

## The PILLAR OF LIGHT

By LOUIS TRACY.

Author of "The Wings of the Morning"

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### SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—At daybreak an assistant keeper of the lighthouse, discovers in the distance a ship in distress. Stephen Brand agrees to swim out to it. In so doing he comes in contact with a shark which he kills and boards the ship. He finds on board the body of a dead man and a strange bundle under a sail. Jones the lighthouse keeper lowers a basket and hauls Brand and his strange bundle safely up. II.—The bundle contains a live baby of which Jones assumes charge. Letters "E T" are found on child's clothing. Baby is placed in charge of nurse who has charge also of Stephen Brand's children. Child is named "Enid Trevillion." III.—Eighteen years later, Constance, daughter of Brand, and Enid go to the lighthouse with an old fisherman named Ben. They are caught in a storm and as they near the lighthouse hear the danger signal from the rock. They land safely and find that two men have been hurt. Brand sends the injured men back with Ben. IV.—Jackson and Bates are lowered into the boat and Ben takes them back to Penzance. The Daisy is met by Lieutenant Stanhope who is devotedly in love with Enid. He assists in caring for the wounded men. V.—Enid spies a boat approaching the rock. It is the Lapping. Brand discovers that it is sailed by Stanhope. He signals for them not to land, and Stanhope returns to Penzance. The girls spend the night at the rock. VI.—During the night a furious storm renders sleep impossible. At dawn Brand makes out a ship in distress. VII.—A young American named Pyne throws a rope to Brand who makes fast to the lighthouse and by means of a pulley arrangement seventy-eight are saved before the ship goes down. VIII.—Mrs. Vansittart, Pyne's aunt, is strangely moved at sight of Constance. IX.—Mrs. Vansittart seeks to meet Brand. X.—Stanhope in the Falcon appears near the lighthouse at daybreak and tries to rescue the girls. XI.—The Falcon returns the next day, bringing Mr. Traill, whom Mrs. Vansittart is married. He sends messages to Mrs. Vansittart and to Pyne his nephew.

He knew quite well that the experienced chief of the lighthouse service would appreciate fully the disabilities under which he labored, with eighty-one months to feed from a stock already far below the three months' maximum.

The first telegraphed question betrayed the prevalent anxiety.

"Hope all is well?"

What was he to say? Was it not best to speak boldly and let men know the truth, not alone as to their present desperate plight, but revealing the measures he had devised for the protection of the light? He could not make up his mind to launch out into a full explanation that instant.

So he signalled:

"Every one alive, but many cases of grave collapse."

Stanhope was again the signaler—evidently he had arranged matters with the admiral at Portsmouth—so Brand expected the prompt reply:

"How are Constance and Enid?"

"Quite well and cheerful."

The tall man near Stanhope bent closer.

"Are Mrs. Vansittart and Pyne all right?"

Brand assumed that the lady was in no worse condition than others. Constance, telling him the state of the sick during a hasty visit, had not mentioned her name.

So he sent the needed assurance and went on forlornly:

"Suppose no effort can be made to open communication?"

To his great surprise the answer came:

"We are constructing a raft. When the tide falls this afternoon we will try what can be done."

Ah, how glad he was that he had not obeyed his earlier impulse and horrified the anxious rescuers by a prophecy of lingering death for many, with the prelude, perchance, of murderous excesses committed by men on the verge of madness. If that story had to be told he would not flinch, but it was a grateful thing that the hour of its telling might at least be deferred.

A long message followed, a string of loving words from relatives ashore to those known to be imprisoned on the rock. During the merely perfunctory reading off of the signals his active mind was canvassing the probabilities of success or failure for the venture of the afternoon. It was high water about 3 o'clock, and, in his judgment, with the wind in its present quarter, about northwest by west, the cross seas which would sweep the reef and engulf the lighthouse at half tide would render it wildly impossible for any raft ever built by man's hands to live in the immediate vicinity of the rock.

However, the issue lay with others now. He knew that they would do all that brave men would dare. He was tempted to make known the inspiring news to all hands, but refrained, because he feared ultimate failure. Beneath his feet was a human volcano. Stirred too deeply, it might become active and dangerous.

So the apathetic multitude in his charge, hungrily awaiting a scanty morsel of food which only provoked what it failed to gratify, must rest content with the long statement written out by the purser and read by him at the door of each room.

Pyne took to Mrs. Vansittart the news of his uncle's presence on the

steamer.

"If you would like to see him," he said, "I have no doubt Mr. Brand will let you stand on the gallery for a little while."

She declined, excusing herself on the ground of weakness.

"In this high wind," she said, "it will be very cold out there, and any further exposure would make me very ill."

"That's true enough," he agreed, though he wondered why she raised no question concerning the message she wished him to convey to Mr. Traill.

Had she forgotten the urgency of her words overnight? He had carried her instructions quite faithfully to Brand and the latter smiled at the fantasy.

"Time enough to think of such things when we are assured of the lady's departure," he said, and they left it at that.

Thinking to interest her, Pyne told her of the crowd on the Falcon.

"Mostly reporters, Brand thinks," he said. "What a story they will build up in the New York papers! It will be more fun than a box of monkeys to get hold of this week's news and read all the flapdoodle they are printing."

But Mrs. Vansittart was not to be roused from her melancholy. She dreaded the least physical suffering. Privation was a new thing in her life. Today she was inert, timid, a woman who cowered away from the door and was obviously anxious that he should leave her to the quiet misery of the packed bedroom.

As the day passed, a wearisome iteration of all that had gone before, a new feature in the relations of the crowded community made itself disagreeably apparent. Men drew apart from each other singly or in small groups. An inexpressible gloom settled on the women. By some means the knowledge spread that they might all starve to death in the heart of this cold dungeon. They began to loathe it, to upbraid its steadfastness with spoken curses or unrestrained tears. The sanctuary of one day was becoming the tomb of the next. No longer was there competition to look at land or sea from the open windows. Everywhere was settling down a pall of blank, horrible silence and suspicion.

Even Constance yielded to the common terror once when the men of the watch escorted the bearer of a tray load of provisions to the occupants of the coal cellar.

"Enid," she whispered, "did you see the light in their eyes? What is it? Does hunger look that way?"

"It must be so, yet it is almost unbelievable. They are far removed from real starvation."

"One would think so. But it is so hard to realize things beforehand. And they have nothing to do. They are brooding all the time. We are slaves to our imagination. Many a sick person is allowed to eat far less than these men have been given, and the deprivation is not felt at all."

"What will become of us, Constance, if we are detained here for many days?"

"Dear one, do not ask me. We must not think of such things."

"But dad is thinking of them. I watched his face when I took him a scrap of food just now, and—"

"Hush, dear. Let us pray—and hope."

There was a clatter of feet down the iron stairs. The men of the watch were hustling to unbar the iron door. A solidly built, circular raft had been lowered from the Trinity tender.

An assistant keeper, wearing a cork jacket, with a rope about his waist, was clinging to a stumpy mast in the center. Two stout guide ropes were manipulated from the deck of the vessel, and the flat, unwieldy mass of timber was slowly drifting nearer to the lighthouse with the tide.

The door of the column opened toward the east, so the wind, with its pelting sheets of spray, was almost in the "opposite" quarter, and the stout granite shaft itself afforded some degree of protection for the entrance.

The scheme signaled from the steamer was a good one. None but a lunatic would endeavor to approach the rock itself, but there was a chance that the raft might be made to drift near enough to the door to permit a grapple to be thrown across the rope held by the gallant volunteer on the raft.

It was his duty to attach the two ropes and thus render it possible for a stronger line to be drawn from the vessel to the pillar. There was no other way. The lighthouse did not possess a rope of sufficient length to be drawn back by the raft without the intervention of some human agency.

This was precisely the puny, half despairing dodge that the reef loved to play with. Catlike, it permitted the queer, flat-bottomed craft to approach almost within hail. Then it shot forth a claw of furious surf, the heavy raft was picked up as if it were a floating feather, turned clean over and flung many fathoms out to sea, while both of its guiding cables were snapped with contemptuous ease.

The assistant keeper, kept afloat by his jacket, was hauled, half drowned, back through the choking froth, while the wave which overwhelmed the raft curled up a spiteful tongue and almost succeeded in dragging out several of the men stationed in the doorway.

With a clang the iron shutter was rushed into its place, and when the tailor was rescued the Trinity boat steamed away to try to secure the raft.

So joyous hope gave way once more to dark foreboding, and the only comfort was the faint note to be extracted from the parting signal:

"Will try again next tide."

### CHAPTER XIII.

DISCIPLINE slackened its bonds that night. For one thing, Mr. Emmett fell ill. Although unaccustomed to hardship in the elemental strife, being of the stocky mariner race which holds the gruff Atlantic in no dread, he had never before been called on to eat sodden bread, to drink

condensed steam flavored with varnish and to chew sustenance from the rind of raw bacon. These drawbacks, added to the lack of exercise and the constant wearing of clothes not yet dry, placed him on the sick list.

Again there were ominous whispers of unfair division in the matter of food. It was not within the realm of accomplishment that the purser, Constance, Enid and others who helped to apportion the eatables could treat all alike. Some fared better than others in quality if not in quantity. The unfortunate ones growled and talked of favoritism.

A crisis was reached when the second officer mustered the night watch.

When one sheep leads the others will follow. A stout German from Chicago asked bluntly:

"Vere de goot of blayn' at mound-in' gart? Dere is bud roy'n'g to gart, und dat is der kichen."

Community of interest caused many to huddle closer to him. Here was one who dared to say what they all thought. Their feet shuffled in support. The officer, faithful to his trust, was tempted to tell the man, but he thought the circumstances warranted more gentle methods.

"Why are you dissatisfied?" he sternly demanded. "What do you suspect? Are you fool enough to imagine that you are being cheated by people who are dividing their last crust with you?"

"How do we know dat? Dose girls—dey are chokin' mit Mr. Pyne all der day. Dey can't do dat und be hungry like us."

"You unmilitated ass!" said the disgusted officer. "There is food here for three people. They have fed eighty-one of us for two days and will keep us going several more days. Can't you figure it out? Isn't it a miracle? Here! Who's for guard and who not? Let us quit fooling."

And the doubters were silenced for the hour.

The hymn singer endeavored to raise a chorus. He was not greeted with enthusiasm, but a few valiant spirits came to his assistance. A couple of hymns were feebly rendered—and again silence.

"Say when," observed Pyne calmly when he entered the service room to find Brand trimming the spare lamp.

"Not tonight," said Brand.

"Why not? Hell may break loose at any moment downstairs."

"What has occurred? I heard something of a dispute when the watch mustered at 8 o'clock."

"Things are worse now. One of the men found a gallon of methylated spirit in the workshop."

"Good heavens! Did he drink any of it?"

"He and his mates have emptied the tin. Eight are helplessly drunk. The others quarrelsome. The next thing will be a combined rush for the store-room."

"But why did not the second officer tell me?"

"He thought you had troubles enough. If he could depend on the remainder of the crowd he would rope the sinners. Says he knows a slave knot that will make 'em tired."

Brand's eyes glistened.

"The fools," he said, "and just as the weather is mending too."

"You don't mean that?"

"Listen."

He glanced up at the glass dome. Heavy drops were pattering on it. They looked like spray, but Pyne shouted gleefully:

"Is it rain?"

"Yes. I was just going to summon the watch to help in filling every vessel. By spreading canvas sheets we can gather a large supply if it rains hard. Moreover, it will beat the sea down. Man alive, this may mean salvation! Tie those wenklings and summon every sober man to help."

With a whoop, Pyne vanished. He met Constance on the stairs, coming to see her father before she stretched her weary limbs on the hard floor of the kitchen.

She never knew exactly what took place. It might have been politeness, but it felt uncommonly like a squeeze, and Pyne's face was extraordinarily close to hers as he cried:

"It's raining. No more canvas whiskey. Get a hustle on with every empty vessel!"

He need not have been in such a whirl, however.

When the shower came it did not last very long, and there were many difficulties in the way of garnering the three blessed water. In the first place, the lighthouse was expressly designed to shoot off all such external supplies; in the second, the total quantity obtained did not amount to more than half a gallon.

But it did a great deal of good in other ways. It brightened many faces. It caused the drunkards to be securely trussed like plucked fowls and dumped along the walls of the entrance passage, and it gave Brand some degree of hope that the rescue operations of the next day would be more successful.

When the rain cleared off the moon flickered in a cloudy sky. This was a further omen of better fortune. Perhaps the jingling rhyme of Admiral Fitzroy's barometer was about to be justified:

Long foretold,  
Long last;  
Short notice,  
Soon past.

And the hurricane had given but slight warning of its advent.

"I feel it in my bones that we shall all be as frisky as lambs tomorrow," said Pyne when he rejoined Brand after the scurry caused by the rain had passed.

"We must not be too sanguine. There is a chance now. I won't deny that, but the sea is treacherous."

"This reef licks creation. At Bar Harbor, in Maine, where a mighty big sea can kick up in a very few hours, I have seen it go down again like

magic under a change of wind."

"That is quite reasonable. Any ordinary commotion has room to spread itself in the tide-way. Here the tide is broken up into ocean rivers, streams with boundaries as definite as the Thames. The main body sweeps up into the bottle neck of the channel. Another tributary comes round the north of the Selly Isles and runs into the tidal stream again exactly at this point. The result often is that, while little pleasure boats can safely run out into the bay from Penzance, there is a race over the rock that would break up a stranded battleship."

"Say, do you like this kind of life?"

"I have given my best years to it."

Pyne was smoking a pipe, one which Brand lent him. The tobacco was a capital substitute for food, especially as he had established a private understanding with Elsie and Mamie that they were to waylay him when possible and nibble a piece of biscuit he carried in his pocket.

This arrangement was to be kept a strict secret from all, especially from Miss Constance and Miss Enid, while the little ones themselves did not know that the she dragons whom Pyne feared so greatly gave them surreptitious doses from the last tin of condensed milk retained for their exclusive benefit.

"Do you mind my saying that you are a good bit of an enigma?" he hazarded between puffs.

"It may be so, but I like the service."

"Just so. I was never so happy as when I took a trip as fourth engineer on a tramp in the gulf of Florida. But that didn't signify being tied to a long nosed oiler for the remainder of my days."

"Are you a marine engineer?" inquired Brand, with some show of interest.

"I hold a certificate just for fun. I had a mechanical twist in me and gave it play. But I am an idler by profession."

The lighthouse keeper laughed so naturally that the younger man was gratified. Polite disbelief may be a compliment.

"An idler, eh? You do not strike me as properly classed."

"It's the fact, nevertheless. My grandfather was pleased to invest a few dollars in real estate on the sheep farm where Manhattan avenue now stands. My uncle has half; my mother had the other half."

"Are both of your parents dead?"

"Yes; years ago; lost at sea, too, on my father's yacht."

"What a terrible thing!"

"It must have been something like that. I was only six years old at the time. My uncle lost his wife and child, too, when the Esmeralda went down. It nearly killed him. I never thought he would marry again, but I suppose he's tired of being alone."

"Probably. By the way, now that you mention it, Mrs. Vansittart wished to see me yesterday. I could not spare a moment, so I sent her a civil message. She told Constance that she thought she knew me."

"Hardly likely," smiled Pyne. "If you have passed nearly the whole of your life in lighthouses."

"I did not quite mean to convey that impression. I knew a man of her late husband's name, many years ago."

"She is a nice woman in some ways," said Pyne reflectively. "Not quite my sort, perhaps, but a lady all the time. She is not an American. Came to the States about '90, I think, and lost her hubby on a ranch in California. Anyhow, the old man is dead stuck on her, and they ought to hit it off well together. The Vansittart you knew didn't happen to marry a relative of yours?"

"No. He was a mere acquaintance."

"Odd thing," ruminated Pyne. "It has just occurred to me that she resembles your daughter—your elder daughter—not so much in face as in style. Same sort of graceful figure, only a trifle smaller."

"Such coincidences often happen in the human family. For instance, you are not wholly unlike Enid."

"Hully gee," said Pyne. "I'm too run down to stand flattery!"

"Likeness is often a matter of environment. Characteristics, mannerisms, the subtle distinctions of class and social rank, soak in through the skin quite as sensibly as they are conferred by heredity. Take the plowman's son and rear him in a royal palace, turn the infant prince into a peasant, and who shall say when they reach man's estate, 'This is the true king.' You will remember it was said of the Emperor Augustus, Urbem latenter invenit, marmoreum reliquit (He found the city brick; he left it marble). The same principle may be obtained in every healthy child properly educated."

The college bred youth had not entered into any general conversation with Brand before. He had the tact now to conceal his astonishment at the manner of his friend's speech.

"You fling heredity to the winds, then?" he asked.

Brand rose to his feet, as was his way when deeply moved.

"Thank God, yes!" he cried.

A faint hoot came to them through the chortling of the wind.

"One of our visitors," shouted Brand, "and here we are gossiping as though snugly seated in armchairs at the fire-side."

He hurried to the gallery, putting on an oilskin coat.

"We must win through, and I guess I'll play ball with my father-in-law," quoth Pyne to himself as he followed.

This time it was the Falcon alone, and she signalled with a lamp that it was deemed best to defer active operations until the following afternoon. The tide at dawn would not suit.

She went off, and the two men returned to the grateful shelter of the service room.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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### SECTION LINE.

Invitations were recently received by several in our berg to attend the marriage of Miss Anna Ruhl to Dr. Luther W. Fromm of Candle, Alaska, on Wednesday evening, October 16, 1906. The ceremony was performed at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. S. Pepper of that place. The bride, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. Ruhl, has spent several years in Alaska and the best wishes and sincere congratulations of her friends are tendered for future happiness in her far off northern home.

Mrs. Peter Kronenberg of California is on a visit to her parents and relatives. She is accompanied by her infant children.

J. C. Buckley attended the funeral of Samuel J. Mooney, which took place in Portland on Sunday March 3d. For a number of years the deceased has been an occasional visitor in our midst where he owned several farms.

A surprise party took M. Allhouse by storm on Saturday evening last, the occasion being his birthday. A number of guests responded to invitations and were highly entertained with music, games and refreshments.

### UPPER LATOURELL.

Columbia Grange held its regular meeting on Saturday, which was largely attended. Weltha Lasley was initiated into the mysteries of the grange. Several applications for membership are on the table. The hall will soon be equipped with new furniture.

Chester Kuieriem, the young boat-builder of this vicinity, has brought his gasoline launch to the river where he expects to make a trial trip soon.

Cecelia Woodward attended a social dance at Bridal Veil Friday evening.

Peter Andersen was in Portland for two days inspecting his property and reports Upper Albina booming.

Helen Deaver was tendered a surprise party on her fifteenth birthday February 28. A large crowd was present and a jolly time was enjoyed by all.

Notice for Publication.  
Timber Land, Act June 3, 1878.  
United States Land Office, Portland, Oregon, October 26, 1906.

Notice is hereby given that in compliance with the provisions of the act of Congress of June 3, 1878, entitled "An act for the sale of timber lands in the States of California, Oregon, Nevada, and Washington Territory," as extended to all the Public Land States by act of August 4, 1892, Joseph R. Cooney, of Portland county of Multnomah, State of Oregon, has this day filed in this office his sworn statement No. 7097, for the purchase of the S. 1-2 of N. W. 1-4 of Section No. 13, in Township No. 1 North Range No. 3 East and will offer proof to show that the land sought is more valuable for its timber or stone than for agricultural purposes, and to establish his claim to said land before Register and Receiver at Portland, Oregon, on Wednesday the 17th day of April, 1907.

He names as witnesses: Charles Cooney of Portland, Oregon, Edward Trickey of Palmer, Oregon, C. O. Gullander of Portland, Oregon, J. T. Bagley of Hood River, Oregon.

Any and all persons claiming adversely the above described lands are requested to file their claims in this office on or before said 17th day of April, 1907.

ALGERNON DRESSER, Register.  
First publication Feb. 15, 1907; last publication Apr. 12, 1907.

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ROBERTINE

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