

8      *THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA*

upon which was an embroidered number: '19. This was his college year.

The mahogany boat and all the rest of its furnishings had gone down into the waters of the Strait. He was alone, without support, in the centre of a tidal flow which was carrying him seaward. He trod water and lifted his head from the surface of the flood.

A pale light showed at Moore's Landing, deep within the pine woods. A row of yellow lanterns marked the hotel on the other shore. He sank to his chin in water and lay over on his back. He finned the brine and wondered how long he would last.

The drag of his coat and duck shoes hampered him, so, doubling and twisting, he rid himself of them. The water roared in his ears. He came to the surface and for the first time realized that it was cold. His teeth chattered. He remembered the childish thing he had done in swinging the boat's stern to the storm.

Often before in his life, which was brief enough, he had made errors in judgment. He recalled fatal hesitancies and indecisions. There was the time when he had had the ball in a game with the goal in sight, a mis-step and a pause had allowed a fast quarter-back to down him.