

three or four miles across. Except for a few razor-bills, nothing but the ripple she trailed broke the reflection of the calm sky. Then his glance, traveling north, stopped and fixed on something faintly distinguishable against the thin mist.

"No," he said, "I don't see her. Thought I did some time since but she's faded. What's that in the distance on our starboard bow?"

"It's hard to tell. Might be a big black-backed gull resting on the water. The misty light magnifies things."

"Shall I get the glasses?"

"Not unless you want them. They're under the stuff we stowed away in the locker aft. If Charley has finished pumping, you might help him get out the spinnaker. We'll have the wind fair when the flood begins to run."

Marston and the fisher-lad vanished down the fore-castle hatch, and Wyndham studied the distant object. He did not yet need the sail the others had gone for, but he was afraid of Charley's keen eyes. A buoy indicating a shoal was not far off and the sailing directions for the race stated that all marks of this kind must be kept on the port hand, but Wyndham knew the coast and imagined the tide was still ebbing in a neighboring river mouth. The main stream ran north and would carry the boats off their course, but near the shore another stream ran west across some wide shoals. If he could steer *Red Rose* into this current, it would help her on while her rivals, farther off the land, drifted back. When the others came up with the sail Wyndham wondered whether Marston would ask for the chart, but he did not. The object