**Royal Yard** Down A Stirring Tale of Love and Adventure on the Ocean

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night descended, cold and damp, the wind hauled, and by 9 o'clock the ship was charging along before a half gale and a rising sea from the port quarter. When the watch had braced the yards the mate ordered the spanker brailed in and the mizzen royal clued up, as the ship steered hard. This was done and the men coiled up the gear.

"Let the spanker bang in the brails. Tie up the royal," ordered the mate from his position at the break of the DOOD.

"Aye, aye, sir," answered a voice from the group, and an active figure sprang into the rigging. Another figure-slim and, graceful, clad in long. yellow oilskin coat and a sou'wester which could not confine a tangled fringe of wind blown hair-left the shelter of the after companionway and sped along the alley to the mate's side.

"The foot rope, Mr. Adams," she said hurriedly. "The seizing was chafed. you remember."

"By George, Miss Fredal" said the officer. "Forgot all about it. Glad you spoke. Come down from aloft." he added, in a rear.

The sailor answered and descended. "Get a piece of spun yarn out o' the booby hatch and take it up wi' you." continued the mate. "Pass a temporary seizing on the lee royal foot rope. Make sure it's all right 'fore you get on it. now."

the ratines ended and ne must unit on the runner of the royal halyards As the yard was lowered, this was a short climb, and he swung himself up ward to the weather yardarm, where be rolled up one side of the sail with extravagant waste of muscular effort. for she had said he was not a man. and he had proved her wrong. He had conquered himself, and he had conquered ber. = 224

He hitched the gasket and cross over to the lee side, forgetting in his exhibitariation the object of the spun yaru in his pocket and the marline spike hung from his neck, stepped out on the foot rope, passed his hands along the jackstay to pull himself farther and felt the foot rope sink to the sound of snapping strands. The jack stay was torn from his grasp, and he fell face downward into the black void beneath.

An involuntary shrick began on his lips, but was not finished. He felt that the last atom of air was jarred from his lungs by what he knew was the topgallant yard, four feet below the royal, and, unable to hold on, with a freezing cold in his veins, and at the hair roots, he experienced in its full-ness the terrible sensation of failingwhirling downward-clutching wildly at vacancy with stiffened fingers.

The first horror past, his mind took on a strange contemplativeness. Fear of death gave way to mild curiosity as to the manner of it. Would be strike on the lee quarter, or would he go overboard? And might he not catch something? There was rigging below him. The lee royal backstay stretched farthest out from the mast, and if he brushed it there was a possible chance. He was now face upward and with the utmost difficulty moved his eyeshe could not yet, by any exercise of will or muscle, move his head-and there; almost within reach, was a dark line, which he knew was the royal backstay. Farther in toward the spars was another, the topgallant backstay. and within this two other ropes which he knew for the topgallant rigging.

though he could see no ratlines, nor could he distinguish the lay of the strands. The ropes appeared like solid bars. This, with the fact that he was still but a few feet below the topgallant yard, surprised him, until it came to him that falling bodies travel over sixteen feet in the first second of descent, which is at a rate too fast for distinct vision, and that the apparent slowness of his falling was but relative, because of the quickness of his mind, which could not wait on a sluggish optic nerve and more sluggish retina. Yet be wondered why he could not reach out and grasp the backstay. It seemed as though invisible fetters' bound every muscle and joint, though not completely. An intense effort of will resulted in the slow extension of all the fingers of his right hand and a little straightening of the arm toward the backstay, but not until he had fallen to the level of the upper topsail yard was this result reached. It did no good; the backstay was now farther away. As it led in a straight line from the royal masthead to the rail, this meant that he would fall overboard, and the thought comforted him. The concussion would kill him. of course, but no self pity afflicted him now. He merely considered that she, who had relented, would be spared the sight of him crushed to a pulp on the deck. As he drifted slowly down past the expanse of upper topsail he noticed that his bead was sinking and his body turning so that he would ultimately face forward. But still his arms and egs held their extended position, like those of a speared frog, and the thought recalled to him an incident of his infancy-a frog himt with an older playmate, his prowess, success, wet feet and consequent illness. It had an evil grin. been forgotten for years, but the chain was started and led to other memories. long dead, which rose before him. His childhood passed in review, with its pleasures and griefs; his school days. with their sports, conflicts, friends and enemies; college, where he had acquired the polish to make him petted of all but one-and abhorrent to her. Almost every person, man or woman, boy or girl, with whom he had conversed in his whole life came back and repeated the scene, and as he passed the lower topsail yard, nearly head downward, he was muttering commonplaces to a brown faced, gray eyed girl, who listened and looked him turough and through and seemed to be wondering why he existed. And as he traversed the depth of the lower topsail, turning gradually on his axis, he lived it over-next to his first voyage, the most harrowing period of his life-the short two months during which he had striven mainly to impress this simple natured sailor girl with his good qualities, ending at last with his frantic declaration of a love that she did not want. "But it's not the least use, John." she said to him. "I do not, love you, and I cannot You are a gentleman. s they say and as such I like you ed enough, but I never can love you r any one like you five been among 

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earnestness-"you are not a man."

would have been brutal spoken by anbut his luck und the fates that had that she could tolerate profaulty in a claim her acquaintance again. Then followed the snubbing in the street, when, like a lately whipped dog, he had placed himself in her way, hoping she would notice him, and the long agony of humiliation and despair as

heart and soul followed her over the seas in her father's ship until the seed she had planted-the small suspicion that her words were true-developed into a wholesome conviction that she had measured him by a higher standard than any he had known and found him wanting. So he would go to her school and learn what she knew. With lightning-like rapidity his mind rehearsed the details of his tuition-

"It's not the least use, John. love you."

the four long voyages; the brutality of the officers until he had learned his work; their consideration and rough kindness when he had become useful and valuable; the curious, incongruous feeling of self respect that none but able seamen feel; the growth in him of an aggressive physical courage: the triumphant satisfaction with which he finally knew himself as a complete man, clean in morals and mind, able to look men in the face. And then came the moment when, mustering at the capstan with the new crew of her father's ship, he had met her surprised eyes with a steady glance and received no recognition.

And so he pleaded his cause dumbly, by the life that he lived. Asking nothing by word or look, he proved himself under her eves-first on deck. first in

have ideals that are strange to you. his head. In the calm of the bollows John"-her eyes were wide open in he listened for voices of possible rescuers. On the tops of the seas, ears Writhing under her words, which filled with the roar of the gale, he shouted, facing to leeward, and searchother, he cursed, not her nor himself. ing with strained eyes for sign of the ship or of one of her boats. At last he shaped his life. And next she was saw a pin point of light far away and showing him the opened door, saying around it and above it blacker darkuess, which was faintly shaped to the man, but not in a gentleman, and that outline of a ship and canvas, hove to under no circumstances was he to in the trough, with maintop sail aback. as he knew by its fore shortening. And even as he looked and shouted it faded away. He screamed and cursed.

> vived that terrible fall, and it was his right. Something white showed on the top of a sea to leeward and sank in a hollow. He sank, with it, and when he rose again it was nearer.

for he wanted to live. He had sur-

"Boat aboy!" he sang out. "Boat aboy. This way-port a little-steady!" He swam as he could, cumbered by the lifebuoy. and with every heaving sea the boat came nearer. At last he recognized it-the ship's dinghy-and it was being pulled into the teeth of

that forceful wind and sea by a single rower, a slight figure in yellow. "It's Freda!" he exclaimed, and then. in a shout: "This way, Miss Folsom-

a little farther!" She turned, nodded and pulled the boat up to him. He seized the gun-

wale, and she took in the oars. "Can you climb in alone, John?" she asked in an even voice, as even as though she were asking him to have more tea. "Wait a little-I am tiredand I will help you." She was ever calm and dispassion-

ate, but he wondered at her now. Yet ne would not be outdone. "I'll climb over the stern, Freda, so

as not to capsize you. Better go for-ward to balance my weight." She did so. He pulled himself to the stern, slipped the lifebuoy over his head and into the boat, then, by a mighty exercise of all his strength, vaulted aboard with seeming ease and sat down on a thwart. He felt a strong inclination to laughter and tears, but

repressed himself, for masculine hysterics would not do before this young woman. She came aft to the next thwart, and when he felt steadier he said.

"You have saved my life, Freda, but thanks are idle now, for your own is in danger. Give me the oars. We must get back to the ship."

She changed places with him, facing forward and said wearily as he'shipped the cars, "So you want to get back?"

"Why, yes. Don't you? We are adrift in an open boat." "The wind is going down, and the

seas do not break," she answered in the same weary voice. "It does not rain any more, and we will have the moon."

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"And left you in an open boat?" he there?" demanded the mate when he answered angrily. "He knew I was with you.

What was irrelevant in this explanaion of the mate's conduct escaped him at the time. The full moon had emerged from behind the racing clouds, and it brightened her face. fringed by the tangled hair and yellow sou wester, to an unearthly beauty that he had never seen before. He wondered at it, and for a moment a grisly thought crossed his mind that this was not life, but death; that he had died in the fall, and in some manuer the girl had followed.

She was standing erect, her lithe figure swaying to the boat's motion. and pointing to leeward, while the moonlit face was now sweetened by the smile of a happy child. He stood up and looked where she pointed, but saw nothing and seated himself to

look at her. "See!" she exclaimed gleefully. "They

have hauled out the spanker and are sheeting home the royal. I will never be married! I will never be married! He knew I was with you."

Again he stood up and searched the sea to leeward. There was nothing in sight.

"Unhinged," he thought, "by this night's trouble. Freda," he said gently, "please sit down. You may fall overboard."

"I am not insane." she said, as though reading his thought, and, smiling radiantly in his face, she obeyed him.

"Do you know where we are?" he asked tentatively. "Are we in the track of ships?"

"No.' she answered, while ber face took on the dreamy look again; "we are out of all the tracks. We will not be picked up. We are due west from Ilio island. I saw it at sundown broad on the starboard bow. The wind is due south. If you will pull in the trough of the sea we can reach it before daylight. I am tired-so tiredand sleepy. Will you watch out?"

"Why, certainly. Lie down in the stern sheets and sleep if you can." She curled up in her yellow oil coat and slumbered through the night, while he pulled easily on the oars, not that he had full faith in her navigation, but to keep himself warm. The sea became smoother, and as the moon rose higher it attained a brightness almost equal to that of the sun, casting over the clear sky a deep blue tint that shaded indefinitely into the darkness extending from itself to the horizon. Late in the night he remembered the danger of sleeping in strong moonlight, and, arising softly to cover her face with his damp handkerchief. he found her looking at him.

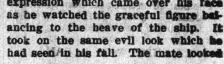
"We are almost there, John. Wake me when we arrive," she said and closed her eyes.

reached the deck, and a yellow clad figure drew near to listen. "It was nothing, sir. I forgot about

the foot rope." "You're a bigger lunkhead than I thought. Go forrard."

He went and when he came aft at four bells to take his trick at the wheel the girl was still on deck, standing near the companionway, facing forward. The mate stood at the other side of the binnacle, looking at her, with one elbow resting on the house. There was just light enough from the cabin skylight for Owen to see the expression which came over his face

ancing to the heave of the ship. It took on the same evil look which he had seen in his fall. The mate looks





"Will you please mind your own business?" she almost screamed.

up into Owen's face and saw some thing there which he must have understood, for he dropped his glance to the compass, snarled out, "Keep her on the course." and stepped into the lee alleyway, where the dinghy, lashed upside down on the house, hid him from view.

The girl appreached the man at the wheel.

"I saw you fall, Mr. Owen," she said in a trembling voice, "and I could not help screaming. Were you hurt much?" "No. Miss Folsom." 'he answered in' low though not a steady tone, "but I was sadly disappointed.'

"I confess I was nervous-very nervous-when you went aloft," she said, "and I cleared away the lifebuoy. Then, when you fell, it slipped out of my hand and went overboard. Mr. Adams scolded me. Wasn't it ridiculous?" There were tears and laughter in the speech.

"Not at all," he said gravely. "It He covered her face and, marveling saved my life, for which I thank you. "Who in Sam Hill's been casting of these gripe lashings?" growled the voice of the mate behind the dinghy. The girl tittered hysterically and stepped beside Owen at the wheel, where she patted the moving spokes pretending to assist him in steering. "Miss Freda," said the officer sternly as he came around the corner of the house, "I must ask you plainly to let things alone. And another thing, please don't talk to the man at the wheel." "Will you please mind your own business?" she almost screamed, and then, crying and laughing together, "If you paid as much attention to your work as you do to-to-me men wouldn't fall from aloft on account of rotten foot ropes." The abashed officer went forward, grumbling about "discipline" and "women aboard ship." When he was well out of sight in the darkness the girl turned suddenly, passed both arms around Owen's neck, exerted a very. slight pressure, patted him playfully on the shoulder as she withdrew them and sped down the companionway. He steered a wild course during that trick and well deserved the profane criticism which he received from the maże.

The man passed down the poop steps. ecured the spun yarn and while rolling it into a ball to put in his pocket stood for a moment in the light shin. ing from the second mate's room. The girl on the poop looked down at him. He was a trim built, well favored young fellow, with more refinement in his face than most sailors can show. yet there was no lack of seamanly definess in the fingers which balled up the spun yarn and threw a half hitch with the bight of the lanyard over the point of the marline spike which bung to his neck. As he climbed the steps the girl faced him, looking squarely into his eyes.

"Be careful, John-Mr. Owen," she mid. "The seizing is chafed through. 1 beard the man report it. It was Dutch George of the other watch. Do be careful."

"Er-why-why, yes, Miss Folsom. Thank you. But you startled me. I've een Jack for three years, not John or Mister. Yes, it's all right; I"-"Get aloft to that mizzen royal!" hundered the mate, now near the wheel.

"Aye, aye, sir." He touched his sou'wester to the girl and mounted the er mizzen rigging, running up



Involuntary Shriek Began on His Lips, but Was Not Finished.

ratines as a fireman goes up a adder. It was a black night with old rain, and, having thrown off his led jacket, he was already drenched to the skin. But no environment of sunshine, green fields and woodland and flower scented air ever made life brighter to him than had the incident the last few moments. and, with every nerve in his body rejoicing in his ictory and her bitter words of four years back crowding his mind as a potrasting background, he danced up ad over the futtock shrouds, up the ast rigging, through the crosstrees the topgallant rigging to where

the rigging, the best man at a weather earing, the best at the wheel, quick, obedient, intelligent and respectful, winning the admiration of his mates. the jealous ill will of the officers, but no sign of interest or approval from her until tonight, the ninety-second day of the passage. She had surrendered. He had reached her level, only to die, and he thought this strange. Facing down ward, head inboard now,

and nearly horizontal, be was passing the crossjack yard. Below him was the sea, black and crisp, motionless as though .carved in ebony. Neither was there movement of the ship and its rigging, the hanging bights of ropes were rigid, while a breaking sea just abaft the main chains remained poised. curled, its white crest a frozen pillow of foam. "The rapidity of thought." he mused dreamily, "but I'm failing fast enough-fast enough to kill me when I strike."

He could not move an eyelid now. nor was he conscious that he breathed; but, being nearly upright, facing aft and inboard, the quarter deck and its fittings were before his eyes, and be saw what brought him out of eternity to a moment of finite time and emotion. The helmsman stood at the mo-

tionless wheel with his right hand poised six inches above a spoke, as though some sudden paralysis gripped him, and his face, illumined by the binnacle light, turned aloft inquiringly. But it was not this. Standing at the taffrail, one hand on a life buoy. was a girl in yellow looking at him. unspeakable horror in the look, and around her waist the arm of the mate. on whose rather handsome face was

A pang of earthly rage and jealousy shot through him, and he wished to live. By a supreme effort of will he brought his legs close together and his arms straight above his head. Then the picture before him shot upward. and he was immersed in cold salt water, with blackness all about him how long he remained under he could not guess. He had struck feet first and suffered no harm, but had gone down like a deep sea lead. He felt the aching sensation in his lungs coming from suppressed breathing and swam blindly in the darkness, not knowing in which direction was the surface, until he felt the marlinespike still fastened to his neck, extending of to the right. Sure that it must hang downward, he turned the other way and, keeping it parallel with his body, swam with bursting lungs until he felt air upon his face and knew that he could breathe. In choking sobs and gasps his breath came and went, while he paddled with his hands and feet. glad of his reprieve, and when his lungs worked normally he struck ou. for a white, circular lifebuoy not sia feet away. "Bless her for this," he prayed as he slipped it under his arms. His oilskin trousers were cumberso

and with a little trouble he shed them. He was alive, and his. world wa. again in motion. Seas lifted and drop ped him, occasionally breaking over

A glance around to spoke truly. There was less pressure to the wind, and the seas rose and fell. sweeping past them like moving hills of oil Moonlight shining through thinning clouds faintly illumined her face. and he saw the expressionless weariness of her voice and a sad, dreamy look in her gray eyes. "How did you get the dinghy down.

Freda?" he asked. "And why did no one come with you?

"Father was asleep, and the mate was incompetent. I had my revolver.



"Can you climb in alone, John?" she asked in an even voice.

and they backed the yards for me and threw the dinghy over. I had loosened the gripes as you went aloft. I thought you would fall. Still, no one would come." "And you came alone," he said in a

broken voice, "And pulled this boat to windward in this sea. You are a wonder." "I saw you catch the lifebuoy. Why

did you fall? You were cautioned." "I forgot the foot rope. I was think, ing of you."

"You are like the mate. He forgot the foot rope all day because he was thinking of me. I should have gone aloft and seized it myself."

There was no reproof or sarcasm in the tired voice. She had simply made an assertion.

"Why are you at sea, before the mast, a man of your taients?" It was foolish, he knew, but the

word "man" sent a thrill through him. "To please you if 1 may, to cultivate what you did not find in me." "Yes, I knew. When you came on

board I knew it. But you might have spoken to me." There was petulance in the tone now,

and the soul of the man rejoiced. The woman in her was asserting itself. "Miss Folsom." he answered warmly, "I could not. You had made it im-

possible. It was your right, your duty, if you wished it. But you ignored my existence."

"I was testing you. I am glad now, Mr. Owen."

The petulance was gone, but there was something chilling in this answer. "Can you see the ship?" be asked after a moment's silence. "The moonight is stronger." "We will not reach ber. They have squared away. The mate bad the deck.

and father is asleep."

within a half mile of a sandy beach which bordered a wooded island. The sea was now like glass in its level moothness, and the air was warm and fragrant with the smell of flowers and foliage. He shipped the oars and pulled to the beach. As the boat grounded she arose, and he belped her ashore.

The beach shone white under the moonlight, and dotting it were large shellfish and moving crabs that scuttled away from them. Bordering the beach were forest and undergrowth with interlacery of flowering vines. A ridge of rocks near by disclosed caves and hollows, some filled by the water of tinkling cascades. Oranges showed in the branches of trees, and cocoa palms lifted their heads high in the distance. A small deer arose, looked at them and lay down, while a rabbit inspected them from another direction and began nibbling.

"An earthly paradise, I should say. he observed as he hauled the boat up the beach. "Plenty of food and water. at any rate."

"It is Ilio island," she answered, with that same dreamy voice. "It is uninhabited and never visited."

"But surely, Freda, something will come along and take us off." "No. If I am taken off I must be married, of course, and I will never be

married." "Who to, Freda? Whom must you marry if we are rescued?"

"The mate, Mr. Adams. Not you, John Owen, not you. I do not like you." She was unbalanced, of course, but

the speech pained him immeasurably, yourself to salute an officer?" and he made no answer. He searched the clean cut horizon for a moment. and when he looked back she was close to him, with the infantile smile on her face, candor and sanity in her gray eyes. Involuntarily he extended his

arms, and she nestled within them. "You will be married. Freda," be said; "you will be married, and to me."

He held her tightly and kissed her lips, but the kiss ended in a crashing sound and a shock of pain in his whole body which expelled the breath from his lungs. The moonlit island, sandy beach, blue sea and sky were swallowed in a blaze of light, which gave way to pitchy darkness, with rain on his face and whistling wind in his ears, while he clung with both arms, not to a girl. but to a hard, wet and cold mizzen topgallant yard whose iron jackstay had bumped him severely between the eyes. Below him in the darkness a scream rang out, followed by the roar of the mate: "Are you all right up there? Want any help?"

He had fallen four feet. When he could speak he answered, "I'm all right, sir." And, catching the royal foot rope daugling from the end of the yard above him, he brought it to its place, passed the seizing and finished furling the royal. But it was a long job His movements were upzertain, for every nerve in his body was jumping in its own inharmonious

What's the matter wi' you

FAILED TO SALUTE

Brig. Gen. Michie tells a good story at his own expens . The other day, he says, he passed an enlisted man who failed to salute. The general stopped the man and asked: "Don't you think enough of and asked :

Oh, I salute officers all right," responded the mar, "but I don't salute none of you guys from the Quartermaster Department.'

For the benefit of those who are not familiar with military usage, it may be well to furnish a diagram : Generals wear gold hat cords, while enlisted men wear vellow hat cords, and the man had mistaken the general for a man from the oh, well. if you don't understand and appreciate this good story by now there is no use in going a y further with the explanation -Spartanburg, S. C., Herald.



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