

with sails flapping and banging, she came head to wind. The long booms jerked, blocks and ropes whipped to and fro, and the crew began to run about the deck. One or two hauled down the foresail, one or two trimmed the jibs aback, and Marston helped the others at the Burton tackle to hoist out the gig.

He jumped on board as she took the water. Four excited negroes leaped down from the schooner's bulwarks, and a white sea washed across the bows as they shoved her off. They got away without damage, and pulled obliquely to leeward while Marston tried to calculate how far *Columbine* had gone since he last saw Rupert. It was necessary to be accurate, because, except when the combers picked up the boat, he could see nothing but the white tops of the waves. Besides, rowing on an angry sea is hard and the men would soon get exhausted. Since they could not search long, he must reach the proper spot.

No floating object tossed among the foam, and after half an hour he gave it up. Rupert Wyndham had gone; he was old, and a good swimmer could not have lived long in such a sea, because a man, buffeted by breaking waves, may drown before he sinks. The boat had shipped much water, the crew were worn out, and had some trouble to row back to *Columbine*. When they had hoisted in the gig and put the schooner on her course, Marston went to the cabin and mixed a drink. He was wet, his hands shook, and his arms ached, for he had been forced to use his strength while he labored with the big sculling oar.

Moreover, he was strangely disturbed. He had shrunk from Rupert Wyndham with half-instinctive repulsion. In one sense, Rupert's drowning would relieve him and Wyndham from an awkward respon-