

OUR SHORT STORY

"A Lump of Coal."

The cattle boat Goshawk's midday lights had shown her to be in latitude 12 degrees 34 minutes south, by 36 degrees 42 minutes west longitude, which meant that she was coming up to that dangerous collection of reefs and rocks known as the Abrolhos Shoals. The chart which covered them was from a French survey in 1861, and as any amount of undergrowth might have been wrought since then by that minute mason of the deep, the coral insect, Capt. Grimshaw was very much on the alert as long as his ship was in the neighborhood. For, being a wise master mariner, he depended but little on either the chart or the Abrolhos Light itself.

But if the captain did not fancy this particular patch of the sea for reasons relating to navigation, the third engineer did for purposes of his own. In short, he hoped to earn the ship's insurance money and a couple of hundred pounds for himself somewhere in the vicinity. It was an excellent locality for a plausible story about the Goshawk running on some uncharted shoal and sinking as she backed into deep water. So when he was relieved of his half watch at 6 o'clock by the chief engineer, he went straight to the engine room mess table for his tea, carefully forgetting his blue jacket where it hung on a rail on the forward side of the engine bulkhead. Having partaken hastily and sparingly of the bad tea and potato hash supplied, he turned into his own room, locked the door, and arranged a pair of trousers to hang so as to look like a shirt over the keyhole. Then he knelt, though not exactly in prayer, beside his sea chest, and proceeded to unpack it, till at length he reached a small wooden box with a sliding top.

Eight it did not appear why his hand should tremble a little as he pulled the lid aside and drew from its well-wadded cradle a very common-place lump of coal.

It was exactly like any other piece of coal, about the size of a large fist, and it had all the jetty sparkle and shine of the newly broken article. The only difference between it and the other lumps in the bunkers was that it was a lump of coal, and a few men's lives lay in its nascent possibilities.

On closer inspection, however, it revealed one little peculiarity, a little square projection such as any lady or gentleman who chooses to use a steam winder may see in his watch any night of the week. Tom Tudor's own watch, which he now tried upon it to see if everything was in proper working order, fitted it exactly as a matter of fact.

"Another hour and it will be pretty nearly dark. That will be my time," he thought to himself with anything but a fiendish chuckle. As yet he was considerably removed from the villainous, at least at first sight, of a sanguinary fiction. Of a truth he was conscious at the moment of a curious sickness, a tickling in his stomach which not even the recent potato hash could account for. No, it was the thought of the coming appalling moment of flame and death—the captain's daughter. Curse the captain's daughter! When he had entered into this dangerous contract with certain unnamable people at home, he had not counted on this disturbing element. That he, hard-hearted and hard-headed scoundrel as he was, should feel this immense tenderness for a pretty ailing girl, away with her father for a voyage on account of her health, was an aberration beyond all calculation. Was it love? It worried and pricked him, and it awakened old unworldly chords in the atrophied sense of fitness which had been his conscience. Yes, it was love, and bless Alice, the captain's daughter!

"If she hadn't been so hard on me last night, I could never have done it," ran his thoughts, waking a fierce tenderness in his hollow, handsome face. "A touch of her hand and the Goshawk would have stemmed the Thames River again! Suppose the ship sank in a couple of minutes, before they had time to lower the boats! There are sharks about! I don't mind sending an old fireman or a trimmer to hotter furnaces. But the flop of the bruter round her sweet body! It's horrible! By heavens, I can't do it, after all!"

He bent his forehead against the raised lid of his trunk. "But I'm talking bethel rot! The cursed thing is calculated to give the ship half an hour. There'll be lots of time for everybody to get clear except the poor fellows who get blown to atoms from the stovehole. Then the weather's quiet, and we're right in the track of ships certain to be picked up within 48 hours."

He dangled the black mass on his fingers.

"Five turns of the key, and then five

minutes before the explosion, every turn a minute. If I push the job through I'll never lack a watch of heaven. I wish we were all safe in the boats!"

He replaced the grim handful of doom in its cradle again, replaced it in its box, and went up to the windy deck where he leaned moodily against the deckhouse.

A slice of young moon, with a few attendant stars, slowly climbed into luminance against the last ardors of the sunset as he leaned moodily against the deckhouse.

How the miserly hour caught up its golden coin of minutes and fled! "Time-time, time-time, time-time," sang the watch bell monstrously soon. "I've got to be done!" he muttered between his locked teeth, as he stepped unsteadily out of the moonlight along the engine room passage, once more unpacked the fatal lump, deviled the key five times, and with a flying heart descended the steel ladder to the engine room, the bomb ticking in the loose breast of his shirt as he went.

"Hallo, Tudor. Forgot your jacket?" sang out the chief, as he stooped over the rails and tried the heat of his bearings.

"Aye," replied the third engineer, as he passed. "In the fierce tunnel of light from one of the open furnaces the nude stokers and a trimmer piling forward the coal to them from behind, seemed like gnomes of some Eastern legend. Foot devil! A chatter like the sound of a sewing machine form the thing in his breast seemed to chant their requiem."

He slipped the black abortion below an end of one of the boilers, caught up his jacket and ran on deck. Under the shadow of one of the after lifeboats he stood, sick with terrible expectancy, awaiting the end with his watch in his hand. Two minutes gone! * * *

Three! A little figure in white came forward out of the darkness of the poop-deck. It was the captain's daughter.

"Is that you, Mr. Tudor?" she said, sweetly.

"Yes," he replied, hoarsely. Three minutes and a half gone.

"I want to tell you how sorry I am for being nasty to you last night. I—I didn't mean it."

Alice, Alice! Quick, for God Almighty's sake! Can you love me even a little? Quick, quick!

"What's all this hurry about, Mr. Tudor? Put that watch in your pocket. What a question!"

But in her face he saw something sweeter than the silver moonlight which revealed it. * * * Four minutes and a half!

With a rush he was in the passage again, slipped noiselessly past the chief stoker, and down the cold iron plates he turned, caught up the accursed thing under his jacket, and like a flash tore up to the deck again.

With all his strength he threw the lump of coal far into the dimpling sea, and sank on the deck, the perspiration running down from every pore.

Then with a terrific rattling thunder an immense flower of fire arose out of the deep, a great, sudden, billowing tract of white, heaved her aloft like a cork, and raced whirling away into the moonlight distances. Then all was still, save for the fretting and fuming of the sea as it slowly settled again.

The whole ship's company came peering on deck in a dazed state of alarm. The captain sprang on the bridge beside the mate and shouted orders unheeded.

But nobody except the girl in white noticed the broken man lying prone in the shadow of the deckhouse.

Like a sudden hideous revelation the explanation came upon her. His wild eyes, his sudden question, the watch in his hand, his mad, headlong race below, all was clear now.

Unnoticed in the general panic, she crossed the deck to him. He was lying face down on the cold iron plates of the deck. She touched him on the shoulder, and he looked up with a white face.

"I know it all, Tom," she said, brokenly. "May God help you. You help me, Alice! Help me from hell. Your love could save me yet, perhaps."

"I loved you all along. But after this"—she sobbed.

Presently she spoke again. "Now, get up and go below. This must never be suspected, even by my father. It will be safe with me. I still love you enough for that." He kissed the skirt of her dress, and pressed her hand like a benediction on his head.

When Capt. Grimshaw reported the phenomenal seismic disturbance he had encountered in the neighborhood of the Abrolhos Reef, it created a considerable sensation in the scientific world. And from the records of the registry in a certain church, within hearing of Bow Bells, there is the best of reason for supposing that Alice Grimshaw's love persisted and she followed the best opportunities for saving the soul of the third engineer—London Star.

JIMMIE'S JOB

His Mother Misunderstood the Boy's Letter

"There is a young man on board the revenue cutter McCulloch, which was at the battle of Manila, whose mother has a totally erroneous idea of his present occupation," said a Chicago traveling man, who sells goods through the Southern States. "This lady is one of the nicest, most motherly old souls I met in my rounds, but she is at the same time one of the most ignorant of everything except how to get up a good meal of victuals and give a tired drummer a comfortable bed and clean sheets to sleep in. She has been married for 40 years, I suppose, and hasn't been five miles from home since she was a girl. Her only son, a chap of about 28, on the contrary, has not been within five miles from home for longer than six months in the last twenty years. However, he keeps her posted as to his whereabouts, and in all his wanderings he does not forget her. When last heard from he had got some kind of a position on board the United States revenue cutter McCulloch, the vessel that was Dewey's dispatch boat at Manila, and is at present doing duty between California and the Bering Sea. About a week or ten days ago I took dinner at her place, and a fine country dinner it was, too, and I asked her about her boy."

"Oh," she responded, with a smile that would make any body glad to have her for a mother. "Jimmie is doing well now. He don't always get into the best places, and I am afraid that sometimes he gets into real bad ones, but he is turning over a new leaf. I guess he has gone to work with a

preacher. He didn't mention what denomination he was, but that don't make any difference, so long as Jimmie just works for him."

"I'm glad to hear it," I said. "Who is the preacher?"

"I don't know, except that his name is the Rev. Cutter McCulloch. I'll show you Jimmie's letter."

"She did so, and there I read briefly, as might be expected: 'I am now with the Rev. Cutter McCulloch, and doing well, and I smiled softly to myself, but I never said a word to Jimmie's mother.'—Chicago Chronicle."

Boys and Girls.

The Boy Who Started Niagara Suspension Bridge.

There lately died in Lincoln, Neb., a man named H. J. Walsh, who had an important part in the construction of the first suspension bridge at Niagara Falls. Mr. Walsh was born in Ireland, in 1834, but was brought to this country when he was a baby, his parents going to live at Niagara Falls, N. Y.

When he was still a boy the first steps for the construction of the suspension bridge were taken. The first thing of all was to stretch a single wire across the chasm. The engineer in charge had thought of a way to get it across.

"What boy is the best kite-flyer in town?" he asked a resident.

The Walsh boy was named, and the engineer asked that he be brought. He was made to understand that he was to fly a kite across the Niagara River. He flew it across and allowed it to come down on the other side. Men were there to seize it. Then the engineer attached a wire to the string on his side, and the men on the other side detached the kite, and by means of the string drew the wire across. By this, in turn, a cable was drawn across, and the bridge was well begun.

Mr. Walsh afterward removed to Nebraska, and became a prominent citizen of Lincoln.

The Bird's Nest Vine.

[By M. S. Daniels.]

It was very strange what had become of Rosalie's hat. She had worn it all day yesterday, and, indeed, every day since she came to the country, and now, all at once, it could not be found.

The boys helped her hunt for it, and they searched in every likely and unlikely place they could think of—in the hay-loft, the corn-crib, the orchard, the dairy, the clover meadow, the attic, the dog kennels and the chicken house. But they could not find it.

"Never mind," said grandma. "I'll make Rosalie a sunbonnet like those I used to wear when I was a little girl."

She did not see him, his back being turned, caught up the accursed thing under his jacket, and like a flash tore up to the deck again.

With all his strength he threw the lump of coal far into the dimpling sea, and sank on the deck, the perspiration running down from every pore.

Then with a terrific rattling thunder an immense flower of fire arose out of the deep, a great, sudden, billowing tract of white, heaved her aloft like a cork, and raced whirling away into the moonlight distances. Then all was still, save for the fretting and fuming of the sea as it slowly settled again.

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ed yellow. They looked something like squashes.

"They're nothing but gourds," said George one day, in disgust. "The kind Hanne uses to dip water with, you know. Won't grandpa be disappointed when he finds that he has planted the wrong kind of seeds?" For, somehow, grandpa never seemed to go near the birds' nest vines.

Interest in the south garden patch began to flag after this. It was quite late in the summer, and more than a week since any of them had visited it, when one day grandpa said suddenly: "I guess the birds' nests must be about ripe."

To his surprise he did not seem to be a bit disappointed when they reached the garden.

He just picked off one of the handsome gourds, cut a big slice from the end, scraped out the inside, and held it up for the little folks to see.

"Won't that make as good a nest as a little girl's hat?"

Three pairs of eyes grew very bright. "That would make a lovely one," said Rosalie. "But where will you put them?"

In the apple trees?"

"The wrens like to come as near to us as they can," said grandpa. "So how would it do to put them under the eaves of the barn?"

It did seem too bad that they could not see the birds take possession of their new lodgings that season. But it was too late for making any more nests, and these had, after all, been raised for next year, as grandpa reminded them.

But when they came back to the farm the next summer there was a row of hollow gourds fastened all along the eaves. And the children were tired of watching the housekeeping of the wrens from the time they selected their dwellings—not without a good deal of quarrelling—to the day when the last of the young broods flew into the world to shift for themselves.—The Outlook.

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN

Domestic Hygiene.

Although our grandfathers and grandmothers lived tolerably well in what we should now consider unsanitary houses, yet there is little doubt that we all benefit immensely by our improved knowledge in the subject of sanitation.

The custom of putting buckets of ashes outside the doors of houses in towns, to be emptied, is distinctly objectionable, the contents are liable to be blown about, and prove a source of great annoyance (to say nothing of unhealthiness) to ourselves and our neighbors. Inside the house, remember that all lumber (in the shape of old clothes, etc.), waste paper and dust, are receptacles of disease, and generate germs.

Ventilation of rooms is all important. Windows must be open at the top, to let out the heated air, which always ascends; equally important it is to open the lower part to admit fresh air. On damp, foggy days, a short time will elapse, after the beds are made, all but the tops should be closed. The top should be left a little open all night. Let the beds remain stripped some time before making, and the clothes should be well opened and aired, and the mattress should be turned over.

Have as nothing so readily absorb germs and communicates disease, and if any suspicion prevails as to its purity, it should be always boiled, and so should the drinking water, and well filtered besides.

My ideas for the prevention of disease will commend themselves to thinking housekeepers, but too many housewives are merely imitators. Nine houses out of ten will show a sameness in furnishing, and it is only in originality that the world is benefited.

The sanitation of a house affects people's health, nerves and tempers more than they are aware. A healthy mind is dependent on a healthy body, and this can only be maintained by thorough knowledge and strict attention to sanitation, always remembering, too, that "cleanliness is next to godliness."

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Never Box or Pull the Ears.

The reason a blow on the ear may do irreparable injury is that the air, driven suddenly and violently against the drum of the ear, might rupture the membrane and cause incurable deafness. The ears should never be pulled nor meddled with in any way, except to wash them in the gentlest manner, the orifice being cleansed with a fold of the wash-cloth rolled into a little cone.

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A Word in Time.

When scouring the steel knives in use in every kitchen, if a little baking soda be mixed with the brick dust used, the spots will disappear with less rubbing, and the knives will stay bright much longer. Another thing of importance I have learned about scouring knives is the substitution of a cut raw potato for the cloth formerly used.

Another word for soda. Every housekeeper has experienced the annoyance of kerosene oil spilled on a clean kitchen floor, and knows the labor expended in eradicating the spot. If, before the attempt is made to scrub it off, would sift over the spot baking soda, completely covering it, and allow the soda to remain for ten minutes or so, the grease will be drawn out, and when washed the spot will not be found.

Dip the stained part of the handkerchief in spirits of turpentine, and let it remain for several hours then rub thoroughly between the hands, and the ink spots will disappear without changing either the color or texture of the fabric.

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A Good Marshmallow Cake

This is the recipe of a marshmallow cake that attracted considerable attention at the Woman's Exchange, where, it was said, none like it was ever made before. The cake layers are made by creaming a cupful and a half of sugar with half a cupful of butter, and then mixing two cupfuls of flour with a little less than a cupful of cold water. Mix thoroughly, and add the whites of four eggs beaten stiff, and then two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. When beaten smooth, and light, the cake is baked in layers.

The filling of the cake is made by

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Irish Linen Collars and Cuffs. COLLARS—Ladies, from 84c per doz.; Gentlemen's, 4-fold, all newest shapes, \$1.15 per doz. CUFFS—For Ladies or Gentlemen, from \$1.42 per doz. "Surprise makers to Westminster Abbey" and the Cathedral and Churches in the Kingdom. "Their Irish Linen Collars, Cuffs, Shirts, &c., have the merits of excellence and cheapness."—Court Circular.

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REID'S HARDWARE

No. 118 Dundas Street (North Side), London.

soaking an ounce of gum arabic in four teaspoonfuls of cold water. Then dissolve over a stove, strain and add a cupful of granulated sugar. Let it cook in a double boiler for half an hour, or until about as thick as honey. Beat the whites of two eggs stiff, add one teaspoonful of vanilla flavoring and a quarter of a pound of marshmallows softened together in the oven until they run without coloring. Mix these together in the double boiler, and beat until they are thick and spongy. Then the mixture is spread on the layers of cake when cold, and the whole is topped off with good icing.

Orange Float.

Heat one pint of water in a saucepan; when boiling, stir quickly into it two teaspoonfuls of cornstarch mixed to a paste with a little cold water. Stir and cook for ten minutes. Add one-eighth of a teaspoonful of salt and one-half a cupful of sugar, stir until the latter is dissolved and take from the fire. Add the juice and pulp of one large lemon. Cut in half three large juicy oranges, remove the seeds, and with a spoon scoop out the pulp and juice; place in the dish in which the float is to be served, pour over the cooked mixture and set away. Serve with cream and sugar.

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I was CURED of a severe attack of Rheumatism by