

THE FROZEN PRISONER.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL. [Continued.] CHAPTER IX. LOSE MY BOAT.

I lingered, I darsay, above twenty minutes contemplating this singular crystal fossil of a ship, and considering whether I should go down to her and ransack her for whatever might answer my turn.

Nothing but the desire to possess the fine warm cloak could have tempted me to handle even to cast my hand upon the dead man again. I found myself more seduced by him now than at first.

His beard was frozen as hard as a bush, and it crackled unpleasantly to the movement of my hands, which I was obliged to force under it to unhook the silver chain that confined the cloak about his neck.

I now noticed for the first time, so overhwhelmingly had my discoveries occupied my attention, that the wind had freshened and was blowing briskly and piercingly.

I turned my back upon the clamorous ocean and started to ascend the slope once more. When I reached the brow of the cliffs I observed that the clouds had lost their fleeciness and taken a slatish tinge, were moving fast and crowding up the sky.

I bore the dead man's cloak on my arm and helped myself along with the oar, and presently arrived at the brink of the slope in whose hollow lay the ship in a cusp. The wind made a noisy howling in her rigging, but the tackling was frozen so iron hard that not a rope stirred, and the vane at the masthead was as motionless as any of the adjacent steeples or pillars of ice.

I rubbed my eyes and stared again. Tush, thought I, I am deceived by the ice. I glanced at the slope behind to keep me to my bearings, and once more sought the haven; but the rock that had formed it was gone, the blue swell rolled brimming past the line of shore there, and my eye following the swing of the water, swung steadily away into the south, and showing and disappearing with the heave.

The dead man's cloak fell from my arm; I uttered a cry of anguish; I clasped my hands and lifted them to God, and looked to Him. I was for kicking off my boots and plunging into the water, but, mad as I was, I was not so mad as that, and mad I should have been to attempt it, for I could not swim twenty strokes, and had I been the stoutest swimmer that ever breathed the salt spray, the cold must speedily put an end to my misery.

When I saw that my boat was lost, and I was to be a prisoner on the death-haunted waste, that I fell down in a sort of swoon, like one partly stunned, and had her person come along and seem to me would have thought me as dead as the body on the hill or the corpse that kept its dismal look-out from the deck of the schooner.

The boat was soon out of sight I looked and looked, but she was gone. Then came my good angel to my help and put some courage into me. "After all," thought I, "what do I dread? Death? It can come to that. It is not long ago that Captain Roxy cried to me, 'A man can die but once. He'll not perish the quicker for contemplating his end with a stout heart.'"

My mind went to the schooner, yet I felt an extraordinary recoil within me when I thought of seeking an asylum in her. I had the figure of her before my fancy, viewed the form of the man on her deck, and the idea of penetrating her dark interior and seeking shelter in a fabric that went into and frost and death had wrought into a black mystery was drearful to me.

On the larboard hand the ice pressed close against the vessel's side, some pieces rising to the height of her water-strake. The face of the hollow was precipitous here, full of cracks and flaws and sharp projections. Indeed, had it been the breadth of the island been as it was at the extremity I might have counted upon the first violent commotion of the sea.

It must be done nevertheless, thought I; I shall certainly perish from exposure if I linger here; besides, how do I know but there is some discovery to be made, some means of escaping from the island?

Hope lives like a park amid the very blackest embers of despondency. Twenty minutes before I had awakened from a sort of swoon and was overwhelmed taking a collected view of my situation, even to the extent of being willing to believe that on the whole it was perhaps as well that I should have been hindered from putting to sea in my little eggshell.

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yond my reach, and I perceived that to get aboard I must seek an entrance on the larboard hand. This was not hard to arrive at; indeed, I had but to walk round her under her bows. She was so coated with hard snow I could see nothing of her timbers, and was therefore unable to guess at the condition of the hull. She had a most absurd swelling bilge, and her buttocks, viewed on a line with her rudder, doubtless presented the exact appearance of an apple. She was sunk in snow to some planks above the garboard-streak, but her lines forward were fine, making her almost wedge-shaped, though the fair of her bows was great, so that she swelled up like a balloon to the cat-heads. She had something of the look of the barca-longas of half a century ago—that is, half a century ago from the date of my adventure; but that which, in sober truth, a man would think the figure of her before my fancy, viewed the form of the man on her deck, and the idea of penetrating her dark interior and seeking shelter in a fabric that went into and frost and death had wrought into a black mystery was drearful to me.

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CHATHAM RAILWAY. WINTER 1888-9. GOING NORTH THROUGH TIME TABLE. Leave Chatham, 8:00 a.m. Arrive Chatham, 12:40 p.m.

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To John K. Baldwin, of Bathurst, in the County of Northumberland, in the Province of New Brunswick, Merchant, and N. Herbert McNeil, of the City of St. Paul in the State of Minnesota, Gentlemen: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a Power of Sale...

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To Geo. McKay of the Parish of Nelson in the County of Northumberland, Carpenter, and Margaret McKay his wife and to all others who may have claims...

NOTICE OF SALE.

To the Executors, Administrators and Assigns of the late William M. Kelly formerly of Chatham in the County of Northumberland in the Province of New Brunswick, deceased...

NOTICE OF SALE.

To the Chatham Shaking Risk Company of Chatham in the County of Northumberland, and to all others whom it may concern: Notice is hereby given that by virtue of a Power of Sale contained in a certain Indenture...

NOTICE.

I hereby caution any and all persons against giving employment to any person, whose name is signed in the following list, as being a responsible party in connection with the late firm of J. M. McKay & Co. of Chatham, N.B.

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