

an' you've got about what I was then. But it don't last long. Still, I'm glad them diamonds of yours is hid. Did you git 'em put away all right?"

"Yes," said Parton, still regarding him anxiously. "Shall I tell you where they are, captain?"

"Not if I was a-dyin' for the need o' news," said the captain. "They're hid. That's all I want to know. I want 'em to be just as well hid from me as from anybody else."

He had gradually recovered from his attack of dizziness and sat down on a coil of rope.

"I didn't re'ly git you back here to show you my patent log," he said. "I reckon you know that. I got you back here to have you tell me what you've just told me, and I tell you that it takes a weight off my mind to hear you say it. Now if you've got 'em hid, you're feelin' pretty comf'able yourself, ain't you?"

"Very," said Parton.

The captain grinned weakly.

"That's good," said he. "I'm allus glad to have th' folks on my ship feel comf'able."

Parton was about to say something in reply when he was again alarmed by a quick change in the expression of the captain's face. Again the old man's hand went, with that wavering, bewildered movement, up to his forehead, where he gently rubbed the skin on the right side. It was fully a minute before he spoke again. The strange look of indefinite mental worry which accompanied the rubbing of his forehead was, it seemed to Parton, even more acute than it had been on either of the other occasions.

Parton did not for a moment suspect the nature of the very serious trouble of which the gesture was prophetic; but he was full of sympathy for the honest man who showed distress by means of it. The memory of the captain's outbreak when he had once before expressed sympathy for him prevented him, however, from saying anything about it. He thought that the captain looked at him gratefully for a moment in recognition of this forbearance, but of that he was not certain.

The captain turned toward him for a moment with a forced smile on his lips, and then let his eyes slowly wander out over the foaming wake of the ship, which stretched far astern across the blue surface of the waters.

"She's makin' pretty good headway," said the captain. "Guess I'll try the patent log, after all."

The captain threw the little brass propeller out in the water and made the other end of the line fast to the ship. He let the slack of the rope slip slowly through his fingers, and for a long time Parton could see the blades of the toy propeller flashing in the sunlight at the surface of the water. Then they sunk far enough so that they were no longer visible, but by placing one's fingers on the line just beyond the ship's rail, over which it was drawn taut, one could feel the vibration of the line due to their whirling.

"It feels like a magnified troll-fishing line," said Parton, "with a spoon hook on the end big enough to catch whales with."

"Yes," said the captain. "Don't it? That's just what it does feel like."

He stood leaning on the rail with his gaze fixed on the wake of the vessel, which stretched away a silvery line, reaching to the horizon.

"I don't believe I'll be watchin' the foot-prints of the Lyddy for many more v'yages," he said finally. "Ain't they dainty? Did you ever see a school miss that left a prettier markin' through th' mornin' grass than th' Lyddy leaves here on th' sparklin' sea? But I shan't watch 'em for many more v'yages. Not many more. Not—many—more."

There was a mournful cadence in the old man's voice that touched Parton deeply.

"Nonsense, captain," he said, "you're hale and hearty enough to take her across for many a voyage yet. I wouldn't wonder if you outlasted her, and she seems to be a pretty staunch ship, too."

"No," said the captain, "and that was why I was so anxious to have you git them stones hidden away some'ers. I ain't a-goin' to last this v'yage out. I tell you, Mr. Parton," and here the captain turned toward the young Englishman and put his hand on his shoulder, looking mournfully into his eyes as he did so, "I tell you, Mr. Parton, that I ain't goin' to last this v'yage out—sure!"

Parton gazed at him in astonishment.

"I'd know whether I'm goin' to die or not," the old man went on, after having turned back to the rail and resumed his sorrowful contemplation of the Lyddy's wake, "but I do know that somethin' or other is a-happenin' to my head. Sure as John Quincy Adams was president of the United States, somethin' a-happenin' on th' inside o' my head. Inside o' my head; way inside o' my head. Somethin's a-happenin' in there!"

When he turned back again and again looked into Parton's eyes that great change had come into his face again. The skin seemed to have pulled away from his eyes, which looked preternaturally large. His features were strained and drawn. His lips were pulled back from his teeth and these showed in double and painfully grinning rows.

"B' John Quincy Adams," said the captain slowly; "b' John—Quincy—Adams, it's—it's—it's come!"

He reached out his arms to Parton, who grasped at them hurriedly and held out his own to him, but the old man slid between them and down to the deck before Parton could catch him. If there had been anything to get hold of the younger man might have saved the elder one from actually falling prostrate, but there seemed to be nothing. Every ounce of solidity, of firmness, of power of resistance had gone from him, and his body was in Parton's grasp like some soft, flabby, elusive, half-liquid thing. It seemed to slip between his fingers like jelly.

The captain's eyes were closed now, as Parton tried to lift him. His face had become a ghastly ashen color. Only his lips moved, and from between them came softly in constant repetition:

"B' John Quincy Adams! B' John Quincy Adams! B' John Quincy Adams!"

Parton picked him up and carried him up the three steps which led to the little wheel deck of the ship. He had not thought to call for help, and the captain's limp body lay dead weight in his arms. The ship was bowing slowly and gracefully to the long Atlantic swells, and he staggered under his burden. A man was standing at the wheel, but no one else was on the little deck which formed the roof of the cabin. Parton called to him, and he turned to see what was wanted. He gave one glance at Parton and his burden and set up a shout for help.

"I'll lash the wheel," he said, but before he had done this two or three sailors came running and took the captain out of Parton's arms. Nearly the entire watch had assembled before anyone called the mate. The sailor roused him from a sound sleep in the cabin and he appeared at the top of the companionway in a towering rage and swearing vigorously.

Parton explained what had happened to the old man as well as he could—he by no means understood it himself—and the mate helped him to take the captain downstairs, while one of the sailors followed with the captain's hat, which had fallen off and which had been found lying on the deck near the place where they had been standing when the attack had come.

They laid him in his berth, and Parton started to take off his clothes, so that he might rest more easily. For a moment the mate did nothing to interfere. Then he thrust him roughly aside and glanced at him wickedly, and with a look in which there seemed to be some malicious satisfaction.

"Here, now—none o' that," said he. "I ain't goin' to have no thieves overhaulin' the captain's clothes. Go on deck, sir, an' don't come back till I send for you. I'm in command of this ship now!"

CHAPTER XI.

One sore-headed officer, five feet high and fourteen inches thick can make a whole ship seem crowded.—The Log Book of The Lyddy.

For a moment after the mate had given his extraordinary order Parton had involuntarily shut his fists and thought of resistance, but sober second thought told him that that would be worse than useless. He knew enough about the rules governing life on shipboard to know that the command, which the mate succeeded to in case of the captain's incapacity, was as complete as that of the captain himself. He went slowly to the deck without a word, but with a look on his face which was unpleasant to see and a feeling in his heart which was unpleasant to experience. The last sound which he heard as he passed up the companionway stairs was the captain's voice, saying, slowly:

"B' John Quincy Ad—! B' John Quincy Ad—!"

He wondered why he did not finish out the word.

The whole ship showed the signs of demoralization. Little work was done on board during the next five or six hours, during all of which time the mate remained in the cabin with the captain. Once, Parton, anxious to have news of the sick man, ventured below again, but was roughly ordered out by the mate, who added that while he was in command of that ship passengers as well as crew should do as they were told, particularly as to disturbing the peace and quiet of the sick man.

"Bear in mind this, Mr.—Mr. Carter," he said, "that while I am in command of this vessel you will do what I say or you will get yourself into trouble. If I had been in command back there in the channel you wouldn't be here now—you'd have gone ashore with the man who came out to get you. It was a slick game that you worked on the captain and that police inspector; but you couldn't have worked it on me. You can't work any game on me. Remember that. You can't work any game on me! You'll stay on deck where you belong if I tell you to, and if you come down here again to bother this poor, old sick man I'll have you put in irons, by God! And now you understand how we stand."

Parton could guess without much hard thinking what his object was in keeping him out of the cabin. That he really feared that Parton's presence might do harm to the captain was, of course, too absurd an idea to be worthy of consideration. That he was anxious to have the whole ship know what Parton's standing

was with the new commander was certain. That he was taking advantage of the situation to provide an uninterrupted opportunity for searching the cabin for the jewels was probable. The captain's fears had been prophetic, and if he should ever see his diamonds again it might be wholly owing to the old man's foresight.

His afternoon on deck was very unpleasant. To add to his discomfort a light rain began to fall at about sunset time. This forced matters to an issue in his mind. The captain had lent him a vast yellow oilskin coat, which smelled horribly of fish. It was hanging in his berth. He made up his mind that he would get it or have his trouble then. He was keyed up to a pitch which would have carried him to any length of assault and battery upon the person of the new commander of the ship when he went below to get the coat. But, greatly to his surprise, the mate made no objections.

He met Parton with as near a pleasant smile as his face was capable of and told him, with his finger on his lips, that the captain was asleep. After Parton had taken what he wanted from his little stateroom the mate went with him to the deck. Parton tried to avoid his company by going to the after rail, but the mate walked with him and leaned against it, as if they were the best of friends. He was evidently ill at ease. Finally he spoke.

"I'm sorry that I spoke that way to you today," he said awkwardly, "but I was so upset by the captain's illness that I didn't quite realize what I was doing or saying. It's a big responsibility to have the command of another man's ship shoved onto your shoulders out here to sea, and—it made me nervous. Not that I'm afraid that I can't take the old hooker into port all right—I can do that, I guess, about as well as he could; but it—it ain't pleasant. I—I hope you'll excuse me, Mr.—Mr. P.—Carter."

Parton said nothing for a moment. The mate's face was, if possible, a little more disagreeable in its expression of apology than it had been in that of aggression, and he did not like the hesitation before the pronunciation of the assumed name. Still his common sense told him that it would be better to get along without an open rupture if he could.

"I don't blame you for feeling sore about it," added the mate before Parton spoke at all, "but you'll admit that things was a little more than usual worrying, and that, perhaps, I had an excuse for being flustered."

"Oh, I fancy that it will be all right," said Parton with no cordiality in his voice, and as if he were accepting a disagreeable but necessary situation as well as he could be expected to. "I presume that we shall be able to get along until we get into port without coming to blows."

It was evidently the mate's desire to take this remark as if it were jocularly meant, for he smiled as he said:

"I guess so. Of course, you will keep your own quarters."

Then he held out his hand.

"Shall we shake and call by-gones by-gones?" he said.

Parton shook hands with him and said that he supposed that they might as well. He was anxious to change the subject and he was anxious to ask about the captain.

"How is he now?" he asked.

"Just about the same," said the mate. "There doesn't seem to be much change. It's the strangest thing I ever heard of. When we first got him down here he was busy with that funny cuss word of his, you know. Only, apparently, he couldn't remember all of it. All he could say was 'By John Quincy Ad—.' He couldn't seem to say the 'ams.'"

"Well, he kept saying that over until he went into the sleep he's in now, only every once in an hour or two, he'd lose a syllable. Finally he got it down to plain 'By John—.' That was the last he said before he went to sleep."

"Has he any fever?" asked Parton. "I don't know very much about illness, but I know that fever is a bad sign."

"You can see him, if you like, and try if you can tell. I don't know anything about such things," said the mate.

That Brown was badly frightened was revealed by the color of his face and his evident nervousness. Parton figured that he had begun to wonder if, when they reached port, there might not be something about the course which he had taken which would be regarded unfavorably by the courts. While a vessel is at sea her officers are supreme in her command, but that by no means relieves them from responsibility for wrongdoing after they have reached shore.

Parton went to the captain's bunk and pulled back the curtains. The old man lay silent and without movement. His face showed that strange pallor which is so uncanny in the countenances of men who have been in health deeply bronzed by sun and weather. The eyes were only partly closed and a strip of yellowish white showed. The hands were not clenched, but the arms were spread straight along the sides of the body outside of the coverlet, with the fingers held wide apart and rigid. The pulse ran slowly and unsteadily at, as nearly as Parton could count with his watch in his hand, about 60. The old man's lips continually moved, notwithstanding the apparent stupor in which he lay, and Parton, stooping over, could distinguish above the creaking of

the Lyddy's timbers and the soft swish of the water along her sides the words, muttered over and over again:

"B' John Quincy—! B' John Quincy—! B' John Quincy—!"

He bathed the old man's hands and arms in hot water and gave him whiskey, although it was difficult to make him take it. When the mate admitted to him that practically nothing had been done before, he had to shut his lips tight in order to prevent himself from bursting out into a stream of reproaches.

Not long afterward Parton looked up from the captain's side to find that the mate had gone on deck. A few moments after this he went to his own little cabin. He had scarcely expected to find it in the condition in which it was; but at the same time he was not greatly surprised when he found evidences that it had been thoroughly and hastily overhauled. The security which the mate had felt in this outrage was shown by the fact that he had not even attempted to rearrange the bed so that traces of his trespass would be hidden.

Several days passed after this with small change in the situation, except for a brief period of incoherent consciousness for the captain on the second day after the stroke, but his struggles to make himself understood were fruitless. The mate was uniformly friendly in a strained and watchful manner. When he called him "Carter" there was always on his face a little sneer as if he knew it to be a false name, and used it merely to save the bother of argument.

The captain's vocabulary lost one syllable at a time, until he lay in his bunk all day and a good part of the night, saying over and over again with a ceaseless monotony which was terribly depressing to Parton:

"By—, By—, By—, By—."

Parton realized that he had been affected in no ordinary way and talked the case over with the mate speculatively. He assumed that the affair was due to some lesion of the brain and that his strange pains and dizziness had been the premonitory symptoms.

If the old man had been stricken with an ordinary illness, no matter how severe, he would have felt much less distressed by it, for he could at least have applied some of those simple remedies which he had learned of in his own experience or which were in the simple knowledge of the sailors, but this seizure was so unusual that it was beyond even the guesses of the wisest of the men on board. There was something almost uncanny about it.

The sailors talked of it quietly among themselves and one of them diffused an indefinite superstitious dread among the others by making the sign of the cross each time he passed the cabin companionway, which so demoralized them that the mate was prone to keep the man forward and force him into such silence of his terrifying gabbling as he could by threats.

Neither Parton nor the mate had the least idea whether or not the illness would terminate fatally. So far as they could tell there was no change of real importance from day to day. Parton had hoped that there might be some way of getting medical assistance for the old man from some passing steamer—there were few days when one or more were not sighted—but the mate assured him that the big ships would not stop for any such purpose and that the smaller vessels would be certain to have no medical man on board. Thus Parton became convinced that nothing more could be done for his old friend until the Lyddy reached port.

It was just after a conversation on this subject that the mate really showed his hand. He was walking with Parton aft of the wheel, sometimes pausing to gaze over the after rail and watch the gently whirling water as it was sucked under the vessel's clean-cut quarters in the lazy whirl of its wake. Suddenly he straightened up and fixed his eyes firmly and for a moment unflinchingly on Parton's.

"Now, see here—Mr.—Mr. Carter," he said with that unpleasant grin which had angered Parton several times before. "I think that you and I had better come to an understanding. Of course, when the old man was all right, you know, you didn't really have to take me into account; but now, you've got to. I don't know how much you were to give him for getting you safe ashore in the states, but I know now that you won't have to give him anything, because he won't be in a condition to force a divvy."

Parton was at first amazed and then angered. He was much too angry to be worried. All his fear went out of him with the growth of a hot indignation. He went a step nearer to the mate, and he looked him steadily in the eyes as long as the other could face the stare, and, after the mate had lowered his eyes, he stared at the lids which hid them.

"First of all," he said, very slowly and distinctly, "I have some other things to talk to you about. I want to tell you that you are a cur. That is one of the things. You are a cur and you know that you are a cur. The captain knew that you were a cur and was sorry that necessity forced him to have you sail on his ship. He told me so before you had been three days out of London. You have a cur's reputation

(Continued on Page Sixteen.)