

'Don't wake her, Webb, for God's sake; it's better as it is.' 'No, sir, never fear me,' said the man with a shudder; and with a stifled moan the captain passed out.

Still the man stands there holding the wheel like some strange watchman guiding the fates of all these humans through the black night, and behind him, fair in the sweet rest of innocence, sleeps the child, on on through the darkness. There is one moment then as the moon peers cautiously down into the old wheelhouse, bathing the decayed wood-work—the old compass.

It is a deep struggle. A queer feeling comes over the man. A strange, dreadful death is near; they are drifting on to it together. 'I have been very bad,' he muttered, 'very bad.' He seems to go away back into a wasted, reckless existence; he remembers a little curly-headed child that played in the green fields of an old farm; the black night, the old wheel-house, and wild winds and waters drift away; he only sees an old kitchen in the soft light of a summer evening long ago, the peaceful face of an old farm clock, that ticks away; a sad, sad face that watched at the door as he went away—the face of his good old mother. He was young then; the long years of evil and sin had not come; he fancies he sees the tearful eyes of his gentle little sister as she clung to him with sobs, and hears the last broken words of his old father, 'God bless you, Ned, my boy.' He was heartless then, he heeded not their sorrow; to-night it seems to come back—the face of this sleeping child, so fair, so innocent there in the pale moonlight, had bridged the long years of crime, lust, and folly.

'Just one kiss,' he muttered; 'I know it will be no harm. If I am bad, it will make me purer; it won't wake her up, I will be so careful. I won't mind dying then, for I know He will forgive me if I go to Him with that one pure kiss on my sullied lips at the last. He will not be hard on a poor, rude fellow, if He knows I have kissed her.'

For a moment the wheel turns loose, the vessel rolls on the waves; the strange, rough figure bends over the captain's cloak; the coarse, feverish lips, unholy and sensuous, only used to uttering oaths, touch the fair forehead—this great, rough creature—so tenderly as not to waken her; it is but an instant, then a great tear has rolled down the bronzed weather-beaten cheek and nestled in the golden hair of the child. Only a little tear, and a trembling rugged form in the moonlight; but He who died for men in His great mercy swung to the strange gates of time on the long years of crime and passion, and shut them out forever. 'I'm not afraid to meet Him now; He'll know I'm just a little purer,' he mutters. Again the shadow has passed from between the child and the moonlight. The vessel plunges on through the dark, the winds are bleaker, the waves wilder, and the dark, strange shadow stealing on between sky and wave. One by one the men have fallen asleep below; all is hushed but the gale and the beat of waters. The captain paces the deck alone, and the steersman stands there looking far into the night.

It seemed about midnight; I awoke from a troubled slumber. A shake from Marks, who was standing by the berth, brought me to myself. 'Come, hurry, boy; on deck as quick as you can; she's breaking up fast.' Springing from my berth, I hurried on deck. It was a dreadful scene: the vessel was pitching and tossing in the angry waters; the moon now and then would steal out from a cloud, and gleam on the wet decks; far to the east a black line of seething waters.

The pilot-house and most of the upper works were gone. The large life-boat, the only one of any use, was lashed to the railing; round it, holding on to ropes, were the crew; and crouching at the bottom the two poor women were huddled, silent with fear, resting on a heap of sail-cloth; at the stern lay the little child, still asleep in the cloak. When all hope was gone, the captain had begged them not to waken her; and cradled in rough arms, they had tenderly placed her in the life-boat without disturbing her sleep. Wrapt in her calm slumber, feeling no terror, she drifted into that great ocean that bounds eternity.

There was no chance of launching the boat; it would have been instant destruction. I never can exactly realize what my thoughts were at that time. There was no shriek or wail, no shrinking from what was to come; all were strong, composed and prepared.

The fires were out, the wheel-house gone; she was drifting with the waves and winds that were breaking her up fast. The calm voice of the captain rose above the storm: 'Our only chance, men, is to stand by the boat and cut the ropes when she goes down, and God have mercy on our souls.' 'And a curse on those who trapped us here like rats in a hole,' growled an old seaman. 'Amen to that, lad,' said old Marks. This was all they said, good or bad, concerning the owners.

This is about the last I remember. The moon at this instant stole out from a cloud, making the slippery decks gleam; far to the north horizon lay the black mass of water that would so soon seize its prey.

The brave men standing there like statues on the deck of that doomed vessel—the white-crested waves, coming in their sweep and washing the decks; the upper works were gone, then part of the

'Does the "Seabird" sleep yet?' said one of the men. 'Yes, thank God,' murmured Marks.

'If any of you fellows are saved,' said the fireman, 'take word to my poor Nelly and the little ones, and let them know I was brave to the last.' There was no flinching; nearer, nearer—down, down nearly level with the waves; then snap, crack go the timbers—a great plunge, then, brittle as a match-box, the old coffin melted in the waves; a few gurgles, then all is drowned in the midnight storm far out on the waters. Nothing was left, where but a few moments before the cruel waters had licked those frail pieces of dust from the battered spars of the ruined hulk.

It is a cold, foggy fall morning; the storm of the preceding night has almost subsided; the steamer *Algoma* steams out of one of the many harbors of Manatoulin Island, where she has been sheltered during the night. The day is just breaking over the heaving waves, when the steersman espies something floating on the water. It is a boat. The engines are reversed, the steamer brought to, and in a few moments the unconscious figure of a man is borne on deck. 'What vessel?' says the captain. 'The *Hooker*, of Sarnia,' says one of the seamen; 'it was painted on her gunwales.' 'A narrow escape; almost frozen to death,' says one of the little group round the figure. 'Anything more,' says the captain. 'Only a sailor's coat and a child's hat,' says the sailor.

Once more the engines are at work, the vessel steams on, and I was saved.

Many years have passed since; I am a middle-aged man now, but I will never forget that terrible wreck out there.

It is a cozy little office I sit in; the ruddy coals in the fireplace blink at me as I tend this. But I am dreamy to-night. The man whose hairs are becoming sprinkled with gray fades away. The beat of waves on an old black hulk, the calm hero faces of those doomed men, and the face of a sleeping child that stares at me from the coals, steal back to-night from the long gone years.

But the little clock on the mantel has struck eleven as I lay down my pen and steal of to my bed, with the lines;

"God pity wives and sweethearts
That wait, and wait in vain,"

ringing through my mind, till the coal in the grate has blinked itself out, and the great ship, through the beat, beat of the surf, glides on, on out into the dark.

MITES AND BITES.

COULD not the Association Football Club get up a match for Good Friday? It would be a good opening of the season.

UNFORTUNATELY the illness of Mr. Torrington prevented the Glee Club singing in Brantford last Monday night, to the great disappointment of many, both in that town and in Toronto. Tickets had been largely sold, and the weather was perfect, but the gods were not propitious. The concert, however, will be held next Monday, as further postponement is impossible on account of the approaching examinations, and the Doctor has luckily given his sanction.

LECTURES come to an end on the second of May.

Two medical students are reported to have spent the small hours of election night on the cooling slabs in the Quad. Slabs are a passable substitute for ice.

CARLYLE exerts a great influence over the rising generation: e.g., a cargo of 'churchwardens' have been imported into the Residence.

THE lockers in the Gymnasium are not extraordinary specimens of carpentry by any means. The locks are very second-rate; very few of the doors have ventilating holes, and each locker is just half as long as it ought to be. The other appurtenances of the Gymnasium are more or less satisfactory.

SCENE: Election night at Moss Hall. Great concourse of students.

Excited Orator: 'Gentlemen, I am filled with emotion—'

Dilapidated Undergrad.: 'How deush d'you manage to get full so soon?' (E. O. looks bewildered.)

A REQUISITION was lying on the table for the last two or three days in the janitor's room. It had no heading to show the nature of it, so the janitor had to inform inquirers. There was a rumor that it was for a guarantee fund to obtain Cool Burgess to act in Convocation Hall; another, that it was for Rev. E. P. Hammond to preach.

THERE ought to be a prospect now, since Professors Wilson and Wright are housing themselves on St. George Street, of having a street opened up through the vacant lot west of the Observatory.