

hand most of the time, as far as I remember, and the leather case, of course, was slung at my back. A bullet went right through it, and yet I knew nothing at all about it. Wasn't that rum?' "

" 'The gods apparently want you on earth a little longer. The chronometer went as well, I observe.' "

" 'It did, all in bits; I don't know how or when. Oh, here are my sailing charts.' He unrolled three large charts that looked as if rats had been feeding on them for six months. From each chart huge pieces had entirely disappeared, and what was left looked particularly mangy.

" Captain Carpenter called my attention to the chart of Zeebrugge.

" 'I had mapped out three courses, you see, to allow for the wind and tide. Eventually I came round here, and the tide carried me alongside the Mole—there. Sorry they're in such a rotten state; but the charthouse was a nasty mess—quite chewed up.' "

" Last of all he showed me the flag—the glorious ensign—blackened with smoke and considerably holed. 'We kept it flying all the time,' he explained; 'we thought we might as well.' "

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A visit to *Vindictive* showed her a sorry wreck. The great funnels were shell-torn, and the smoke was pouring out at a hundred holes. Only one or two of the famous "brows" by which the men reached the Mole remained intact; the remainder had been smashed and splintered beyond recovery. The false deck, lined with a breastwork of sandbags, was still to be seen, and so were the ruined charthouse, the shell-torn bridge, and the riddled hut in which the flame-thrower was housed. The fighting-top—a circular nest high above the bridge—was completely wrecked. Marines with Lewis guns had been stationed in it, and had done excellent work in shooting down the Germans as they tried to escape into the destroyers under the harbour wall of the Mole. An enemy shell had crashed into that top, and had killed every marine but one.

" Bit knocked about, isn't she? " said the commander.

" Rather a mess," the interviewer agreed.

Yet, knocked about as she was, her work was not yet done. She had still to perform another feat, as you will learn in the