

A Death Ship

crushed helplessly beneath the weight of the chest — an inert dead body.

"The fellow got his, sir," said Leayord solemnly. "Likely enough killed by the very thing he was tryin' to git away with. What shall we do with the boat and what's in it, sir?"

"Untangle that pulley slowly, and hoist up even with the rail," I answered. "We'll have a look at the man, and find out what's in the chest; it's an odd looking affair."

"Aye, aye, sir; Olson you man that other rope. A hundred years old, I'd say, an' stowed away in some odd corner o' the world at that. Now pull — steady; all the weight is on my end."

I helped balance it, and with White using his uninjured arm, we drew the dead man's body in over the rail. The two mates released his limbs from the grip of the chest, and we laid him out on the deck. He was an ill-looking fellow, deeply tanned, with a livid scar across one cheek, and an anchor tattooed on his forearm. Leayord drew a paper out of the inner pocket of his shirt, and passed it over to me. It was a letter with no date line, or signature, and had been so soaked in salt water as to be almost illegible. The only connecting words I could study out were: "De Lys has all his men but a cook; try to get on! he'll never know you after these years."

"Does it tell you anything, sir?" asked Olson anxiously.

"Not much; only this fellow sailed as cook, and got