

Dolphin's sailing did anyone outside the major's own family surmise that his daughter was to be a passenger, and so rapidly, even secretly, was her luggage carried aboard that very few persons saw it at all. Among the rest was one article singular enough as part of a young lady's outfit, especially so healthy, active, and blithe a girl as Dorothea Cathcart; it was one of those large, square, stuffed easy-chairs still to be found in old country houses, sometimes dishonored in the lumber-loft, sometimes carefully preserved in cover of white dimity or gay old-fashioned chintz in the chamber of the grand-mamma. This one was covered in green moreen, and had stood in Mrs. Cathcart's own bedroom, although that dear lady had not been able to occupy it for many a day. A short time after the decision with regard to his daughter, Major Cathcart had removed this chair to his own study, and both he and Dolly had occupied themselves over it for many hours, until at the last the girl deftly sewed a tow-cloth over all, and said to her father, who stood watching the operation:

"There, father, it will stand in the cabin, and I shall say that it is covered lest any but my dear mother should use it, and I am taking it to her invalid sister in Halifax, whom I am about to visit."

"I doubt not your shrewd wit will suggest many a quip and turn," replied the major, with a grim smile; "but take care you do not pass the bounds of truth and discretion."

"I will take heed, father. The barrels are all ready, are they not?"

"Yes, and shipped. Here is the bill of lading," and Major Cathcart took from his pocketbook and handed to his daughter a slip of paper worded thus: "Shipped by the Grace of GOD, in good order and well conditioned, by Reginald Cathcart, in and upon the good Schooner called the *Dolphin*, whereof is Master under GOD for this present voyage William Peters, and now riding at anchor in the Harbour of Pilgrim Vale, and by GOD'S Grace bound for Halifax, to say, Twenty barrels and boxes of sundries on A/c. and Risque of the Shipper, and consigned to Cathcart and Kingsbury, Halifax. Being marked and numbered as in the Margent, and are to be delivered in the like good Order and well Conditioned at the aforesaid Port of Halifax (the Dangers of the Seas only excepted) unto said Cathcart and Kingsbury or to their assigns, he or they paying Freight for the said Goods, Sixpence per cw., English Currancy, with Primage and Average accustomed. In witness whereof the Master or Purser of the said Schooner hath affirmed to two Bills of Lading, all of this Tenor and Date, one of which two bills being accomplished, the other to stand void."

"And so GOD send the good Schooner to her destined Port in safety. AMEN."

"Dated in Pilgrim Vale, October the 15th, 1774."

WILLIAM PETERS.
Dolly rapidly ran her eye over the familiar form, for part of her busy life had been to play the occasional part of confidential clerk in her father's business, and she smiled as she returned it to him, saying:

"Barrels and boxes of sundries? Well, and so they are. China and books and household gear are sundries, no doubt, although I dare say your partners think it is mackerel or—"

"It does not concern the other owners of the schooner, since I ship freight at my own charge and purely as a private venture," interrupted Major Cathcart, hastily. "But be careful, Dolly, that you say not a word either here or upon the voyage as to the nature of those same sundries, for William Peters is a fanatic as bitter as the worst, and if he got wind of the matter here, nothing would be more likely than that he should persuade Merivale and the rest to throw off the mask at once, and confiscate my goods to the republic they talk of founding. Even at sea you must be careful, for this man is quite capable, even in the harbor of Halifax, of giving the order to 'bout ship, and bring you and the easy-chair and the barrels of sundries all back to Pilgrim Vale. It is a large errand for so young a woman as you, Dolly, and you will need

to be wily as the serpent, though innocent as the dove."

"I think I can do it, father," said Dolly, quietly; and, as the Major looked in his daughter's face, he thought she could.

The morning that the *Dolphin* was to sail, Captain Peters found that Thomas Wilson, his first mate, had fallen down the steep ladder leading from his house to the shore, sprained an ankle and broken a wrist, and was obviously unfit for a voyage. As he grimly meditated over this reverse, he encountered a flushed and breathless young man, who thus accosted him:

"Splendid weather, captain. I've a mind to make the cruise with you up to Halifax."

"Cabin's all engaged and paid for, John Belknap," replied the skipper, gruffly. "That old Tory Cathcart is sending his daughter up there to bring down troops upon us, or something of that color, I'll warrant. I wonder the owners don't see through it and refuse; but he's paid for the cabin and both state-rooms, so that madam should not be spied upon, I suppose."

"Oh, never mind; I'll go as clerk, or purser, or steward, or even as a foremast hand. I can hand-reef and steer with any man, you know, and hard work, or hard fare either, don't frighten me."

The skipper looked meditatively at the young man, and turned the quid in his cheek, then carelessly asked:

"Did you know that fool Wilson has tumbled down the cliff steps and disabled himself, at least for this voyage?"

"Your first mate? Hullo, skipper! Is that what you mean? Will you give me the berth?"

"Hold hard, lad! What are you squeezing my old flipper for, and what's your rage for Halifax just now? Is the English lass that was here last year up there, or have you quarreled with your uncle, or—"

"Never mind why I want to get to Halifax," replied the young man, rapidly, seizing upon this version of his eagerness to ship in the *Dolphin*. "But saying I do, will you give me Wilson's place?"

"Why, yes, Belknap, and be glad to get you; for I've seen you handle a boat round the harbor here and up on the fishing ground often enough to know that you're worth having aboard, even if you— But look here; there's the gal. She's got to have the after-cabin, and her meals are to be separate, and no one knows all the fine airs she'll put on. Maybe you couldn't stand it, and I don't know as I can. The little she-Tory!"

But John Belknap did not seem in the least disturbed even at this prospect, and no other objections coming up, the bargain was soon concluded, the young man's name set down upon the schooner's books as mate, *vice* Thomas Wilson, discharged, and he at once entered upon his duties. One of the first of them was to receive and place the last articles of Miss Dolly's luggage, including the arm-chair, which he was about to have stowed in the hold, when the young lady herself came off, attended by her father. At sight of the first mate standing beside the open hatchway, reaving a line around the chair, Miss Dolly showed signs of some embarrassment, whether arising from the sudden appearance of her old friend and school-fellow, or from his employment, no one can say.

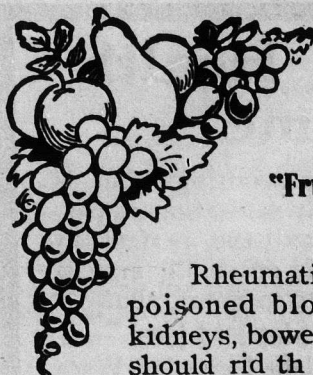
"Oh, John—but the chair is for my cabin. And are you helping Captain Peters get ready?" stammered she; and the mate, hardly less disturbed, replied, in much the same style:

"Certainly, Dolly—of course, Mistress Cathcart; it will be as you direct, surely; and—yes, of course; I am mate of the *Dolphin*, you know."

"You mate of the *Dolphin*? Since when, John Belknap?" asked Dolly's father, severely.

"To-day, sir. I was looking for a voyage, and wanting to go upon my own business to Halifax; and as Wilson is disabled, I took the place," replied Belknap, a little more coherently, and meeting as best he might the piercing regard fixed upon him by the major from beneath his shaggy gray eyebrows. At last the veteran slowly spoke:

"You have a right to your own business, as you say, John Belknap, and I



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