

"Go, Chaon!" With difficulty I made my way to the stern of the ship, but before I left it the barge broke. I made a frantic rush for the deck load, but a sailor seized my arm and the deck load floated away. Then the bow was carried leeward, farther and farther from us into the blacker midnight.

"A life-boat! A life-boat!" I cried.

"Are you mad, sir?" shouted the second mate, holding to my face a red light. "Yo' might as well look for purity in a pig sty as for life-boats or anything else, exceptin' death, to-night. Give a hand there wi' them planks."

Hope dies hard in the heart of a lover, and when the *Cordelia* blew a shrill blast from her whistle, hope breathed again.

The *Cordelia* was a large propeller, and was light. This made the work of transferring to her the *Oriana's* passengers dangerous in the extreme, and at first seemingly impossible. She was brought beside the wreck, but towered above it in awful grandeur. The storm was at its height and it was only by the aid of artificial lights and the electric flashes that anything was accomplished. Planks were made ready, and whenever the immense waves brought the wreck and the propeller on something like a level, the passengers and officers crossed, upon the planks, to the *Cordelia*.

"There's hope yet, hope yet," said the captain of the propeller. "If we can reach the bow before it goes to pieces we can save all hands."

As she was bearing down upon the *Oriana*, the *Cordelia* had made ready her tow line, expecting to