.

He passed along King Street in such manner as he could, swaying amid the scornful crowd, till a turn in the road brought him into the Japanese quarter. Here no one paid him any attention. But he refused the silent invitation of the saloons and kept on till he reached Iwilei, hot, desolate, and foul, but free from the surveillance of the police. Once within this asylum of wretchedness he threw out his chest and strode boldly up an alley.

He stopped in front of a little hovel. A child cried shrilly within, its plaint rising, a thin note above the hum of the quarter. The vagrant listened, nodding his unkempt head. "That's Yohara's kid," he said to himself. "And I forgot the candy."

He felt in all his pockets for the coin he had spent in a Kakaako bar. "Poor little kiddie," he muttered, when his searching fingers failed to find anything.

Then, as an after-thought, he added, "Poor Jim Hughes!"

At this instant a tall, angularly built man in decent clothes, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, came out of the hut, almost bumping into Hughes. They suddenly eyed each other, blinking in the torrid sunshine. "I beg your pardon," said the stranger.

"No offence," Hughes answered, rubbing his unshaven face. "My fault entirely. Did n't expect to see a white man here."

"I'm Rapp," the other responded to this suggestion. "I have a school in Palama and the little boy here was going to it. But he's not well, and my wife sent him home to-day."

"You're the new missionary?" Hughes demanded.

Embarrassment was plain on Mr. Rapp's face. He swept off his big felt hat with an easy gesture and seemed to interrogate the glaring heavens. "I don't know that I'm much of a missionary," he said, slowly. "I'm only a teacher — Social Settlement, you know."

"Anything like Peniel Mission?" Hughes removed his own tattered hat with a faint insinuation of mutual courtesy.

"Not exactly," Mr. Rapp answered. "I don't believe I know just who the Peniel missionaries are."

"They're the real article," Hughes asserted, standing more erect. "They work in San Francisco. I was converted by them several times. Their religion is the only thing for a man that's got many bad habits, like

me. Now I was thinking that if you were a Peniel man, it might save me a trip to San Francisco."

The Settlement worker looked somewhat mystified. The man before him showed every sign of degradation. They were in a quarter of Honolulu shunned even by the police. He had just come out of a hovel where disease rioted, into a street where vice reigned. And a white man, shaking from excesses, was looking at him with appealing eyes and affirming that a sect he had never heard of were the bearers of the only true gospel. Lacking words, he nodded. His companion nodded back, as if he quite understood, and went on: "I was just trying to make arrangements to get back to the Coast a little while. I need a turn in Peniel. Somehow the religion down here is n't strong enough for my case. It's all right for the natives and people that don't have much to fight against. But a man like me needs a good strong doctrine to hold him up." He glanced at Rapp, humbly. "I'm sort of a weak sister, you see. Now in San Francisco I'm all right. The Peniel people get me and I say to myself, 'Jim, this time's the time the Lord has got you by the ear, *sure*. You can't get lost again.' Then I come back to Papeete or Honolulu. I'm all to the good for a month, maybe. I live among the good people and work hard and save my money. Then the religion gets sort of thinned out, and by and by I take to gin, not being able to find anything in the way of doctrine, and I land here in Iwilei."

"Why don't you keep going to church, and keep up your good works?" Mr. Rapp demanded.

Hughes put on his hat again. "I tried it," he said, "but the religion here don't bite; honestly, it don't. I'm used to strong liquor and I want strong doctrine. Anyway," he added, somberly, "the missionaries don't want me around. They all know Jim Hughes — drunken Jim, they call me. But I advise you, if the missionaries get down on you and you find you're weak on practice and shaky on doctrine, to hunt up the Peniel people in San Francisco. I'm going back there myself to get saved. Seven times they plucked me from the burning. All I need is the price to pay my passage. You have n't ten dollars, have you? I'll pay you back just as soon as I get saved and find a job again."

Mr. Rapp's interest turned to disgust. The man was begging. He would have started away, except that a sense of his duty made him pause to say: "Look here, I'm in no position to give you money. If I did, you'd spend it for drink. Why don't you brace up and live like a white man? Quit this life and be decent. You really look as though you might have been a man, once."

The thin wail of the child rose into the afternoon air and Hughes shambled into the hut. As he passed the Settlement worker he shook his head. "Nothing does me any good except Peniel Mission. I've tried all the other brands. I ought to know. Ain't I the one that needs salvation?"

He disappeared into the interior, and Rapp, picking his way down the filthy alley, heard the wail turn to

a feeble cry of joy. "I wonder," he mused, "whether that is the brute's child?"

The same question occurred to him the next day when he visited the hut in Iwilei and found Yohara bending over a very sick child, indeed. When he had done what little he could to ease its pain, Mr. Rapp determined to decide the question. "You remember one man very drunk yesterday? *Haole?*"

Yohara seemed at a loss for a moment. Rapp suddenly remembered the name the man had given himself. "Hughes? Hughes?" he added.

The woman smiled instantly. "He bring my baby candy."

"He your husband, you *aikane?*" he continued.

She shook her head vigorously. "*Aole, aole me aikane. Me aikane paké.*"

"But he give your baby candy," he persisted.

The Japanese woman smiled. "He *poopooli*" (crazy), she said curtly.

The next day and the next, Mr. Rapp came to visit the child, now dying in the stifling heat of the foul alley. But it was not till a week later that he met Hughes again. This time the vagrant was sober. He was bending over the fretful child when Rapp entered. He straightened up and silently stood to one side while the child was examined.

"How's the kid?" he ventured at last.

"Not going to last much longer," was the reply.

"What's the matter?" Hughes demanded.

"Everything — principally poor food and bad air.

I'd bring milk myself, only this woman would let it get warm and it would be worse than none at all inside of an hour. I've tried to persuade her to take the child somewhere else. But she don't seem to understand."

Hughes bent his head over the little mat a moment. "Poor little kid!" he muttered. When he straightened up, the Settlement worker observed that the slack lips were quivering; he did not notice that round one finger was clutched a feeble baby's hand. "I'll ask the Jap what's the matter," Hughes mumbled, not moving in his tracks, feeling that faint tug on his hand. He broke out into speech that Rapp could not follow, so mingled was it of three languages.

The woman listened sullenly. Then she spread out her empty hands in a gesture eloquent of poverty. "She has no money," Hughes interpreted. "Her husband, who is a Chinese *luna* [overseer] on Kauai, sends her no money. She is afraid."

"I can't make these people out," Rapp said, angrily. "That kid would have a chance to get well anywhere but here. I've done what I could. It'll just have to die." He took his hat and left.

When he had gone, the woman went and sat in the doorway while Hughes lifted the frail child into his arms and soothed its fretfulness by grotesque grimaces and snatches of song. When it was stilled he carried it out into the scant shade of the hut and sat down to fight out his battle.

The woman paid no attention to the *haole* when his

voice rose in soliloquy. He was *poopooli*. He would not hurt the child. "Poor little kiddie," the outcast was saying. "Chink father and Jap mother. No chance at all. Going *maké* [dead] because there's no one cares." He repeated this last sentence and fell silent. When the child stirred and its clawlike hand reached up and touched his bare throat he said again, "Going *maké* because no one cares."

The woman fell asleep, her head on her breast, and Hughes shook his head. "Poor little kiddie," he whispered. "And ten dollars will do it. But I've got to go to the Coast and get saved. It'll take that ten dollars. If I don't go, I'll never straighten up and I'll go *maké*, too, here in Iwilei where nobody cares."

The day-mosquitoes stole in upon his emaciated body, and he took off his hat and slapped at them. The child wakened and cried again, twisting till its hot cheek rested on Hughes' breast. His face suddenly whitened. His weak mouth drew into firmer lines and he painfully got upon his feet. Thrusting past the drowsing woman he entered the hut and laid the child upon its mat and drew a torn piece of netting over it. "It's got to be done," he muttered.

King Street was crowded. Gaily decked native women pushed their way along in front of the shops, chattering and laughing. Heavily laden coolies trotted through the midstreet, swinging their baskets from under the noses of the panting hack horses. Japanese women, hauling bedizened children by the hand, called to each other across the stream of traffic. Here and

there a mounted policeman rode above the current, debonair, careless, dominant. Occasionally linen-clad white men lounged by in the shadow of the wall, red-faced, complaining of the mid-afternoon heat. At intervals a crowded street car clanged on its hurried way to Kalihi or Waikiki.

Hughes noted nothing of this. He was walking as fast as he could, careless where his bare feet stepped. A withered garland depended from his tattered hat. His torn jacket flapped behind him, snatched at by coarse flower sellers, almost plucked from his body by impudent children.

He won out of the crowd and down the alley that leads to the post office. A few steps more brought him to a bank. Without pause he stepped in and went down the big room, past the cages wherein clerks worked over books, to a far window. He tapped on the counter and a man at a desk inside looked up with a frown. "What is it, Hughes?" he said. "The transport does n't sail till next week."

"I know that," Hughes answered, "but I need the ten dollars you promised me to-day. I thought maybe if I did n't bother you any more, you 'd be glad to be rid of me, Mr. Haskins."

"I certainly would be glad to be relieved of your constant pestering," was the response. "But you've always said you could straighten up if you went to the Coast. I told you I'd give you the money to go. Now you take advantage of my good nature and try to work me for it now. If I give it to you, it means



that you 'll go and get drunk again. Don't you want to be decent?"

Hughes' face darkened. "I never lied to you, did I?" he demanded.

"No-o," Haskins admitted.

"Well, I'm not lying now. I need that money worse to-day than I will next week. I'll never bother you again if you 'll let me have it now."

"All right," said the banker, "here's your tenner. But don't come in here any more."

Once on the street Hughes started back the way he had come. But his feet lagged. Time and again he stopped to gaze out over the many-tinted bay. "I could make it all right," he said to himself. "And the Peniel people would straighten me out, and I could quit the beach and be somebody. But I guess I've had my last chance. We'll just give somebody else a show."

Two hours later the woman Yohara was seated under the awning on the forward deck of the inter-island steamer *Caroline*, a little bundle of her belongings at her feet and the child on her lap. As the last whistle blew Hughes shambled to her side and thrust a package into her hands. "Candy," he mumbled. The mate bellowed at him and he hastened away. The woman drew her gown closer about her and then looked down at the child. "*Poopooli*," she murmured.

When the *Caroline* had fussed out of her slip and passed down the gleaming bay toward the tossing pass, Jim Hughes left the wharf and shambled to Iwilei.

Once safe within its precincts he sought a cheap saloon and laid down his solitary quarter on the bar.

A couple of nights later Mr. Rapp was surprised to see the outcast walk into his little chapel in Palama where he and his wife were trying to teach a polyglot assembly the virtues of cleanliness and godliness. Hughes listened silently to the reading of a chapter from the Bible, to the songs, to the exhortations. Before the services ended he slipped out into the night.

Thereafter he made occasional visits to the chapel. Ragged and unkempt, he was usually sober. Even when drunk, he was scrupulously quiet and attentive. Finally Mr. Rapp sought him out alone. "You ought to straighten up," he said kindly. "I see you are really interested. I'd like to help you."

Jim shook his head. "I'd like to oblige you," he said. "I'd like mighty well to be saved again. But the only thing that will take hold of old Jim Hughes is San Francisco gospel. If I could have made it back to the Coast I'd have been all right. But I passed up my chance. Don't worry about me."

Rapp was provoked, thinking it a play for his sympathy. "I have n't any money to send you up to the Coast," he said sharply. "And if you went there, I doubt if you would do anything but what you do here."

"I'm not asking you for money, am I?" said Hughes, suddenly flushing. "I was simply trying to explain to you. Good-night."

Palama Chapel saw him no more and honest Mr.

Rapp's heart was troubled. But he and his wife found plenty to occupy their minds in their efforts to save in the morning the fruits of their toil of yesterday. And in due time the Settlement came into conflict with the interests of certain of the powers. Their efforts to cleanse the filthy purlieus of Chinatown and the still filthier slums of Iwilei met with a quiet but effective opposition that finally ended in a courteous notice to Mrs. Rapp that her prescribing for the sick and the ailing was against the territorial law, providing that only licensed physicians should be allowed to practise in Honolulu.

Three nights later a Chinese came out of a house across the street from the deserted chapel and built a fire in the gutter. He worked hastily, puffing noisily as he thrust little sticks of kindling into the heart of the burning pile of paper. A little crowd gathered, jabbering curiously. The Chinese, baring his arms, poured incense on the blaze from a paper sack, working his lips in mad incantation. A block away another fire suddenly flared into the darkness, sparks streaming upward to the stars. A gong rolled its thunderous beat out over the quarter. The crowd melted silently. All Palama shuddered within doors. The plague had broken out.

The next morning Mr. Rapp found a squad of mounted police barring the way across Nuuanu Creek. Beyond the bridge he saw the uninterrupted traffic of the careless city. He distinguished a party of tourists viewing the sights. He turned and looked back

over Palama. It was deserted of grown people. A few dying fires sent little spirals of smoke toward the glowing sky. Little children huddled on the curbs, oppressed by the silence. From an alley near by came the strident wail of a mourning woman. Against an electric light pole a Chinese slept his last sleep, awaiting the dead wagon.

"You can pass," said the police sergeant, lighting a cigarette. "But I guess they'll shut Palama up by itself to-morrow. We don't allow *pakés* or Hawaiians into the city now. Better get your wife and take her out while you can."

Mr. Rapp paused, turning his eyes from the safe city back to the quarter he called home, — the quarter he was trying to cleanse and make decent.

"Thanks," he said quietly. "I shall stay. But you'll let Mrs. Rapp pass?"

The sergeant, who remembered gratefully the woman who had soothed the last hour of a little child whose girl-mother did not know how to save it, nodded his head. "You better get her through right away," he suggested.

With a groan, Mr. Rapp turned and made his way to the little cottage he called home. In the *lanai* his wife waited for him, her face drawn and white. "Dear heart!" she called, as he came up the steps. "Dear heart, they're dying!"

They were, all around them. But after that first cry of anguish neither spoke again of the horror. Rapp tried to suggest that she take advantage of the

chance and go to Waikiki. "I can stay and do what I can," he said.

She smiled.

They were almost alone the first days. Honolulu, kept in ignorance of the death that knocked at her door, heard only vague rumors of infectious disease and the necessity an active health department felt of cleaning up the native quarters. The band played in Emma Square as of old, and from Fort Street to Waikiki none but the government officials suspected the scenes in which Mr. Rapp and his wife were acting across the stream, fighting the plague with such supplies as they could get from the police.

The third day they came to their home in the little lane bordered by papayas for a brief rest. The servant had fled and they cooked what food they could find, ate it, and went to sleep in the *lanai*, holding each other's hand that neither might be seized upon by death alone.

They woke to find a man in dirty cotton trousers and a ragged shirt seated on the steps. He looked at Rapp bashfully and nodded. "I thought maybe I could help you," he muttered.

It was Hughes. When Mrs. Rapp sat up in her chair and brushed the hair out of her weary eyes he nearly fled. She smiled at him and he mumbled inarticulately. "Hughes thought we might need some help," said her husband, doubtfully.

Quicker to understand, Mrs. Rapp nodded to the outcast. "It's good of you," she said. "Would

you mind helping me to get something for us to eat?"

So there were three of them that toiled in the heat and smoke of the disinfecting fires. It was grim work, the grimmer because they heard no news from the city that hummed across Nuuanu stream, careless of the dying. Hughes said little as he went about the tasks that mercy set. But every now and again he would look at Mrs. Rapp, nod his head vigorously and smile. It was a confident smile, cheering beyond words to the exhausted woman. She taught herself always to respond to it, feeling a certain stimulus in thus acknowledging that all was not lost. But the hour came when she did not smile in answer to Hughes' quick flash of cheer. Instead she gazed at him with weary eyes and sank to the steps of the little hut within which the child she had been nursing lay dead. Her eyes closed.

With a startled leap Hughes reached her side. Rapp was far up the street burning rubbish. The outcast stared down at the slender form an instant and then he stooped. With an effort he raised the light body in his arms and strode away toward the cottage under the papayas. It was a hard climb up the lane and the beads of sweat stood out on his white face when he finally reached her chair in the *lanai*. There he laid her down, gently, and sped away for her husband.

He came, his limbs shaking under him, fearing the worst. He poured out all his little skill to revive her, and when Hughes heard the man's voice calling to

the wife, he slipped out into the little yard, where he stood, bareheaded, in the hot sun.

But it was not death, only exhaustion, that had overpowered Mrs. Rapp's frail body. She revived, and when Hughes tiptoed up the steps he met her smile. He mumbled inarticulate words and turned away, hurrying down the lane and out of sight. So there were but two of them to carry on the battle. They toiled harder than ever, working with frantic strength to stem the tide of death that rippled to the very hills. But this time they made shorter shifts of it, coming back to the little cottage to meet the woman's smile, to hover about her with anxious words of encouragement, to steam over the stove compounding soups and dishes she might enjoy. And when her smile grew stronger, Hughes would slip out, his rake in hand, to battle with filth, to burn rubbish, to bury the dead, to lift the dying into the open air.

One day Rapp paused on the porch of his house and stared out at the bay. He saw a couple of steamers anchored out beyond the reef. He saw others anchored inside, flying signal flags. Hughes joined him and they nodded to each other. The city had been quarantined. The black death had crossed the stream. They were not alone.

That afternoon soldiers appeared in Palama. Wagons loaded with disinfectants rumbled across the bridges and squads of men with rakes and brooms invaded the alleys. The city had wakened. On every hand officialdom worked beside them.

But it was too late. The plague had got a foothold that nothing could shake. Chinese and Japanese, native and white, they cried out in pain, panted and wheezed on their mats, and died.

All day long the good priest of Kalihi-uka chanted the masses for souls and flung the incense into the polluted air. All day long the dead wagons toiled up the hills, and the wails of the desolate rose to the languid skies.

Rapp found himself suddenly overcome with distaste of life. It mattered nothing what he might do. He labored on because Hughes worked beside him, with his flashing smile, his eternal confidence. But the end came. He went to the cottage and slipped into the chair beside his wife. There he stayed, fighting for strength to live through the horror.

But Hughes accepted this, as he had the woman's collapse, with cheerfulness. He still worked with rake and fire and medicine. But he came oftener into the *lanai*, where these two militant workers drowsed in exhaustion of body and soul. He cooked their meals. And now and then he would stop before them, smiling cheerfully. "Not so bad to-day," he would remark. "Only three died in Palama since morning. We've got it under. Cheer up!"

They looked wearily for him when he was gone. The hours passed with unbearable sluggishness. And when he came again they would rally a smile to meet his, only to sink back into apathy.

One night he came to the house and threw his rake





Rapp and his wife rose to their feet and walked feebly out.



down with a bang. "It's all over," he said. "No new cases to-day." He breathed chokingly.

"How about Honolulu?" Rapp demanded fretfully.

Hughes blew his breath out with a whistle. He panted in the heat, still smiling. Then he threw his hand out. "Come and see."

For the first time Rapp and his wife rose to their feet and walked feebly out to the gate. Hughes went beside them, blowing out his breath, wheezing like a spent runner. "Look!" he said.

They looked. The sky was crimson above the city across the stream. Sparks soared among the stars. A faint roar, as of a distant crackling surf, beat upon their ears. They pushed on into the lane, followed its declivity a hundred yards, and came out into a full view. The city was afire from Nuuanu stream to Fort Street. Rapp drew a long breath. He stared, open mouthed, for a moment. Then he turned to his wife.

"It is all over," he said. "Fear has done what we could not. This saves the city."

"Will they burn Palama, too?" his wife demanded.

Hughes puffed out his white cheeks and seemed to be muttering to himself. Suddenly his voice broke articulately. "No," he said hoarsely. "Palama was saved." He smiled. But agony gathered in his eyes.

With a sudden leaning forward Mrs. Rapp put her hand on the outcast's arm. "You saved it," she said.

He gazed at her in astonishment, the ultimate amazement of a man who turns a corner and finds the

end of his thoroughfare. He gasped. Then he turned on his heel, clutched at the air, and fell. They bent over him. He opened his lips. "I lost my show to be saved," he said with difficulty. "Peniel Mission . . . strong doctrine. . . . Could n't go again. . . . No good, anyhow. . . . Unsaved . . ."

The conflagration across Nuuanu roared into the sky.

But Palama was safe. Under the papayas lay the last case, his face upturned to the crimson sky.





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