

THE FAMILY STORY

THE CAPTAIN'S LOVE.

N O, I've never been shipwrecked, nor been in collision all the time I've been to sea—a matter of over forty years. But I've carried some queer passengers in my time. I'll tell you about two who exercised a powerful influence over me; but whether for good or evil you shall hear presently.

It was in the fall of 1872, just when on the eve of sailing, that an old gentleman stepped on board, and hurriedly approached me. He was a tall, spare man, with iron gray hair, and had a slight stoop at the shoulders.

"Good day, Captain," said he. "I only heard this morning that you were sailing for the United States, and I hurried down to ascertain if you could find accommodation for myself and daughter at so short notice."

"Certainly," I replied. "I shall be only too pleased to take you. As it happens there are only three passengers booked this trip, and they are second-class, so you can have the saloon pretty much to yourselves."

He thanked me effusively and disappeared into the saloon. I marveled at his precipitancy, and wondered where the daughter was to come from, as she was not visible anywhere.

I gave instructions to the apprentices to have their luggage conveyed on board, and myself superintended the stowing away of their trunks in the two best appointed cabins in the ship. While so engaged I heard a light foot-fall behind me, and, turning round, I beheld the fairest vision of loveliness that ever brightened my saloon.

"My daughter—Captain Harnott," said Mr. Brandon, introducing us.

I was so taken aback by her exceeding beauty that I awkwardly touched my cap, and, with the wind clean taken out of my sails, stammered:

"Glad to see you, Miss."

She placed her soft little white hand in my big, sun-browned paw, and, looking me squarely in the face out of her laughing blue eyes, said:

"I'm sure we shall be good friends, Captain, during the voyage."

She spoke with a charming colonial accent; from that moment I was her most devoted, humble servant, slave, anything you like. I went head over ears in love with her at first sight. You may smile, but recollect I was a comparatively young man then.

Leaving them to arrange their cabins to their own satisfaction, I ascended the companion steps and went on deck. It certainly occupied them a considerable time, for neither father nor daughter appeared on deck until the ship was well outside the "Heads," and the tug had returned to port.

That voyage I look back upon as the happiest and saddest I ever made. Miss Brandon was a splendid sailor. In fair weather or foul she'd be on deck, delighting me with the admiration she expressed for my handsome three-masted clipper, and the childlike naïveté of her questions. I used to pace the quarter deck in the morning, impatient for her first appearance. On the dulllest or dirtiest day it was like a ray of sunshine suddenly bursting forth from a lowering sky to see her emerge from the companion hatch, looking as fresh as a daisy, and a thousand times more lovely.

Of course, it was only natural that my mates should fall in love with her also, but she treated them with marked indifference, if not absolute coldness. Her smiles were all reserved for me, and she lavished them upon me in no niggardly manner.

There was a piano in the saloon, and often in the long evenings she would sing and play for my sole delectation, while I would sit on a settee alongside and gaze rapturously into her pretty face. The song I liked best was "Tom Bowling," and she infused such an amount of pathos into her expression that the tears would sometimes trickle down my weather-beaten cheeks as she sang. Ah! those were happy days; it was heaven while it lasted.

I have scarcely mentioned her father yet. The fact is, I was so engrossed with his beautiful daughter that I didn't pay so much attention to him as perhaps I ought. At the best he was an unsociable sort of person, who seemed to prefer his own company to other people's. When not in his own cabin, where he spent most of his time, he was walking with his hands clasped behind him, apparently deep in thought, in the waist of the ship. Sometimes, when standing idly at the break of the poop, I have caught myself wondering if he had ever committed a crime, the remembrance of which was weighing on his conscience. I was destined soon to learn more about him.

One evening, when about nine weeks out, I was sitting in the charthouse alone with my idol. The second mate was stepping the planks outside, old

Jobson was at the wheel away behind us, and the watch on deck was lounging about forward. Some days previous to this I had had the temerity to confess my love for her, and asked her to be my wife. She had made me inexpressibly happy by promising, subject to my obtaining her father's consent. This, after some demur, he had granted, and that night the future appeared very bright for me.

We had been sitting silent for some time, too happy for words, gazing on the setting sun as it disappeared into a glowing mass of golden-rimmed clouds on the horizon, when, to my infinite amazement, she suddenly burst into tears.

"Darling, what is the matter?" I exclaimed in an agony of apprehension.

"Oh, Alfred, I have just heard such a dreadful story from my father. I shall never be happy again. We can never be married now."

"Never be married!" I ejaculated, aghast. "Why?"

"Because my father is a—a criminal. Oh, I feel so miserable, I think I shall throw myself overboard."

"Alice, for heaven's sake don't talk like that, or you'll drive me mad. What has he done?"

"Something dreadful. Oh, don't speak to me any more," and she sobbed violently.

At that moment I was so mad I felt half inclined to go down and tear the old scarecrow out of his berth by the scuff of his neck and demand what the deuce he had done to cause my darling such poignant grief. But I didn't. Instead, I drew her to my side and kissed her tears away.

"Tell me all about it," I said, soothingly.

"Well, my father, as you are aware, was an agent in one of the banks in Arlington, Victoria, and it seems he

consent. Ah, what folly will not a man commit when in love!

Next day it was reported that Brandon was seriously indisposed. I took out the medicine chest, as in duty bound, and ordered the cabin steward to attend him. Three days later Mr. Brandon was reported dead.

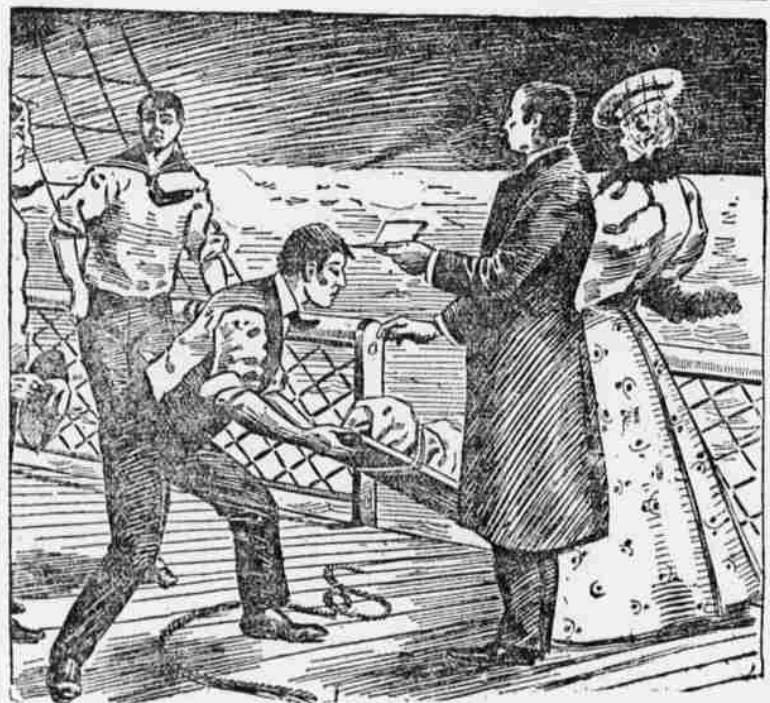
When I was informed of this I entered his cabin. He was lying on the under berth, pale and motionless as death. I felt the body; it was cold and rigid. If this were not death, he simulated it to perfection. I sent for the sailmaker, who sewed the body up in my presence. When his task was completed I dismissed him, and, securing the cabin door inside, with a sharp knife ripped open the stitches. My hand shook painfully. What if he were really dead?

I confess to experiencing a singular



"IN FAIR WEATHER OR FOUL SHE'D BE ON DECK."

feeling of relief when the man opened his eyes, and the resuscitated Brandon sat up. I administered some brandy, which helped to revive him. Then he produced from an American trunk a dummy figure which he had previously prepared and weighted, and inclosed it in the shroud. This he sewed up with his own hands. Not a word was spoken by either of us. When all was completed I stepped out to reconnoiter. Seeing the coast was clear, I signaled him, and he crept swiftly across the



SHAM FUNERAL OF ANTHONY BRANDON.

embezzled large sums of money belonging to the bank to speculate with. Of course, he meant to replace it before the audit, when the deficit would have been discovered. But he lost it all, and that is why he fled the country."

"Is that all?" said I, with a sigh of relief. "It's bad enough, certainly, but I fail to see that in itself it forms a sufficient barrier to our union."

"But that is not the worst. My father is convinced that the police may have traced him to Melbourne and to this ship. He declares he will be arrested on landing."

"Nothing more likely," I thought. But I asked: "Has he any plan to suggest?"

"Yes, oh, yes, if you will only assist him. But it seems too horrible to contemplate. He says it is his only chance to escape."

"What is it, then?"

"That he should die and be buried at sea!" she responded, with a perceptible shiver.

"I don't understand."

"He proposes to feign death. Then, after he had been sewed up for burial we must find the means to liberate him and substitute something else."

The daring audacity of the proposal fairly took my breath away. If discovered, the consequences to me in aiding and abetting a felon to escape would be disastrous. I resolved to have nothing to do with such a criminal proceeding, but a look of entreaty from those tearful eyes made me falter in my resolution.

"For my sake," she murmured, pleadingly, placing her fair white hand on my arm. Her touch thrilled me. I hesitated no longer, but gave an unwilling

passage into his daughter's cabin, where he concealed himself.

In the first dog watch of the same afternoon the bell commenced to toll its solemn knell for the funeral of Anthony Brandon. Officers and men and passengers stood round me with heads uncovered as I read from the Book of Common Prayer the beautiful and impressive burial service.

After the funeral Brandon returned to his own cabin, which was kept constantly locked, and the key of which I retained in my possession. With my connivance, Alice smuggled food to him from day to day. Several weeks afterward, while proceeding up the Atlantic coast under all sail, we were hailed by a tug. Anticipating danger, I slipped down the companion way and conveyed Brandon to my own cabin for concealment. When I went on deck again I was just in time to see a stout, well-groomed party clambering over the vessel's side. Without any preliminaries he brusquely demanded:

"Got a passenger of the name of Brandon on board?"

"I had, stranger; I had."

He gazed at me inquiringly.

"Come below, sir," said I.

As we descended he explained that he was a detective sent in pursuit of Brandon, who had absconded from Australia with a considerable sum of money and valuable negotiable securities. When he had produced his warrant, I ordered the mate to fetch the logbook. Under date of Jan. 15 he read this entry:

"Buried at sea in latitude 35 degrees 49 minutes north, longitude 33 degrees 16 minutes west, Anthony Brandon,

cabin passenger. Cause of death unknown."

He muttered something under his breath which was quite unintelligible to me. Then he demanded to see Brandon's effects. I led the way into his cabin. He ransacked every trunk and portmanteau; but not a vestige of paper or anything of value did he discover. The expression on his face when he left the ship some hours later was not particularly pleasant.

When we arrived at the docks at New York I smuggled Mr. Brandon ashore in one of his daughter's trunks after they had been searched by the customs officer. No one in the ship ever suspected the truth. Their secret remained alone with me.

It was arranged that Alice and I should be married quietly before setting out on my next voyage, and our honeymoon was to be spent on the bosom of the deep. When we parted that night she promised to communicate with me when her father had secured some quiet retreat in the country. She kept her promise. Here is the letter. I have preserved it all these years. It has neither superscription nor signature:

"Dear Old Captain—Many, many thanks for all your kindnesses. My husband and I—for Mr. Brandon is my husband, though it was not known in the Arlington—will never forget them. Pray forgive the deceit we found it expedient to practice on you in order to carry out our plans. We are in fairly affluent circumstances, for my husband did not lose the money in speculation, as I thought it necessary to tell you. Dear Captain, I know I can rely on you, for your own sake, not to inform the authorities about my husband. As he died at sea, we expect to live securely, unmolested by the bank officials or the police. Good-by forever."

And that was the end of my romance. No, I never heard anything more about them. Whether they lived to enjoy their ill-gotten gains or whether they didn't, I cannot tell. But this I do know, she was the first woman that ever fooled me, and, by heaven, she was the last. I never gave another the chance.

Writing by Cave Dwellers.

A discovery of unusual interest—in deed, one might say of nearly the greatest importance that has been made for many years in the domain of anthropology—has latterly been announced by M. Ed Piette, and consists in the finding, in the cave of Mas-d'Azil, in the departments of Ariège, France, a layer of pebbles of unquestionably neolithic age, in which many of the surfaces are painted in various devices with the peroxide of iron, says an exchange. In these markings there appears to be almost unquestionable evidence of the existence of an alphabetic language, and it is even surmised that some of the markings may even indicate entirely conventionalized phonetic characters. The pebbles in question are mostly rounded or flattened stones of quartz or sandstone from the river Arise, and overlie a deposit containing the bones of various large quadrupeds—reindeer, aurochs, horses, etc.—while above them rests a mixed layer, in the upper portion of which are found polished stone axes.

In some cases the entire surface of the pebbles is colored, but more frequently the stones are marked on one or both sides with simple devices—dots, bars and "graphic" or combination characters, while occasionally a border forms part of the decoration. These various devices are classified by M. Piette in four categories: Numerals, symbols, pictographic signs and alphabetical characters. Most of the spots and bars are ingeniously reasoned out to be numerical characters, those of the first series (spots) being considered to be units of the higher groups of figures, and those of the second (the bars) to represent simple numerals. In the pictographic signs M. Piette believes to have found the transcription of natural objects, such as serpents, trees, reeds, etc. Assuming the alphabetical signs to be properly interpreted in their leaning—i. e., to be syllable in their construction—the question is raised: Can it be possible that these pebbles were employed in building up words and sentences, much as children use boxes of letters? However conclusive or inconclusive may be M. Piette's interpretation of his finds, their discovery will doubtless tend to warm up the zeal of anthropologists in the direction of the new and most instructive field of investigation which has been opened up to them.

And He Was Carromed Off.

Traveler (at a crowded hotel)—How much do I owe you? What's my bill? Hotelkeeper—Let me see; your room was—

Traveler—I didn't have any room. I slept on the billiard table.

Hotelkeeper—Ah, well, 40 cents an hour.—Boston Post.

At a Literary Dinner.

"I suppose there were some bright things said at Mrs. Lionunter's literary party last night?"

"A few."

"Who got off the most interesting?"

"The butler—when he announced that dinner was ready."—Illustrated Bits.

No dinner tastes as good as it reads in a cook book, and a woman never looks as well as a fashion plate.



The earnest question of the hour, And general theme, no doubt, Is not of love or politics, But, "Will the coal hold out?"—Chicago Record.

Remains to be seen: The boy who has an appointment with the teacher after school is dismissed.—Boston Transcript.

Kean—Isn't your wife afraid to drive that horse? Steam—Not at all. It's the people she meets who are scared.—Hartford Times.

First Office Boy—It says "Our hero now partook of a frugal repast." What does that mean? Second Office Boy—Quick lunch.—Puck.

Husband—Why should you blame me because we were late to the theater? Wife—You forget, dear, that you hurried me up so.—Puck.

"Wobbles rides his bicycle in his flat now." "In his flat?" "Yes; it's steam heated, and he has to scorch up and down the hall to keep warm."—Life.

I went into the theater, But left it with a sigh: The play was long, the jokes were broad, The hats were very high. —Pick-Me-Up.

"Do you think opals are unlucky?" inquired the superstitious man. "Yes," was the reply. "My wife wants one, and it's going to cost me \$50."—Washington Star.

"Does your latest novel enjoy a large sale?" he inquired. "I don't know whether the novel does or not," replied the author, "but I do."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Rural Teacher—What current event of great interest can you give me this morning? Small Girl (eagerly)—My ma has just made twenty tumblers of jelly.—Judge.

Willie—It's always in damp places where mushrooms grow, isn't it, papa? Papa—Yes, my boy. "Is that the reason they look like umbrellas, papa?"—Yonkers Statesman.

"Did you ever get so mad that words failed you?" "Yes—once." "When was that?" "Just one-eighth of a second after I called a prize-fighter a liar."—Chicago Record.

Mudge—Oh, yes, we had a real lively time, Simmons and I. It cost us nearly \$50. Wickwire—Yes, I saw Simmons this morning, and he told me he spent \$45.—Indianapolis Journal.

"Come, Julie, let's go and have a friendship oyster stew together." "Friendship oyster stew! What's that?" "Why, you pay for mine, and I'll pay for yours."—New York Journal.

She—And you say that you have never been in love? He—Never. I have thought I was, seventy-five or eighty times, but I always found out afterward that I wasn't.—Somerville Journal.

The subordinate—Here is a letter from a young woman wanting us to give some of the legends about the origin of the fan. The Chief—Turn it over to the base-ball editor.—Indianapolis Journal.

However long the line may be With elvie folk and troopers, Each marcher proudly feels that he Is the grandest in that pageantry; The rest are merely supers. —Washington Star.

"And is she really the trained singer she claims to be?" "Beyond a doubt. She can sing 'Comin' Through the Rye' so that nobody can tell what it is without looking at the program."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

First Doctor—Well, that's just like these actresses! Second Doctor—What is? First Doctor—Why, that Miss May Cupp won't let us look into her head with the X ray until she makes up her mind.—Puck.

Couldn't Stand Alone.—"They tell me Van Wither is very weak since his last sickness." "He is. I saw him on the street just now and asked him for a fiver; but he couldn't stand a loan."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

"Amy, my love, I wish we lived in the good old days when a knight could fight for his lady love." "Why, George, dear, as for that, you haven't asked papa's consent to our engagement as yet, you know."—Forget-Me-Not.

The Comedian (on the defensive)—But you know there are only seven real jokes in the world, it is said. The Sou-brette—I know; what puzzles me is that you have never happened upon any of them.—Cincinnati Tribune.

Nellie—I don't see why Charley Dimpleton has suddenly been so taken with Dot Thurston. How do you account for it? Jessie—Oh, I believe she was the first one to notice that he was raising a mustache.—Cleveland Leader.

"Sometimes," said Uncle Eben, "de man dat pays hundu'nds ob dollahs fob flags an' decorations ain' ez much ob er patriot ez de one dat goes quietly 'long an' pays 'is taxes an' serves on de jury wifout kickin'."—Washington Star.

Arizona Al—Wal, what do you think of that? Here's Jim goin' an' gitting married! Chloride Charley—Wal, that's the way of the world! Arizona Al—Right enough; but look at this: "No Cards." That's what comes of marryin' inter a pious family.—Puck