

eyed friend, now burning bright and clear, well on the port quarter. Even as I looked, it seemed to change once again into the dragon's eye, each moment rising higher and higher and drawing nearer. Involuntarily, I shrieked out the words—"Marmion!—the Marmion!"

Next moment, sleep was dashed completely from my eyes by a cuff from the mate and a sniggering, half suppressed laugh from the man at the wheel. But the name of our foe had already reached Matson's ears; before I had recovered from the mate's blow, he was on the poop. He stood in a half dressed state, as if expecting a call, never deigning to notice the mate nor myself, neither did he take his eyes from the green light, but, from the squaring of his shoulders and the intensity of his gaze, I knew there had been fact as well as fiction in my drowsy brain-jumble—the schooner had disappeared—the Marmion was close on our heels. The riddle was immediately solved by the exhilaration of cold air, the first fitful breath of the breeze that had brought the Marmion.

I turned in, the richer by two, bright-golden sovereigns, but lay awake, wondering if I were honestly entitled to them; listening to the glad sound of the ming sails to the freshening breeze: with the soft, slippered footfall of Matson on the poop above. He was watching the green light now—watching it creep up closer and closer, until, about daybreak, our ship suddenly rolled to windward, with the sails hanging limp and useless from the yards. I ran out, and along the break of the poop, to look for the cause, and found the Marmion in all the beauty of her white-winged power, close up, on our weather beam; every sail curved and filled with the wind—our share as well as her own—heeling over and cutting the seas, which dripped from her bow and side like drops of liquid gold, in the beams of the rising sun. On her poop was Captain Styles, and at his side, the tall, slender figure of his wife, clad in a soft, clinging eiderdown robe; with their two years old baby waving little, fat hands from the snug safety of her mother's arms.

Matson was in his favourite position, leaning against the weather poop rail; a good humoured smile on his full, red lips and eyes which divided their attention between Winifred Styles and quick, greedy glances astern, where night had melted into a bank of dense, black clouds. No words were exchanged between the rival crews, just looks, but the looks spoke volumes, especially the dainty smiles from the lady of the Marmion—pretty glances of triumph, mellowed by her beauty—She stands before me to-day as plain as on that morning, so does Matson and his parting look, shot at the Marmion as she forged ahead—the smile had disappeared, in spite of the tan his face was ashen pale, his keen, gray eyes were filled with unutterable but suppressed longing, changing into sudden alarm when the pink and white face on the other ship, swayed for a moment as the owner reeled against her husband; and I knew the rose-tints on her cheeks had been veiled by deathly pallor—I had seen it happen before, in Sydney.

The Marmion passed on—not in a moment, but very gradually, inch by inch, she crept away from us—it was her breeze to a fine point, every thread of warp and weft in every sail pulled to its utmost tension: from the huge mainsail to the tiny skysail. The Whitkirk did well, but we were canvassed in the modern style, for easy handling in rough weather; without the tasseis of stunsails, sky-sail, and balloon-jib. By eight bells the Marmion showed us the stern ports in her half-round; at noon, her courses were flush with the horizon—but I anticipate.

We got no more watch below that day, for no sooner had the Marmion passed ahead than Matson got busy. He sent for the sailmaker, and, to our astonishment, the whole crowd were set to work unbending all our fine weather canvas, replacing it, sail by sail, with the best suit and all storm sails. The port watch took the fore and main, the starboard watch the mizzen and staysails, we lads, the jigger-mast; with Matson bossing us around and making us climb like squirrels—I learnt more sailorizing that