

**LITTLE JARVIS.**

A STORY FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

(CONTINUED.)

Jarvis adopted Jack Bell's theory that nothing was as safe in a storm as being at sea; and the next hard blow they had, Captain Truxtun caught sight of Jarvis perched on the cross-trees, while the wind bent the mast like a reed, and the spray dashed over the fore-castle at every lurch the ship gave. The captain bawled so loud through his speaking-trumpet that he almost broke a blood vessel, and Jarvis, who thought the storm was great fun, was so perfectly terrified when he stood trembling before the angry captain, that he couldn't say a word to save his life. Here was a pretty kettle of fish, indignantly thought Jarvis, when, after a terrific wiggling, he was ordered below, if an officer can't risk his life any



time he wants to. Another one of Jarvis's troubles was, that everybody on board called him "Little Jarvis"; and when he remonstrated with the other young gentlemen who shared the luxuries of the steerage with him, he usually got a licking for it. At last this got so intolerable, especially from Brookfield—for this was before he and Jarvis became such cronies—that Jarvis fiercely resolved his honor (which he spelled with a big H) required he should put a stop to it. Therefore, one day he sat down and penned a formal challenge to mortal combat as soon as they made a port, and addressing it to Brookfield, wrathfully awaited developments. The grammar wasn't unexceptionable, and the spelling was very weak in spots, but there was no sort of doubt about Jarvis's meaning, and that he was full of fight. He also mentioned that he would not consent to fight at less than twenty paces, and ten would be more to his taste; and he hoped Mr. Brookfield would not consider this suggestion an infringement of "the code." To this alarming missive Brookfield returned the following reply:

"Mr. Brookfield presents his compliments to Mr. Jarvis, and declines absolutely sacrificing his life in the manner proposed by Mr. Jarvis. Mr. Brookfield, being five feet eleven, and weighing a hundred and fifty pounds, would be an excellent target for Mr. Jarvis at twenty paces—while Mr. Jarvis would be invisible to the naked eye at twenty paces—and if Mr. Jarvis buzzes about Mr. Brookfield any more, Mr. Brookfield promises Mr. Jarvis the handsomest drubbing he ever had in his life."

When Jarvis read this letter he fairly danced with rage. Brookfield, down in the steerage, stretched out on a locker, reading, happened to glance up, and there stood Jarvis, glaring at him, and evidently red-hot. As Jarvis was not actually five feet high, Brookfield could easily have settled him with one hand tied behind his back, so that Jarvis's ferocious air didn't frighten him particularly.

"Mr. Brookfield," asked Jarvis, in a trembling voice, which he in vain

tried to make cool and composed, "did you write this letter, sir?"

"I did, you young rascalion," calmly answered Brookfield, laying down his book.

"Then, sir," continued Jarvis, nearly bursting with wrath, "all I have to say, sir, is, that your conduct, sir—your conduct is unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, and you are a coward, sir—"

By the time the word was out of his mouth, Brookfield had jumped two feet in the air, and seizing Jarvis by the collar of his jacket, was shaking him up and down as a mastiff shakes a terrier, while he beat the devil's tattoo on Jarvis's unfortunate ribs. When Brookfield put him down, Jarvis was blind and breathless, but perfectly undaunted.

"Will you take that back?" roared Brookfield, now as angry as Jarvis, "and if you don't, by the Lord Harry, I'll—"

"N—n—no," gasped Jarvis, "I won't take it back—"

In another minute Jarvis was again dangling in the air at the end of Brookfield's brawny arm. The first shaking wasn't a patch on the second one.

"Now will you take it back?" howled Brookfield, stamping his foot.

"No—confound you!" shouted Jarvis, game to the backbone, and stamping his foot back at Brookfield.

Brookfield, breathing very hard, looked intently at Jarvis, who, with folded arms and a cool that was meant to be appalling on his pink and white face, stood awaiting his fate. Half a dozen grinning midshipman had crowded round by that time, and somebody called out, "Hooray for Jarvis!"

"Look here, you fellows," said Brookfield, turning to them, "did you ever see anything like the little beggar's pluck? Drat my eyes, but I've got half a mind to fight the 'brat anyhow'—and as this he seized Jarvis again, but, instead of shaking him, he threw the boy across his shoulder and began to parade up and down, accompanied by a crew of yelling, cheering midshipmen, all hurrahing for Jarvis, who was kicking and pounding with all his might. In the midst of the hullabaloo, a lieutenant, unobserved came running down the gangway, and, the first the howling mob of middies knew, was in the midst, shouting, angrily:

"What is the meaning of this infernal racket?"

The lieutenant was in a boiling rage. His cap was askew, and when he tried to straighten it he slammed it down so hard that the peak was nearly over his left ear.

An instant hush fell upon the crowd, every one of whom stood bolt upright at "Attention!" including little Jarvis, who, half in and half out of his jacket, had slipped down from Brookfield's shoulder, and stood red and trembling before the peppery lieutenant.

Brookfield was the first to recover his composure.

"I can not tell a lie, sir," he said, with much suavity—for nothing on earth could upset Brookfield's composure. "It was all Mr. Jarvis's fault. Mr. Jarvis objects pointedly to being called 'Little Jarvis,' and because I happened to allude to him in those terms he challenged me to mortal combat, as soon as we make a port. I declined, sir, upon the ground that the contest was unequal, Mr. Jarvis being perfectly invisible at the distance he proposed to fight, while I can be easily seen half a mile off. Then Mr. Jarvis came up and called me a coward, and, although I almost galloped the life out of him for it, Mr. Jarvis declined to apologize, and I had to repeat the operation. Mr. Jarvis still persisting in his remarks, though I nearly killed him, I and the other midshipmen present concluded that Mr. Jarvis ought to be rewarded for his gallantry; and we were testifying our respect for him, sir, when you appeared."

The lieutenant, during all this rigmarole, coughed once or twice, put his cap on straight, and managed to keep from grinning, like the midshipmen.

"Mr. Jarvis," he said, in a very meek, mild voice, "I regret very much that I shall have to report you for language unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. Meanwhile, it will give me a great deal of pleasure if you will dine in the ward-room with me to-night."

Little Jarvis could hardly believe his ears. What was it all about, any how? He had called Brookfield a coward, and Brookfield had licked him, and here were all the midshipmen hurrahing for Jarvis, and the lieutenant inviting him to dinner in the ward-room.

"Th—th—thank you, sir," he managed to stammer, when prodded by Brookfield; and then the lieutenant bowed formally and went off, and the noise began exactly where it had been before. (TO BE CONTINUED)



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