

LOUIS TRACY

Author of the "Pillar of Light," "The Wings of the Morning" and "The Captain of the Kansas."

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CHAPTER III. WHEREIN THE ANDROMEDA MEARS THE END OF HER VOYAGE.

IVE bells, miss! It'll soon be

daylight. If you wants to see the cross, now's your time!" Iris had been cailed from dreamless sleep by a thundering rattat on her cabin door. In reply to her half awaked cry of "All right!" the hoarse voice of a sailor told her that the Southern Cross had just risen above the horizon. She resolutely screwed her knuckles into her eyes and began to dress. In a few minutes she was on deck. A long cont, a tamo'-shanter and a pair of list slippers will go far in the way of costume at night in the tropics, and the Andromeda's seventeenth day at sea had brought the equator very near. At dinner on the previous evening—in honor of the owner's niece fashionable are were observed for meals-Mr. Watts mentioned by chance that the cross had been very distinct during the middle watch, or, in other words. between midnight and 4 a. m. Iris at once expressed a wish to see it, and Captain Coke offered a suggestion. Mr. Hoxler takes the middle watch

tonight," said be. "We can ax 'im to send a man to pound on your door as soon as it rises. Then you must run up to the bridge, an' 'e'll tell you all

If Iris was conscious of a slight feeling of surprise she did not show Hitherto the burly skipper of the Ande had made it so clearly understood that none of the ship's company save himself was to enjoy the society of Miss Iris Yorke that she had exchanged very few words with the one man whose manners and education obviously entitled him to meet her on an equal plane. Even at meals he was often absent. So Coke's complacency came now quite unexpectedly, but iris was learning to school her tongue. "Thank you very much," she said "When shall I see bim?"

'Oh, you needn't bother. I'll tell

She was somewhat disappointed at this. Hosier would be free for an hour before he turned in, and they might have enjoyed a nice chat while he smoked on the poop. In her heart of hearts she was beginning to acknowledge that a voyage through summer seas on a cargo vessel, with no other society than that of unimaginative en, savored of tedium, indeed almost of deadly monotony. Her rare meetings with Hosier marked bright spots in a duli round of hours. During their small intercourse she had discov-ered that he was well informed. They had hit upon a few kindred tastes in books and music. They even differed sharply in their appreciation of favor-ite authors. And what could be more conducive to complete understanding than the attack and defense of the shrine of some tin god of literature?

While, therefore, it was strange that Captain Coke should actually propose a visit to the bridge at an unusual time—at a time, too, when Hozier would be on duty—if struck her as far more curious that he should endeavor to prevent an earlier meeting.

I shall be delighted to come at any time. I have often read about the

time. I have often read about the Southern Cross, yet three short weeks ago I little thought"—

"You reely didn't think about it at all." broke in Coke. "If you'ad you'd 'ave known you couldn't cross the line without secin' it."

Here was another perplexing element in the skipper's conduct. That Iris was a stowaway was forgotten. She was treated with the attention and ceremony due to the owner's ceremony due to the owner's niece. Coke never lost an opportunity of dinning into the cars of Watts or Hosler or the steward or any mem-Hosier or the steward or any members of the crew who were listening that Miss Yorke's presence in their midst was a preordeined circumstance, a thing fully discussed and agreed on as between her uncle and himself, but carried out in an irregular manner owing to some girlish freak an her part. The portmanteau, with its change of raiment, brought confineing testimony, and tris' own words when discovered in the interest supplied further proof, if that were needed.

A keen, invigorating brosse awept the last mirage of sleep from the gir's brain as she flitted silently along the dack. A wondrous galaxy of stars blazed in the heavens. In that nellucid

he sky was a rivid pitrama ship's truck was milited i of phosphorescent fire. Each to of the propeller drew from light that danced and



in the veins under the stress of an emotion at once passionate and mystic. Iris, spurred on by no stronger im pulse than that of the signtseer, though not wholly unaware of an element of

adventurous shyuess in her expecta tion of a tete-a-tete with a good look ing young man of her own status climbed to the bridge so speedily and noiselessly that Hozier did not know of ter presence until he heard her dismayed cry:

"Is that the Southern Cross?" He turned quickly

You, Miss Yorke? he exclaimed and not even her wonder at the insig nificance of the stellar display of



which she had heard so much could cloak the fact that Hozier was unpre-

pared for her appearance.
"Of course it is i. Who else?" she asked. "Did not Captain Coke tell you to expect me?"

"How odd! That is what he arranged. A man came and rapped at my door.

"Pardon me one moment." He leaned over the bridge and bailed the watch. The same boarse voice that had roused Iris answered his questions, and in the faint light that came from the binnacle she caught a flicker

of amusement on his face.

"Our excellent skipper's intentions have been defeated," he said. "He told one of the men to call him at seven bells, but not to wake you until the cross was visible. His orders have been obeyed quite literally. He will be summoned in another hour, and you have been dragged from bed to gaze at the false cross, which every foremast band persists in regarding as the real article. The true cross, of which Alpha Crucis is the southern pole star, comes up over the borizon an hour after the false one."

"But Captain Coke said he would see you and warn you of my visit."
"I can only assure you that be did

not. Perhaps be thought it unnecessary, meaning to be on deck himself." "Must I wait here a whole hour

Hozier laughed. It was amusing to find how Coke's marked effort to keep the girl and him apart had been defeated by a sailor's blunder.

"I hope the waiting will not weary you." he said. "It is a beautiful night." "I am gind of the accident that brought me on deck somewhat earlier than was necessary," she said. "You and I have not said much to each other since you routed me out of the lazarette, Mr. Hozier."

"Our friends at table are somewhatdifficult. If only you knew how I re-

"Oh. what of that? When I became a stowaway I fully expected to be treated as one. I suppose, though, that you have often asked yourself why I was guilty of such a mad trick."
"Not exactly mad, Miss Yorke, but

needless, since Captain Coke partly ex pected to have your company"
"That is absurd. He had not the

utest notion"-"Forgive me, but there you are wrong. He says that your uncle and be discussed the matter on the Sunday before we left Liverpool. His theory is rather borne out by the present state of the ship's larder. I assure you that few tramp steamers spread a table like the Andromeda's mess during this yours."

ing this voyage. Iris laughed with a spontaneous mer

"Being the owner's nice. I am well entered for?" she cried.

"Something of the sort. It's only

"But I think I have read in the newspapers that when some unhappy creature is condemned, to death by the law he is supplied with luxuries that would certainly be denied to any ordinary criminal?"

"Such doubtful elemency can hardly upply to you, Miss Yorke."

"It might apply to the ship or to and remembers and is capable of-of giving evidence."

She paused, fearing lest, perhaps, she might have spoken too plainly. Coke's counter stroke in aimding to her dread of the proposed marriage was hidden from her ken. Hozier, of course, was thinking of nothing else For the moment, then, they were at ross purposes;

"Things are not so bad as that," he said gently. "I hope I am not trespassing on forbidden ground, but it is only fair to tell you that the skipper was quite explicit up to a point. He said you were being forced into some matrimonial arrangement that was

"And, to escape from an undesirable sultor. I ran away?"

"Well, the story sounded all right." "Hid myself on my uncle's ship when wished to avoid marrying the man of his choice?"

Hozier was not neglecting his work but he did then take his eyes off the starlit sen for a few ninazed seconds. There was no mistaking the scornful ing in the girl's words. He could see be deep color that flooded her cheeks. The glance that met his sparkled with in intensity of feeling that thrifled while it perplexed.

"Please pardon me if the question aurts, but if that is not your motive and there never was any real notion of your coming on this trip why are you here?" he said

"Because I am a foolish siri, I suppose-because I thought that my pres ence might interpose a serious obtacle between a criminal and the rime he had planned to commit. It one wants to avoid bateful people a change of climate is a most effectual means, and I had not the money for rdinary travet. Believe me, Mr. Hofer, I am not on board the Androm da without good reason. I have often vished to have a talk with you. hink you are a man who would not betray a confidence. If you agree to help me, something may yet be done At first I was sure that Captain Coke would abandon his wicked project as soon as he discovered that I knew what was in his mind But now I am beginning to doubt. Each day brings us nearer South America, and-

She was breathless with excitement She drew nearer to the silent and impassive man at her side, dropping her voice almost to a whisper. She caught his arm with an appealing hand.

"I am afraid that my presence will offer go hindrance to his scheme," she murmured. "I am terrified to say such a thing, but I am certain, quite certain, that the ship will be lost within the next few days."

Hozler, though incredulous, could not but realize that the girl was saying that which she honestly thought to be

be purposely thrown away?" he asked, and his own voice was not wholly under control, for he was called on to repress a sudden temptation to kiss tive is invoked indiscriminately it away the tears that glistened in her brown eyes.

"Yes, that is what he said-on the rocks this side of Montevideo."

"He sald-who?" "The-the captain."

"To whom did he say it?" "Ob, Mr Hozier, do not ask that, but believe me and belp me." "How?"

"I do not know. I am half distracted with thinking. What can we do? Captain Coke simply swept aside my first attempt to speak plainly to him. But-make no mistake-be knows that I beard his very words, and there is something in his manner, a curious sort of quiet confidence, that frightens

After that neither spoke during many

"That is a very serious thing you have told me, Miss Yorke," muttered Hozier at last.

not without a backward glance at the sallor in the assure himself that the man could not by any chance overhear their

conversation. "But it is true -dreadfully true," said Iris. clasping ber and resting them on the high railing of

the bridge. "It is all the "ner it is TRUEmore serious, DREADFULLY TRUE,

inasmuch as Sath IRIS. we are helpless," he went on. you see how impossible it is even to hint at it in any discussion with the man principally concerned? I want to say this, though-you are in no danger. There is no ship so safe as one that is picked out for willful destruction. Men will not sacrifice their own lives even to make good as insurance policy, and I suppose that is what I intended. So you can sleep sound o nights-at any rate until we near the const of Brazil. I can only promise you if any watchfutness on my part ean stop this piece of villainy- Rello

there! What's up? Why is the ship

falling away from ber course ?"

The sudden change in his voice startled the girl so greatly that she uttered a slight shriek. It took her an appreciable time to understand that he was speaking to the man at the wheel. But the sailor knew what he meant.

"Something's gone wrong with the wheel, sir," he bawled, "I wasn't ceraln at first, so I tried to put her over bit to s'uth'ard. Then she jammed

Hozier leaped to the telegraph and signated "slow" to the engine room. Already the golden pathway behind the Andromeda had changed from a wavering yet generally straight line to well defined curve. There was a niss and snort of escaping steam as he sailor inside the charthouse endeavored to force the machinery into

"Steady, there!" bellowed Hozier. Wait until we have examined the gear boxes! There may be a kink in chain!"

A loud order brought the watch scurrying along the deck. Some of the men ran to examine the bearings of the buge fan shaped casting that governed the movements of the rudder, while others began to tap the wooden shields which protected the steering rods and chains. In the midst of the hammering and excitement Captaix Coke swung himself up to the bridge.

"Well, I'm blowed! You here?" be said, looking at Iris. "Wot is it now?" he asked, turning sharply to Hozier. 'Wheel stuck again?" "Yes, sir. Has it happened before?"

"Well-er-not this trip. But it as appened. Just for a minnit I was mixin' it up with the night you nearly run down that bloomin' booker off the trish coast. Ah, there she goes! Everything O. K. now. Wen daylight comes we'll overhaul the fixin's. Nice thing if the wheel jammed Just as we was crossin' the Recife!"

Hozler tried to ascertain from the watch if they had found the cause of the disturbance, but the men could only guess that a chance blow with an adz had straightened a kink in one of the casings. Coke treated the incident with nonchalance.

"Thought you was to be called w'en the cross hove in sight, Miss. Yorke?"

he said abruptly. "I am sorry to have to inform you that some people on board cannot distinguish between faisity and truth." she answered. "But please don't be angry with any of the men on my account. Mr. Hozier tells me they often confuse the false cross with the real one, and the mistake has been enjoy-

"A reg'lar 'umbug, the Southern Cross," grunted Coke. "It ain't a patch

Coke grinned at his own pleasantry. To one of his bearers at least it seemad to be passing strange that he was so ready to forget such a vital defect in the steering gear as had manifested its existence a few minutes earlier,

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

(Paid Advertising.) ABUSING THE INITIATIVE.

Initiative for Matters of General

Interest. "The initiative privilege is a valuable right and the people of Oregon are fortunate in the possession of the same . It is a right though that should be used with discretion. If the initiawill be of injury rather than of benefit," says the Pendleton East Ore-

gonian in its issue of July 19. "By the nature of things the initiative should be used for the settlement of questions that are of general state interest and questions upon which the people at large are capable of judging. It was proper that the direct primary law be enacted under the initlative. The law could not have been enacted in any other way. Legislatures elected under the old convention system would never have passed the direct primary law. It was proper that the corrupt practices act be enacted under the initiative and referendum. That law pertains to political morality and the people were able to judge of the merits of the law. It is all right to settle the normal school problem under the initiative. The legislature has utterly failed to handle

the question. "But the most glaring abuse of the initiative is on the part of those who nave proposed county division measures. Eight bills have been filed asking for the creation of new counties or for the changing of boundary lines. In each case the question involved is of a purely local nature; not of state interest. It will be impossible for the people of the state to judge of these measures with intelligence. All division disputes should have been held in abeyance pending the passage of a law calling for the settlement of such disputes by the people directly concerned. The county divisionists. however, have refused to wait. They have submitted their bills in hopes the people will vote blindly for them. They have abused the initiative privilege and they should be rebuked for doing so. Every county division bill should be voted down.

"Insist that the initiative be used only when it may be invoked with propriety."

County Division Increased Taxes 61 4 Per Cent. (East Oregonian.)

That county division mea

creased taxation for the secssionists is shown by the experience of E. A. Schiffler, the well known local tailor, who owns some property in the city of Rood River. To the East Oregonian Mr. Schiffler has exhibited his tax receipts and they show that during the first year of the existence of Hood River county Mr. Schiffler's taxes increased 61.4 per cent. His 1908 taxes, which were paid in Wasco county, amounted to \$85.50. His 1909 taxes, the first levied after the creation of Hood River county and which he paid on February 14, 1910, amounted to \$138. Therefore the creation of the new county cost Mr. Schiffler the sum of \$52.50 during the first year of

Hood River county's existence. "I have always said that it is foolish to divide counties," declared Mr. Schiffler. "It only means additional expense and increased taxation."

THE MARKETS.

Portland.

Wheat-Track prices: Club, 82c; bluestem, 82c; red Russian, 80c. Barley-Feed and brewing, \$31, Oats-No. 1 White, \$28 per ton. Hay-Timothy, Willamette Valley, \$19@20 per ton; Eastern Oregon,

\$20@22; alfalla, \$15@16. Butter-Creamery, 36; ranch, 24c. Eggs-Ranch, candled, 37c. Hops-1910 erop, 10@1214c; 1909, nominal; olds, nominal.

Wool-Eastern Oregon 13@17c lb.; Valley, 17@19c lb. Mohair-Choice, 32@33c.

Seattle. Wheat-Bluestem, 86c; Club, 82c;

red Russian, 80c. Oats-\$28 per ton.

Barley-\$21 per ton. Hay-Timethy, \$26 per ton; alfalfa, \$19 per ton. Butter-Washington creamery, 36c;

anch, 22c Eggs-Selected local, 45c.

Shooting was in Self-Defense. Umatilla-Sam Kee, the Chinaman, who shot and killed James W. Loveface here on October 17 last, was given his liberty following the verdict handed down by the coroner's jury at Pendleton, which held that the snooting was done in self defense. The jurors came here from Pendleton, and atter taking all the testimony of the witnesses here, returned to Pendleton

and signed the verdict.

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