

The darkness came on too, and I observed that unusual care had been taken by the chief officer to have all things snug on deck, although not a word was said which would arouse the fears of the uninitiated.

Accordingly the customary amusements were had recourse to, and chess players congratulated themselves warmly upon the comfortable steadiness of the ship. Taking my customary walk on deck about ten o'clock, I found old sailors scanning the weather anxiously, and as the mercury in the barometer fell, sails were furled, and everything aloft as well as below made ready for a wild night. But there was no apparent change till all were at rest on board, save the night watch and the first and second officers who now patrolled the deck in silence together. Scarcely however had eight bells struck when a dull roaring sound was heard in the distance, growing louder as it approached, until it suddenly burst upon us. Instantly, as it were, the sea was lashed into fury, the waves rose, and foamed, and thundered, as the ship flew through them before a gale of terrific violence. Hardly a sound could be heard, save the beating of the angry waters, and the roaring of the wind through the rigging. For some hours the gale seemed to increase in force, and still the good ship held on, but presently amid the deafening turmoil of the storm, she was struck with a tremendous sea, which smothered all other noise, drove in the bulwarks, swept away the boats, and launched one fierce wave into the saloon. Instantly every room was flooded, and where a few hours before joy and merriment had reigned, a boiling sea now held sway as it dashed from side to side with every rolling of the ship. Under circumstances such as these I consider it the duty of all travellers by sea, whose services are unneeded, to remain as much out of the way as possible, and I acted on this maxim upon that occasion, till I was fairly washed out of my berth. Peering into the saloon I there saw some of my fellow passengers, half drowned, holding on as best they could to anything that gave holding room, and like myself of course wading in some considerable depth of sea water. Even amid the storm I could not repress a hearty

laugh at the ludicrous nature of the scene. But it was by no means pleasant. The water was intensely cold, all the lights except one, faintly glimmering at the distant end of the saloon, were extinguished, every thing was drenched with salt water, and there was no prospect of matters mending, for the barometers persistently told that the storm would increase, and as I fought my way to the door and looked out into the night, the scene was one not readily to be forgotten. The darkness was impenetrably black. Not a sound was to be heard, save the howling roar of the tempest, the deck was clear but washed incessantly by the waves, as it lay exposed and open to the sea. The bulwarks were gone, and no vestige remained of the boats and spars and other things which a few hours before had crowded the place. The waters fringed with foam appeared like huge monsters ever rising and towering over us as though threatening to thrust down the puny ship with giant arms, and destroy all trace of our existence. In short it was a scene which must have struck the stoutest heart with a sense of the mighty power of the elements, and the intense littleness of man.

In occasions of danger at sea it has often occurred to me to observe how far a sense of fear prevailed among the passengers. I have met with individual examples where actual terror seems to have taken hold of the mind, but as a general rule I do not think that fear gains much power. No one can witness the effect of a hurricane upon the broad ocean, without a vivid sense of his own impotence, of his dependence upon a higher power than man's for safety, or without a stern appreciation of the awful sublimity of nature in these her wildest moods. But that is a feeling far different from fear. It more nearly approaches to Reverence and Faith, and is all the more therefore to be admired. On this occasion I do not think that the faintest sense of fear entered into the breast of any—except one; and that exception was the more remarkable.

The Captain was an honest worthy man, and an experienced seaman, but influenced by strong religious prejudices. He had his wife and family on board with