

But as he spoke he slipped and went down heavily. As he rose Jackson came back running—alone.

"They must both be dead," said the purser. "That boat cut right into their berth, old man! There isn't anything there, Wyatt; it's all jags and tatters."

Wyatt felt him shake as he laid hold of him.

"And I heard someone groan," said Jackson.

But even then a woman came running in the darkness, and they knew it was she for whom they looked.

"Catch hold of her," shouted Jackson. "And get her on deck, Wyatt!"

He rushed up the companion and disappeared. Wyatt caught Mrs. Herman as she came by him.

"Let me go," she said breathlessly, "I must find my husband."

But at that moment the *Lyceemoo* lurched as heavily as if she were sinking, and Wyatt caught hold of her and lifted her in his arms and cried out—

"You can't go! He's dead, dead!"

And still she cried out that she must help him and slipped away from his grasp. But again he caught hold of her and lifted her up, and for a moment she was rigid in his arms and then as limp as if she, too, were dead. With great difficulty he carried her to the upper deck, and felt the wind and rain upon his cheek. On deck there seemed no order nor anyone capable of procuring it. The darkness was intensified by the white foam of the tumbling seas. Folks cried and ran to and fro aimlessly. Some called for those who did not answer. The Chinese deck-hands and stokers lost their heads and took charge. The little second mate, who had never had any authority, was swept aside. No one saw the captain or heard him; he was asleep. Simpson, the chief mate, now partly sobered, made an attempt to stem the rush of the crew, but he was half crazy. Wyatt saw him pull a six-shooter, heard him bellow, saw the flash as he fired, and then heard

him cry out as he fell stabbed to the heart by a Malay. The men themselves set about getting a boat over the side. As it was being lowered, unequally and unevenly, part of them rushed it, and when it took the water the forward tackles came unhooked. The still moving *Lyceemoo* gave a roll and held the boat up by the after-tackle and emptied it. There was a frightful screaming of men who were thrown into the sea. And then Wyatt felt the woman in his arms begin to come to; she moaned.

"Where's the captain?" asked Wyatt of Jackson.

"Dead drunk," said Jackson. "He'll go down with his ship. Have you a life belt? Put one on her."

And he and Wyatt strapped one on her. At that moment it seemed to him that there might be more in life than there ever had been. Once again he thought of the Sussex Downs, the pine trees and the sails of the wind-mill answering quietly to the quiet breeze. And then he heard a scream from the siren of the vessel that had cut them down. He saw her black bulk still stem on to them. Jackson took him by the arm.

"She's our chance," he said, "if they will only lower boats."

"Can't we lower another of ours?" asked Wyatt.

The second mate, with a few of the crew who were left, was trying to lower one, but the *Lyceemoo* was wallowing deeply like a log. She had lost all buoyancy. She heeled over as if she was going and the boat took the water. The next moment the steamer gave another wallow and the deck sloped heavily. Wyatt felt himself slide. He slipped down to the rail with Mrs. Herman clinging to him.

"Get over the side," said Jackson. "We're better out of it!"

And Wyatt took her in his arms and jumped. As he swam he saw a little way from him the boat that had been lowered, with three men in it. Near it there were others swimming. He struggled to reach it with his bur-