

A Woman Intervenes.

BY ROBERT BARR. Author of 'The Face and the Mask,' 'In the Midst of Alarms,' Etc.

CHAPTER IX. Most of the passengers awoke next morning with a bewildering feeling of vague apprehension. The absence of all motion in the ship, the unusual and intense silence, had a depressing effect. The engine had not yet started, that at least was evident. Kenyon was one of the first on deck. He noticed that the pumps were still working at their full speed, and that the steamer had still the ominous look so far. Happily, the weather continued good, so far as the sky was concerned. A slight drizzle of rain had set in, and the horizon was not many miles from the ship. There would be but much chance of sighting another liner while such weather continued.

Before Kenyon had been many minutes on deck Edith Longworth came up the companion-way. She approached him with a smile on her face, but she was not smiling at all. "Well," she said, "you at least, do not seem to be suffering any anxiety because of our situation."

"Have you forgotten that this is Sunday morning?" she asked. "Of course it is. So far as I am concerned, time seemed to stop when the engine broke down. But I do not understand why Sunday means anything in particular."

"Don't you?" Well, for a person who has been thinking for two or three days very earnestly on one particular subject, I am astonished at you. Sunday morning, and no one is in sight! Really, for a moment."

"AB," he cried, "I see what you mean now. Miss Brewster's cable message will not appear in this morning's New York Argus. Of course it will not and don't you see, also, that when we do arrive you will have an equal right to be in the newspaper?"

"I don't know," she said, "but I know that the directors are the report itself. It is not much to be sure, but still it is not an equal right, while if we had got into Queenstown last night that would have been impossible."

Kenyon laughed. "For such a result the cause is rather tremendous, isn't it? It is something like burning down the house to roast the pig?"

"To detect the atmosphere cleared and showed in the distance a steamer, western bound. It evidently belonged to one of the great lines. The masts and funnels were visible. The masts were topped with a number of signal flags, and people crowded to the side of the ship to get a better view of the coming vessel. Minute after minute passed, but there was no response from the other liner. People watched her with increasing anxiety, as though their fate depended on her noticing their signals. Of course, everybody thought she must see them, but still she steamed westward. A fleet of black smoke came out of her funnels, and then a long, dark trail, like the tail of a comet, floated out behind her, but no notice was taken of the fact that the steamer was for more than an hour the steamer was in sight; then she gradually faded away in the west, and finally disappeared."

"This incident had a very depressing effect on the passengers of the disabled ship. Although every officer had maintained there was no danger, yet the fact was that the steamer seemed somehow to have been alone, and people, after gazing toward the west, until not a vestige of her remained in the horizon, went back to their deck chairs, feeling more despondent than ever.

Kenyon was given to the man who put the message in his pocket, and then Kenyon thought it was safe, but Miss Longworth was not so sure of that. "Miss Brewster put in the deck chair, calmly resting her usual paper-covered novel. She apparently knew nothing of what was going on, and Edith Longworth, nervous with apprehension, was preparing for launching the boat while preparations for launching the boat were being completed. Suddenly, to her horror, the deck steward appeared and in a loud voice cried: "Ladies and gentlemen, any one wishing to send telegrams to friends has a few minutes now to write them. The mate will take them ashore with him and will send them from the first office that he reaches. No letters can be taken, only telegrams."

Miss Brewster looked up intently from her book during the first part of this recital. Then she sprang suddenly to her feet and threw the book on the deck.

"Who is it that will take the telegrams?" she asked the steward.

"The mate, miss. There he is standing yonder, miss."

"Really," she replied, "I was not thinking of that at all, but about something else. Can you not guess what it is?"

"No," he answered, hesitatingly. "What is it?"

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SHE CAME DIRECTLY AT HIM WITH HER FIST CLENCHED.

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