

She hurried into the house and returned quickly with a lighted match which she held over the bowl of his pipe while he puffed. His control over his muscles was not yet quite complete enough to make it easy for him to hold steadily so small an object as a match. Mrs. Burgee had followed Norah to the porch and stood behind her husband, but he did not see her.

"All right," he said to me at length. "Me and the old ship ain't done *much* that we're ashamed of." He paused and looked at me quizzically. Then he added: "We couldn't at sea—without gittin' found out, by John Quincy Adams! Tryin' to hide things on ship-board is a good deal like tryin' to conceal your presence from the girl that's settin' on your lap." He grinned. "First thing you know publicity 'll up an' kiss ye—smack!" He became conscious of Mrs. Burgee's presence behind him at this moment. There is a subtle sympathy between those two. "Lyddy," he said, "he's goin' to put me an' th' Lyddy in a book! It amused her. She is a slim, wiry little woman, and she sat down on the top step of the little flight leading from the porch and laughed. Before she had finished she had her apron over her head and was rocking to and fro in a convulsion of silent merriment. He smiled at her. Then he turned to me.

"Seems to kind o' tickle Lyddy," he said, cheerily, and added, "Be ye goin' to tell about that time when Parton was along?"

"Yes," I replied, and Mrs. Parton looked up with an interested expression on her face. But she said nothing.

"John!" said the Captain, thoughtfully. "A