The Venture of the Flying Hind

By James B. Connolly

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I WAS walking up Atlantic avenue in Boston one day, thinking that perhaps I'd had enough of fishing for a while and wondering what I'd do next, when along came Glaves, and he slaps his thigh and says: "Alec Corning—just the man. What d'y'say, Alec, to a little cruise down Newfoundland way?"

Now Glaves wasn't the man to go hunting you up out of pure love, and so I waited for more. Besides, when he said Newfoundland I guessed what was at bottom. For that very morning I'd learned, too, that Annie Mann had gone back to visit her people; but Glaves, being what he was, I said nothing of that.

"There's a man named Cruse," goes on Glaves, "and he wants somebody that knows the Newfoundland coast; and he'll pay you well. What d'y'say? Maybe a bit of excitement for you before you see Boston again. And"—he added it almost without thinking—"Pinlock left for there a couple of days ago."

That word of Pinlock settled it. Whatever the business it didn't matter now. Glaves could easily be a better man, but Pinlock! They did not make them any meaner than Pinlock. "Where will I find Cruse?" I asks.

So he brought me to Cruse, in the back room of a shipping office on Commercial street, who sizes me up. "Well," he says, "you look like the man I want. And I hear there's not a harbor between Hatteras and the straits of Belle Isle you can't take a vessel in or out of, fair or foul, night or day. What d'y'say, Mister Corning, to a yachting trip to Newfoundland?"

"Maybe," I says. "Though I don't know as I'd call it yachting."

"Well," he says, "if a man isn't yachting what would bring him there?"

"Well," I says, "it's a good place, Newfoundland, for a fisherman to get baiting."

"All right," he says, "let's call it a fishing trip. But will you come? Glaves is all right in his way, but he needs somebody to stiffen him up like."

And so we left on the Flying Hind, a fishing vessel Cruse had got at a bargain that spring. I knew the Hind well—a fast craft, but weak built from her launching day, and six years of driving to market hadn't made her any stronger. Her frames sagged like the ribs of an old umbrella, and her spars buckled like a cabman's whip when we slapped the canvas to her in a breeze. But no matter—she could sail and, with Glaves for master and me one of the crew, we swung her off to the east'ard. The others of the crew were scrubs picked up along the water-front, except an old dory-mate of mine, a young fellow named Gillis, careless as a drifting derelict in his ways, but game to his very shoestrings. Him I took to make sure there was one man would be standing by if anything happened.

We put into St. Pierre on our way, in the Miquelon islands, off the Newfoundland coast, to wait for news and take a few cases of brandy for emergencies. From there we laid into a little place, Lowcliff, to the east'ard of St. Johns, where Annie Mann's people lived, and where was Pinlock's vessel, the Polaris, before us. Glaves couldn't wait till we were fair to anchor before he was on his way ashore to see Annie Mann. And Pinlock to the house before him.

We put in a week at this place, lying around daytimes and going to dances evenings, and I wondering when we would get down to business; but not worrying overmuch, for I was seeing Annie Mann every day. And neither did Gillis care. "Fine buxom girls here in Lowcliff," Gillis used to say, and he'd dance all night with a younger sister of Annie's if she would but let him.

Till one afternoon Cruse came hurrying aboard. "The steamer from England's into St. Johns. Stand ready to put out any minute now." Next day a little packet dropped anchor near us, and that night we took four doryloads of Chinamen from her, forty in all, and the Polaris took three doryloads more. And we crowded 'em into the hold and battened the hatches on 'em. With the last Chinaman came Cruse. "Get out in a hurry now," says he.

It was a bit sudden, and I was glad enough to hear Glaves say: "Just another day here, just one."

"What for?" asks Cruse.

"Just one, just tomorrow and to make sure I'll be back, let Alec come along with me."

So we went ashore in the morning, up to Annie's father's house. She came to the door herself, and she was good to see—all smiles and curves and rosiness.

"Will you wait?" asks Glaves. "I've a message for Annie." Which didn't suit me quite, but I waited. After a while Annie herself called me inside. She and Glaves were standing together in the entry. "Is it true the Hind is going to sea tonight, Alec?" she asks.

"So the owner says."

"And where bound?"

"He didn't say—if, indeed, he's sure where. But somewhere between Eastport and Norfolk I guess 'twill have to be."

She looked at me. "Is it smuggling out of St. Pierre?"

I had to laugh—at the thought of the Chinamen being mistaken for any St. Pierre packages. But, before I could answer, there came from the steps outside the scraping of a man's boots and a knock at the door. The three of us stepped into the front room, and Glaves was trembling. "Say you'll marry me, Annie," he says, "and we'll go off on the Hind together."

Annie's younger sister that Gillis was so sweet on came into the room then. "It's Captain Pinlock wants to see you, Annie."

"Tell him," says Annie, "he can't see me." That was a pleasant message to both Glaves and me. We heard the voice of Pinlock swearing at the door. "Tell her for me," he says, "that she'll be sorry for this, and Corning too, and whoever else is in there with them," and some more that was less polite.

More than the surprise was the thrill I felt at hearing my name coupled with Annie's. I had no notion that anybody but Glaves was thought to have a chance with Annie Mann. I was dumb, but Glaves was for jumping out the door. Coming to myself, I grabbed him. "A lovely bridegroom you'll look," I said, "with maybe your eyes blackened and your nose flattened." That by way of an excuse, for I doubted he was as good as Pinlock; also I did not want to see any brawling in front of Annie's door. So I went out the back door and overtook Pinlock on the dock, and I said a word or two, and he said a word or two, and it being about that size of a place where there's no police to bother we had a great chance to try tacks.

Being, as we were, of the one tonnage, with pretty much the same length and beam, as you might say, and the spars and quarters to carry sail, it ought to have been an even thing. But he couldn't maneuver—a bit slow to answer his helm, and maybe, too, I could bore into the wind closer than he could. Anyway, when for the last time he'd hauled his wind and his colors with it, I left him, he hailing the Polaris and I going back to the house. I hadn't been gone more than fifteen minutes altogether, and Glaves was still talking: "Marry me, Annie, and I'll take you off on the Hind tonight," I heard through the door.

Annie heard my steps. "What happened?" she said.

"Nothing much," says I. "But I think he'll be putting out on the Polaris soon, and if there's going to be any wedding somebody'll have to hurry."

"What makes you say that?" she asked. "There's going to be no wedding here. But tonight I'm leaving St. Johns on my father's vessel for Boston."

"And I will see you there, Annie?" says Glaves.

"Why, of course, and you too, Alec—that is, if you want to." She smiled at Glaves, but not at me, and I made up my mind I wouldn't call in a hurry.

II

IT WAS nine that night when we broke out our anchor. We should have gone early that day, the same as Pinlock, but Glaves had to go mooning around Lowcliff after Annie'd gone off, having a drink here and a drink there. While we were waiting for him I, being handy with the brush, painted a new name under the vessel's stern, the Zulieka. I hauled a canvas over me while I was doing it—told the crew I was decorating things. For I'd begun to foresee the need of a change of name, and Zulieka was the most unlikely one I could think of. I had read it in a story somewhere.

While Glaves lay drunk in his bunk I took the vessel out of Lowcliff harbor. It was a pitch-black night, and only by the noise of a steamer's screw did we know that something was coming in. She bore no lights and passed us in a hurry. We had no lights up either.

"What's that?" asked Cruse.

"What could it be," I says, "coming from St. Johns way at ten o'clock at night, with her lights shrouded and at full speed?"

Only then did Cruse suspect it was the government cutter. "Pinlock's doing?" he asked.

I said yes and was sorry I had not beat him up so that he would've been thinking of going to a hospital 'stead of to sea that day. I forgot to say that we wouldn't have left the harbor that night only that I was afraid of this very thing, the cutter. Cruse had wanted to wait till morning. It looked so bad. 'Twas a gale of wind and getting worse, and the Flying Hind—the Zulieka now—a weak built vessel, as I said, with her deck crawling under your feet. It was a hard beat out, but at last I shot her between the two lights of the narrow harbor entrance.

We made a wild night of it before morning. And three wilder days followed, so that we guessed there was some damage done all along the coast that blow; and during it all, fearing stray cutters, I kept her well off-shore. On the fourth day I swung her back toward the course of traffic, looking for a chance to run over Georges Shoals and so on to Narragansett bay and Providence, which was one place Cruse had in mind to land his passengers. From Providence it would be an easy matter to get the Chinamen to Boston by train.

But that afternoon Gillis, on watch, made out a sail. We were pretty wary of everything, but I soon saw we hadn't any need to fear this, which was a wreck with only one mast left standing.

Glaves and Cruse were not over eager to stand down to her. Glaves especially. Whatever would the Hind do with more passengers? he asked, and what talk would they have after they got ashore? We'd all be ruined. Besides, somebody else would surely come along and pick them up, and so on; to which I answered that it wasn't yet on record where a fisherman passed by a wrecked vessel without trying to take her people off, and so now I was going to stand down to the vessel.

Drawing nearer, we could see she had been a small two-masted schooner, pretty well water-logged now, a coaster by the look of her. While yet a mile away I could name her; but Glaves, though he'd seen her a score of times, and his eyes were as good as mine, had yet no suspicion, and so could not understand why I was so eager as we drew nearer to get alongside her. "She may be sinking under their feet," I says, and I was scared; but he had no suspicion till we were so close he could read her name.

It was Annie's father's vessel and with him, on the quarter, Annie herself, wrapped in her father's great-coat and a sou'wester till she looked like any other of the crew at a distance. It was Glaves who bustled around and gave the orders then; but it was Gillis and me who manned the dory, and it was me who grasped her hand and first looked into her eyes again. "M-m—but I'm glad to see you again," she breathed, and that was enough; though later 'twas Glaves and Cruse who got all the thanks of her father, and right enough too, Cruse being the owner and Glaves hailing for the master of the Hind.

There was something of a sea and lifting fog that afternoon. Between the shifts of vapor we could see a steamer's smoke at times, but were not sure; and even if it was a steamer, I would not rush Annie into a dory till the sea moderated. It was one thing to put yourself or a fisherman like Gillis in a dory, but another to risk a woman's life in one. Not for two hours did I think it safe to take them off. And then it was in two doryloads—Annie and her father the last to leave her.

But between these two doryloads the steamer came down on us. She knew us without even trying to see the name, which I'd kept covered by a piece of canvas hung carelessly over her stern. She bore up and hailed—told us to stay where we were till morning, when she would take us in tow, or maybe send a boat aboard if it was moderate enough. And to prevent us from slipping away during the night we were to come to anchor and take in our topsails and keep our riding-light burning over our taffrail and another to our fore-mast-head; and to be careful to keep them burning bright, for if one of them disappeared for even a second they would take it as a signal of our attempt to escape and fire on us at once.

So there we lay, every one downcast and waiting for the morning, and it was me who caught it, while Annie and her father were forward eating supper, for lingering so long on the wreck of the coaster. I let them talk for a while, and then, looking at Glaves particularly, I said: "If I had to do it all over I'd do just the same, stay just as long on her, and so would you all—or be no men," and went on deck, where I watched the lights of the cutter, which was steaming back and forth like a patrol in the night. And watching her and thinking of what was next day before us gave me an idea, and I went into the hold, helped myself to two of the lanterns which were used to light up the Chinamen's quarters, and took them into the cabin, where now was Annie and her father, sitting in the lockers, she with her head on his shoulder asleep.

"There's been more or less complaining of what's gone and past and what'll happen to us in the morning. Now it rests with ourselves whether we'll be here in the morning," I said, in a low voice so as not to waken Annie.

They couldn't see what I'd be at. Said Glaves: "What! you'd have the cutter fire at us and a woman aboard?" so loud that if Annie wasn't deep asleep she'd heard him, or so I was jealous enough to think. "Oh, belay that!" says I, and held up the two lanterns and lit them and covered them each then with black oil-jackets. "Now," I said, "have a man stand by our light aloft and another by the lantern astern, while I'll row to the wreck and make these two lanterns fast on her, one to her stern and one to her masthead, same as aboard here, but covered with these jackets till the time comes. And you watch the cutter's lights, and when the Hind's in line with the cutter and the coaster, then do you aboard here smash both lanterns at the same time, and I'll be on watch on the wreck and snap these oilskins off the lanterns there, so the cutter won't know but what they're the same all the time. And then we'll slip away nice and cosy."

Gillis wanted to come with me to the wreck, but I said no, and Glaves also said no. Said he'd need a good man like Gillis aboard the Hind to tend the light aloft. So I left the Hind alone in the dory and boarded the wreck, which lay then with her rails awash, as I could feel in climbing aboard. I mounted the shaky fore-rigging and tied the lantern to her masthead, making fast a length of halyard to the oilskin cover and sliding down then to the deck, where I hung the other covered lantern over her stern. With the end of a line in each hand, then, I waited. A long wait it seemed, for the water on her deck aft was then to the top of my boots, and she settling lower with every roll.

The dory I had hauled up under her stern, ready to hand if she did go down, and, by the feeling of her, I knew that she would go before a great while. Slowly the cutter's lights swung across the stars. My, but she came slow! But soon they would be in range. And now the stern light was in range—and now, whsh-h-t! out went the Hind's lights. I whipped the oil-jackets away from my two lights. Below, aloft, they flashed brightly together, and into the dory I leaped and pulled madly for the Hind. In the blackness, of course, I couldn't see her, but I knew where she had been. Besides, the cutter's gliding lights were like a range to go by.

I rowed hard, but before I got to her I could hear her chain slipping. That meant I was not far from her. Then a voice, the voice of Annie: "You are sure Alec is aboard?" And Glave's answer: "Sure of it—one of the men just told me he came in over the bow."

"So soon?" she exclaimed.

I guessed something then and drove the dory harder. I heard the jibing of muffled booms swinging over and knew she was coming around. She could not yet be under full way, but she was coming fast enough to make me hesitate. However, it was my only chance, and I laid the dory directly in what proved to be her course. Down came the lifted fore-foot of her on the little dory. Down, down, I was borne under water; but I had a grip on her bobstay, and when she lifted I felt for the stops hanging from her bowsprit and got them and hauled myself up. With every leap now she was increasing her speed, and by the time I was over her knight heads, safe in her bow, she was sifting like a snake through the water.

I stayed up in the bow to get my breath and, as I waited, I saw the masthead light on the coaster begin to swing from side to side. While she was yet swinging the taffrail light went out of sight—puff, like that. Came a hail over the water then, even as the lantern aloft began to swing yet more widely. Another hail and almost immediately a flash of flame as long as our foreboom. Almost with the report the masthead light dipped with a rush into the sea. Another moment and a broadside lit up the blackness. The roar of it came down the wind like thunder.

Crawling up, I almost stumbled over two figures in the waist. "But is he aboard?" said the voice of one—Cruse.

"Isn't he?" asked the other—Glaves.

"Don't you know?—he's hardly had time," said Cruse.

"No, he isn't, then," answered Glaves. "He can lay around, and the cutter'll get him in the morning."

"But suppose the cutter doesn't lay around—or suppose it breezes up tonight?"

"Then to hell with him—we can't be laying around here till we're caught."

I heard Annie's voice then and crept farther aft and stood by the house, not ten feet from her and her father. "My poor vessel," said Captain Mann.

"Yes, but your insurance is safe," answered Glaves. He had moved aft, too.

"It's more than insurance—fifteen good years I put in on her," said the old man. "And named for Annie's mother that's dead."

Just then Gillis came from somewhere forward. I could tell his step before he spoke. "You told me, Captain Glaves, that Alec was aboard and below, but I don't find him."

"What!" Annie's voice and the tone of it made my heart beat.

"He's in the cabin," answered Glaves.

"Oh-h—" said Annie. And after a pause: "but why isn't he up to see this? I'll call him," and went below. Glaves followed. Gillis jumped down after Glaves. I leaned over the house and looked down the cabin steps.

"And you said his dory was towing alongside, but it's not—nor on deck. There's but one dory on deck. Where is he?" Gillis stepped into the cabin light. "Alec Corning and me were dory-mates too long—look here, Glaves!"

What Gillis would have done I don't know—I dropped below and laid a hand on his arm, but looking at Annie at the time and she looking at me. The fright left her face, and to see that made me so glad that I couldn't be mad, even with Glaves.

"Maybe I'd better look to the vessel's course," I said after a little while. "Come, Archie, come on deck."

III

I GAVE her all the sail we had and all that night kept her going. By daylight we were many miles from where we'd left the cutter. But even so I drove her. It was a gale of wind and a milk-white sea, but still I drove her and kept driving her till it got so bad below that the Chinamen came running on deck like rats. You could tell how much water was in her hold by measuring how high up their trousers, or whatever it is they wear for trousers, were wet. To their knees some of them.

And still I drove her, being in that mood, and I think I'd have driven her to some port or other in that breeze, only she carried away her mainmast head. It was a gale of wind and a milk-white sea, as I said, and something had to go.

I had to take the mainsail off her then, and maybe, with a young woman that two of us wanted for a wife aboard, she had sail enough without the mainsail in that breeze. And so long as we were stopping to put things to rights, I set the Chinamen to work, one gang with draw-buckets bailing out the hold and another gang to the pumps. One of them, who could speak a few words of English, just as much as said that it was pretty hard to have to pay $280 a head and work your passage too. I thought so too, but told him that if he didn't keep on bailing it soon wouldn't matter how much he'd paid for his passage. I didn't need to say any more. The English-talking one passed the word, and they all grabbed buckets and pump-brakes again.

"I set the Chinamen to work, one gang bailing out, another gang to the pumps"

It was gales, fog and stiff head-winds for another two days, and we wondering where the Polaris and the cutter were all this time, when out of the fresh-coming easterly a sail came tearing. And soon we knew her for Pinlock's vessel, and behind her, just showing over the horizon, was the smoke of a steamer. It was plain it was a chase, which would make the steamer a government vessel. That meant it was no place for us, and so again I put the mainsail to the Hind and let her go straight before it.

The course of the Polaris when she first raised would've carried her two or three miles to the east'ard of us; but now she swung off and came straight for us, so that by the time we had sail on the Hind the Polaris was perhaps a mile ahead and going at a great clip to the west'ard.

'Twas plenty wind, so much wind that I doubted our twisted masthead could stand the strain of the mainsail, but it was not a case for doubting—I had to make sure. I knew that, so long as nothing parted, we could out-sail the Polaris. And shortly we began to see that we had gained and soon were closing in and, before long, would have had her safe. Only just then they swung a dory to the rail, put a couple of their Chinamen into it, and tossed it over. But hardly over—'twas a good sea on, I forgot to say—before it capsized.

Annie Mann, a proper Newfoundland girl, never one to mind rough weather, was on deck to see the excitement, but she hadn't counted on this kind of work. She screamed to see those poor fellows hanging to the bottom of that dory in that sea.

"Never mind," says Cruse—"the cutter'll get 'em." And, turning to me: "Won't they, Alec?"

I doubted she could, even if she was on the spot—no rough-water sailormen their crews—and she was surely too far away. And in that sea they couldn't hang on very long.

'Twas a rain of tears on Annie's face; and when with that our English-speaking Chinaman pointed to the dory, then to one of our Chinamen, and said: "Brother," and every Chink of 'em looked at me, I began to wet my lips.

Annie went up to Glaves. "You're master of this vessel," she said—"couldn't you go close and throw them a line?"

"H-m—I don't seem to be the master for the last two or three days," he sneers. She looked to Cruse. "Well, at least you're the owner."

"But not the owner of those Chinamen," answers Cruse. "Why should I give up my liberty for rivals of mine? They're Pinlock's passengers, not mine." From Cruse she turned to me, only to me she said no word; I couldn't bear her eyes. "All right," I said to her, but to myself: "It's jail for all hands," and, pushing Glaves from the wheel, I let her wear around. It was taking a long chance, but there was nothing else to do. And then what we all had feared happened. Away went our mainmast over the side.

"Now we're gone as well as the Chinks," said Cruse, and we all waited for the cutter to steam up and get us.

The Chinamen kept drifting away. They couldn't last much longer, that was certain, with every heave of the sea tossing them high. Annie broke down again. And I couldn't stand that either. "Archie," I says to Gillis, "help me heave the dory over."

"No, no," cries Annie. "I didn't mean that." But I pays no attention to her—it'd gone past her now—only watches my chance to jump in.

"No, no, no," cries Annie again. "You can't get them—no dory can live out there. Don't make a worse tragedy of it." And she, being Newfoundland-born and a sailor's daughter, knew what a dory could and could not do. I pushed her hands from my arm and leaps into the dory; and who jumps in after me but Gillis, and I mind, as we shoved the dory clear, saying to Gillis: "You're certainly a damn fool, Archie."

"Maybe so," answers Gillis, "but I'm your dory-mate too, Alec, and that means for rough as well as fine weather. Maybe too, Alec, she won't forget me writing home to her young sister for this," says Archie. And what more could I say?

The capsized dory was up to wind'ard of us. We worked up to wind'ard of her, and, getting near, hove a line to them, making signs for one of them to take hold and jump toward us, which one did at last, and I hauled him under our stern, Gillis, to the oars, watching the bad seas to keep her head to them. A careless move on his part and our dory would go over too. But a strong lad, Gillis. He held her true, and I took a try at my Chinaman, who was pretty well worn out and weighed a ton, I thought, in his wet, woman-like clothes. With one hand braced in the becket, with the other I reached over and heaved high, watching the sea to help, and in he came and lay like a big fish in the bottom of the dory.

"A good job you did then, Archie. Now, once more," and tossed the line to the other lad. He hesitated—hadn't the nerve of the first one. I had to yell encouragement to him, and the Chinamen from the deck of our vessel began to call to him, too. I did more than encourage him—I threatened him as I again hove the line, which this time he grabbed, but could not seem to trust his life to it. He sawed there while up and down the seas were lifting him, one hand in the plug-strap of his dory, the other in the bight of his life-line. Again I yelled—every second of waiting was a second of taking chances—and again came the chorus of his countrymen from the Hind's deck. So that finally he gathered himself and leaped, and I hauled him under my dory's stern and was reaching down for him, had even got his hand, when just then he let go the becket, which I had also given him, and his weight came dead on me just as I heard a great yell.

I could feel it coming and braced. But I had to hang onto my Chinaman, too, and the big sea overbore me. When I came up I saw Gillis well away from me, striving like a hero, one of his oars broken and the dory filled to the gunnels. But with his one oar astern he had yet a chance to steer her to the vessel.

I was probably a hundred feet astern of the vessel then and drifting by. I figured that I had hauled my last trawl. And probably I had, with that almost dead Chinaman on my hands and the cutter two miles away, when I noticed a broken spar—'twas our broken main-mast, still attached to the big spar by the halyards and stays, but drifting well away from the vessel. It was no time for too much reflecting—I let go the hand of the almost lifeless Chinaman, and, grabbing his queue, kicked off my boots, threw myself on my back and kicked out for the loose spar.

And made it and was about to straddle it for a moment's clear breathing, before hauling myself up on it, when the Chinaman, getting me in a despairing grip, pulled me back into the sea. The tide carried me away, my strength was gone—and I never so near the vessel, I said to myself: "Well, Alec, you're gone now sure," and came up with only the hope of another look around to the vessel, to Annie, before I should go.

I heard my name called, and saw her, held on the taffrail by her old father and swing a lead around her head—a strong hearty girl she, but no Amazon. One, two, three times, and it came—almost hit me, but not quite—and, still hanging to my Chinaman by his queue, I was hauled alongside and aboard. Gillis was there before me. He was all gone. I had to lie across the house before I could stand up.

However, we were all safe aboard, and the danger of it was forgot, when I saw the trembling smile on Annie's lips and the look in her wet eyes—it was not the salt spray alone that wet them. And for the look in those eyes, had we been alone, I'd have kissed her standing.

"You saved my life this day," I said.

"It's a man you are," she whispered, and to have it said to me again in just that way I'd wish the sea alive with capsized Chinamen, so I could go out and get them all.

And the Chinaman, whose brother we picked up, knelt down, and with the brother, kept bumping his head as well as he could to the tumbling deck till Glaves picked 'em up by their queues—"Yah-h—" and tossed them into the waist. "You'd think it was a miracle happened!" he sneered.

"And so it was," I said. "A miracle that a girl threw a deep-sea line that far."

IV

WELL, the cutter steamed up, but not to take us then. "Well done!" says a chap with a megaphone. "But we'll have to take you into custody, nevertheless. We'll come back for you when we get the other fellow," and she tore on. She wasn't the cutter we'd escaped from, but one of our own, the Sierra.

Away she went. And Cruse looked the saddest man you ever saw. But I couldn't see why. Perhaps nothing could look sad to me then, not with Annie standing by. I happened to think that, with the mainsail falling over our stern they couldn't have seen our new name, that when she came back she'd be still hunting for the schooner Flying Hind. So with the crew and those Chinamen to help, I got to work, and if you ever saw Chinamen turn to, it was those chaps. We'd give them the end of a line and motion them to haul, and they'd had things up by the roots if we didn't check 'em.

I had the wreckage of the mainmast cleared away and rigged the mainsail to the foremast, making a sloop of her, and, once we got under way again, we stood off to the no'the'ard, and next morning headed her to the west'ard. She made out pretty well. And, with the Chinamen skylarking around deck when 'twas fine and ducking below when it was wet or we sighted a sail, it wasn't half-bad at all. Well-behaved, cooking their own rice, and clean as could be, those Chinamen. Only they did leave an awful smell of opium floating around below.

We crossed the Bay of Fundy by day, and coming into Massachusetts Bay at night, with a good breeze stirring, we ought to've been able to run somewhere between Boston and Gloucester before next daylight. Cruse thought Marblehead would be a good place, because from there he could get his Chinamen by trolley to Boston. So, for there I headed her, and all would've gone well, only the breeze died out, and it was broad light when we drifted into Marblehead harbor. And what was going on there but a yacht race among a lot of dinky little jib and mainsail boats about as long as a banker's dory. No more freeboard than a 2-inch plank, and sailing for the Emperor's Cup they were. And who was superintending operations but our cutter, the Sierra. A nice pocket we'd got into, but nothing to do but keep on, for Lord knows how many glasses were on us. Well, we drifted through 'em, a hundred or two of all kinds of yachts and excursion boats floating round to see the race; and with our busted gurry-kids—our deck'd been swept clean in the storm—a few took notice of us, and to two or three we couldn't dodge I told a story of how it happened. It was more than we counted on, all that attention; but we had to keep on, and we came to anchor, industriously watching the race, with the Chinamen battened below and all hands waiting for night-time.

Cruse went ashore during the day to arrange for getting the Chinamen to Boston, but nobody else would I allow to leave the ship. Annie I didn't dare let be seen on deck at all. But Glaves slipped me. He'd been glowering since the night of the escape from the wreck and ugly as a shark since the rescue of the Chinamen, and now, when I was below for a minute's talk with Annie, he hailed a shore boat, and before I could get to him he was gone. "Well, maybe it was just as well. A good riddance," I thought.

But not so Annie. "Quick!" she said. "Send Archie after him to see what he's up to!" and Gillis jumped into the dory and rowed ashore. In two hours he was back. "Do you know what he did, the flat-faced skate!" burst out Gillis. "I trails him to a telephone place, and me not thinking overmuch of it let him talk. Till all at once it comes over me and I jumps in and hauls him out by the ear, but before I could stop him he'd got out: 'The boat you want, the Flying Hind, I say, is now in Marblehead harbor,' like he was repeating something he'd already said once."

"A lucky thing," thinks I, "he wasn't aboard when I painted on that new name in Lowcliff harbor. But go on, Archie—what then?"

"Well, I was mad enough, but I didn't let on how mad till I got him where nobody could interfere, out of town about a mile, and then I jarruped him. When I left him he was there to stay for a while, and I'll bet he won't be telling any police, because, look here"—and Gillis held up a bundle of newspapers—"I took these from him. Must've been those gave him the telephoning notion."

When we opened up the newspapers we were surely amazed. There was a picture of the Hind and the Polaris and pictures of Glaves and Pinlock and of the Newfoundland cutter we'd escaped from, and two of our revenue cutters—all after us—and how Pinlock had sent word to St. Johns about us, and column after column of our leaving Newfoundland in the gale and all about Pinlock putting into St. Pierre to escape the storm and how he got drunk there and talked too much and his having to hurry out and the word passed along, and not a Government vessel on the North Atlantic coast but what was on the watch for the pair of us.

"Whew!" I says, "and just when I was thinking our troubles were over," and goes up and hauls our staysail over the foot of the mainmast—it had been sawed off close to the deck. Then, praying for an early dark, we waited.

When the racing was over, who should come in and anchor handy to us but our government cutter? Nothing happened for a while, but by and by I could see them getting up steam on her launch, which made me guess something. "Quick!" I calls out—"all hands tumble into a bunk and give a good imitation of men just off a forty-eight hours' watch! Let nobody talk but me. And you, Annie, you'll have to tuck away too, in the lazaretto under the overhang."

They all got under cover in a hurry, and I made sure the Chinks were tight below, too, when along side comes the cutter's little launch. An officer, a decent-looking chap—the same who'd megaphoned to us after he'd passed on after the Polaris—rises out of her sternsheets, and, though I didn't invite him, he comes aboard. Seeing him aboard, I couldn't but invite him into the cabin. But before going below he takes a look at our busted gurry-kids.

"Looks as if you been having a hard time."

"Yes," I says. "On our way to the fishing grounds but got caught off Cape Cod night before last, crew short-handed, and swept everything off except that one dory you see there."

"So I heard," he says. "Well, what brings me aboard is that the old man—our captain—is looking for information of a schooner-rigged fisherman we passed twenty miles east-southeast of Cape Cod three days ago. I guess you'd know her all right if you've seen her—main-mast carried away."

"Three days ago," I repeats. "Let me see. Three days ago we weren't far from there. Don't go too far off-shore in this old packet. But what about her?"

"Smuggling. But perhaps you haven't heard yet about these people trying to smuggle the Chinamen in?"

"Oh, them! Indeed I did. One of the yachts we passed in the harbor this morning hove us the paper that had all about it. What d'y'think? Think you'll get 'em?"

"I don't know." He strokes his chin and looks down at his feet. "But a while ago we got a message from Boston saying that that vessel, the Flying Hind, was now in this harbor. The party didn't say who told him, but somebody must've been joking him in Boston, for I don't see any fishing schooner here. Or anything at all, for that matter, bearing the name Flying Hind."

"But you have to look around just the same, s'pose?"

"That's it. Look around—and ask questions. And if"—he looked up at the skylight—"if I do see anything answering her description I'll have to do my duty though I'm not over crazy to get 'em. Why? Well, there were two of that smuggler's crew put off in a dory in a big wind and high sea—a spar-colored dory with red gunnels, same as that you've got on deck, remember. And to put off and get those Chinamen as they did, 'twas a fine thing. And for that, more than any other reason, we passed him by and kept after the other chap. If I had my way, they'd get medals of honor, those two chaps that manned the dory, even if I had to send them to jail the next minute."

"Oh-h," I says, "probably a couple of fishermen winter trawlers maybe, and it's pie for them to handle a dory in a little sea. But that's for one of them. What became of the other chap you were chasing?"

"Oh, We got him. Damn him, yes. Probably the papers'll get hold of that soon. Kept after her till we crowded her ashore on Cape Cod. Her captain started to go through the surf in his dory, but a few well-placed one-pounders headed him back. Took them to Boston yesterday. Be sure he'll go to jail. A sight of difference between these two"—he looked at me again—"the chap that turned those Chinamen adrift and the chaps that picked them up. Maybe a lucky thing, too, for the Flying Hind, their stopping to pick the Chinamen up, but how they got far in their dismasted condition I don't see. And yet they might get away at that. Only I'm half hoping he don't drag 'em around here," he goes on; "because tomorrow the Allegheny will be taking our place, and she's got a commander who'd put his own father in jail if he broke the law." He was a decent-looking young fellow, as I said, and he looks casually at me then.

"Well, I s'pose he'd be right, too, the Allegheny captain," I says; "and yet, I don't know, sometimes these fellows aren't the worst in the world. No telling what might be driving an honest man to make a cruise of that kind."

"M-m—what, for instance?" he asks.

"M-m—I could rig up a good story about that. Suppose now, a fellow was in love with a girl, and he wanted to keep an eye on a couple of other fellows who were courting the same girl, and neither of them much good?"

"But what's that got to do with—But hold up! there was a girl on the Flying Hind. But how did you know?"

"One of the papers had it."

"So? Well, we never told any reporter that."

"No? Then it must've been a despatch from the Newfoundland cutter."

"M-m—maybe so. But what paper was it? Say, that's interesting too! But let me see that paper!"

"Let me see," I said; but what I was seeing was Annie's eyes to the slit in the lazaretto slide. They were shining. "Let me see," said I. And, pretending to paw over the papers, "But maybe you'll have a drink while I'm looking them over?"

"M-m—I don't know but I will!"

From the locker in the stateroom I hauls out a quart of that four-star brandy, draws the cork, and passes the bottle over to him. He looks curiously at the label. "That's funny now," he says. "In the Polaris we found two dozen cases of this stuff, under her cabin. I s'pose it's cheap in St. Pierre?"

"So I hear," I says. "Once in a while some of our fellows, on their way home from a salt-fishing trip, puts in there and brings along a case, now and then, and maybe passes a spare bottle down the line same as this."

"So?" says the officer. "Well, here's your good health, and if ever you happen to run across those two men who put out in that dory, I wish you'd give them my compliments, and say for me it was a fine bit of work. As I said, I'd tell 'em that if 'twas in open court and I giving evidence against them; and, of course, I'd have to give evidence against them if they're caught, for it's getting to be a bad business this smuggling of Chinamen by way of Newfoundland. We stopped a lot of it by way of Puget Sound on the Pacific, and now they're shipping 'em by way of the continent and England—through the provinces and Newfoundland. There's a society, we've been told, that gets big money—a thousand dollars a head, it's said, for every Chinaman they can land in this country. And we got to stop it. And it seems too bad to see good men in that business, the kind of men that ought to be with the law instead of against it. But what's that?" He was sniffing the air like a gamey dog.

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I WELL knew what it was, but, being used to it, had forgotten all about it. And, sitting with my chair against the bulkhead of the after-hold. I could almost hear them breathing hard against me, and I knew they had their eyes to any stray crack to get a peek at the officer in uniform, and to ease the strain, no doubt one or two of them had to light up their little pills. It took quite a little while to finish my drink, not even opening my eyes over the top of the glass till I'd got it right.

"It's the sulphur we burned trip before last," I said at last. "Once every year we fishermen seal up everything below and burn sulphur to fumigate her, to kill any stray rats and so on." Even as I spoke, I could see Annie over his shoulder, her head and shoulders out of the lazaretto and her scared eyes on mine. "Yes," I said, "it's the old sulphur still smelling. Take two or three weeks to sea sometimes to clear it out."

"Oh, that's it?" he says. "I'm glad to hear that," and after another drink goes up on deck and into his launch. Only as he was about to step over the rail, taking another look around, he says: "Got her mast stepped pretty well forward, hasn't she, for a sloop rig?"

"She's one of those Zanzibar models," I says, quick too quick; for I doubt if I could've explained a Zanzibar model off-hand.

"Zanzibar?" he repeats, relieved-like. "Well, that's a new one on me, but I'll bet you know all about them," and he smiled. He didn't say any more, only, as his launch went under our stern, he pointed out her name, Zulieka. "We couldn't find it in the register," he says.

"Naturally," I said, "seeing as she was named new since the last register was printed."

He looked me fair in the eyes then, and—'twas the first time—he laughed out loud. "You can explain all over to the captain of the Allegheny tomorrow," he says, and, laughing again, waves his hand and steams off.

"Oh, yes," I said to myself, "I can see myself waiting for that revenue captain in the morning."

That night after dark, Gillis and I rowed ashore those forty-two Chinamen, eleven to a time in the dory. There was a little chop on, and, with thirteen of us in the dory, they had to bail like blue devils with their little round hats to keep her from filling. And Cruse and his agents, who were waiting, took 'em to Boston on the trolleys, half a dozen at a time.

I put Annie Mann and her father ashore too. On leaving, she said: "Be careful and get away long before daylight, Alec. Let all the Glaveses and Pinlocks and Cruses be caught—it's in their business—but not you, Alec. Nor you either, Archie," stepping over to him. "No sister of mine must marry a lawbreaker," and a few words more to me and then a few from me that had maybe more of love than of law in them.

We worked our way out among the yachting fleet in the dark, and next day being drizzly, it was a good chance to run her into a safe place on the north side of Cape Ann. And there we let her lay awhile. And the extra head money on those two Chinamen we picked up in the dory was more than enough to pay for the broken mainmast and all the damage of the gale. And Cruse, after a time, sold her to a Portugee for a packet between New Bedford and the Azores islands, though Cruse—only his name wasn't Cruse for a while—had to sacrifice all the profit of the trip in the sale. For fast as the dey though she was, which suited the Portuguese packet service, she was a bit loose in her planking.

What became of Glaves, I don't know; but he never darkened Annie Mann's door again. And Gillis and I—we were satisfied to go back fishing.