

cent eyes dilated by terror, as she was placed in the boat, "come with us."

"Push off!" ordered Gregg, as the foaming water broke over the gunwale, and the men grasped their oars: we've room for no more."

But by this time the fact that the other boats were unserviceable had been discovered, and the crowd of passengers, firemen, and deck-hands came rushing wildly to the side, eagerly imploring the captain to save them. The shrieks, prayers, and entreaties of the females mingled with passionate exclamations of the men, several of whom did not hesitate to accuse the commander of the *Prosperine* of treachery. Gregg, however, mocked at all entreaties, and pushed off. I was now violently flung forwards, and found myself struggling for life in the frothing, tumbling water, the centre, so it seemed, of a chaotic mass of torn woodwork and rent iron, of splintered beams, miscellaneous rubbish, empty casks, loose oars, and whatever was light enough to float; while mixed with the wreck were human forms, some clinging to the pieces of timber, some hopelessly entangled in the ruins of what had been the shapely vessel. I knew by the destruction around me that the *Prosperine* had burst her boiler, and that death in its ghastliest shapes was busy with all around.

It was a dreadful moment, crowding as it did into its brief compass sights and sounds of horror. Bruised and all but stunned by the blows of the pieces of woodwork which drifted against me as I swam, I twice incurred more imminent risk, as I felt the clutch of some drowning wretch tighten upon me and threaten to drag me down. But the grasp relaxed, and I found myself in open water, and could draw breath again, and look around. A sad and terrible spectacle it was on which the wan white moon looked down. There were the breakers chafing on the shoal, the broad stretch of turbid river, the confused mass of the wreck, whence proceeded moans and cries that grew gradually more feeble, as victim after victim sank beneath the rushing water. What was that, full in the silvery track of the moonlight? A boat, surely, bottom upwards, and near it, clinging to a half-submerged oar, a slender figure, just visible. I thought I recognized the light-colored muslin dress that Alice wore, as it floated up to the surface; and without an instant's delay I struck out for the spot. I am a strong swimmer, but it was all that I could do by straining every nerve, to make head against the force of the stream, and it was by extreme exertion that at last, spent and breathless, I reached the sinking girl and drew her towards the boat. My hand slipped from its hold the first time as I tried to grasp the keel, but a second effort succeeded, and then I felt that we were safe.

"You are not hurt?" asked I eagerly, as I assisted Alice to obtain a firm hold of the drifting boat. "Not hurt? But what is this?" I continued in alarm, for the blood was trickling freely from the soft white wrist that I grasped.

"It is nothing," she answered earnestly; "a mere scratch. But, Alfred, my father, my poor father, he, I fear, is badly injured, for I heard his voice, calling for help as if in pain, as I was washed away.

At this instant I felt firm ground beneath my feet, and, to my great joy, I perceived that the boat had floated into shallow water on the verge of the shoal. We scrambled as best we could upon the sloping shelf of the sandbank, where the boat stuck fast, while the swift current flowed frothing and bubbling down the channel beyond. We were now in comparative security; but I had not the heart to refuse the piteous en-