

Lanyon glanced up in his master's face with a quaint humor on his own.

"Truly, I was overbold," he grumbled, "to think that knight or high-born dame, whether in flesh or spirit, would concern themselves greatly as to what would befall a battered old *routier*. Under your leave I will prophesy for mine own self. Your worship may remember certain words of mine when your hand rested on my shoulder—even as to-day awhile ago, only that we were far out in the deep sea. 'Whether ye sink or swim,' I said, 'I am minded to keep your company.' So say I now: which founders first is but small matter."

Just then the door at the lower end of the presence-chamber opened, and Gualtier de Marsan came in to inquire his lord's farther orders for the night. Ralph looked kindly on the esquire, and half pityingly too, for the other's face was very wan and weary.

"I have no more work for thee to-night. De Clisson is too wary a captain to attempt the breach darkling, so we must needs have rest to dawn. I am minded to take repose, and I counsel thee, Gualtier, to do likewise: thy strength is somewhat minished by sickness, and I fear me it hath been overtaxed already. Trust me, I was not so busy but that I marked how gallantly thou didst bear thyself before Bullhead here," he smote Lanyon on the shoulder, "played his old sleight with the scaling-ladder. So rest you well while you may."

There was an eager, wistful look in De Marsan's eyes, and it seemed as though he would have spoken; but if he had any such thought, the presence of the other esquire restrained him. With a low obeisance he turned and left the presence-chamber.