## Neal of the Navy

WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

| Author of "Red Mouse," "Running Fight," "Cats. |
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FIFTH INSTALLMENT
a MESSAGE FROM THE PAST

Walked away in digciaimed, as he
There was a genteel. titer from the
plecturegque titte group around the punch bow title group around the the
touched Romanotf
upon thio rim. upon the erm. "t it in perfect" ahe whispered, "no
con coll Tho preudo Romanof glanced at
her significantly, paced across the har significantly, paced acrous the
danctng deck and pasaed out upon the arncing deck and pasaed out upon the
moonlit deck beyond. Inez, nifting
with an oflcer,
 With an officer, excuued herselt, beck-
oned to Joe Welchor, who came
owiftly at her beck and call, and with her hand her beck hand call, and with
hith followed
In the wake of Romanoff. As they
reache reached the bow romanonoft turned they
denty and confronted them. He neized Welcher by the arm..
"Friend Wem. He selized
tightent," he naid, his grip "Friend Welcher," he aald, his grip
tightenng, "on the canvas curtains aft,
on the port stdo, you will find one
black cront mark upon the curtain and on the port stag, you will find one
black cronn mark upon the curtatn and
one black cross mark upon the dock.
They are They are my marki. You will dance
with Annette Itington Welcher hurried off and Romanotr
with the beautiful Misa Irens Courter upon has arm, strode alowly to
ward tho Highta,
With her egcort With her encort mhe atood glanetng
out betwoen tho curtatns at the moon-
light upon the sea. Her escort bow light woen tho eurtaing at the moon- escor, how.
ever, was not watching the moonlight
elia -hin eyos wero fixed upon a monimotor
boat that sported tiself like some hugo shark in the watera just beyond
He drew forth a white handkerchice.
He stepped finto the aperture betwee the canveas curtanas. aperture between
wianped the rall
with ono hand and ahooks with one hand and ahook the handker-
cilef.
thez noted that a amall black cross hen noted that a amall black cross
had been placed upon the canvan cur-
tain. Sho looked at her teet tatn. Sho looked at her teet. There
wan another crone upon the deck.
Then mhe turned and faced the crowd Then mhe turned and faced
watching with keen oyee.
Joe Welchar trom tar Joe Wetcher trom far across the
deck caukht the glint of thoose name
eyen-he had been watching for them Ho bent over nnette,
"Look at the trath,", "that's
ted up to thez-1 mean Irone Courier.
I alwayy Toll ted up to Inez-1 mean Irone Courler.
I al wayn call her Inez somehow. Let's
go and see the frak.". go and see the frak.".
"The freake", naid Annette, "han disappeared.",
She was not the only person on the
deck who noticed that. Some halt


 smed an Joe came un
and waved his hand.
"Tve been toeh
sald.
Annette, already bored-chlefy by Annette, already bored-chiefy by
the close proximaty of Joo Welcher-
gianced off toward Neal. "Let'g go and get some grape futce,"
she said. Joe drew her out to the ralling
through the same aperture from
whtch Romanort had watched the cir-
cling mer and "O11 got the grape fulce," sald Jo Annette started after him, but the
aperture was closed now by the broad
back of aperture was closed now by the brond
back of Romanof, who clousty with Irene Courtlor. Annette
was not averse to looking nt the
moon, and she looked. But-all the saw was the moonen tself. Sut-all she did not
see and could not know that a motor launch, silent as the night, had
tetched up atongside of the anchor
chain. Sho did not know and could
nct see a back and not see a black shadow that stole
along the ralling behtnd the canvas
curtains that hid the danclng deck
 panther had sprung upon her from
the night and clutched her ti the
gras. she cried out once more., or
tried to. She found she could not.
A strong whe fory tried to. She found she could, not
A strong wiry hand closed across her
mouth and a wiry form torced ber mouth and a wiry form torced her
back across the rafl.
With a superhuman twist of her
lithe young body-and the was strong.
 gave vent to a plerctng scream. Neal
Hardin at the punch bowl heard it
Forgetting all disctpline-and ail Forgetting all disistlpine and all and
grape juce-be bounded across the
dancing deek and with one sweep o dancing deck and with one sweep o
his arm brushed the nowplunged
Romanof and his charming escort to to
one side. His eyes were blinded by
$\qquad$
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