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A DAUGHTER OF THE STORM!

BY CAPT. FRANK H. SHAW.

CHAPTER X.

The Call of the Sea.

(Continued)

"I'm not a girl, really," confided Aileen. "I'm a storm-child, and that's stronger in me than the girlishness. Miss Selina despairs of me; she says I'm worse to handle than a whole schoolful. But she's break her heart if I left."

"Well, it's mighty strange. Here, don't jump about like that. You were almost over again." He had put out a swift hand, and had caught her arm in time. He did not thrill to the contact, strange to say. It was as if he had reached out to succour a falling shipmate on a topsail yard.

"I'm safe enough, truly," protested Aileen; but he would not rest content until he had drawn her back a little way.

"Now, tell me all about everything." "You're not a sea-funk, are you? I mean, you're not going just to serve your time, and then look out for a shore-billet?"

"I felt awfully like that first voyage," confided Leigh. "But after I got home, just when I began to think I was settled, and the very day a letter came to me from the owners offering me my release, I couldn't do it. I just had to go back, although I knew what it was like. Four weeks of the land sickened me. There didn't seem to be room."

"Yes, I know. I'm glad you're going on. Well, good-night, Leigh." She rose suddenly, slipped away into the darkness, and a moment later he heard her voice rising above the gale, and yet it seemed to him a part of the gale. She was singing gladly, "Away, Rio!" the old capstan chanty that has been sung almost from pre-historic times.

CHAPTER XI.

The Birth of an Idea.

"I think I've learned all there is to learn, dad, now, so I might sign on aboard the Zoroaster regularly."

Captain Curzon looked at his daughter and smiled shrewdly.

"No, no, my dear. Things have altered a lot at sea since your time, and it's no place for a woman. Another year here, and then—well, perhaps I'll leave the sea, and we'll settle down ashore somewhere, where we won't be out of sight of the water, you know."

"Leave the sea! Dad, you won't! No, don't tell fibs. I know you couldn't do it."

"But—I must, Ailee, darling. Things have altered so much, you see. Men aren't what they used to be. They've stuck a donkey-engine aboard the old Zoroaster, and taken five men out of the forecastle. That's young Greening's doing; and, what with one thing and another, the sea isn't what it was. Once let me see you finished here, and then let me see you finished here, and then I'll take my discharge, sell out my share in the ship, and come ashore for good."

"But—I always thought it was a promise, dad, that I should go with you."

"Yes—yes, but that was years ago. Your old men, those who brought you up, have died or gone into the work-house. The new men are just rotters, most of 'em. They wouldn't think to cut out the cursing just because there was a woman aboard. They'd do it worse than ever, just for devilment. All foreigners, too, Dutchmen, you know."

Aileen began to turn over matters in her mind. She and her father were seated on the cliff where three nights before she and Leigh had met unconventionally. She was thinking of Leigh now; he entered into the half-formed scheme that was working in her shrewd young mind. Aileen's latest and most daring peccadillo had passed undetected. She had gained an entry to the garden without discovery, had scrambled skilfully up the drain-pipe, had wormed her precarious way along the gutter, and with a deft spring had gained the room. Hence, her more venial sin forgiven, her father had had nothing but good reports of her, and this was the result. They were face to face with the sea again, it was leaping and foaming beneath them, roaring out a hearty invitation in pure good-fellowship.

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"I'd hoped you would stay at sea all your life," said the girl presently. Her father shook his head, and as he did so he sighed. It would come hard to part with his lifelong antagonist, but—for the sake of the girl it must be done. Aileen heard the sigh, her heart leaped gladly. But she decided to bide her time. She knew that no amount of argument would turn her father, once his mind was made up. Considering everything, she decided on a daring coup de main. She would burn her boats, and, that once done, there could be no turning back. For some reason or other she smiled.

"If you want me to be the prim and proper shore-girl of your dreams, dad," she said gently, "you'll have to let me dress the part. It costs a heap of money—for dresses and things."

"You surely aren't short of pocket-money, Aileen?" he cried, with all a sailor's instinctive open-handedness. Aileen nodded rapidly.

"Awfully short. I've only three and sixpence in the world, and the winter's coming on. There are loads of things to buy. Hand over."

Curzon reached for his pocket, and drew out a handful of loose money—gold, silver, and copper mixed indiscriminately. Aileen bent over the store and picked out half a dozen sovereigns.

"That will do for the present," she said, pocketing them. Now, keep the promise you made last time, dad, and

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The Fraser Machine & Motor Co. for the purpose of reorganizing and enlarging their plant, lately went into voluntary liquidation; the organization is now complete, much more capital has been subscribed to meet the growing demands of the business, and this year double as many FRASER engines will be built as last year. There is no other engine so popular in Newfoundland or Canada as the FRASER, and with the new Company we can promise better service and deliveries than in the past, when many had to wait for their engines, as we could not get them from the factory fast enough. All orders now booked we can ship at a moment's notice FRANKLIN'S AGENCIES, -LTD., St. John's, Newfoundland, Agents.—Feb 28.

Next day the pair went to London, and, once within sight of the packed docks, Aileen forgot everything else. She hailed each ship, bare, dirty, and ugly though it might be, as an old, familiar friend. When the graceful tracery of the Zoroaster's stripped spars appeared against the sky, she sobbed a little, a queer catching sob, and ran on at speed.

Old Steadman was leaning over the poop, smoking thoughtfully. He flung his finger to his cap, his hard old face lightening as though kissed by a sun-goddess.

"Aileen!" he cried, in a voice that rang resoundingly amongst the warehouses, and when the girl fairly flung herself upon his broad chest he chuckled with delight.

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Important Notice!

"We sail on the twenty-fifth of November, sweetheart."

That was so much useful information, and Aileen stowed it away carefully at the back of her mind.

"I don't think you'll disapprove of the way I've spent your money," she said demurely, "when you find out; but telling's knowing, dad."

"There's nothing to do in port."

"Bless you, there's lot to be done. And there's nothing to do ashore—for an old man. Besides I knew you were coming to-day, my dear."

Ah, it was inexpressibly good to be aboard the old ship once more. She roamed from windless to wheel, dropped down into the holds, ventured to climb a little way aloft in the meahouse, scanned the Zoroaster from stem to stern, and—yes, it was more than good. But Aileen had not come here merely to revive old memories—she had another end in view. She was seeking for information, and as she and Steadman padded about the decks she questioned him carefully.

"General cargo, my dear—good stuff. Yes; we shan't be quite full, you know. The after hatch will have space."

"But how if you get into a heavy sea when you're out of the river?" asked Aileen casually. "Won't things throw themselves about a lot?"

"Not with my kind of stowing, my dear." The mate chuckled. He had a name from London to Sydney as a deft stevedore. Aileen gave a sigh of thankfulness. The one fear was set at rest. Nothing now stood in her way.

"He's talking of leaving the sea after this voyage, Ailee," said Steadman, jerking his thumb towards the cabin.

"Say's he can't leave you ashore by yourself when you've finished school."

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He can't leave it—he just can't. Don't you worry?"

"But he won't take me," cried the girl. "He might just as well stay ashore."

"No, he won't do that. He's got it into his head that you're ordained to be a lady, and all that sort. Making of a good sailor's spoil in you, my dear. But he won't leave the sea. Now let me see if you've forgotten anything I taught you. This main-topgallant-spilling-line—"

"This reefal brace, you mean," said Aileen firmly. "Go on." No she had forgotten nothing. The old sealer had merely been relegated to the back of her head for the time being. She was better-versed in her knowledge of ropes, and when Steadman spoke to her of a brand-new towsail, just sent aboard, nothing would satisfy her until the mate called men to his aid and dragged the good forth.

"That's something like canvas," she said admiringly. "I'll live to—"

"Steady, dear, are you sure there's no fear of the cargo shifting? I should hate anything to happen to the ship, you know." He reassured her, and she seemed content. When Curzon took her back to Illminster she was very quiet, which he put down to drowsiness at the distant yet inevitable parting. That night, when he was leaving her, she suddenly threw herself into his arms.

"Dad, you'll never be really angry with me, will you?" she pleaded. "No, really-truly, for-always-and-ever-angry?"

"Not I, child. Who could be angry with you?" He stroked her sunny hair, fondly and turned her face up to meet his own. But Aileen's eyes fell, she flushed unaccountably, and Curzon with a swift pang at his heart, said she had fallen in love. He need not have feared. There was only room for one other love in her heart at that time, and the sea had it all.

(To be continued)

ACCESSORIES FOR THE SMALL GIRLS FROCK

This group shows some little collar and cuff accessories for little girls' frocks. Many of the latest dresses are made with a narrow center panel at the front over which the sides are buttoned. For this style frock the design at the top of the group is chosen. It is of batiste, "Val" lace and embroidery. The second set shows a double collar and cuffs of dark blue satin and figured cotton crepe with rope covered buttons. With these are worn a headband of the same material trimmed in the same colors and silk loops. The lower group is of course line heavily embroidered in dark blue and red, outlined with black.

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