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BY \_\_\_\_\_

#### CHAPTER III.

##### A PLEASANT SURPRISE.

Dinner being over Mr. Vanners arose and followed by his guest, returned to the spacious sitting-room, where both seated themselves before a blazing fire kindled to keep away the chillness of an October storm which was now raging without. Mr. Vanners at first seemed inclined to resume reading, but at length having laid the magazine aside he turned to his guest and enquired of him if he would relate the circumstances of the voyage and wreck, a wish his companion readily acquiesced in and began as follows:—My young friend and myself who are enjoying your hospitality, started three weeks since from the small sea port village of Eden-ville, Suffolkshire England, for New York via Liverpool. The earlier part of the voyage was pleasant, as the sea was calm and the weather delightful, but such serenity was destined to be of short duration. On the sixth day out from land, a severe gale arose and it was soon evident that the sea-worthiness of our ship would

be severely tested. The heavens grew dark and on the succeeding day the rain fell in torrents, the lightning flashed from one end of the heavens to the other, followed by loud, repeated thunderings. The vessel was a staunchly built one, but despite this she rolled about in the seething ocean the waves, almost mountains high, threatening every minute to swallow her up in their relentless fury. The captain was a courageous man and an excellent commander, and enjoyed the confidence and respect of his crew. This enabled him to utilize every opportunity to direct the vessel safely. She withstood the awful commotion until the morning previous to that on which you rescued us. All the preceding night the storm had raged so furiously that the crew were powerless to direct her course. We must have been driven in a westerly direction as it took but a short time to gain the land after the vessel went down. At the dawn of this dreadful morning she was driven against a rock and we immediately discovered that she would be wrecked. The captain with quivering lips called to his crew man the life boats as quickly as possible. The boats were quickly lowered and the passengers rushed forward, eager to avail themselves of this means of escape. The spectacle was indeed a sad one at that hour. Many of the passengers were suffering intensely from sea sickness, adding more to the misery of the situation.