

**JIM LORD'S CAT.**

[A true story told by a sailor who sailed on the "Annabel Lee."]

Can I tell ye that pictur's story? Well, It's a longish story, yer honor, to tell; Hows'ever, it's cur'ous, an' so here goes.

I were wunst a sailor, yer honor knows, Though it's now ten year as I left the sea;

An' the last o' my ships were the Anna-bel Lee, West India packet; the steward abroad Is now the keeper of Eddingley Pard— Jim Lord.

He wer fond of animals, sir, wer Jim; He al'ays took out with him five or six, An' he used to larn 'em the rummiest tricks,

All sorts seemed to come alike to him; But of none of his pets wer he quite that fond

That he wer of a cat as he'd saved from a pond As wer trying to swim with a stone round her neck.

Well, yer honor, this cat and I didn't agree; She used to trot up and down the deck, And 'ud get in the way of the crew, ye see.

An' at last one day I wer shifftin' some kegs, An' she comes and pushes 'tween my legs,

An' trips me up, and I tumbles flat; An' I ups in a wax an' says "bother the cat"—

[Savin' yer honor's presence] an' then I says, "you don't never do that again." An' I takes an' pitches her into the sea. An' my shipmates stan's a-splittin' at me, An' roars out, "Cat overboard! Jim Lord, Some un's been chuckin' yer cat over-board."

Jim run'd to the taffrel an' seed it were true, For there were the crittur a-swimmin' in view;

Then he run'd to the cap'n, an' "Cap'n," says he, "Some brute's been an' throwed the cat in the sea;

You can spy her a-swimming, cap'n, from here— Will ye stop the ship, sir, an' lower a boat?"

"Jim Lord," says the cap'n, "I've been afloat

From boy to cap'n, nigh forty year, An' of all the fools as ever I see In that long spell, the biggest you be; To think any cap'n would be such a flat As stop a liner to pick up a cat!"

What d'ye think Jim does? "Cap'n," says he, "Then you're bound to stop one to pick up me;"

An' over the taffrel goes Jim Lord, An' the cry this time wer "Man over-board."

Well, the cap'n goed perfectly white with rage, But o' course he wer bound to lower a boat;

An' in less than five minutes we had her afloat [Though I felt every minute were like an age].

An' [I hopes I'm not tirin' yer honor?] Well, Jim Picks up the cat, an' we picks up him.

'Twould have done your heart good, sir, to have heered The way as the crew an' the passengers cheered,

But the cap'n were savage with Jim, an' swore He'd have him in irons a week or more! So we writes a round-robin, an' gets the first mate

To ax Jim off in the name of the crew; An' the passengers writes a round-robin too.

An' sen's it in by Sir Richard Thwayte. An' the mate and Sir Richard they argueys the case,

An' at last the cap'n he strokes his face An' says, "If he lets Jim off, it's jest As a personal favor to them an' the rest;

But I gives you my Alfred David," says he. "As he don't never sail no more with me; So, gentlemen, now you've got my reply."

Well, Sir Richard he goes to Jim by-and-by, An' says, "Muster Lord, the cap'n has swore

As you shan't never sail with him no more. I respects yer kindness, likewise yer pluck,

An' I don't like seein' 'em bring ill luck; So, if you be tired of living at sea, An' 'ud care to pass the rest o' yer days Where animals is, an' larn 'em yer ways,

Why, my old park-keeper's jest dead," says he. An' the place is yourn, if you'll say the word."

An' that, yer honor, were how Jim Lord Came to be keeper of Eddingley Park.

Well, yer honor, that evenin' afore it was dark, I goes to Jim, an' I says to him, "Jim, It were all my fault as you had that swim,

An' now I axes yer parding," says I, "An' I hopes to get it." Says he, "Tom Bligh, It's an easy thing for you to get that! What you wants is the parding of this here cat."

He picks her up, an' he says to her "Kitty, This is the man as tried to drown ye, my pretty;

He don't know yer lingo, Kitty," says he. "So you says to him what you says through me.

You tells him as life's as sweet a thing, An' dyin' as hard to a cat as a king; You tell him it might have been God's plan

To have made him the cat an' have made you the man; An' you axes him how he'd have felt if he

'd bin took by you an' chucked in the sea; You axes him, Kitty, to think of that

Next time as he'd harm a pore little cat; An' then you gives him your parding," says he. "An' you gives him your paw."

"Well, Kitty," says I, "As I takes it, the two on you's taught Tom Bligh

A lesson I hopes he'll never forget." An' though it's ten year as I left the sea,

I ain't forgotten that lesson yet; An' I took good care as I never should, For I goes to one of my mates, Bill Wood,

As did the ship's paintin', an' says to him, "Bill, "Will ye paint me a pictur?" Says he, "That I will."

"Then," says I, "If so be as you'll humor my whim, Jest paint that cat there a-puddlin' at sea.

An' Jim Lord a-swimming to save her, an' we A-pullin' our arms off to pick up Jim, An' the Annabel Lee a standing to."

—Edward Byron Nicholson, M. A.

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