

"Who's caught here?" he called down.

"Benjamin Corvet of Corvet, Sherrill, and Spearman, ship owners of Chicago," Corvet's voice replied deeply, fully; there was authority in it and wonder too—the wonder of a man finding himself in a situation which his recollection cannot explain.

"Ben Corvet!" the mate shouted in surprise; he cried it to the others, those who had followed Corvet and obeyed him during the hour before and had not known why. The mate tried to pull the wreckage aside and make his way to Corvet; but the old man stopped him. "The priest, Father Benitot! Send him to me. I shall never leave here; send Father Benitot!"

The word was passed without the mate moving away. The mate, after a minute, made no further attempt to free Corvet; that indeed was useless, and Corvet demanded his right of sacrament from the priest who came and crouched under the wreckage beside him.

"Father Benitot!"

"I am not Father Benitot. I am Father Perron of L'Anse."

"It was to Father Benitot of St. Ignace I should have gone, Father!"

The priest got a little closer as Corvet spoke, and Alan heard only voices now and then through the sounds of clanging metal and the drum of ice against the hull. The mate and his helpers were working to get him free. They had abandoned all effort to save the ship; it was settling. And with the settling, the movement of the wreckage imprisoning Alan was increasing. This movement made useless the efforts of the mate; it would free Alan of itself in a moment, if it did not kill him; it would free or finish Corvet too. But he, as Alan saw him, was wholly oblivious of that now. His lips moved quietly, firmly; and his eyes were fixed steadily on the eyes of the priest.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

##### Mr. Spearman Goes North.

THE message, in blurred lettering and upon the flimsy tissue paper of a carbon copy—that message which had brought tension to the offices of Corvet, Sherrill, and Spearman, and had called Constance Sherrill and her mother downtown where further information could be more quickly obtained—was handed to Constance by a clerk as soon as she entered her father's office. She reread it; it already had been repeated to her over the telephone.

"4.05 a.m. Frankfort Wireless station has received the following message from No. 25: 'We have Benjamin Corvet, of Chicago, aboard.'"

"You've received nothing later than this?" she asked.

"Nothing regarding Mr. Corvet, Miss Sherrill," the clerk replied.

"Or regarding—Have you obtained a passenger list?"

"No passenger list was kept, Miss Sherrill."

"The crew?"

"Yes; we have just got the names of the crew." He took another copied sheet from among the pages and handed it to her, and she looked swiftly down the list of names until she found that of Alan Conrad.

Her eyes filled, blinding her, as she put the paper down, and began to take off her things. She had been clinging determinedly in her thought to the

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