

He stopped his soliloquy as he heard the man of the deep voice call loudly, like a foghorn,

"Hi! Hi! Jacko! Hi!"

Then followed several sharp screeches, as of someone whistling with his fingers in his mouth.

The Wayfarer listened a moment, and, hearing nothing further, started to explore his cell. Groping about, he could feel nothing but casks, piled tier upon tier. The ceiling was about nine feet high and he hurt his knuckles as he leaped to test its height. There was, apparently, no other exit but the trap-door. He was walled on three sides by casks, and on the other by rocks, all unhealthily moist. He lifted down a cask to the floor—it held, probably four gallons—and, with a mighty stamp of his heel, smashed in the head. The liquor drenched him, and he laughed noisily.

"Great Bacchus!" he cried, "a few short minutes ago I was as dry as a wooden god, and now—faith, I'll have to revise my song:

I'll lie in the pit where the rum casks sit  
And stay till the last drop's done.

"Hallo! Voices."

The man with the deep voice had evidently found Jacko, for the Wayfarer heard a new tongue calling him to attention.

"Well, Mr. Excise, what think ye of us surrendering our liquor to ye? Didn't think ye could find it so easy did ye? Nice little haul for one man to capture, ain't it? I said one man, ye swine, an' I should 'a' said one swine, 'cause we've got yer four men, Excise, all tied up in an open boat an' floatin' on the Scarther Rocks. Nice little bit of poetic revenge, ain't it, Excise? Payin' ye back in yer own filthy coin, eh? Pretty little gen'lemanly trick ye played on the captain's brother, wasn't it? To cast him in a open boat, trussed like a fowl, an' shootin' him from the shore till ye got him in the back an' he fell in the boat. But we got him, ye bloody swine of hell, an' we saved his life, an' we're

goin' to fetch him, an' my God this is yer last day on this earth, Mr. Excise—bloody swine!"

The Wayfarer listened to this tirade with intense interest. When it was over, he laughed and shouted:

"You smuggling idiots!—you've got the wrong swine. I'm no exciseman, but a true worshipper at the shrine. Let me out!"

He was answered by loud jeering laughter, and the deep-voiced man called back:

"We'll let yer out, Excise—out in a open boat. Yer've got an hour to wash yer dirty soul."

He heard them go, and ruminated on his position with mixed feelings. Firstly, he was under no misapprehension. They would recognize their error as soon as they saw him, and his ship's discharge would prove his identity as a person not interested in the impeachment of smugglers.

"But," he mused, "in an hour I shall probably be as drunk as Roger, and that means insensibility."

Again, he was by no means impressed by his quarters, the air of which was increasingly heavy since the cask was broken. He scooped up a drink in his two hands, then remembered the flask.

"I knew you'd be useful," he said, and filled it.

After a few seconds more of bewildered cogitation, he heard footsteps on the floor above. Then, with cautious delight, he heard the bolt drawn and the trap-door was slowly raised.

"Would you like to come up?" asked a hard, suave voice.

The Wayfarer laughed. He hadn't heard such cultured tones, despite their harshness, for many days. He could not see the man, though he peered eagerly about.

"Nothing," he answered, "would give me greater satisfaction, my preserver—that is unless you are the captain with a vendetta on his mind, in which case, I would much prefer you to come down here."