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## A NIGHT WITH A MADMAN. ❦ ❦ ❦

still, from this very bleeding, perhaps, I was not rendered insensible; indeed, I was fully conscious. Knowing now for certain that he intended to make an end of me, and most likely afterwards of himself, instead of trying to get up, I did as I had seen the cockroaches do—feigned death, and lay all of a heap just as I had fallen. My grateful patient paused for a moment, and looked down at his work; then stooping towards me, he passed both hands over my face, so as to bathe them in blood, and then held them up to the light.

"Good," he muttered. "*Red blood—not blue; but I'll mak siccar*, and then, Doctor, I'll follow you."

He then stepped over me, with a light laugh, and re-entered my cabin—for the knife, I knew.

Now was my chance, if ever. His back was scarcely turned, when I bounded to my feet, and made for the steerage. It was a short but exciting race for life. Two seconds took me to the steerage-door two more to the foot of the companion-ladder. I sprang up, but had succeeded in placing only a few steps behind me, when I slipped, and fell to the bottom, while at the same time I heard an oath, and the cutlass flew past, and stuck in the bulk-head, not a yard above me. The madman, seeing I was escaping, had thrown it; and the fall had saved me. I drew out the cutlass, and hurried on deck. Seeing that the maniac had now given up the pursuit, I paused for a minute to take breath, and bind a handkerchief around my head. It was a very lovely night; not a cloud in all the dark sky, in which the stars—so differently arranged from those in the far north—were shining more brightly, I think, than I ever yet had seen them.

But I had little inclination to gaze long at the gorgeous scene; my thoughts were all on the fearful danger I had just escaped; and, whether from excitement or loss of blood, I could not tell, but I felt as if about to faint. After leaning against the bulwark for a short time, the cool night-air revived me, and I made haste to go to the captain's cabin, to make my report, and get assistance. This report was never made, for just as I was about to descend, a dark figure glided stealthily past, loomed for one moment on the bulwark between me and the starlight, then disappeared, and the plash alongside told me that the unhappy engineer had thrown himself into the sea.

"Man overboard!" I shouted, and the cry was re-echoed, fore and aft, from every part of the vessel. I rushed past the man at the wheel to where, in the stern of the ship, two little brass knobs, like door-bell handles, told the position of the life-buoy. One was pulled, and a gleam of light sprang up; then the other, and the blazing beacon dropped sullenly into the sea. The captain was almost immediately on deck, and the ship was quickly being put about.

"Man the quarter-boats, and lower away with a will. It is earnest, my lads," he added: "It is poor Wheeler;" for the men were used to be sent away after the life-buoy on many a dark night, as a species of drill. "A bottle of rum to each boat, with an additional one to the boat that picks up the officer."

They hardly needed such encouragement, for the boats were manned and

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