

bergs and fogs; and having for twenty years traded the Newfoundland outports, from small Peter's stores and wharves at Come-Along Cove to the first harbors of Labrador, there was neither harbor, cove, bight, arm, run, basin nor tickle, of that long, harsh coast, that she was not completely aware of—situation, degree of shelter, contour, heads, rocks, fathoms of water. Though she was dressed in new paint every spring of the year, and furnished and furbished until she wore a gaudy, sprightly air of youth, like a decorated grandmother mimicking a lass in apparel, she was old to the bones. Skipper Steve fancied, sometimes, himself fallen into a melancholy mood and out of temper with his ship, that she was tired of it all, as he was tired—driving through the big seas, beating into the big winds, wandering in the fogs, dodging reefs in the dark.

Skipper Steve was not tired now.

"Dang her!" said he to the cook. "She've a notion to go down an' be done with it."

"She have! 'Tis true! An' she will!"

"She'll not! I'll balk her!"

The cook scanned the sea, disclosed in the dirty dawn, and smelled of the rising wind. It was ominous.

"She'll worst ye," he declared.

"Me?"

"Ay, she'll worst ye."

Skipper Steve looked into the cook's eyes, his own twinkling—his face in a quizzical pucker.