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The Captain of the Kansas

By LOUIS TRACY.

(Continued.)

The meal drew to its close without much further talk. The American engineer was the first to rise, but the chief steward whispered in his ear; he returned to the table.

"Say," he said calmly, "we can't quit yet. The companion-hatch is closed. We must remain here a bit."

"Do you mean that we are battered down?" demanded Isabel, shrilly, and her face lost some of its beauty in an ashen pallor.

"Something of the sort, Miss Baring. Anyway, we can't go on deck."

"But—I insist on being told what is the matter."

The American knew little of ships, but he knew a great deal about mines, and, in a mine, if an accident happens, the man in charge cannot desert his post to give information to those who are anxious for it. So he replied laconically:

"Those the captain will tell us all about it after a while, Miss Baring."

"Que diable! I feel like the rat in the trap," said Count Edouard, suppressed excitement rendering his English less fluent.

At another time the phrase would have sent a ripple of amusement through that cheery company. Now, no one smiled. They knew too well what he meant to pay heed to the mere form of his words. No matter how large or sumptuously equipped the trap, the point of view of the rat was new to them.

CHAPTER III.

Wherein The Captain Reappears.

The fierce hissing of the continuous escape of steam excited alarm in those not accustomed to machinery. Men and women share the unreasoning panic of animals when an unknown force reveals its pent-up fury. They forget that safety valves are provided, that diminished pressure means less risk; the knowledge that restraint, not freedom, is dangerous comes over in the guise of a new discovery.

The mining engineers, of course, did not share this delusion.

"There must be something serious the matter, or they would not be wasting power like that," murmured the American to one of his fellow-professionals.

"A smash-up in the engine-room. Nada es mas seguro," was the answer.

"(Nothing is more certain.)"

"Wonder if any one is hurt?"

The Spaniard bent a little nearer. "What can you expect?" he whispered sympathetically.

In the unnatural peacefulness of the ship's progress, disturbed only by the roar

of the superheated vapor they all heard the opening of a door at the head of the saloon stairway. The third officer appeared—his wet oleikins gleaming and dripping.

"Dr. Christobal, the captain wishes to speak to you," he said.

"As you are here, won't you tell the ladies there is nothing to be afraid of in the mere stopping of the engines?" he suggested.

"Oh, the ship is right enough," was the hasty response. "There has been an accident in the stokehold. That is all."

"Want any help?" demanded the American. "Well—I'll ask the captain."

Evidently anxious to avoid further questioning, he ran up the companion. Christobal followed, the door was closed and bolted again.

"I hate the word 'accident.' It covers so many horrid possibilities," said Isabel. "I'm afraid some poor fellows have been injured, and that is why Captain Courtenay sent for Dr. Christobal," said Elsie.

"Oh, of course. I meant that I was not thinking of the mere delay, though it is annoying that a breakdown should occur here."

"It would be equally bad anywhere else," put in the missionary's wife, timidly.

"By no means," was the sharp response. "If we were in the Straits for instance, we could signal to San Isidro or Sandy Point; and there would be other vessels passing. Here, we are in the worst possible place."

Miss Baring's acquaintance with the chief features of the South American coast-line had seemingly improved. To all appearance, she alone among the passengers, now that Christobal was gone, realized vaguely the perilous plight of the Kansas. The fact was that even a girl of her apparently frivolous disposition could not avoid the influences of environment.

In a maritime community like that of Valparaiso there was every reason to know and dread the rock-bound coast which fringed the southern path towards civilization. Strange, half-forgotten stories of the terrors which await a disabled ship caught in a southwesterly gale on the Pacific side of Tierra del Fuego rose dimly in her mind. And the advancing darkness did not tend towards cheerfulness. In her new track, the Kansas had turned her back on the murky light which penetrated the storm-clouds towards the west. Unhinged by the external gloom and the prevalent uncertainty, and finding that no one cared to dispute with her, Isabel felt that a scream or two would be a relief.

It was a nerve-racking moment. It demanded the leadership of a strong man, and there were few gatherings in Anglo-Saxondom which cannot produce a Caesar when required.

"Say," shouted the American, his clear voice dominating the turmoil, "that gave us a shower-bath. If we could just stand outside and see ourselves, we should look like an illuminated fountain."

That was the right note—belief in the ship, contempt of the darkness and the gale. The crisis passed.

"There really cannot be a heavy sea," said Elsie, cheerfully inaccurate. "Otherwise we should be pitching or rolling, perhaps both, whereas we are actually far more steady than when dinner commenced."

"I find these hills in the storm most trying," complained Isabel. "They remind me of some wild animal hunting its prey, creeping up with silent stealth, and then springing."

"I have never before heard a fog-horn sounded so continuously," said the missionary's wife, a Mrs. Somerville. "Don't you think they are whistling for assistance?"

"Assistance! What sort of assistance can anybody give us here? Unless the ship rights herself very soon we don't know what may happen."

Isabel seemed to have a premonition of evil, and she paid no heed to the effect her words might have on the others. Although the saloon was warm—almost uncomfortably hot, owing to the closing of the main air passages—she shivered.

Mr. Somerville drew a book from his pocket. "If that be so," he said gently, "may I suggest that we seek aid from One who is all-powerful? We are few, and of different religions, but in this hour we can surely worship at a common altar."

"Right!" said the taciturn Englishman, varying his adjective for once. The missionary offered up a short heartfelt prayer.

Daily Fashion Hint for Times Readers.



FUR AND FEATHERS TRIM VELVET CHAPEAUX.

Sailor shapes are general favorites in the winter's millinery. Brims are slightly narrower than those of summer shapes, and crowns while about the same height, are somewhat smaller. Trimmings too are different. Instead of the huge ribbon bow surmounting the front brim of semi-tailored effects, huge wings and beautiful birds are set at smart angles on the front and sides of crowns, and in the dressier models ostrich feathers are the trimming par excellence.

The pictured sailor shape is of a rich dark blue velvet. The crown is encircled with a mink skin, and at the right side, its quill caught beneath a large tortoise shell cabochon, is a single fluffy ostrich feather in two shades of brown, which curls down over the back brim to the wearer's neck. A shallow bandeau raises the shape ever so slightly and becomingly from the head, and this is trimmed with a fringe of fur and ruchings of brown malmette.

For once pride was helpful—it saved her from hysteria.

The curious sense of waiting, they knew not for what, which died the first moment and stilled the tongues of the small company at the table, soon communicated itself to the stewards. The men stood in little knots, exchanging few words, and those mostly meaningless; but the chief steward, whose trained ear caught the regular beat of the donkey engine, woke up with a series of sharp orders.

"Switch on the lights," he said loudly. "Clear the table and hurry up with the coffee. Get a move on those fellows, Gomez. Have you never before been in a ship when the screw stopped?"

The Gomez thus appealed to was the Englishman's second-in-command; he acted as interpreter when anything out of the common was required. He muttered a few words in the Hispano-Indian patois which his hearers best understood, and the scene in the saloon changed with wondrous suddenness. The glow of the electric lamps banished the gathering shadows. The luxurious comfort of the apartment soon dispelled the notion of danger. Coffee was brought. The smoking saloon was inaccessible, owing to the closing of the gangway, but the chief steward suggested that the gentlemen might smoke in the ladies were agreeable. Under such circumstances the ladies always are agreeable, and the instant result was a distinct rise in the social barometer.

The noise of the steam exhaust ceased as abruptly as it began. The ship was riding easily in spite of the heavy sea. Drifting with wind and waves in a simple thing for a big vessel. There is no struggle, no tearing around of resisting forces. This might a boat caught in the pitiless current of Niagara glide towards the brink of the cataract with cunning smoothness.

And then, while the occupants of the saloon were endeavoring to persuade each other that all was well, the loud wail of the siren thrilled them with increased foreboding. It was not the warning note of a fog, nor the sharp course-signal for the guidance of a passing ship, but a sustained trumpeting, which announced to any steamer hidden in the darkness that the Kansas was not under control. It was a wild, sinister appeal for help, the voice of the disabled vessel proclaiming her need; and the answer seemed to come in a fiercer shriek of the gale, while the added fury of the blast brought a curling sea over the poop.

The Kansas staggered and shook herself clear. The wave smashed its way onward; several iron stanchions snapped with reports like pistol-shots, and there was an intolerable rending of woodwork. But whatever the damage, the powerful hull rose triumphantly from the clutch of her assailant. Shattered steelwork of which covered off the decks like so many cascades. Loud above the splash of these miniature cataracts vibrated the tense boom of the fog-horn.

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er, and, finding that he carried his congregation with him, read the opening verse of Hymn No. 370, "For those at Sea."

The stewards, most of whom understood a few words of English, readily grasped the fact that the padre was asking for help in a situation which they well knew to be desperate. They drew near reverently, and even joined in the simple lines:

O hear us when we cry to Thee

For those in peril on the sea.

During the brief silence which followed the singing of the hymn it did, indeed, seem to their strained senses that the fierce violence of the gale had somewhat abated. It was not so, in reality. A steady fall in the barometer foretold even worse weather to come. Courtenay, assured now that the main engines were absolutely useless, thought it advisable to get steering way on the ship by rigging the fore-sail, double-reefed and frapped. The result was quickly perceptible. The Kansas might not be pooped again, but she would travel more rapidly into the unknown.

Yet this only afforded another instance of the way men reason when they seek to explain cause, from effect. The hoisting of that strip of stout canvas was one of the time-factors in the story of an eventual night, for it was with gray-faced despair that the captain gave the requisite order when the second engineer reported that his senior was dead, the crown of two funnels destroyed, and the engines clogged, if not irretrievably damaged by fallen debris. None realized better than the young commander what a disastrous fate awaited his ship in the gloom of the dying sea ahead. There was a faint chance of encountering another steamship which would respond to his signals. Then he would risk all by laying the Kansas broadside on in the effort to take a tow-ropes aboard. Meanwhile, it was best to bring her under some sort of control, the steam steering-gear, driven by the unimpaired donkey-engine, being yet available.

In the saloon, Elsie had shielded her face in her hands, to hide the tears which the entreaty of the hymn had brought to her eyes. Some one whispered to her:

"Won't you sing something, Miss Maxwell?"

It was the American. He judged that the sweet voice which unconsciously led the singing of the hymn must be skilled in other music.

She looked up at him, her eyes shining. "Sing! Do you think it possible?" she asked.

"Yes. You can do a brave thing, I guess, and that would be brave."

(To be continued.)

Fooled the Doctors and Got Well

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They certainly were a surprised lot of doctors out Tyneside way. They had been treating Mrs. Harris for years. Gave her about everything that was ever heard of for Rheumatism—and then told her the disease was chronic.

A friend told Mrs. Harris about GIN PILLS. Just to oblige her friend, Mrs. Harris took a box. When that was gone, she dismissed the doctors and bought another box of GIN PILLS. By the time these were gone, she was so much better that she bought the third box and laughed every time she saw a doctor.

Tyneside P. O., Aug. 6, 1906. I received your sample box of Gin Pills but as there was only enough for a trial I got a box from our druggist, and now I am taking the third box. The pain across my back and kidneys has almost entirely gone, and I am better than I have been for years. I was a great sufferer from Rheumatism, but it has all left me.

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Sold by dealers everywhere. 50c a box — 6 for \$2.50.

THE HUNTING TIME.

And now Br'r Rabbit wildly scots As through the woods the hunter boots, And all around his shotgun shoots; 'Tis hunting time.

At home o'er books of cooking lore The cooks for rabbit stews do pore The hunter brings 'em—from the store—in hunting time.

Don't Spend One Dollar Until You See Our Prices.

During the month of December we will give some very enticing bargains. It will pay you to see our ad. every day, as we intend making this month a record breaker, and to do this we will be obliged to lose sight of profits Bargains for Ladies.

LADIES' \$30.00 COATS, Black or Blue Beaver Sateen lined, Fashionable Cut Sale price, \$20.00
LADIES' 25.00 COATS, Black or Blue, Beaver Sateen lined, Fashionable Cut Sale price, 15.98
LADIES' 15.00 COATS, Black or Blue Beaver Sateen lined, Fashionable Cut Sale price, 10.98
LADIES' 23.00 COATS, Newest Styles in Fancy Scotch Plaids, Sale price 17.00
LADIES' 19.00 COATS, Fancy Plaids Sale price, 13.98
LADIES' 15.00 COATS, Fancy Plaids Sale price, 9.98
LADIES' 12.00 COATS, Mixed Tweeds Sale price, 7.48
LADIES' 10.50 COATS, Mixed Tweeds, Sale price, 5.98
LADIES' 20.00 COSTUMES, Fancy, Grey and Mixed Plaids Sale price, 12.98
LADIES' 18.00 COSTUMES, Fancy, Grey and Mixed Plaids Sale price, 10.48
LADIES' 14.00 COSTUMES, Fancy, Grey and Mixed Plaids Sale price, 9.00
LADIES' 12.00 COSTUMES, Fashionable Stripes Sale price, 7.98

Ladies' Fashionable Furs, all Marked in Plain Figures. Stoles, Muffs and Throwovers, less 10 per cent. Discount.

\$5,000 Worth of Jewelry. A choice lot of Christmas Gifts, suitable for any member of a family, 20 per cent, less than the regular price.

LADIES' 10.00 SILK WAISTS, all desirable Shades Sale price, 6.98
LADIES' 6.00 SILK WAISTS, all desirable Shades Sale price, 4.48
LADIES' 4.50 SILK WAISTS, all desirable shades Sale price, 3.28
LADIES' 3.75 SILK WAISTS, all desirable shades Sale price, 2.98
LADIES' 6.00 SILK UNDERSKIRTS, Sale price, 4.48
LADIES' 5.00 SILK UNDERSKIRTS, Sale price, 3.78
LADIES' 2.00 SATEEN UNDERSKIRTS, Black, Blue and Brown, Sale price 1.58
LADIES' 1.50 SATEEN UNDERSKIRTS, Black Blue and Brown, Sale price, 1.10
LADIES' 1.00 SATEEN UNDERSKIRTS, Black, Blue and Brown Sale price, 68c
LADIES' \$1.25 D AND A OR P C CORSETS Sale price 98c
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30c ALL WOOL TQUES Sale price 23c
\$2.50 ALL WOOL CLOUDS Sale price \$1.75
1.50 ALL WOOL CLOUDS Sale price 98c
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7.00 ALL WOOL BLANKETS Sale price \$4.98
8.50 ALL WOOL BLANKETS Sale price 3.98
3.50 ALL WOOL BLANKETS Sale price 2.48
1.60 SHAKER BLANKETS Sale price 1.28
MEN'S \$1.25 MOCHA GLOVES Sale price 98c
MEN'S 1.75 MOCHA GLOVES Sale price \$1.25
MEN'S 75c WOOL GLOVES Sale price 48c
MEN'S \$1.00 CAPS, FUR LINED Sale price 69c
MEN'S 1.50 CAPS, FUR LINED Sale price 98c
MEN'S 1.00 UNSHRINKABLE SHIRTS AND DRAWERS Sale price 68c
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MEN'S 6.00 SUITS, WOOL SERGE, Sale price 3.48
MEN'S 3.50 COAT SWEATERS, Sale price 2.48
MEN'S 2.00 DOUBLE SWEATERS, Sale price 1.48
MEN'S 1.25 SWEATERS, BLACK, BLUE, GREY OR WHITE, Special price 98c
MEN'S 3.00 HEWSON TWEED PANTS, Sale price 1.98

During the month of December we will sell the \$3.00 "King" Hat for \$2. Our \$4.50 special shoe for men, sale price \$3.48.

50 DOZEN MEN'S HANDKERCHIEFS At 3c each
75 DOZEN MEN'S TIES At 10c each.
100 DOZEN MEN'S POLICE AND FIREMEN'S BRACES 10c each.

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Two Sizes—8 ounce bottle 50c; 20 ounce bottle \$1.00