

indifference. He stood reflecting for a moment while Kosmaroff ate the ship's biscuit offered to him in the lid of a box, and Cartoner stared thoughtfully at the flickering lamp.

"I'll take him out to sea and bury him there," said Cable, at length, "if so be as that's agreeable to you. There's many a good man buried at sea, and when my time comes I'll ask for no better berth."

"That is the only thing to be done," said Cartoner.

Kosmaroff glanced towards the bed.

"Yes," he said, "that will do. He will lie quiet enough there."

And all three, perhaps, thought of all that they were to bury beneath the sea with this the last of the Bukatys.

Captain Cable was the first to move. He turned and glanced at the clock.

"I'll turn the hands . . ." he said, "and we'll get to sea on the ebb. But I'll have to send ashore for a pilot."

"No," answered Kosmaroff, rising and finishing his wine, "you need not do that. I can take you out to sea."

The captain nodded curtly and went on deck, leaving Kosmaroff and Cartoner alone in the cabin in the silent presence of the man who had been the friend of both.

"Will you answer me a question?" asked Kosmaroff, suddenly.

"If I can," was the reply, economical of words.

"Where were you on the thirteenth of March?"

Cartoner reflected for a moment, and then replied, "In St. Petersburg."

"Then I do not understand you," said Kosmaroff. "I don't understand how we failed. For you know we have failed, I suppose?"