

IN THIS TALE
JACK LON-
DON'S SEA EX-
PERIENCE IS
USED WITH ALL
THE POWER OF
HIS VIRILE PEN

The SEA WOLF

JACK LONDON



THE STORY OF
A MAN WHO
IN HIS OWN
LITTLE WORLD
ABOARD SHIP
WAS A LAW
UNTO HIMSELF

SYNOPSIS.

Humphrey Van Weyden, critic and dilettante, is thrown into the water by the sinking of a ferryboat. On coming to his senses he finds himself aboard the sealing schooner Ghost, Captain Wolf Larsen, bound to Japan waters. The captain refuses to put Humphrey ashore and makes him cabin boy "for the good of his soul." He begins to learn potato peeling and dish washing under the cockney cook, Mugridge. Humphrey's quarters are changed aft. Mugridge steals his money and changes him when accused of it. Later he listens to Wolf give his idea of life—"like yeast, a ferment," the big eat the little. Cooky is jealous of Humphrey and hatches a plan to get him out of the ship. Humphrey has a sea sickness and makes it the basis for another philosophic discussion with Humphrey. Wolf entertains Mugridge in his cabin, wins from him at cards the money he stole from Humphrey, and then tells Humphrey it is his. Wolf, by right of might, Cooky and Humphrey when knives at each other. Humphrey's intimacy with Wolf increases, and Wolf sketches the story of his life to Humphrey. Wolf discusses the Bible, and Omar with Humphrey and illustrates the instinctive love of life by choking Humphrey nearly to death. A carnival of brutality breaks loose in the ship and Wolf proves himself the master brute. Wolf is knocked overboard at night, comes back aboard by the logline, and wins clear in a fight in the fore-castle. Humphrey dresses Wolf's wounds and, despite his protest, is made mate on the hell-ship. Mr. Van Weyden tries to learn his duties as mate. Wolf hatches the men who tried to kill him.

CHAPTER XIV—Continued.

I had cherished a hope that his victims would find an opportunity to escape while filling our water barrels, but Wolf Larsen had selected his spot well. The Ghost lay half beyond the surf line of a lonely beach. Here debouched a deep gorge, with precipitous, volcanic walls which no man could scale. And here, under his direct supervision—for he went ashore himself—Leach and Johnson filled the small casks and rolled them down to the beach. They had no chance to make a break for liberty in one of the boats.

Late that afternoon we hove up anchor and got away. Nothing was before us but the three or four months' hunting on the sealing grounds. The outlook was black indeed, and I went about my work with a heavy heart. An almost funereal gloom seemed to have descended upon the Ghost. Wolf Larsen had taken to his bunk with one of his strange, splitting headaches. Johnson I found lying full length on the fore-castle head, staring at the troubled churn of the forefoot, and I remembered with horror the suggestion Wolf Larsen had made. It seemed likely to bear fruit. I tried to break in on the man's morbid thoughts by calling him away, but he smiled sadly at me and refused to obey.

Leach approached me as I returned aft. "I want to ask a favor, Mr. Van Weyden," he said. "If it's yer luck to ever make 'Frisco once more, will you hunt up Matt McCarthy? He's my old man. He lives on the hill, back of the Mayfair bakery, runnin' a cobbler's shop that everybody knows, and you'll have no trouble. Tell him I lived to be sorry for the trouble I brought him and the things I done, and—just tell him 'God bless him,' for me."

I nodded my head, but said, "We'll all win back to San Francisco, Leach, and you'll be with me when I go to see Matt McCarthy."

"I'd like to believe you," he answered, shaking my hand, "but I can't. Wolf Larsen'll do for me, I know it; and all I can hope is he'll do it quick."

And as he left me I was aware of the same desire at my heart. Since it was to be done, let it be done with dispatch. It was a cheap and sordid thing after all, this life, and the sooner over the better. Over and done with! I too, leaned upon the rail and gazed longingly into the sea, with the certainty that sooner or later I should be sinking down, down, through the cool, green depths of its oblivion.

CHAPTER XV.

Strange to say, in spite of the general foreboding, nothing of especial moment happened on the Ghost. We ran on to the north and west till we raised the coast of Japan and picked up with the great seal herd. Coming from no man knew where in the illimitable Pacific, it was traveling north on its annual migration to the rookeries of Bering sea. And north we traveled with it, ravaging and destroying, flinging the naked carcasses to the shark and salting down the skins so that they might later adorn the fair shoulders of the women of the cities.

I saw more of Wolf Larsen than ever when we had gained the grounds. For when the weather was fair and we were in the midst of the herd, all hands were away in the boats, and left on board were only he and I and Thomas Mugridge, who did not count. It was our duty to sail the Ghost well to leeward of the last lee boat, so that all the boats should have fair wind to run for in case of squalls or threatening weather.

It is no slight matter for two men, particularly when a stiff wind has sprung up, to handle a vessel like the Ghost, steering, keeping lookout for the boats and setting or taking sail; so it devolved upon me to learn and

learn quickly. Steering I picked up easily, but running aloft to the cross-trees and swinging my whole weight by my arms when I left the railines and climbed still higher, was more difficult. This, too, I learned, and quickly, for I felt somehow a wild desire to vindicate myself in Wolf Larsen's eyes, to prove my right to live in ways other than of the mind. Nay, the time came when I took joy in the run of the masthead and in the clinging by my legs at that precarious height while I swept the sea with glasses in search of the boats.

I remember one beautiful day, when the boats left early and the reports of the hunters' guns grew dim and distant and died away as they scattered far and wide over the sea. There was just the faintest wind from the westward; but it breathed its last by the time we managed to get to leeward of the last lee boat. One by one—I was at the masthead and saw—the six boats disappeared over the bulge of the earth as they followed the seal into the west. We lay, scarcely rolling on the placid sea, unable to follow. Wolf Larsen was apprehensive. The barometer was down, and the sky to the east did not please him. He studied it with unceasing vigilance.

"If she comes out of there," he said, "hard and snappy, putting us to windward of the boats it's likely there'll be empty barrels in steege and fore-cle."

By eleven o'clock the sea had become glass. Slowly the whole eastern sky was filled with clouds that overtopped us like some black sierra of the infernal regions. And still we rocked gently, and there was no wind.

We ate dinner, a hurried and anxious meal for me with eighteen men abroad on the sea and beyond the bulge of the earth and with that heaven-rolling mountain range of clouds



He Laughed Aloud Mockingly and Defiantly at the Advancing Storm.

moving slowly down upon us. Wolf Larsen did not seem affected, however, though I noticed, when we returned to the deck, a slight twitching of the nostrils, a perceptible quickness of movement. Once, and unwitting that he did so or that I saw, he laughed aloud, mockingly and defiantly, at the advancing storm. I see him yet, standing there like a pygmy out of the "Arabian Nights" before the huge front of some malignant genie. He was daring destiny, and he was unafraid.

The whispers of wind became puffs, the sails filled, the Ghost moved. Wolf Larsen put the wheel hard up, to port, and we began to pay off. The wind was now dead astern, muttering and puffing stronger and stronger, and my head-sails were pounding lustily. My hands were full with the flying-jib, jib, and staysail; and by the time this part of my task was accomplished the Ghost was leaping into the southwest, the wind on her quarter and all her sheets to starboard. Without pausing for breath, though my heart was beating like a trip-hammer from my exertions, I sprang to the top-sails, and before the wind had become too strong we had them fairly set and were coiling down. Then I went aft for orders.

Wolf Larsen nodded approval and relinquished the wheel to me. The wind was strengthening steadily and the sea rising. For an hour I steered, each moment becoming more difficult. I had not the experience to steer at the gait we were going on a quartering course.

"Now take a run up with the glasses and raise some of the boats. We've made at least ten knots, and we're going twelve or thirteen now. The old girl knows how to walk."

I contented myself with the fore-crosstrees, some seventy feet above the deck. As I searched the vacant stretch of water before me, I comprehended thoroughly the need for haste if we were to recover any of our men.

Indeed, as I gazed at the heavy sea through which we were running, I doubted that there was a boat afloat. It did not seem possible that such frail craft could survive such stress of wind and water.

For an hour I saw nothing but the naked, desolate sea. And then, where a vagrant shaft of sunlight struck the ocean and turned its surface to wrathful silver, I caught a small black speck thrust skyward for an instant and swallowed up. I waited patiently. Again the tiny point of black projected itself through the wrathful blaze a couple of points off our port-bow. I did not attempt to shout, but communicated the news to Wolf Larsen by waving my arm. He changed the course, and I signaled affirmation when the speck showed dead ahead.

It grew larger, and so swiftly that for the first time I fully appreciated the speed of our flight. Wolf Larsen motioned for me to come down, and when I stood beside him at the wheel gave me instructions for heaving to.

"Expect all hell to break loose," he cautioned me, "but don't mind it. Yours is to do your own work and to have Cooky stand by the fore-sheet."

The boat was now very close, and I could make out plainly that it was lying head to wind and sea and dragging on its mast and sail, which had been thrown overboard and made to serve as a sea-anchor. The three men were bailing. Each rolling mountain wheeled them from view. Then, and with black suddenness, the boat would shoot clear through the foaming crest, bow pointed to the sky, and the whole length of her bottom showing, wet and dark, till she seemed on end.

The Ghost suddenly changed her course, keeping away. Wolf Larsen was preparing to heave to. I felt an abrupt easing of the schooner, a loss for the moment of all strain and pressure, coupled with a swift acceleration of speed. She was rushing around on her heel into the wind.

As the Ghost wallowed for an instant, broadside on and rolling straight over and far into the wind, I beheld a huge sea rise far above my head. It descended, pandemonium broke loose, everything happened at once. I was struck a crushing, stunning blow, nowhere in particular and yet everywhere. My hold had been broken loose, I was under water, and the thought passed through my mind that this was the terrible thing of which I had heard, the being swept in the trough of the sea. I brought up violently against what I took to be the rail, breathed, and breathed the sweet air again. As I scrambled out on all fours I passed over the body of Thomas Mugridge, who lay in a groaning heap. There was no time to investigate. I must get the jib backed over.

On all sides there was a rending and crashing of wood and steel and canvas. The Ghost was being wrenched and torn to fragments. The fore-sail and fore-top-sail were thundering into ribbons, the heavy boom thrashing and splintering from rail to rail. The air was thick with flying wreckage, ropes and stays were hissing and coiling like snakes, and down through it all crashed the gaff of the fore-sail.

The spar could not have missed me by many inches, while it spurred me to action. Perhaps the situation was not hopeless. I remembered Wolf Larsen's caution. He had expected all hell to break loose, and here it was. And where was he? I caught sight of him toiling at the main sheet, heaving it in and flat with his tremendous muscles, the stern of the schooner lifted high in the air and his body outlined against a white surge of sea sweeping past. All this, and more—a whole world of chaos and wreck—in possibly fifteen seconds I had seen and heard and grasped.

I did not stop to see what had become of the small boat, but sprang to the jib-sheet. The jib itself was beginning to slap, partially filling and emptying with sharp reports; but with a turn of the sheet and the application of my whole strength each time it slapped, I slowly backed it. This I know: I did my best. I pulled till I burst open the ends of all my fingers; and while I pulled, the flying jib and staysail split their cloths apart and thundered into nothingness.

Still I pulled, holding what I gained each time with a double turn until the next slap gave me more. Then the sheet gave with greater ease, and Wolf Larsen was beside me, heaving in alone while I was busied taking up the slack.

"Make fast!" he shouted. "And come on!"

As I followed him I noted that in spite of rack and ruin a rough order obtained. The Ghost was hove to. She was still working order, and she was still working. Though the rest of her sails were gone, the jib, backed to windward, and the mainsail hauled down flat, were themselves holding, and holding her bow to the furious sea as well.

I looked for the boat, and, while Wolf Larsen cleared the boat tackles, saw it lift to leeward on a big sea and not a score of feet away. And so nicely had he made his calculation,

we drifted fairly down upon it, so that nothing remained to do but hook the tackles to either end and hoist it aboard. I noticed blood spouting from Kerfoot's left hand. In some way the third finger had been crushed to a pulp. But he gave no sign of pain, and with his single right hand helped us lash the boat in its place.

Then we raced, and wildly, across the wild sea, the while I hung like a fly in the crosstrees and searched for the other boats. In half an hour I sighted the second one, swamped and bottom up, to which were desperately clinging Jock Horner, fat Louis and Johnson. This time I remained aloft, and Wolf Larsen succeeded in heaving to without being swept. As before, we drifted down upon it. Tackles were made fast and lines flung to the men, who scrambled aboard like monkeys.

As before, the Ghost swung out of the trough, lifting her deck again out of the sea, and dashed before the howling blast. It was now half-past five, and half an hour later, when the last of the day lost itself in a dim and furious twilight, I sighted a third boat. It was bottom up, and there was no sign of its crew. Wolf Larsen repeated his maneuver, holding off and then rounding up to windward and drifting down upon it. But this time he missed by forty feet, the boat passing astern.

"Number four boat!" Oofy-Oofy cried, his keen eyes reading its number in the one second when it lifted clear of the foam and upside down.

It was Henderson's boat, and with him had been lost Holyoak and Williams, another of the deep-water crowd. Lost they indubitably were; but the boat remained, and Wolf Larsen made one more reckless effort to recover it.

And when he put the wheel hard over and the Ghost's bow swung off, I was once more buried beneath the pounding seas and clinging for life to the pinnal at the foot of the fore-mast. When the Ghost finally emerged Kelly, who had come forward at the last moment, was missing.

This time, having missed the boat and not being in the same position as in the previous instances, Wolf Larsen was compelled to resort to a different maneuver. Running off before the wind with everything to starboard, he came about and returned close-hauled on the port tack. Though we were continually half-buried, there was no trough in which to be swept, and we drifted squarely down upon the upturned boat, badly smashing it as it was heaved inboard.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PECULIAR SPECIMEN OF WASP

Insect That Is Becoming More Common in England Not Pretty Thing to Look At.

The other day a fearsome insect made its appearance in the window of a local chemist's shop, relates the London Chronicle. The chemist, placing a little chloroform near the invader, soon reduced it to a comatose condition. In color and shape it was much like a giant hornet, with a very long sting. It was a specimen of the giant-tailed wasp (*Sirex gigas*), which is getting much more common than it was some years ago. The larva is a wood-feeder, and is supposed to have been introduced to Great Britain in foreign timber.

The perfect insect is about two inches in length, has four membranous wings, and long, yellow antennae. The body is blue-black, with yellow stripes, and the long boring apparatus used by the insect for piercing a hole into the timber in which to deposit its eggs has, to the uninitiated, the appearance of a terrible sting. When hatched, the grub bores its way into the interior of the timber, where it enjoys itself for three years, or even longer.

Luck in Wall Street.

The case of the former Wall street messenger boy who has just paid \$72,000 for a stock exchange seat out of his winnings in "war stocks" will long serve to point a moral and adorn a tale of the magic possibilities of stock speculation. As against this concrete example of successful get-rich-quick finance, all the hard-luck experiences of the less fortunate and all the warnings about the snares and pitfalls of stock gambling will be as nothing. There was the unlucky case a few months ago of the bank teller whose faith in war stock profits proved his ruin. But that is another story, and as opposed to it here is the more agreeable instance of the youth who has made good, and at thirty-one from the humblest of beginnings has reached the cherished rolls of all stock brokers' clerks.

But it is to be noted that he made his fortune operating from the inside and not from the outside.

Large Sum for Holstein Bull.

Oliver Gabana, the "Holstein king," paid \$25,000 for a bull at public auction sale. He has the greatest collection of Holsteins in the world.

His Own

By REV. B. B. SUTCLIFFE
Assistant Superintendent of Men, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago

TEXT—Having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end.—John 13:1.

With peculiar emphasis this text describes all Christians as "his own."

Believers are the peculiar property of the Lord Jesus Christ in at least three ways. They become his by gift from the Father. In speaking of them Christ describes them as those "whom thou hast given me." They are also his peculiar property by his own purchase, for he bought them with his precious blood on the cross of Calvary. They belong to him in the third place by their own surrender to him. These things are full of assurance and of blessing to the believer. The Father will never take back the gift he has made to the Son, the Son will never give up that which he has purchased at such awful cost, and that which is surrendered, he will never allow to be wrested from him. Christians are his own peculiar property to have and to hold and to love unto the end; or, as the Revised Version has it, "to the uttermost."

As a child becomes the peculiar care of a home so the believer becomes the peculiar care of the Lord. All other cares take a secondary place. It is his care to guard his property. It sometimes seems as though the Lord dealt with his own in a hard way. This is because the Christian, like the child, does not understand the "why" of many things. Many of the seemingly hard things that come to the Christian may be but the guarding of the Lord's property from dangers unseen but to his eye. Again, it is the peculiar care of the Lord to guide his own people. He knows what lies along each pathway and when he seems to close a path which looks attractive to one of his own, that one can rest assured it is because he sees danger there or else he sees more blessing along some other road. The unknown and untried of the Lord's choosing are the ones where richest blessings lie, and happy the Christian who allows him to guide the footsteps. Once more it is his own peculiar care to provide for his own. Many are the ways he has for providing for them. Sometimes by natural, sometimes by unnatural ways, as in the case of Elijah at the brook. The ravens were called to bring meat to the prophet, and they were sent to feed Elijah just where the Lord told him to be. Had he been elsewhere he might have missed what the Lord had for him. So the Christian often misses much that the Lord has for him by being out of the Lord's place. See to it that you are in God's place for you and he will see to it, though he must work a miracle, that every need of yours will be supplied.

His Own Peculiar Love.

The peculiar love of the Lord for his own covers all their shortcomings and their peculiarities. The Lord graciously warned Simon Peter of his coming time of denial, but Peter boastfully said he would lay down his life before he would leave him even. When, therefore, Peter so miserably failed it might seem that the Lord's love would grow a bit cool. But in spite of the failure there was no lessening of love, there was no cooling of the affection. It was his love that was in the look that brought Peter to his repentance. Let no Christian who may have failed his Lord think that the love of Christ has cooled or been diminished. He loves with an everlasting love that many waters cannot quench. Return unto him and it will be found that having loved his own he loves them unto the end in spite of any failures. Again some are kept away from him because they seem to be so backward in learning of him. But he loves in spite of the backwardness of his disciples. Think of Philip after three years of companionship not being able to discern who he was, but had to be told, in answer to his inquiry for the Father, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He knows so well the make-up of the believer that no slowness to understand can surprise him, much less make his love grow cold.

He loves his own with a peculiar love that nothing can cool or turn aside from its object.

His own peculiar property, which is his own peculiar care, is the object of his own peculiar love.

Even the unbelief of his own is not sufficient to cool the warmth or lessen the depth of his love.

Poor Thomas, the doubting one, was never loved any more truly or more deeply than in the midst of his refusal to believe in the resurrection until he had thrust his hand into the wound prints.

There is nothing that can bring to an end the love of the Lord for his own, for having loved his own he loves them unto the end; or, as the Revised Version puts it, "He loves them to the uttermost."



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