

PRISONERS OF THE SEA

“Hope!” roared the sailor, “in course there’s hope! Who says there ain’t? While there’s life, there’s hope, my hearties!—I mean ma’am. Young Baillot here knows every word I’ve said is Gospel truth, there *is* land and there *is* vessels, mebbe not ten miles distant; more’n that the sea’s calm as a milkpan, we’ve water aboard and—What’d you say, sir?”

“That we must eat now, and then take what rest we may till morning. We may need all our strength to reach the land you speak of, Winters.” The young man stepped cautiously past the sailor as he spoke, and silently proffered a cup of water and a basin filled with sea biscuit to the two women.

The girl laid her hand impulsively upon his arm. “Tell me, monsieur,” she began, then stopped abruptly. “I forget—” she faltered drawing back. “But the English, I know it so little—is it possible that we have any chance of safety? You also are a sailor and a brave man—ah, how brave, since you did not abandon us to our fate in the storm; tell us shall we be safe?”

“We are in no present danger,” replied the young man looking down into the dark eyes which were lifted appealingly to his. “As for to-morrow, who can say. We are in God’s hands.” He said these words in the French language.

“You are then—one of us?” It was the older woman who spoke.

“I am a Huguenot, madame.”

At this avowal the girl gave a little cry of joy and surprise, but the other only bowed her head.

“We are in God’s hands,” she repeated gravely.