

"Give 'em a hail, an' shoot through th' door!"

Corby carried out his instructions, and silence reigned forward. Not so, aft. Here the hunters berthed and had their rifles, and, after their first surprise, they commenced firing indiscriminately through skylight and planking—making things unpleasant for those on deck. McDonald at the wheel began to get desperate and sang out:

"Cap'n Olsen, hold on a minute!"

"Aye!" growled a voice, while the firing stopped.

"I jest want ter say that ef we hev any more signs o' resistance from youse fellers or any more shoot-in', I'll pile this schooner up on th' rocks an' set fire to her! An' furthermore, I'll take all yer boats an' leave ye on this blasted island to die like rats! I mean what I say, an' by God, I'll carry it out!"



A LONG silence ensued after McDonald proclaimed his threat, and, the breeze freshening with the dawn, they made a successful run through the passage. Meanwhile, Simons and the others were busily engaged in getting the sealskin pelts up on deck.

Swinging around the point to the eastward of the Island, they ran down on the *Roberta* as she rode to her anchor.

"Stand by!" yelled McDonald.

By a piece of smart seamanship on his part, they ran alongside the fishing schooner and, cutting the foresail halliards, Simons had the sail down by the run. On the shout from Mac, the cook and Morris caught a rope and made it fast to the *Roberta's* fore-bits. The *Topsail Belle* swung around and both schooners lay bow to bow, as, creaking and grinding, they surged into the long easterly swell.

With feverish haste the *Roberta's* crew began to load the bundles of pelts aboard. Sweating and panting in the chilly air, they labored like Titans to get the valuable spoil out of the sealer's hold. The