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And the darky cook was none the wiser; captains, mates and sailors were the same to him—loud-voiced individuals for whom it was his duty to cook, and it mattered little to him that in this case the mate was the noisiest.

So he helped the two to make sail, and when Mr. Macpherson had steered the little craft out into the lake, took the wheel at the mate's behest, though earnestly declaring that it was outside of his duties. But the captain, looking vacantly around from the vicinity of the windlass, paid no attention to his plaint, and Mr. Macpherson's darkling eye was persuasive, so he subsided. Mr. Macpherson went forward.

"Jock Billings," he said, "come here."

"Billings came obediently."

"Ye're too fat, Jock. D'ye know me, by the way?"

Billings looked keenly, though stupidly, at him.

"I—I—think I may—"

"Aye, ye think right, Jock. I'm the mon ye chastised no long back when

"Ye may if ye cannot control your unwise an' mischievous curiosity. Captain Billings is 'exercisin' to reduce flesh. Is that clear to ye?"

"Yes, sah. He's too fat. He's gwine work it off."

"Exactly. Likewise he's goin' to diet himself. An' bein' sore afraid that he'll no be able to if he eats at the table, he means to eat forrard by himself. Ye're to give him his meals in a tin pan—about half as much as ye're givin' me here—an' some cold water in a tin pot. An' ye're to ask no foolish questions, nor make any comment calculated to break down his good resolutions. It's his own orders. Remember that!"

The cook did, though the mate later had occasion to wish that he did not. When he, relieved Jock at the wheel the darky gravely handed him his breakfast as prescribed, and Jock as gravely carried it forward and down through the dark, square hole in the deck, where he ate it alone.

The wind was light, off the land, and steady; and the small craft skimmed along with little need of atten-

manded, and Billings awakened.

"Hello," he said, sitting up. "We're out. How's she heading?"

The answer required no thought, and gave time for at least a moment of it. Mr. Macpherson thought quickly. "Nor-nor-west, sir," he answered.

"That's right. What time is it?"

"Nine o'clock, sir. Ye came doon at daylight an' said to take her oot; but na men had come 'long, sir, an' I went withoot. Ye were asleep like, an' lay doon on the hatch."

"Yes, sleep-walking again. I remember turning in ashore, that's all. Hello, you've been holystoning the deck, I see."

"Aye," said the mate, a little disconcerted.

"You're the man for me. I've always wanted the deck white and clean, salt-water fashion, but you can't introduce the custom up here. Lake sailors won't stand for it. Now you've started, go ahead and finish."

"Aye—aye, aye, sir," said Mr. Macpherson, blankly.

"And I'm going to turn into my bunk. Dead sleepy still. Curious, isn't it, how stiff you get sleeping on a hatch. Feel as though I'd been through a threshing machine."

"The way I felt in Fat Anna's bardin'-hoose," suggested the mate, grimly.

The captain was weak enough or sleepy enough to grin.

"Forget it, Mr. Macpherson," he said. "It wasn't me."

Mr. Macpherson ruefully watched him roll aft, peep into the binnacle, and descend the after companion without conversation with the cook—for which latter fact he was duly thankful. But he sighed at the task he or the Fates had laid out for himself, and gripped the handle of the holystone as though it were a club for the head of the delinquent Jock. He sighed again, and again, and more deeply as the exertion under the hot sun compelled him to discard his shirt; and as the breeze died out entirely, taking from the air the slight coolness that had benefited Jock early in the morning, his sighs became grunts and groans.

"Fo' de Lawd, sah," sang out the cook, as he lolled over the quiet wheel under the shade of a big straw hat. "I neber see a mate work so hard, sah, an' Ise sailed up an'—"

"Hold yer tongue," interrupted the exasperated Mr. Macpherson, fiercely, "or e'en under the broad light o' the sun there'll be darkness on the face of the waters. I'll chuck ye overboard, ye Senegambian."

The cook subsided, and he went on with his holystoning. He had dared put the cook at the wheel, but he dared not put him at this work; it would involve later conversation with the captain. So, with aching bones, he scoured away until five struck on the cabin clock, when, just as he was about to quit and relieve the cook, Billings rolled out through the forward cabin door, and hastened toward him with a doubting, deprecating look on his fat countenance that clearly indicated his identity. He was not Captain Billings—he was Jock.

"Here," said the mate, intensely, yet softly, for the cook's benefit, "come here."

Jock came obediently.

"Where ha' ye been sogerin' while I do you work? Answer me."

Jock's face took on a look of distress, then fitful gleams of intelligence flashed across it, followed by a puzzled, doubting, questioning expression. He might have wakened right there had not the next remark of the mate been one to arouse no speculation in the slumbering soul.

"Never mind, Jock," he said, with a leniency born of his own fatigue. "Wash off this muck from the deck; put away the holystone, an' take the wheel. You're only a poor, ignorant sailorman, after all."

Jock obeyed, and when he had relieved the cook, Mr. Macpherson lit his pipe and pondered.

"Mebbe," he mused, it's mention o' his evil past that makes him wake up in it; an' mebbe I worked him o'er hard in his fat condection, an' it sent him back. I'll remember."



"Pay me off and an' I'll answer ye," said the mate doggedly.

ye were no so fat as ye are the noo. I've a long memory, Jock, an' the Lord has a long arm. An' the Lord never meant ye to be so fat, Jock, an' has given ye into my hands to reduce ye. Take you that broom by the windlass, an' that drawbucket by the pump, an' scrub this schooner clean."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered Jock, cheerfully, all but the last of the speech lost upon his understanding.

He began the task, and, as was expected, soon began to pant, puff and perspire; but the task-master inexorably kept him at it, flourishing, and occasionally administering, a rope's-end, until it was time for the cook to prepare breakfast, when he sent him, limp and languid, to the wheel.

"Fo' de Lawd, sah," said the cook, when he served the mate at the table, "Ise sailed up an' down dese lakes a long time, an' I neber see a cappen work so hard; an', sah, you'll 'cuse me, sah, but I neber see a mate take a rope's-end to a cappen befo', sah."

"Did you ever see any one take a rope's-end to a cook?" inquired the mate, solemnly.

"No, sah, I neber did."

tion except at the wheel. With the cook again at this station, Jock Billings finished the scrubbing. Meanwhile Mr. Macpherson had rummaged out from under the topgallant forecandle a square block of sandstone, which his salt-water eye recognized at once as a holystone, an apurtenance seldom found on anything but deep-water ships, and productive of more profanity from the hearts of sailors than any other evil of the sea. Jock Billings also had a nautical eye; and when the mate had fitted a broom-handle to the stone, and pointed grimly to the deck, he understood, and with only a disapproving grimace on his own fat face, went to work at the hardest, meanest, most muscle-wearing work known to sailors—holystoning; that is, grinding off with the square stone the paint, tar, hardened dirt and decayed wood that had accumulated with the years. Having started him, Mr. Macpherson went aft to light his pipe, and when he returned, he found his sailor asleep on the hatch, with about a square foot of the deck scoured clean.

"Wake up," he injudiciously de-