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their high revels. This infinitesimal speck of a ship with all its little humanities about it was of exactly the same account as the bubbles on the spume that lashed the waiting, shouting man.

Perhaps some sense of this insignificance did attack him, softening the rigid muscles and slackening the set of his square jaw. But only for a moment. The man in him sprang up against the degrading idea of base surrender, and again he roared out his summons. This time it was answered by the door bumping back and seven wild-eyed, half-dressed men appearing, who plunged into the foaming flood on deck and rushed aft, not seeing the mate or not heeding him. But when they got to the break of the poop where the rest of the watch on deck were standing by awaiting orders, matters were taken out of their hands; indeed, they had been so from the first, the poor handful of men not being able to cope with the first necessities of the situation, as treble their number could have done. The mighty entanglement of steel and rope and canvas aloft began to give way to the abnormal strain upon it, and, although the horrible uproar of its going was completely dumbled by the all-subduing riot of wind and wave, was being dispersed like autumn leaves over the invisible sea.

This failure of the masts and sails to withstand the shock of the wind saved the ship,