

PRISONERS OF THE SEA

mode of conveyance was speedily lost in concern for her mother, who still sat in the boat below.

"Mother," she cried anxiously, "do not fear!"

"I am not afraid," said Madame de Langres, with a quiet smile.

Winters lifted her with surprising gentleness, and in another instant she stood beside her daughter on the deck. Cato followed, scrambling over the side of the vessel as nimbly as a cat, and lastly Winters.

All instinctively looked down at the boat which they had just quitted. It was nearly a third full of water, for the leak had been gaining on them rapidly within the past hour. For a moment no one spoke; then Cato, true to his craft, exclaimed, "We have left our water and biscuits behind; dis yer ship's mighty fine, but what about her victuals?"

No one had thought of that, and Winters paused as he was about to cut the ropes which held the water-logged boat.

"You've got more sense in your woolly pate than I gave you credit for, Cato," he said. "Suppose you do a little exploring on your own account; you'll scent victuals if there be any, I'll warrant me. I'll bring aboard what we had, sir," he continued, "though wet biscuits are sorry eating; but it'll serve us, I reckon. By the token of the fresh-cut hawser, we'll see land afore many days."

With a last look at the sinking boat, the women turned toward the companion-way. They were wet to the skin, and trembling with fatigue.

As they entered the cabin Madeline could not repress a cry of delight. Rich rugs carpeted the floor; costly tapestries covered the walls; while parted curtains of