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pearly gleam of the heaven-caressing royals and skysails tinting over with faintest green, and the sight made him think of a gigantic sheaf of lilies against the dimming azure of the sky.

"Hard up your wheel!" the captain's sharp command broke into the reverie. His spare, white figure strode forward on the poop, his nostrils dilating, almost sniffing.

"Where's that mate?" he clicked with the sudden, steely snap that Shelton knew so well, from certain happenings he had observed in the North Atlantic and off the Horn.

"Square them after yards — Mr. Wharton!"

"Square after yards, sir!" answered the mate from somewhere forward, then bawled orders to the men.

The not unmusical yo-hoing of the lo's'n—all that Shelton had found left of the chanties of old—sounded clearer as the men moved aft from braces to braces of the three masts. They made a vital picture, all straining at the same angle in rhythm with the lo's'n's chant.

"They look a little more fit than when they came aboard, any way," Shelton reflected. But his artist imagination could not help substituting a line of thew, blue-eyed young giants in their feeble stead.

The enormous steel yards swung state-ly, almost ominously, reminding him of ponderous cranes, broadside to the blast of wind that was now whipping the water into a froth of tiny whitecaps. The brine, spurned under her forefoot, effervesced like soda along the ship's leaning side, and the dauntless structure of steel and canvas forged ahead, quietly, smoothly, resistlessly, the breeze humming through her rigging.

"And some people think this sort of thing a bore!" Shelton marveled, with parted lips, feeling the cool wind flood him like some exquisite liquid.

Big drops of rain began to fall.

"Keep 'r nor'nor'west, soon's she comes up," the captain called to the helmsman. After observing for a time the wearing of the ship, he turned and said: "Might's well set down again an' rest our hands an' faces, 'n' have some of that tea." And Shelton beheld him once more genial, pleasant, moistly pink, moving around to the chairs.

"Come on, come, you northeast trade—keep it up, keep it up!—give us nine knots," he adjured cheerfully from his reclining seat. "We're only two hundred plunks a day out of the owners, ef you don't come on. An' I'm one of the owners."

The terrier sniffed at the large blobs of wet on the steaming deck, and yawned himself full of the grateful wind.

"Poor ribby little cuss!" the skipper repeated. "Look at 'm enjoy 'nself. He's gettin' to be all eyes an' ribs."

For a while the two men sat drinking their tea and listening to the rush of wind and wave and rain, filling their lungs with coolness. All at once, rousing his hearer like a cold douche, the Yankee skipper sat up and spoke with an unwonted sharpness:

"Ef that there squall don't fetch wind enough tonight to keep the officers and crew of this ship on their feet, I can tell you there's goin' to be something else doin' that 'll shake the whole bunch of loafers up like a shift in a gale!"

The determined lines of his face and body relaxed slowly, and he sank back into his reclining posture. Many days of apathy in the unrelieved heat had made prompt replies unnecessary between the two; and Shelton, although he only looked curiously at his companion, was alert. He knew now what had been the matter with the captain, and drew together his lines of thought. It was just what had been bothering himself, and he was glad he had refrained from broaching the subject. Nearly a week before, he had happened upon an instance. One night, unable to sleep for the sticky heat below, he had come up to refresh himself, in fancy at least, in the cool, blue light of the tropic stars. The officer on watch was not in sight. The helmsman, dull from nearly two hours of inaction, only half awake, leaned against the wheel.

The phosphorescent points of light were unusually bright and numerous, and