CHAPTER I.

Wave-Tossed and Castaway.

了可以有一个人的 HE beginning was at Cape Town, when Blake and Winthrope boarded the steamer as fellow passengers with Lady Bayrose and her party.

This was a week after Winthrope had arrived on the tramp steamer from India, and her ladyship had explained to Miss Leslie that it was as well for her not to be too hasty in accepting his attentions. To be sure. he was an Englishman, his dress and manners were irreproachable, and he was in the prime of ripened youth. Yet Lady Bayrose was too conscientious a chaperon to be fully satisfied with her countryman's bare assertion that he was engaged on a diplomatic mission requiring reticence regarding his identity. She did not see why this should prevent him from confiding

Notwithstanding this, Winthrope came aboard ship virtually as a member of her ladyship's party. He was so quick, so thoughtful of her comfort. and paid so much more attention to her than to Miss Leslie, that her ladyship had decided to tolerate him, even before Blake became a factor in the situation.

From the moment he crossed the gangway the American engineer entered upon a daily routine of drinking and gambling, varied only by attempts to strike up an off-hand acquaintance with Miss Leslie. This was Winthrope's opportunity, and his cleves frustration of what Lady Bayrose termed "that low bounder's impudence" served to install him in the good graces of her ladyship as well as in the favor of the American heiress.

Such, at least, was what Winthrope intimated to the persistent engineer with a superciliousness of tone and manner that would have stung even a British lackey to resentment. To Blake it was supremely galling. He could not rejoin in kind, and the slightest attempt at physical retort would have meant irons and confinement. It was a British ship. Behind Winthrope was Lady Bayrose; behind her ladyship, as a matter of course, drank heavier after each successive goading.

Meantime the ship, having touched at Port Natal, steamed on up the east coast, into the Mozambique channet.

On the day of the cyclone, Blake had withdrawn into his stateroom with a number of bottles, and throughout that fearful afternoon was blissfully unconscious of the danger. Even when the steamer went on the reef. he was only partially roused by the shock.

He took a long pull from a quart flask of whisky, placed the flask with great care in his hip pocket, and lurched out through the open doorway. There he reeled headlong against the mate, who had rushed below with three of the crew to bring up Miss Leslie. The mate cursed him virulently, and in the same breath ordered two of the men to fetch him up on deck.

The sea was breaking over the steamer in torrents; but between waves Blake was dragged across to the side and flung over into the bottom of the one remaining boat. He served as a cushion to break the fall of Miss Leslie, who was tossed in after him. At the same time, Winthrope, frantic with fear, scrambled into the bows and cut loose. One of the sailors leaped, but fell short and went down within arm's length of Miss Leslie.

She and Winthrope saw the steamer slip from the reef and sink back into deep water, carrying down in the vortex the mate and the few remaining sailors. After that all was chaos to them. They were driven ashore before the terrific gusts of the cyclone. blinded by the stinging spoondrift to all else but the hell of breakers and coral reefs in whose midst they swirled gurgling blithely of spicy zephyrs and

swaying hammocks. There came the seemingly final moment when the boat went spinning etern over prow.

Half-sobered, Blake opened his eyes and stared solemnly about him. He ings. A smother of broken surf came breakers, to roll him over and scrape him a little farther up the muddy shore. There the flood deposited him for a moment, until it could gather force to sweep back and drag him down again toward the roaring sea that had cast him up.

Blake objected-not to the danger of being drowned, but to interference with his repose. He had reached the



Sleeping the Sleep of the Just and the Drunkard.

feet. Instantly one of the terrific storm. He himself was beaten down wind-blasts struck his broad back and by a terrific gust. Panting and tight hole, and we're like to keep comsent him spinning for yards. He trembling, he waited for the wind to pany for a while-probably long as we brought up in a shallow pool, beside a hummock.

Under the lee of the knoll lay Winthrope and Miss Leslie. Though conscious, both were draggled and bruised and beaten to exhaustion. They were was all the despotic authority of the together because they had come captain. In the circumstances, it was ashore together. When the boat capnot surprising that the American sized, Miss Leslie had been flung against the Englishman, and they had held fast to each other with the desperate clutch of drowning persons. Neither of them ever recalled how they gained the shelter of the hummock.

Blake, sitting waist-deep in the pool, blinked at them benignly with his pale blue eyes, and produced the quart flask, still a third full of whisky. "I shay, fren's," he observed, "ha' one on me. Won' cos' you shent-

notta re' shent!" "You fuddled lout!" shouted Win-

thrope. "Come out of that pool."

"Wassama'er pool? Pool's allri'!" The Englishman squinted through the driving scud at the intoxicated man with an anxious frown. In all probability he felt no commiseration for the American; but it was no light matter to be flung up barehanded on the most unhealthful and savage stretch of the Mozambique coast, and Blake might be able to help them out of their predicament. To leave him in the pool was therefore not to be thought of. So soon as he had drained his bottle, he would lie down, and that would be the end of him. As any attempt to move him forcibly was out of the question, the situation demanded that Winthrope justify his intimations of diplomatic training. After considering the problem for several minutes, he met it in a way that proved he was at least not lacking in shrewdness and

"See here, Blake," he called, in another Iuli between the shricking gusts. 'the lady is fatigued. You're too much of a gentleman to ask her to come over there."

It required some moments for this to penetrate Blake's fuddled brain. After a futile attempt to gain his feet, he crawled out of the pool on all fours, so dizzily. And through it all Blake and, with tears in his eyes, pressed his lay huddled on the bottom boards flask upon Miss Leslie. She shrank away from him, shuddering, and drew herself up in a huddle of flaccid limbs and limp garments. Winthrope, however, not only accepted the flask, but

come near to draining it. Blake squinted at the diminished contents, hesitated, and cast a glance was given little time to take his bear. of maudlin gallantry at Miss Leslie. She lay coiled, closer than before, in seething up from one of the great a draggled heap. Her posture suggested sleep. Blake stared at her, the flask extended waveringly before him. Then he brought it to his lips, and drained out the last drop.

"Time turn in," he mumbled, and sprawled full length in the brackish ooze. Immediately he fell into a dranken stupor.

Winthrope, invigorated by the liquor, rose to his knees, and peered around obstinate stage. He grunted a protest. It was impossible to face the scud and Lady Bayrose! And she'd traveled so dear papa when he was manipulating Again the flood seethed up the shore, spoondrift from the furious sea; but much-oh, oh, it is horrible! Why the Q. T. railroad, and he did me out and rolled him away from the danger. to leeward he caught a glimpse of a did she persuade me to visit the Cape? of my pay.

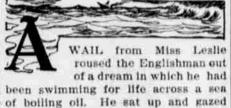
turned over, and staggered to his | reedy vegetation beaten flat by the lull, in hope that he might obtain a clearer view of his surroundings. Before he again dared rise to his feet, darkness swept down with tropical suddenness and blurred out everything.

The effect of the whisky soon anything for her.

Presently he became aware that the cyclone had passed before the ship struck, and they were now in the outermost circle of the vast whirlwind. With the consciousness of this change for the better, Winthrope's fear-racked nerves relaxed and he fell into a heavy sleep.

CHAPTER II.

Worse Than Wilderness.



about him, half-dazed. The cyclone

had been followed by a dead calm, and the sun, already well above the horizon, was blazing upon them over the glassy surfaces of the dying swells with fierce heat. Winthrope felt about for his hat. It had been blown off when, at the stri-

king of the steamer, he had rushed up on deck. As he remembered, he straightened, and looked at his companions. Blake lay snoring where he had first outstretched himself, sleeping the sleep of the just-and of the drunkard. The girl, however, was already awake. She sat with her hands clasped in her lap, while the tears rolled slowly down her cheeks. "My-ah-dear Miss Genevieve, what is the matter?" exclaimed Win-

thrope. "Matter? Do you ask, when we are here on this wretched coast, and may not get away for weeks? Oh, I dld so count on the London season this year! Lady Bayrose promised that I should

be among those presented." "Well, I-ah-fancy, Lady Bayrose will do no more presenting-unless it may be to the heavenly choir, you know.

"Why, what do you mean, Mr. Winthrope? You told me that she and the maids had been put in the largest boat-

"My dear Miss Genevieve, you must remember that I am a diplomat. It was all quite sufficiently barrowing, I assure you. They were, indeed, put into the largest boat- Beastly muddie!- While they waited for the mate to fetch you, the boat was crushed alongside, and all in it drowned."

"Drowned!-drowned! Oh, dear This was too much! He set his jaw, marsh flooded with salt water, its It was only to be with her-And then

for us to start off for India, when we might have sailed straight to England! Oh, it is horrible! horrible! And ray maid, and all-It cannot be possible! "Pray, do not excite yourself, my

dear Miss Genevieve. Their troubles are all over. Er-Gawd has taken them to Him, you know,"

"But the pity of it! To be drowned -so far from home!"

"Ah, if that's all you're worrying about!-I must say I'd like to know how we'll get a snack for breakfast. I'm hungry as a-er-groom."

"Eating! How can you think of cating, Mr. Winthrope-and all the others drowned? This sun is becoming dreadfully hot. It is unbearable! Can you not put up some kind of an awning" "Well, now, I must say, I was never

much of a hand at such things, and

really I can't imagine what one could rig up. There might have been a bit of sail in the boat, but one can't see a sign of it. I fancy it was smashed." Miss Leslie ventured a glance at Blake. Though still lying as he had sprawled in his drunkenness, there was a comforting suggestion of power in

"Is he still-in that condition?" "Must have slept it off by this time, and there's no more in the flask," answered Winthrope. Reaching over with his foot, he pushed against Blake's back.

his broad shoulders and square law.

"Huh! All right," grunted the sleeper, and sat up, as had Winthrope, half dazed. Then he stared around him, and rose to his feet. "Well, what in hell! Say, this is damn cheerful!"

"I fancy we are in a nasty fix. But I say, my man, there is a woman present, and your language, you know-" Blake turned and fixed the Englishman with a cold stare.

"Look here, you bloomin' lud," he said, "there's just one thing you're going to understand, right here and now. I'm not your man, and we're not going to have any of that kind of blatter. Any fool can see we're in a

"What-ah-may I ask, do you mean by that?"

Blake laughed harshly, and pointed from the reef-strewn sea to the vast stretches of desolate marsh. Far inpassed, and Winthrope huddled be- land, across miles of brackish lagoons tween his companions, drenched and and reedy mud-flats, could be seen exhausted. Though he could hear Miss groups of scrubby, half-leafless trees; Leslie moaning, he was too miserable ten or twelve miles to the southward himself to inquire whether he could do a rocky headland jutted out into the water; otherwise there was nothing in sight but sea and swamp. If it could wind was falling. The center of the not properly be termed a sea-view, it was at least a very wet landscape.

"Fine prospect" remarked Blake, dryly. "We'll be in luck if the fever don't get the last of us inside a month; and as fcr you two, you'd have as much show of lasting a month as a toad with a rattlesnake, if it wasn't for Tom Blake-that's my name-Tom Blake-and as long as this shindy lasts, you're welcome to call me Tom or Blake, whichever suits. But understand, we're not going to have any more of your bloody, bloomin' English condescension. Aboard ship you had the drop on me, and could pile on deg till the cows came home. Here I'm Blake and you're Winthrope."

"Believe me, Mr. Blake, I quite appreclate the-ah-situation. And now, fancy that, instead of wasting time-

"It's about time you introduced me to the lady," interrupted Blake, and he stared at them half defiantly, yet with a twinkle in his eyes.

Miss Leslie flushed. Winthrope swore softly, and bit his lip. Aboard ship, backed by Lady Bayrose and the captain, he had goaded the American at pleasure. Now, however, the situation was reversed. Both title and authority had been swept away by the storm, and he was left to shift for himself against the man who had every reason to hate him for his overbearing insolence. Worse still, both he and Miss Leslie were now dependent upon the American, in all probability for life itself. It was a bitter pill and hard to swallow.

Blake was not slow to observe the Englishman's besitancy. He grinned. "Every dog has his day, and I guess this is mine," he said. "Take your time, if it comes hard. I can imagine it's a pretty stiff dose for your ludship. But why in-why in frozen hades an American lady should object to an introduction to a countryman who's going to do his level best to save her pretty little self from the hyenaswell, it beats me.

Winthrope flushed redder than the

"Miss Leslie, Mr. Blake," he murmured, hoping to put an end to the

But yet Blake persisted. He bowed, openly exultant.

"You see, miss," he said, "I know the correct thing quite as much as your swells. I knew all along you were Jenny Leslie. I ran a survey for your

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



THE OIL THAT PENETRATES



"Excuse me, can I speak to your typewriter a moment?"

"You cannot; she's engaged." "That's all right; I'm the fellow she's engaged to.'

A Reflection. "To my annoyance," she said. "I found he had a lock of my hair. How he got it I can't imagine."

The older girl smiled oddly. "When you were out of the room, perhaps?" she hazarded.

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