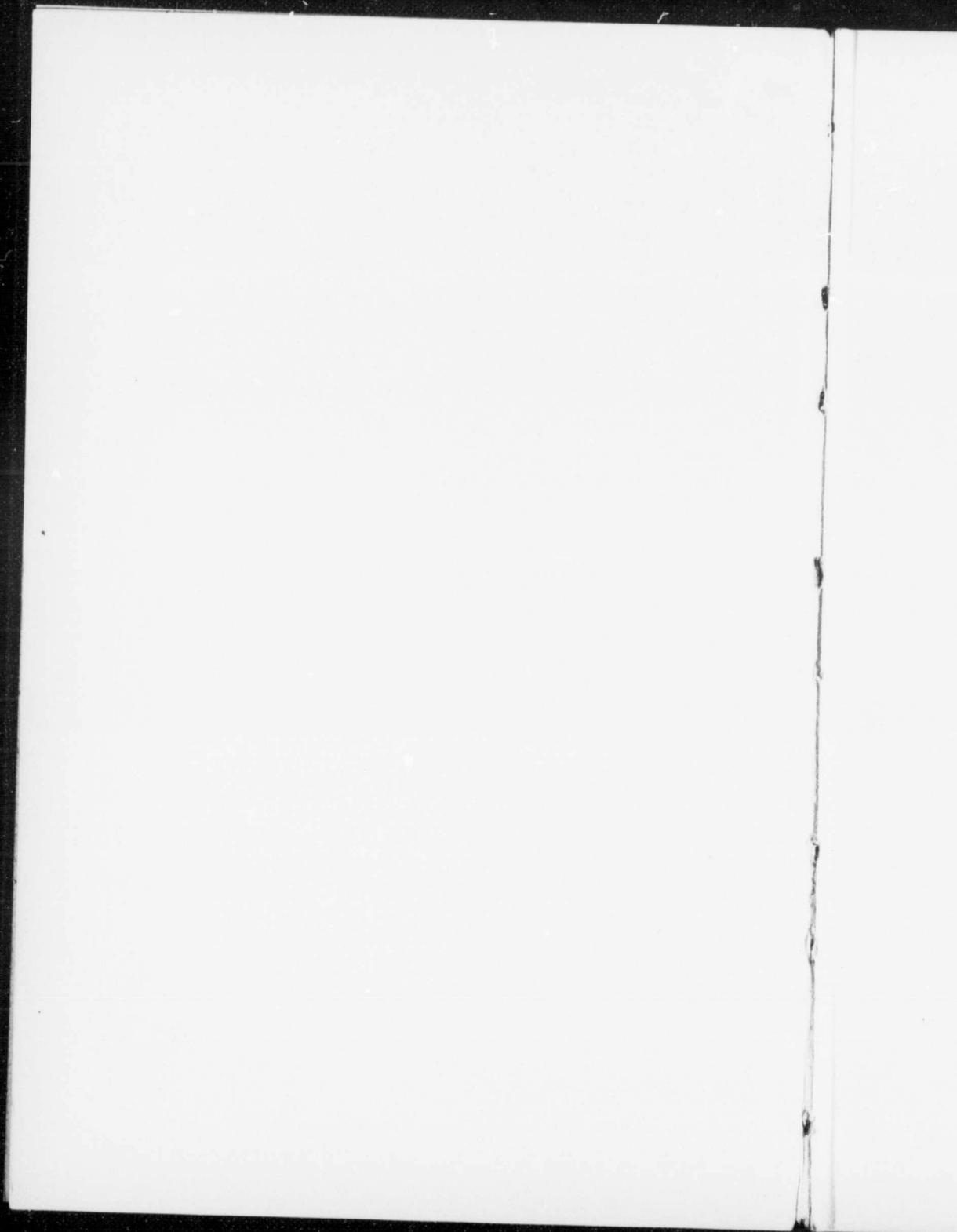


The
SHEPHERD
OF THE
SEA
HENRY LEVERAGE

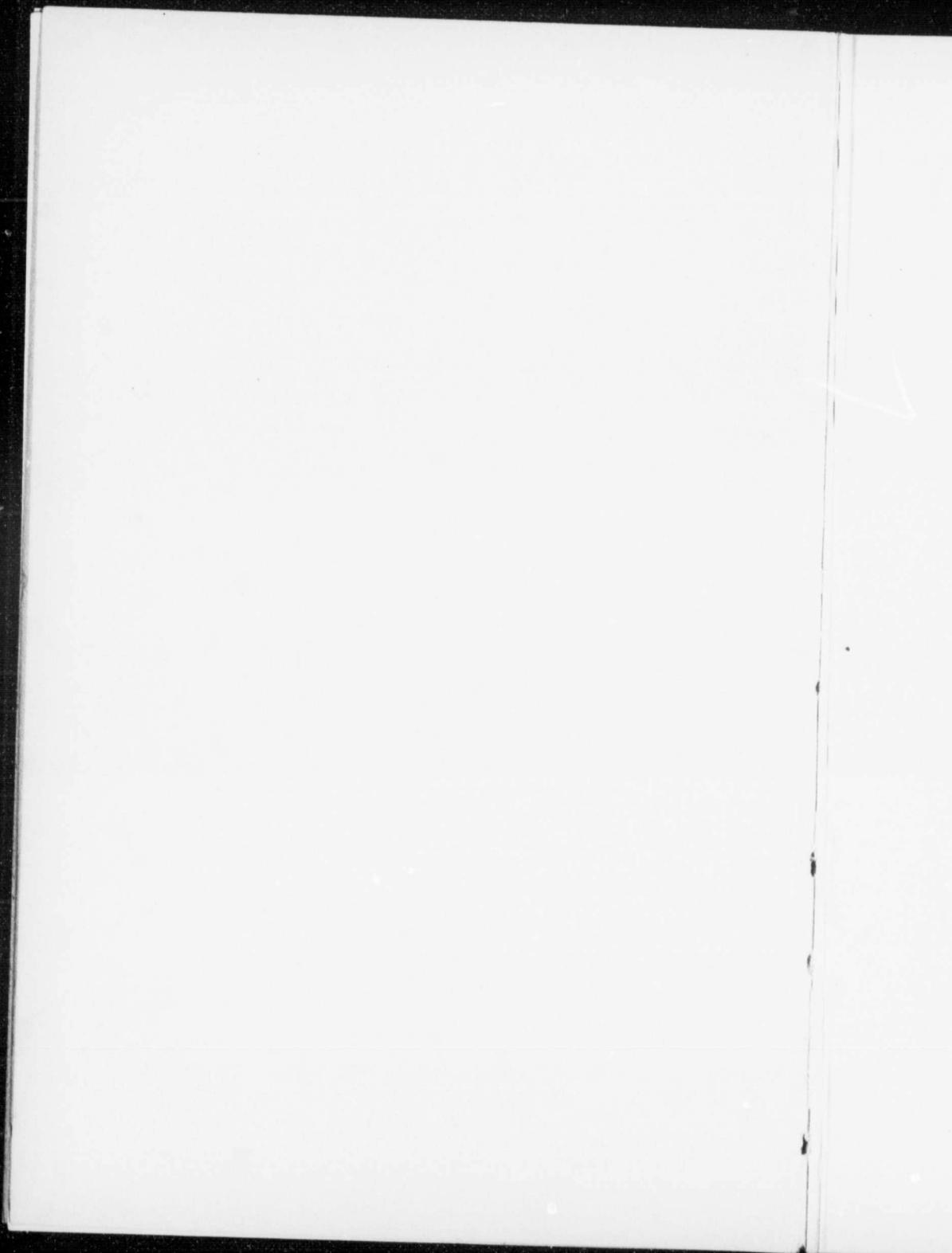
~~#800~~

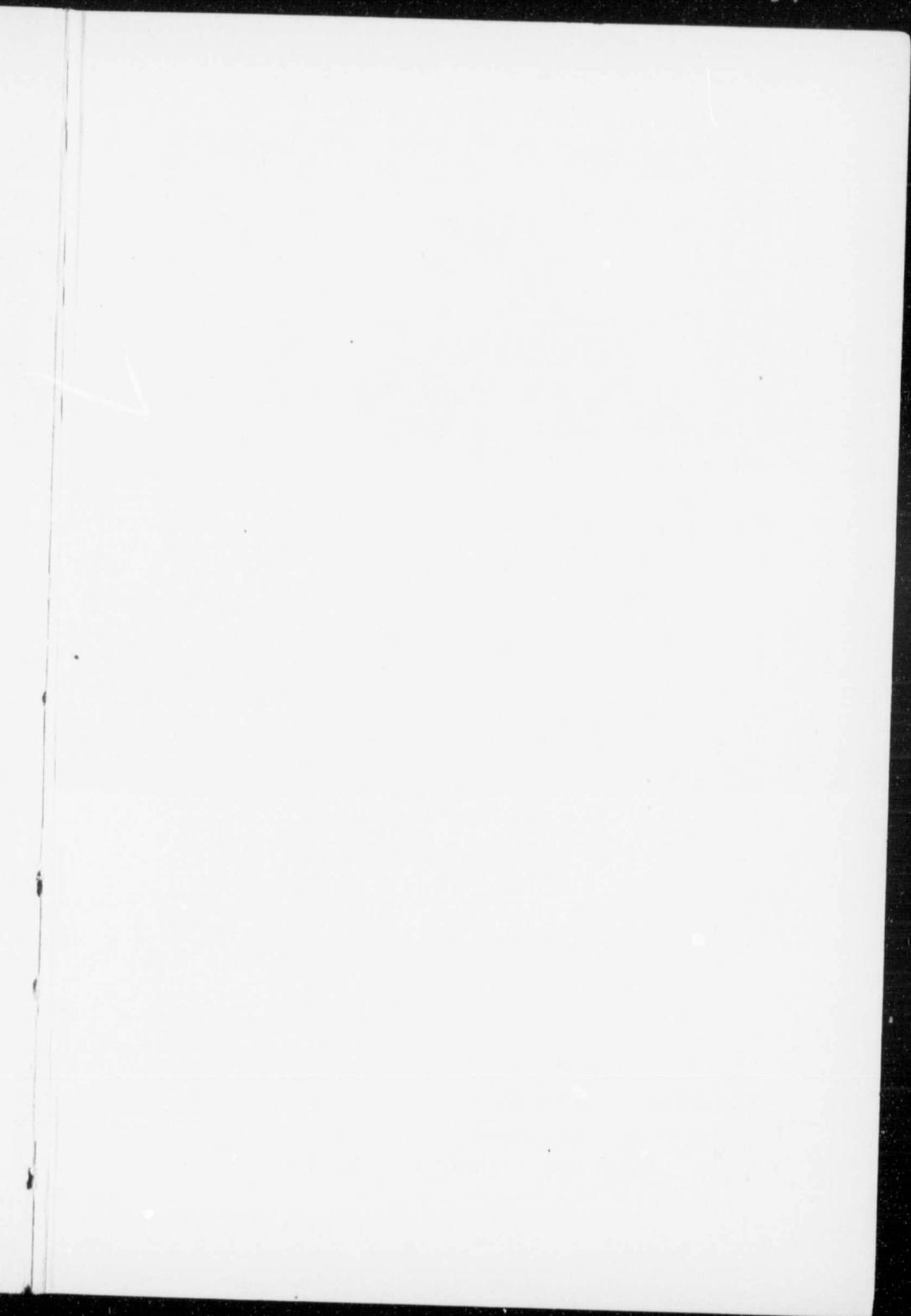






THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA







*“We'll go south—where the roses bloom all the year
around—south to Seattle and Puget Sound”*

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA

BY
HENRY LEVERAGE

*Author of "Whispering Wires,"
"The White Cypher," "The
Ice Pilot," etc., etc.*

ILLUSTRATED BY
RUDOLPH F. TANDLER

TORONTO . . . S. B. GUNDY
Publisher in Canada for Humphrey Milford

PRINTED IN GARDEN CITY, N. Y., U. S. A.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED, INCLUDING THAT OF TRANSLATION
INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGES, INCLUDING THE SCANDINAVIAN

TO MY MOTHER

PS3523

E798

S5

ce

v

2

X

X

2

X

XV

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. The Dark Strait	3
II. A White Schooner	13
III. Wing and Wing	31
IV. The Rum-Runners	48
V. The Blood-Bund	69
VI. Retribution	88
VII. Northern Justice	107
VIII. The Thunder-Bird	126
IX. A Pale Coast	149
X. The Blond Eskimo	169
XI. An Open Boat	193
XII. Cast Away	217
XIII. Starvation	243
XIV. The Barren Land	264
XV. The Journey Back	277
XVI. Reindeer	284
XVII. The End	297

6

I

T

T

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

“We’ll go south—where the roses bloom all
the year around” *Frontispiece*
(See page 300)

FACING PAGE

He reached with a desperate resolve and
clutched a martingale guy 10

The Shepherd preached the Good Word
wherever he went 120

Traherne dragged O’Kane back to the coast 278



THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA



da
A
ba
inv
l
sm
We
of
she
in i
I
of t

The Shepherd of the Sea

CHAPTER I

THE DARK STRAIT

A CEDAR slope ran down to a beach upon which short waves curled and seethed. Beyond the waves and the beach was the dark Strait that cleft through the Olympic Range. A western moon hung over the Pacific like a bronze ball of fire. The white light-points powdered an inverted dome of velvet gray.

Beneath this dome of night there was thrust a small wharf whose piles had been hewn from Washington pine. A motor-boat floated at the end of the wharf. Its cushions were silk. Its inner sheathing was mahogany. It seemed out of place in its rude surroundings.

Back from the wharf and through the tall stems of the trees shone a row of paper lanterns swinging

from the porch of a great, bark-thatched hotel. Music floated out the door of this hotel. Couples in flannels and white duck moved to a lively waltz.

A tall man in the early twenties blotted out the light from the door, drew down a plaid yachtsman's cap, glanced back once, then hurried down the steps and through the underbrush in the direction of the wharf and the waiting motor-boat.

Traherne had given up the dance at the hotel. He decided to cross the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Moore's Landing where three men he knew would be sitting at a game of poker.

He neither danced nor made love with success. He liked the drinks they served at the Canadian camp, the good-fellowship of the hunters, and the long sail back over the Strait when every light had been extinguished in the shore colonies.

"Buck" Traherne, they called him at Seattle. He had finished college and was taking a two months' vacation before entering some business, which he had not yet decided upon.

The motor-boat belonged to him. It was propelled by a heavy-duty four-cycle engine which the builders, a Detroit firm, guaranteed to give thirty horse-power.

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA 5

Traherne grasped a handle on the fly-wheel, closed the switch to the covered magneto, and spun the engine vigorously. It caught the spark at the third revolution. He sprang forward, flipped the painter off the string-piece, and twirled the steering wheel so that the light craft sheered from the dock without scraping its gunnel.

He sat down, fingered the spokes of the wheel, and stared at the white, curdy wake churned up by the screw. His eyes were raised to the velvet depth of the cedar forest. They topped the tall trees and rested upon the Olympic Range where it rose inspires to the dome of stars.

The grip of the wide places came to him. He breathed deeply of the salt sea air. He scented the pine and tamarack. His keen nostrils dilated, his eyes closed. Seattle lay within the Strait. There would be a desk there for him soon, and work in a confined space, and gossipy stenographers, and hectic nights at restaurants, if he could afford it.

He opened his eyes and glanced ahead of the fast-flying boat where the moon's bronze reflection glinted over the waves. He rose suddenly and stared at the Canadian shore. A cloud hung above it no larger than a puff of smoke. Tra-

6 *THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA*

herne eyed this cloud and steered the boat with his knees. He looked back toward the American coast.

Sitting down on the cushioned seat he watched the engine and the rapidly revolving fly-wheel. The boat was making her extreme speed.

It came to him that he was in for a squall. The air changed as the light craft reached the middle of the Strait. A white mist blotted out the stars. A series of tiny waves slapped the boat's knife-like stem. The waves grew higher. One came aboard and drenched the covered forepeak beneath which was stored the gasoline.

Traherne saw the first reaching jaw of the menace. It was a fanged line of foam that rimmed the entire northern portion of the channel. It had been caused by the wind leaping the Canadian shore line and shelving into the Strait. It came with the speed of a flying cloud. A high-pitched note vibrated overhead. The note grew in volume. A shriek sounded within a roar. All the world of water suddenly rose and milled.

"My word!" said Traherne; "I'm done for!"

The years of college and military school life did not serve him in the manner they should. Self-reliance was one thing on a campus and another

th
N

H
lo
ro
se
te
be
co
H

dr
hi
tru
of
be
br

wi
ha
lig
ch

arc
bo

thing in the most dangerous stretch of water in the North.

Traherne lost his nerve and made a fatal mistake. He starboarded the wheel and swung the broad, low stern of the motor-boat toward the storm. It rocked in the trough and came about with high seas dashing over the cockpit. The engine sputtered in the choked muffler and stopped. The boat filled. Traherne attempted to remove his coat. He began going down into fathomless brine. He churned the water with hopeless energy.

It is not an easy thing for a good swimmer to drown. Traherne felt youth and strength come to his aid. He fought the inky tide with a final trudgeon stroke upward. He heard the roaring of waters in his ears. Light purple spots appeared before his eyes. A violet flash burned to his brain.

He emerged from the depths and turned over with a weak effort. The squall in some manner had gone on toward the American shore. The light points dusted the great velvet vault. The choppy waves showed signs of subsiding.

Swimming easily in a small circle he glanced around and searched for some sign of the motor-boat. There was none save a sodden silk cushion

upon which was an embroidered number: '19. This was his college year.

The mahogany boat and all the rest of its furnishings had gone down into the waters of the Strait. He was alone, without support, in the centre of a tidal flow which was carrying him seaward. He trod water and lifted his head from the surface of the flood.

A pale light showed at Moore's Landing, deep within the pine woods. A row of yellow lanterns marked the hotel on the other shore. He sank to his chin in water and lay over on his back. He finned the brine and wondered how long he would last.

The drag of his coat and duck shoes hampered him, so, doubling and twisting, he rid himself of them. The water roared in his ears. He came to the surface and for the first time realized that it was cold. His teeth chattered. He remembered the childish thing he had done in swinging the boat's stern to the storm.

Often before in his life, which was brief enough, he had made errors in judgment. He recalled fatal hesitations and indecisions. There was the time when he had had the ball in a game with the goal in sight, a mis-step and a pause had allowed a fast quarter-back to down him.

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA 9

He remembered a score of mistakes, spread over as many months. Someone had told him that he always did the wrong thing first and saw the right one afterward.

The mischief of the boat and the squall was over. There seemed no way to escape the reaching clutch of death. The American shore was perhaps the nearer, but it was fully four miles away. The tide was flowing toward the Pacific and Cape Flattery at the rate of three miles per hour. Soon he would be in the first grip of the long rollers that swung down from the icy seas of the North.

Resignedly he lay on his back and floated.

Youth dies hard. Traherne was a good swimmer. He reviewed all that he had ever heard concerning escapes from the sea. He knew by the chilling numbness of his legs and chest that he could not remain afloat for more than an hour. There was no use wasting his strength in attempting to reach either shore. His one chance was from a steamer coming into the Strait, or a boat going out. Few ships left Puget Sound or the Canadian ports at night.

The Strait appeared level. It had a dark horizon that rimmed around his lone position. The lift of the Olympic Range and the Canadian but-

tresses merged into an enclosing ring which might have been clouds. The belt of stars paled and thinned and shone dead. Traherne shivered and paddled frantically as he turned over.

The undertow sucked at his limbs. He felt his legs dragging. It was as if a great lodestone was attracting a particle down to the bottom of the pit. He fought gamely. He exhausted his strength. The chilling cold reached to his heart. He gave up, almost too soon.

Sinking down, he was conscious of a bursting pain in his lungs. He emerged with a frantic rally of his long arms. He saw through a vale of mist a white speck that danced and floated and then disappeared. He came up for a second time.

The pain had gone from his limbs and chest. A numbness reached his brain. He felt his mouth open and the water gush forth. He sank back until his ears were covered.

The white speck had grown to a tall spire, showing single and then double. A thought flashed through his mind as he went under: that the white thing should not have been upon the waters of the Strait. It was uncanny with its stately approach.

He felt the kiss of the under brine. It was sweet. He no longer struggled or cared. Warmth



*“He reached with a desperate resolve and clutched a
martingale guy”*

a
l

r
s
k
r
li

w
P
a
a
th
th

of
H
ar
he
dr
se
wa

A
be

and security crept through his body. It seemed to him strange that young men died and old men lived.

His last emergence was hazy until a finger reached out and wiped the fog from his brain. He saw with youthful eyes the tall spars of a schooner bearing in his direction. The jibs and fore- and main-sail, the topsails and the red and green range lights—were all there.

The fast ship was heading into the light wind which drove from off the Canadian slopes. Its point of sailing was at least full and by. No sound at all announced its coming. It glided seaward with a sweeping motion as if it rested, not upon, but above, the surface of the dark Strait. It was white even to the shadowy counter and the after deck-house.

It neared Traherne. He felt a returning glow of hope burn through his chilled veins and arteries. He attempted to shout, but found his throat closed and puckered. He raised his arms and shook his head to free his hair from the stinging brine. The drops of water described a circle about him. They seemed ink spattered into ink. He sank back and waited.

The tall schooner grew to gigantic proportions. A block creaked. A bone of foamy water showed beneath a taper jib-boom. It came on swiftly.

Traherne attempted for a second time to attract attention by shouting. He waved his arms. He saw no sign of life on the schooner. He reached with desperate resolve, clutched a martingale guy, and lifted himself out of the clinging sea by swinging into the bobstays beneath the overhang of the bow.

He breathed with difficulty. He watched the fast-running water beneath him. Turning, he twisted his body, squirmed up and over the schooner's rail, and stood upon the forepeak where a brass capstan showed.

Wind and wave and clean-lined schooner all merged into a dizzy vision. Traherne started toward the capstan for support. His feet splashed an immaculate deck. He reached forward, swayed, and went down across the planks as a shout sounded from aft and a head was thrust from the forecastle's booby hatch.

Baleful, red-rimmed eyes stared at him. A second head appeared. A gigantic figure in soiled pea-jacket and blue, loose-flapping trousers sprang over the quarter-deck rail with one bound and came gliding along the weather scuppers.

Traherne sat erect as the man exclaimed:

"God's mercy has snatched ye from the deep, lad!"

CHAPTER II

THE WHITE SCHOONER

THE scene as he sat upon the forepeak of the schooner was wild beyond imagination to Traherne. He pressed his sodden right leg and otherwise assured himself that he was not dreaming in some cavern of the dark Strait.

The man who towered over him had the form of a Hercules and the large brown eyes of a dreamer. A yellow, spiked beard as pointed as an icicle struck down from a determined chin. A knitted scarf was bound around a long neck. A pair of closed hands advanced slowly as if they would lift the stowaway and carry him aft like an infant in arms.

“Another lamb o’ God!” declared the big man. “Where did ye come from, lad?”

Traherne attempted to rise. He saw three forms join the seaman. A tap of a wooden leg on the planks of the waist was followed by the looming bulk of an ancient mariner who climbed nimbly enough to the forepeak.

Five men surrounded Traherne and stared at him. He felt of his shirt which was open. He glanced at the straining canvas and the rocking stars overhead. He twisted his neck and looked forward. Already the fast-flying craft was breasting the long, oily rollers of the Pacific Ocean. Cape Flattery with its light showed like a cloud bank to the southward.

"I came from near there," said Traherne. "Over at Griswold's Hotel and Lodge. I'll thank you if you'll put me ashore at the Cape."

The bearded man leaned forward and his brown eyes closed to slits. He uncoiled his gnarled fingers and rested them on his hips. He removed one hand and stroked his yellow beard.

"Ye swum out?" he asked.

Traherne rose to his knees, steadied himself by grasping the capstan, and stood erect. He measured a foot under the tall man's woollen cap.

"I lost my motor-boat in the squall," he explained. "I want to go back, now."

A white mist swept along the coast. It crossed the schooner's bow. It blotted out the stars. A curling surf slapped the forward planks. Spray dashed over the short bowsprit and drenched the forepeak.

Turning swiftly the tall man shouted with a voice like the clap of a sail:

"Hold 'er steady, there!"

"Hold 'er steady, sir," rolled back like an echo as the mist descended and wreathed the straining rigging of the schooner in an impenetrable veil.

The man turned and thrust aside the seamen. He strode to Traherne. He clutched his shoulder with the grip of a vise.

"Ye have religion, lad?" he asked, solemnly. "Ye believe in your Maker? Ye put trust in Him who snatched ye from a watery grave?"

"I got myself out of a bad fix," said Traherne. "You happened to come along in time. It was luck!"

"Ye believe it was luck?"

"Ye-s."

The big man stroked his beard, thoughtfully. He turned and said to the mariner with the wooden leg: "He has strayed from the fold. He speaks like a child. Take him, you, Hank Peterson, to the fo'c's'le. Remove his wet clothes and give him some of your own. Feed him and place him in a spare bunk."

Traherne flushed.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed. "Here you, officer! I don't want to sail with you. I belong to Seattle. I'm well known in that town. My father lives there. I shall have you arrested!"

A purple flush swept back of the beard of the big man. He secured a new grip on Traherne's shoulder, spun him toward the break of the forepeak, and straightened a mighty arm.

Traherne felt himself catapulted aft and down to the foredeck. He rose, fighting mad. He saw the big man towering over him. He swung an awkward blow. The next thing he knew, a double thud sounded upon the walls of his chest. He crashed over backward and struck his head on the corner of a hatch.

A bucket of sea water brought him around. He lifted himself and rested his weight on one elbow. His chest, where the blows had landed, felt sore and swollen. He searched about under the foreboom for some sign of the big man. Instead, he saw the crippled mariner advancing with a second bucket of brine.

"Aye! aye!" chuckled the old salt. "So you're well again? 'Tis not everybody who can stand Martin's blows. Ask them at Esquimalt or Victoria—they what know!"

Traherne lurched to his feet and grasped the fife-rail about the foremast.

"Who's Martin?" he asked, as he felt his aching chest.

"Aye, lad, he's th' one who lashed into you. A good thing you didn't strike back. Martin, lad, is th' skipper, th' cappin, a two-fisted missionary who owns th' *Wing an' Wing* from keel to truck."

Traherne stared about the deck. He attempted to pierce the fog with his eyes. He could see no farther aft than the break of the quarter-deck. A ghostly silence wrapped the plunging ship. It seemed afloat in clouds.

"Is this the *Wing and Wing*?" he asked.

"That she is, lad. Fair-found and staunch. Martin Jordan, cappin. Hank Peterson, mate—that's me! Come below an' change your clothes. No use standin' here."

Traherne studied the man before him. He saw a spade-shaped red beard, a pair of kindly gray eyes, and a row of broken teeth, no two of which seemed to meet.

He lowered his scrutiny to the wooden leg and the broad brogan that covered the right foot. He raised his eyes. He frowned with memory.

"It's a crime!" he declared. "I should be treated like a passenger. Why can't I go to the cabin?"

Hank shook his head and tapped his stump impatiently on the deck.

"You're a stowaway from out of th' deep. You're lucky to find a warm fo'c's'le. You might have gone down to a watery grave. Many have!"

There was truth in what the mate said. Traherne lifted his shoulders and turned toward the open booby hatch out of which a pale light streamed.

"Is that the forecastle?" he asked.

"Your home an' mine, lad. There's no galley on th' *Wing an' Wing*, only a small deck-house what you can see aft. Th' cook bunks there over th' stove. It's well arranged for th' Bering an' th' Arctic."

"Are you going to the Bering?"

"Aye, lad, and beyond known seas. Come, follow me."

The mate stumped forward and, turning on one leg, started backward down the forecastle ladder. His head disappeared like a grotesque Jack going into a box.

Traherne hesitated, stared aft, clenched his fists,

then opened them and followed the mate. He went down the ladder by grasping the companion-cover and dropping to a holystoned deck. He swung around.

The view that greeted him was comforting in its rude simplicity. Three bunks lined the starboard planks of the schooner. Three were built against the port side. A single bunk was under the ladder. A chain-locker's door opened out against a huge molasses barrel over which swung a smoky lamp. The wood of the fore-castle, the deck-planks, the bunks, were scraped and polished. Chintz and calico curtains showed against the partitions. Three aged men sat with their boots extended and their pipes glowing. They stared at Hank and then at Traherne.

"New hand," said the mate as he reached into the bunk under the ladder and drew out a suit of red underwear and a heavy shirt. "His name is——"

Traherne glanced at his dripping trousers. They had once been immaculate flannel. They sagged and wound round his legs and feet. He laughed bitterly and reached for the underwear. He backed against the ladder and started undressing.

"My name," he said, "is Buck Traherne. Do any of you men come from Seattle?"

Hank answered for the silent group.

"Some been there. We're out of Victoria, th' three down here and th' three on deck—an' me. There's Cocky an' Byrd an' Scotty in this watch, which is mine. There's Goodwin an' Samuels an' Saul in th' starbo'rd watch, which is th' old man's. You'll find us all fair an' above board, Buck. How does th' underwear fit?"

Traherne mopped his blond hair with a coarse towel. He drew a blanket from the bunk, which he wrapped around himself before stepping out upon the planks of the forecandle deck.

He smiled at the peering mate whose questioning eyes contained the same glint of fire that was in the three seamen's pipe-bowls.

"All right," he said. "Mine was certainly wet."

"Leave your gear hang on th' back of th' ladder, lad. You can turn in my bunk when th' watch is called, which'll be soon."

Traherne glanced at the molasses barrel and the smoky lamp that hung from the deck-beam. He rocked with the motion of the schooner. Old Hank tapped forward and returned with a small pan of bread and salt meat.

"No Java, now," explained the mate. "The cook—we call him Doctor—is seven fathoms under. No use to 'wake him. Th' morning watch is th' time, lad, for fair feed and plenty of it.

"You're Canadian?" asked Traherne as he devoured the meat willingly enough.

"Aye, I'm not! I'm Thames born—at London Town, lad. I haven't seen the old country for going on ten years. Cocky, here, is better off than that. He an' Byrd an' Scotty came to Victoria after th' war."

Traherne set the empty pan upon the lower step of the forecastle ladder and stared up through the booby hatch. He saw a misty oblong of space and the marble-like bulge of an inner jib. He heard the seething of the water along the fast schooner's bow. Then, and clearly, eight bells struck with a double note above him.

The three seamen and the mate prepared to climb to the deck. They tapped their pipes and buttoned their coats. A figure stood blocking the companion-way.

"Watch on deck!" sounded.

Hank remained below long enough to introduce Traherne to Goodwin, Samuels, and Saul, who came off the captain's watch.

"Turn in," he said as he climbed the ladder. "Get a sleep, lad. We're well off soundings an' out in th' Pacific. You go with us till th' old man puts you ashore."

"He'll suffer for this!"

Hank's kindly eyes hardened. He peered back through the hatch. The two men measured each other in that glance. The mate shook his head and drew away. He stamped aft as Traherne climbed into the bunk.

Samuels and Saul and Goodwin showed no intention of going to sleep. They lighted pipes, drew molasses, which they spread over bread, and glanced keenly toward the bunk under the ladder.

Saul—a thin, crafty-looking seaman—reached beneath his mattress and pulled out a deck of well-thumbed cards. A bucket was overturned on the planks. A game started under the swinging lamp. Now and then Samuels crept up the ladder and peered aft with a guilty squint.

"Mate's standin' watch," he announced each time. "Gawd 'elp us if th' skipper comes on deck."

The rude picture beneath the lamp, the care-lined features of the three salts, the slapping cards

and the strange oaths—half suppressed—caused Traherne to stay awake. He wondered for a second time that night if the whole occurrence was a dream.

The *Wing and Wing* glided seaward like a fast gull. The rush of water against the schooner's planks finally lulled Traherne into sleep. He heard as he drowsed the voices of the trio raised in close-bitten oaths over some point in the game.

The change of watch, with Hank leading three seamen down to the forecabin, awoke Traherne.

He rolled over on the sea-weed mattress and thrust his feet down to the deck where he stood and stared through the ladder.

There was the feel of dawn in the air. The seamen started swabbing and mopping and tidying up the forecabin. They shook the blankets, turned the pillows, draped the trade-stuff curtains, and wiped the molasses drippings from a wooden plug in the barrel.

Traherne watched them. He drew on his half-dried flannel trousers and his shirt which had a monogram on the left sleeve. He stared at this emblem curiously. It was all that was left of his social position. He flushed and sat down with sudden thought.

"Where are we?" he asked Hank, as that seaman paused in the work of cleaning up and fingered a pair of heavy brogans which he had found beneath a bunk.

"Off soundings," said the mate. "Way off th' coast on th' long tack to Unalaska an' th' Bering, lad. Sea moderating. Wind Northeast. Barometer normal—maybe a little low."

Traherne flushed as the mate held out the brogans.

"Do I have to wear those things?"

"Aye, lad. They're serviceable! They'll keep your feet dry. There are no boots save in th' slop-chest."

Traherne pressed his hands to the sore spots on his open breast. He snatched the shoes and dropped them to the planks. He asked:

"Where are you people taking me to? What kind of a ship is this? Who is the man who struck me? When do we eat?" he added in a weaker voice.

Hank leaned against the forecastle ladder, chewing vigorously upon a huge mass of tobacco which extended his left cheek.

The old mariner took his time in answering. Twice he shifted the chew. Twice he tapped the

deck with his peg-leg. Finally he said: "You're young an' quick to smart, lad. Aye, you are! You have much to learn—even from us." The mate turned and pointed a twisted thumb toward the three seamen who had approached the ladder.

"They," he went on, "have been like you in days gone by. They sweated an' fumed an' chaffed over delay an' wind an' tide. Now they let the world roll by. You will learn all there is to learn of th' ship before we raise th' Aleutians. She's a missionary schooner, well found an' captained. She's loaded to th' hatches with honest stores—no whisky for th' Mazekas, which are all northern natives, including th' Siwashes. We're goin' to Indian Point, an' Cape Prince of Wales, an' St. Lawrence Island, an' East Cape, an' th' Siberian Shore, an' Herschel Island, an' Point Barrow, an' then on where few ships have ever ventured, lad."

Hank crossed his peg-leg over his good one. Swaying with the gentle motion of the ship and leaning up the canted deck he continued: "Th' cappin' is the Reverend Martin Jordan of Victoria an' th' Bering Sea settlements. He preaches with word o' mouth—an' with both fists, if need be. He is down on lickin' an' robbin' th' poor Aleuts an'

Eskimos. Now I've said a fair bit, lad. You know everything save it's almost time for mornin' prayers, which we will have at four bells. Th' cappin' and Moona will conduct services for all those who go down to sea in ships, an' all those who starve an' freeze on th' Arctic wilds. A fair thing to do, lad, in this wicked world."

"Moona?" asked Traherne.

"Th' same being his half-daughter—his ward, as it were. She's part Eskimo and part of th' best blood in th' world—on her Scotch father's side, who died at St. Lawrence Island during the Bad Year."

"A woman aboard?"

"No, lad—a girl."

"Where does she sleep?"

"Aft, in one of two cabins. Martin is the Shepherd an' you an' me and Moona an' all hands are th' lambs—so to speak."

Traherne recalled his demand to be put ashore. He did not blame the giant skipper for the double punch. He stared at his soiled trousers and the stained shirt which most certainly had shrunk. He eyed his stockinged toes and the brogans which the mate had given him. He glanced up swiftly, and held out his hand.

"I'll get along," he said, still thinking of the trim schooner and the towering Shepherd. "Will you shake?"

"Aye, lad," the seaman smiled through his red beard. "Aye, that's th' spirit! Ask Cocky an' Byrd an' Scotty if this isn't a fair ship."

"A bloody 'ooker!" said the cockney. "Prayers an' blows an' 'ard bread an' 'arder words. 'Olystone an' Bible an' short grub. I won't stick up for th' old man. Bli'me, if I will!"

The mate only smiled.

"It's th' worst he can say," he explained to Traherne. "Didn't th' Shepherd rescue him from a water-front dive an' save his soul? An' it was a fair thing to do. Wasn't th' police lookin' for you, Cocky? Didn't you steal some brass, or was it an' anchor—or maybe a hawser? We're all th' old man's lambs. He saved me from drink, which is a besettin' sin born of th' devil. What wrecks ships an' breaks masters an' takes th' lives of first-cabin passengers? Th' old red-eye an' trade gin!"

Cocky snorted and spat slyly underneath a bunk. He opened his slit-like mouth and then closed it swiftly.

A voice sounded throughout the schooner in strident command:

"All hands on deck for service!"

The brass bell rang in the belfry on the forepeak as the lookout struck four slow measures with a marlin-spike.

Hank Peterson assisted Traherne to pull on the brogans and don a heavy pea-jacket whose ancient horn buttons dangled like loose rope-ends.

The mate pointed to the ladder.

"Stir your stumps," he said. "I'll follow you. The old man will be waiting."

Traherne climbed the ladder. He stood upon the inclined deck of the schooner. He widened his eyes to a splendid seascape. The night's haze had been swept from the surface of the ocean. A flush showed over the starboard quarter where the sun was rising with flame-coloured plumes. The inverted dome of the sky was ash-gray inlaid with violet and pearl.

Waves ran from east to west before the billowing wind. The hard canvas seemed carved from marble. Each taper spar and mast was polished. They shone in the first light like that of a clipper yacht's. The planks were scraped. The pitch and oakum ran in straight seams from the break of the forepeak to the break of the quarter-deck.

Upon this deck, towering over the rail, stood the

big man who was called the Shepherd of the Sea. His jacket was open and flying to a wind which flapped his muffler around his neck. His brown eyes peered forward and counted the little flock that gathered on the main hatch with doffed caps in their hands.

He turned as Traherne stepped behind the broad figure of the mate, glancing aft to a low companion out of which a quaint figure appeared and stood swaying with the motion of the flying schooner.

"That's Moona," whispered the mate. "She's bringin' him th' Good Book an' th' song sheets."

Traherne studied the girl as she came forward, climbed down the weather poop steps and glided to the group of seamen who took from her the thumbed sheets of music.

He stared as she stepped timidly to his side. He saw a Quaker bonnet, the ribbons tied in a loose-flowing knot, a dark olive face, and unfathomable blue-black eyes with psychic reserve in their depths. He noted her form as she climbed up the weather steps and stood by the old man's side. It had curves which the alpaca gown she wore could not disfigure. He placed her age at seventeen—no more.

"Half Eskimo, half Scotch," the mate said, in a

guarded whisper. "Th' pride of th' Shepherd's life. His ward, as it were. It's a fair thing I've told you, so be warned."

Traherne filled his lungs with the salt sea air. He felt the maid's glance upon him from time to time. Each time she glanced she had lowered her eyes.

The Shepherd's voice was raised in an opening chant. He was joined by those of the swaying crew. The cockney's thin, nasal tones cleft through the song like a reed note through lesser pipes.

Then all was silent. The captain's hands were lifted from the rail and took the Good Book from the girl.

The fair wind was hushed as he began reading the Psalms.

Traherne had one thought. It drove a great warmth through his veins. He and the girl were Youth—the others on the ship were sere with old age.

CHAPTER III

"WING AND WING"

THE simple service ended with a short prayer. The skipper turned toward the wheelman and shouted:

"Keep her in the wind, you! Hold her full an' by!"

"Full an' by, sir," sounded from the low wheelhouse at the schooner's stern.

Traherne stepped from the main-hatch and started forward. He heard the Shepherd's strident voice pitched in another key from a prayerful one. He turned under the shelter of the foreboom and the straining foresail, glancing aft.

"Come here, you!"

Traherne was of two minds. He hesitated for a second. He saw the big man's beard bristling and his brown eyes flash. There came a shout that sounded like the carrying away of a jib.

"Ye, I mean!"

Traherne went aft. He stood beneath the Missionary who leaned far over the quarter-deck rail.

"Changed your mind about luck?" asked the Shepherd.

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Isn't God upon the waters?"

"I suppose so—if there is a God."

"Don't ye believe in one?"

"I don't know." Traherne felt the ship's movement and unskillfully balanced himself.

"Where did ye get your education?"

"At college—University of Seattle."

The old man stroked his yellow beard with a twisting motion of his left hand.

"Ye were snatched from the deep," he said slowly, solemnly. "Ye were brought into the fold. And yet ye do not believe in the God who watched over ye last night?"

"He was never proved to me."

The Shepherd glared along the white deck. He raised his hand from his beard and pointed a steady finger toward the crew who were swabbing up forward.

"Join them," said he. "Take the word of the Good Book from them. Mark their lives. Ye

shall leave this ship when ye acknowledge a God on High!"

Traherne thought of the card game in the fore-castle. He allowed his mind to turn to the vision of the demure maid. He lifted himself on tiptoes and peered along the quarter-deck. He saw only the V-shaped top of the cabin companion and the telltale on the wheel-house. The maid had gone below with the Bible and song sheets.

He moved from the huge seaman and started forward on the windward side.

"Get to lee'ard!" sounded behind him. "Ye shall know the way of ships and men before ye reach th' shore. I'm not a hard skipper. I want ye to remember that!"

Traherne closed his lips, but he did not turn. He crossed the deck, waited for the schooner to cease rolling, then went forward and stood by the side of Hank whose sleeves were pulled up exposing a maze of purple tattooing from wrists to elbows.

"When do we eat?" he asked as a sailor extended the handle of a squeegee.

"Blym, soon!" said Cocky over his shoulder. "'Elp swab up th' bleedin' deck, matey—an' we eat. See th' skipper is a-watchin' hus. There's blood hin 'is bleedin' eyes. There always is!"

Traherne reached the small galley house from which a thin smudge of smoke poured. He waited for Hank to unsnarl a hose which extended forward to where a handpump was being operated by feeble down and up strokes of an aged seaman.

The towering form of the skipper had vanished from the quarter-deck rail. The sea stretched to a silver bow astern. A creamy wake divided the hemisphere into two equal sections. No sail or bird or smoke broke the fine line of the horizon. The sky shone azure with fleecy clouds sailing before the pressure of the northeast wind.

Rakish lines had been given to the schooner by her builders. Her forepeak rose to the tapering jib-boom that pointed like a woman's dainty finger toward the north and west. Her spars were varnished and revarnished. They held the mirror-finish of some rare wood. Her sails were white, with here and there a thrifty, well-sewn patch. The standing rigging was tarred. The running rigging, the belaying pins on pin-rails and fife-rails, the coiled-down hauls and halliards and sheets—all showed the exacting care of the Shepherd.

Traherne knew no more about the sea than the experience with his motorboat on Puget Sound and in the Strait had gained him. He began to

wonder if men who went out to blue water were fools, after all. The simple prayer, the demure maid, the healthy hunger that gripped him, brought a new light in his eyes. It was morning. He was far from the coast of Washington. He had not reached the camp at Moore's. He was perhaps given up for dead. But then he had no "morning after" headache. He braced his shoulders and grasped the squeegee handle as Hank got the water flowing into the odd corners of the deck. He attacked the job vigorously. He went forward and was shown where to rack the squeegee close under the low break of the forepeak.

A snickering chuckle sounded when the cockney spied the grub coming forward. Traherne pressed the squeegee into its chock and turned.

The "Doctor," or cook, of the *Wing and Wing*, was bearing aloft a huge tray which rested upon his palm. He walked impressively. He rounded the foremast on the windward side. He lowered the tray to the fore hatch.

Straightening himself with an effort he stared at the group of hungry seamen.

"Mess for eight," he said. "Six seamen, a mate, an' a stowaway."

Traherne eyed the tray upon which was a heap-

ing pile of thick-sliced bread, a pot of steaming coffee, and eight slices of almost white fried ham. His glance lifted. He stared searchingly into the cook's eyes which were red rimmed. He studied the man with a feeling of pity. Seventy years old, he took him to be. His straggling beard might have served for an Arab chieftain's. It was gray-streaked and unkept. It reached to his rope-yarn belt. The slippers he wore had been woven from spare cords. His trousers were faded dungaree patched at the knee and greasy at the seams.

It came to Traherne that here was another aged seafarer. He glanced at the mate's red beard. He recalled the Missionary's yellow hair. He swung a swift scrutiny around the circle of seamen. They all were more than two score and ten. The schooner was officered and manned by men whom the world would have cast aside as useless. It was heading toward a darker pass than the Strait of Juan. It was going into the Bering and through to the Arctic. It might touch at the Mouth of the Mackenzie River, or even beyond. And old men would haul the ropes and hold the wheel and carry the word of cheer to the pale, barren lands around the Pole.

He asked Peterson a number of questions as they

sat down together and waited for the coffee to cool.

The mate reached for tin cups which Cocky brought out of the forecastle. He ignored the questions.

"Lad," he said as he turned. "Lad, when you have lived to my age you will find nought but yourself an' th' Universe—which is your Maker. Yourself don't amount to much. Your Maker is everything. That's all I've found."

"You preach to the Indians, then?"

"No, lad, there's them what preach an' them what have learned to remain silent an' look on th' glory of th' seas an' th' ice an' th' Aurora an' th' inhabitants of earth. I'm satisfied to do my duty and let other men do the talking—which some have a natural skill to do. Th' skipper is a powerful convincer. He has saved many souls in Northern waters."

Traherne rubbed his chest thoughtfully.

"His ward—Moona?" he asked.

The mate filled a cup to the brim with hot coffee and passed it over before he said cautiously: "She was educated at St. Lawrence Island, which is in th' Bering. Her father was a Douglas, a fur trader. Her mother was a fair woman for her

race. Th' girl was adopted after her parents died in th' Bad Year. She has been under Martin's care ever since she could walk. He was th' missionary at St. Lawrence until he bought this ship an' extended his field. He is down on two things, lad: rum an' Shamanism—which he calls all beliefs other than Christian."

"Is there any rum up where you are going?"

The mate set down his cup.

"It's th' curse of th' Arctic! Every whale-ship is a rum-runner."

Traherne did not question the mate further. He recalled hearing in Seattle that the Government was taking active measures against trading bad whisky, or any whisky at all, with the natives along the Alaskan Coast. The matter had attracted attention at the time it came up.

He rose from the hatch. He braced his shoulders and stared aft toward the quarter-deck.

The tall missionary was on the poop. The off-shore wind tossed the yellow strands of his long beard. He stood in an attitude of concentration, his eyes upon the sea ahead of the fast-running schooner.

Traherne turned and gazed forward. The watch on deck consisted of two bent seamen, a man

at the wheel and the mate. The sea was clear to the blue line of a bulging horizon which showed cold and clear. Somewhere north was the great swinging bow of the Aleutian Islands—extending almost to Japan. The *Wing and Wing* was headed for Dutch Pass, one of the easterly openings to Bering Sea.

Hank Peterson eyed Traherne. He said slyly to Cocky who was munching a crust left from the breakfast, "A spoiled lad, with good points. What a sailor he'd make after a three years' voyage!"

Traherne lifted his chin and tried to appear as if he had not overheard the mate.

"E's a bloody swell," said the cockney. "Look at that shirt—silk! Look at them pants—flannel. No slop-chest stuff."

"Aye, an' look at th' wild light in his eye. He's thinkin' of shore an' home an' city streets."

"You're wrong!" exclaimed Traherne. "I was just wondering if it would make a particle of difference to anybody in this world whether I went back to Washington, or not. I've finished college; why can't I see the world?"

Old Hank and the cockney glanced at each other. They turned their faces toward the flowing sea.

"You're welcome to come with us," said the mate. "You'll see a world an' a life that's not down in printed books."

There was a challenge in the seaman's words. Traherne thought them over as the days followed the days and the nights glided after each other.

Despite the brushing menace of a storm and the shifting of the wind to the magnetic north, the *Wing and Wing* reached smoky seas, and there was raised from the foremast the first glint of snow-capped mountains indicating the land of the Aleuts.

The course was corrected, the schooner allowed to run off a point from the Arctic gale, and she was driven straight toward two white needles which marked the entrance to Dutch Pass and the strait that led into the Bering Sea.

Unalaska, which the mate said contained much of interest in the way of a Greek church, and Russian cannon, and Yukon boats waiting for the ice to clear, was left astern. The schooner, under the skillful guidance of the missionary, reached a narrow pass upon each side of which were foam-curded crags of basalt over which fell water from melting snow.

"Th' Rock of th' Bishop!" declared Hank to

Traherne as the anchor chain rattled through the starboard hawsepipe, the aged crew cast loose halliards and down hauls and brought the fluttering canvas to the deck.

Traherne stared along the mate's pointing arm. He saw a shaft of black rock extending out of the strait like a giant's finger—a giant that was all but submerged in the flood of inky waters.

He heard a slight splash aft, denoting the lowering of the dinghy. He turned and glanced over the quarter-deck.

The missionary, assisted by the cook, had lowered the boat. It was held to the taffrail by a short painter. The sea rose and fell. A hollow roar echoed through the Pass. The sun had disappeared over the serrated edge of the wild mountains whose peaks were turned to pink and gold.

"Where are they going?" asked Traherne of the mate.

"Back to Unalaska, lad."

"Can't I go with them?"

"Wait!"

The simple statement of obedience to the captain's will caused Traherne to flush. He leaned over the rail in the waist of the schooner as the

Shepherd and the cook disappeared along the shadows of the overhanging rock.

He took one step aft and then stared forward at the crew which was gathering the canvas and coiling the lines on the belaying pins. He stepped again, and this time did not look forward. He saw the shadowy form of Byrd come down the weather poop steps and glide along the schooner's white rail.

It occurred to him that the sailor had come off anchor watch and had sneaked forward to get something out of the forecabin. He acted on this supposition.

The quarter-deck was deserted. There was a narrow ladder on each side of the wheel-house. He climbed upon the poop then went down the lee steps and stood with his back pressed against the taffrail. The falls from the davits astern were invitingly strong. The sea surged and rose and dropped along the rudder. It was not more than three ship's lengths to a narrow cove, at the land end of which showed a small shelf of sand. Above this cove was a gully that wound along the basalt formation like a goat's path.

Moss and lichens and northern wild flowers scented the air. A hair-seal plunged from a crag. It disappeared beneath a concentric circle of dark

ripples. Traherne removed his coat and hung it on davit hook. He bent and loosened the laces of his stiff brogans. He stood erect and peered over the top of the wheel-house. His eyes swept the quarter-deck. The masts of the schooner were in line with his position. The crew were busy forward.

He hesitated before diving over the stern. His first impulse cooled within him. There came another and a saner idea. A longboat hung in the waist of the schooner, this was lashed to davits and rail. It was possible that it might be cleared and lowered some time during the night. With it in the water and with oars or a paddle the trip to Unalaska would not be difficult.

Again he studied the sandy shelf at the end of the fjord. He traced the path that ran along the dark mountain's side. His gaze fixed upon the cold northern stars, which shone with white purity.

Dropping his glance he turned and raised himself on tiptoe. The crew were chanting a hymn in aged, cracked voices that carried far. Their chanty died as the companion slide opened upon the quarter-deck and Moona stepped out. She moved to the port side and rested her elbows upon the rail. She gazed intently out upon the dark waters of Dutch Pass.

Traherne realized that she had not noticed him. He drew his head below the combing of the wheelhouse and reached for his coat. He started putting it on.

A shadow caused him to turn and stare upward. Moona stood over him with her hands pressed to her breast and her dark eyes narrowed in wonder.

"Art thou going to leave us?" she asked, timidly.

Surprised at the Quaker note in her voice Traherne was silent some little time regarding her. He stared boldly at her hair which was gathered in two plaits at the sides of her head. He mentally noted her change of costume from the black alpaca in which he had last seen her to deer-skin and bead-top boots and a quaint vest of white fur.

The calm inscrutability of her glance brought him to speech. He stammered an incoherent answer to her question as he finished drawing on his coat.

"I was going to leave you," he added candidly, however. "Do you think the captain has any right to hold me on this ship?"

"Thee did not ask to go ashore."

Traherne smiled.

"That's right!" he admitted. "But then it was understood!"

The girl swung her eyes over the waters of the Pass. She raised her hand and pressed back the plaits of her hair. Her glance fell.

"I don't know thy name," she said.

Traherne told her, adding, "And I don't know yours."

"Moona Douglas-Jordan."

"I like the Moona," he said, pleasantly. "The Douglas-Jordan is a reminder that your guardian, or foster-father—I suppose I should call him that—is Scotch and stubborn. Don't you think I'd better take off my coat again and swim to the shore? Would you stop me?"

"I would not stop thee."

"I believe that," Traherne declared. "I'm sure I can swim to the shore and walk along that ledge and find my way to some settlement."

"Thee can try."

He studied her. He tried to compress a description of her. "Young, naïve, dark of skin and eyes and hair, pretty and yet not pretty," he thought.

She stood silent. He turned and looked at the restless waters of the fjord. He backed against the taffrail. He grasped one line of the down-running falls. He swung this line and measured the distance to the surface of the sea.

He heard her move from her position over him and give a sudden start of surprise. He glanced up.

She had gained the port rail of the quarter-deck and was leaning over it. He watched intently. He saw the ghost-like outlines of a ship that was steaming through the Pass in a northerly direction. A red sidelight showed like a pale eye of fire. A glow marked the funnel's cap. The spars and sails were reflected in yellow tracery. The ship went by and rounded the Rock of the Bishop.

The girl came gliding to the after edge of the wheel-house.

"Thee art still there?" she asked.

Traherne hurriedly climbed the weather steps, and stood by her side.

"What ship was that?" he asked.

"The steam-whaler *Bernecia*. Thee has seen the first of the fleet that goes to northern waters. Others will come, soon."

"And why do you watch for them?"

"The captain gave me that order before he went to Unalaska. He wants their names."

"Why?"

"Thee should not ask why."

Traherne sensed a mystery which would be hard

to obtain from the maid. He changed the tenor of his questions.

“When will the captain come back?”

“To-morrow, methinks.”

“And I have until then to decide whether I want to swim ashore or not?”

“Thee has till then.”

“I can trust you not to tell any of the crew that I was going to desert this ship?”

“Thee can trust me.”

Traherne bowed. He started toward the hand-rail that marked the port ladder leading down to the waist of the schooner. He looked back as he heard her soft steps behind him.

“Stay with the ship,” she whispered, demurely.

“Why?”

She swished around without answering, and moved to the rail which overlooked the surface of the dark Pass. He left her still silent, watching the stretch of inky waters through which all ships must steam or sail to reach the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean.

CHAPTER IV

THE RUM-RUNNERS

TRAHERNE turned in in the cockney's bunk. That seaman was sleepily standing an anchor watch while the mate was below with his bushy, red whiskers thrust over a soiled blanket.

None of the crew had noticed Traherne's conversation with Moona. He slept well and came on deck before dawn.

A faint pink glow was in the stars. The white mountains reflected the rosy flush of day. The Pass ran like a tideless river of ink through walls of basalt. A single floe drifted northward; it had broken from the shore of some fjord.

Hank Peterson called the watch. He stumped toward the small galley house where he started the fire and boiled coffee for breakfast. Traherne drank a double measure and munched upon ship's biscuits. He worked at cleaning the deck and squeegeeing the icy water pumped from the sea into the scuppers.

The mate grew confidential as day broke and showed a clear blue sky from one end of Dutch Pass to the other. He moved to Traherne's side and leaned over the rail, filling a cord-wrapped pipe with cut-plug and striking a match on the dried planks.

"Over there," he said, pointing the stem of the pipe toward the Rock of the Bishop, "was where a drunken skipper put three hundred souls under th' deep. He went ashore in a fog. The ship—she was th' *Hamilton*—was bound for Nome. Nobody got ashore except a dog."

Traherne glanced at the Rock and asked:

"How far is it to the Bering Sea?"

"Not far. Just around th' point an' then th' Pass opens till you can see th' first of th' north pack—which should be loose by now."

"I saw a ship go through last night."

The mate drew slowly at his pipe. He worked his beard up and down as he eyed the southern entrance to the Pass.

"There'll be more," he mused. "That was th' first of th' whale fleet. They'll all lay off th' pack ice an' wait for lanes to let them through to th' early bowhead whalin'—jus' south of th' Seal Islands. There's th' *Bernicia*, which you saw, an'

then there's th' *Northern Lights* an' th' *Gleaner* an' th' *Beluga* an' th' *Grampus* an' th' *Hakodate* an' one or two schooners. Like as not th' *Casco* an' th' *Pole Star* will come north this season. It's a little fleet to what it was in th' early days before th' war."

"Do they all whale?" Traherne watched the mate's eyes as he asked this question.

The old salt tapped his pipe on the rail. He replaced it in the pocket of his pea-jacket.

"Some they do, an' some they don't. Th' *Hakodate*, which should come from Hawaii, is a tradin' ship that touches all th' Siberian points an' fills to th' hatches with skins an' bone an' ivory. Th' skipper's name is Blane. His crew are half Chinks an' half Kanakas. He makes an open boast that he brings whisky north for th' natives. An' that whisky is made right on th' ship."

"How?"

"Easy! Blane buys two or three hundred casks of alcohol, or gets it from some ship, and mixes it with th' same amount of water. He colours it with colourin' matter an' then he has six hundred casks of trade whisky. It's rot-gut!"

The old seaman stamped his left leg upon the planks to emphasize his statement.

"That's what the Shepherd is tryin' to stop,"

he went on. "That an' th' immorality along th' coasts. Th' Eskimo is a dyin' race—killed by whalin' captains an' civilization. They are goin' th' way of th' Indians—through fire water. Some they say that drugs an' opium is brought north by ships like th' *Hakodate*."

"Do the natives believe in Christianity?"

Hank folded his arms and lifted his shoulders until he was almost erect. His eyes closed in thought. They opened the merest slits.

"They accept anythin' on th' surface. Deep under their skins they believe in th' old witches an' priests an' sacrifices an' tokens. Shamanism is what it is called. You can't change them very much. They see th' Northern Aurora an' the ice fields an' th' blizzards an' queer things an' they think too much. An' then comes th' white men with trade gin an' whisky an' condemned stores an' poor rifles with defective ammunition. It was a clean world up here before th' whale ships started tradin' with th' Mazekas."

Traherne thought of Moona. He turned with a lift of his chin. He studied the quarter-deck. He saw the closed companion.

"These half-breeds," he asked, "are they to be trusted?"

"White blood don't help—as a rule. Th' worst thing in th' world is to mix blood. Think of Mexicans an' Negroes. Look what happens when you breed Chinks with Kanakas."

"But there are exceptions."

"Few if any. Th' call of th' wild is in all natives with a bit of white blood. They pray, an' listen to preachin' an' accept th' tenets of th' Christian creed, but down in the souls o' them they hold to th' old religion with its misty sacrifices an' tortures."

The mate's discourse was interrupted by the appearance of a skin canoe around the sea end of the Pass. It came on with a single figure paddling slowly.

"Kyack," said Hank. "It's an Aleut otter hunter. He'll come aboard, no-doubtly."

Traherne watched the small boat dancing over the water. He moved aft and away from the mate. He it was who lowered a line to the Aleut and saw him unlace the thong that tied him to the skin cover in the cockpit of the kyack.

The native's face was broad, greasy, and wrinkled with smiles as he came over the rail and dropped to the deck.

"Are you going to Unalaska?" asked Traherne,

remembering that his father would be worrying about his disappearance.

"Me go pretty soon," said the Aleut. "You like to go with me?"

Traherne shook his head. He stared at the small boat. It would not very well hold two men.

The Aleut glanced forward and saw that the crew were not concerned with his visit. He looked at Traherne and fingered his shirt.

"You trade?" he asked. "Me give you salmon or tusks."

Traherne smiled and said: "I'll give you my shirt if you take a letter to the post office at Unalaska. I'll give you money for a stamp, too."

The Aleut understood part, if not all, of the proposition. He beamed broadly.

"All right. Give me shirt, then I start pretty soon with letter."

His eyes widened and he moved toward the poop of the schooner. Moona stood at the rail with her gaze upon the waters of the Pass. A sudden thought flashed through Traherne's mind. He remembered the call of the blood as he saw the Aleut waddling over the ship's plank and climbing the poop steps.

Moona heard the native coming. She turned and held out her hand. She started conversing with the visitor in a tongue unknown to Traherne, who could overhear the conversation.

He watched the figures and compared them. The Aleut was of an Island race, hardy, well-nourished, almost untouched by civilization. The girl, in her fur clothing and beaded Mazeka boots, was olive-skinned, yet her oval face showed rare blood and culture. She held her poise like a little queen. Her slant eyes were pools of inscrutability. And yet, to Traherne, there was a bond between the two which he could not understand.

The Aleut had gone right to the maid without hesitancy. He talked with her as if they were old-time friends meeting after a brief separation. He showed his treasures drawn from a leather poke.

Traherne went forward and wrote the letter on a scrap of paper which the cockney seaman tore from the front page of a testament. The envelope was furnished by Hank

He waited for the Aleut to descend to the deck. Twice he examined the address on the envelope to be sure it would not miscarry. He was leaning over the rail when the native came down the poop steps and moved forward.

He turned and called him back. The Aleut pointed toward the forecastle.

"Me go there," he said. "Me like to come whale ships and trade ships. Plenty come, pretty soon." The native pointed down the Pass. He narrowed his fat-encased eyes.

"You'll take the letter for me?"

"You give me shirt. Me wear skin shirt, now. Skin shirt no good."

The mate shook his head when he heard of the transaction.

"Too much!" he declared as he found Traherne another shirt. "You've offered him five times more than it is worth to take a letter to Unalaska. He's going right there."

"Yes, but this is an important letter," said Traherne. "It's got to go safely. I can't take any chances."

"The native is robbing you."

Traherne changed shirts in the forecastle and climbed the ladder after the Aleut. He watched him paddle away from the ship and guide the sharp bow of the kyack toward the south and Unalaska. His eyes swung to the girl on the poop. She, too, was watching the fast-disappearing native.

Her lips were closed tight. Her brown hands

grasped the rail. Her expression was one of loss. Suddenly she started toward the companion which led into the cabin. She hesitated, bowed, and vanished below the white planks of the quarter-deck.

Traherne found the mate in the galley-house where he leaned over a smoky stove upon which was a huge kettle of boiling salt beef and half-peeled potatoes.

"Did Miss Jordan—Moona—ever meet that native before?" he asked.

The mate ceased stirring the meal and lifted out a long spoon.

"No, like as not she never did," he said as he touched his tongue to the spoon. "They're all friendly with her. She understands their lingo. She's a daughter of th' North an' they seem to feel it. She's got their blood. Blood always calls, somehow."

"But she's almost white."

"Almost, yes. And we're almost civilized, but there's times when we're not. Ain't th' big war proved that?"

Traherne backed out of the galley-house door. He went forward to where the crew were sunning themselves on the deck. He waited and talked

with Cocky and Byrd until Hank appeared with the meal which was set upon the forehatch.

A barque-rigged whaler went by at noon. Its long row of dingy white whaleboats, its crow's nest, the slatternly crew gathered on the forecastle deck—all denoted the straits into which an ancient and honourable calling had fallen.

"She be th' *Beluga*," said Hank as he tapped his pipe on his wooden leg and filled the burnt bowl with a handful of cut-plug. "*Beluga*, out o' 'Frisco. That makes two."

Traherne wheeled and glanced aft. The maid stood on the quarter-deck. Her head was bare. Her hair glistened in the northern sun. Her eyes were fixed on the slow-steaming whaler.

"She's taking note, too," chuckled the mate. "Th' old man left her aboard for that purpose, most likely. He don't trust none of us when it's gettin' th' evidence on th' rum-runners."

"Is the *Beluga* a runner?" Traherne inquired.

"Not if she didn't put into Hawaii. There ain't much booze to be had now save at foreign ports or out of th' way places—like Mexico an' th' Sandwich Islands."

"But Hawaii belongs to the United States."

"There's queer things goes on over there. Most

of th' whisky an' alcohol an' trade gin comes from th' China Coast—originally. There's lots of thirsty people left in th' world."

The aged mate's sincerity was unquestioned. He was not rabid on the subject—he stated facts and left his hearers to draw their own conclusion.

A feel of spring was in the air about the ship. Traherne walked away from the mate and strode up and down the deck. He turned each time at the foremast. He observed the girl in a score of positions on the quarter-deck. She seemed restless and ill at ease.

He ran his hands through his hair, replaced his cap, glanced toward the crew forward, started aft, climbed the poop steps and crossed the deck to her side where she leaned against the lee rail.

"I saw you here," he said. "I thought you wouldn't mind if I came up."

"I don't mind. I'm waiting for the Shepherd to return. I can't stay in the cabin always. It's of thee I have been thinking."

Her eyes dropped so demurely that he gained courage to take her arm and lead her aft to the wheel-house where they sat down.

He studied her bead-topped boots. They seemed like dainty moccasins. Her skirt was cut high,

from some soft fur. The waist of her dress had been changed. It was now of Indian woven wool and contained two bright colours—red and yellow.

The touch of barbaric splendour showed only in her clothes. Her well-shaped hands were clean. Her neck was open and without necklace.

“Thee wrote a letter?” she said, softly.

“Yes! To my father. I told him that I was going north on the *Wing and Wing*. You see he probably thinks I’m lost in the Strait.”

“Hast thee a mother?”

“No. She is buried near Spokane, Washington.”

“I have no mother or father. The father I call father is not my father.”

Traherne smiled at her mode of expression. There was a break in her sentences, a tiny lack of direct thought.

He turned and held out his hand. “I’m sorry about your father and mother,” he said. “It must be hard to lose them both.”

She remained silent. He talked on and told her of his life in college, of the camp on the American shore, of the Indian Reservation near Cape Flattery, and then he related his hopes for the future. He mentioned business and endeavour and

social affairs. She still was silent. He stopped suddenly and stared at her.

"There's a ship going by," he said, rising and pointing to the waters of Dutch Pass.

She stood erect and parted her lips over white teeth as she studied the ship.

"*Casco*—a schooner," he said, reading the name on the stern and ranging his eyes over the rigging. "Where is it from?"

"Father would know. He will be coming soon, now."

Traherne stared over the rail and toward the southern end of the Pass. He felt the girl's breath over his shoulder. He turned and glanced down into her eyes.

"Why do you call him father?" he asked.

"Because he has requested me to. He is not my father. He is a good man who takes care of me and who——"

Her voice died to a hesitating whisper.

"Some time I shall tell thee," she said. "You must leave me now. There is a boat coming."

Traherne strained his glance and saw a white speck close inshore. It was fully three miles away. He wondered at Moona's eyesight as he crossed the quarter-deck and went down into the waist of the

schooner where the entire crew were foregathered in expectancy. They, too, had seen the boat. It was undoubtedly the *Wing and Wing's* dinghy.

It came on with flashing oars. Both the captain and the cook were bending their backs manfully. Traherne made note of their haste. He realized as he followed the mate over the quarter-deck and to the taffrail davits that something of moment must have occurred at Unalaska.

The small boat rounded the schooner's bow and swung under her waist. It came gliding to where the falls dangled close by the water. The missionary reached out a long arm. He rapidly hooked the line to the eye-bolt in the bow of the dinghy. The aged cook, whose name was Seaford, did the same with the stern bolt. Traherne and the peg-legged mate hauled lustily at the tackles. They brought the boat up to the level of the rail with steady pulls. Traherne, with youth in his muscles, had to pause once or twice. As he did so he had a close view of the Shepherd of the Sea. He studied his face and divined strength and decision there. The white beard with its yellow tint around the mouth curved outward. The brown eyes were large and lambent. The ears were big and prominent. The whole face was fanatically determined.

"Good, lad," said Martin Jordan as he lifted a Bible from a thwart of the boat and leaped over the taffrail. "Ye have decided to remain with us?"

"Yes," said Traherne as the mate coiled the tackle more securely around the belaying-pins and prepared to swing straps beneath the boat.

"'Tis well, then. Ye are welcome." The Shepherd climbed to the quarter-deck, braced his legs, and stared back at that portion of the Pass over which he had come. His shoulders lifted. His eyes widened. The dingy outlines of a barquentine appeared to the southward. Its sails shone in the sun. It tacked and came slowly gliding on.

Traherne assisted the crew forward in casting loose the vang and buntlines preparatory to hoisting canvas. The capstan bars were thrust into the capstan. The slack was taken from the anchor chain. Then, at an order from Hank who hurried forward, the crew with the exception of one man lay down upon the deck.

Traherne watched the tall skipper. He saw him turn toward the cabin companion and take a pair of binoculars from Moona. The girl moved aft. Standing by the wheel-house, the Shepherd braced his legs and studied the passing barquentine. He marked every man and straining sail upon her.

He closed the glasses with a snap and turned away.

"What ship is that?" asked Traherne as he crawled over the deck planks to the mate who sat under the lee of the rail at the waist.

"*Hakodate*," whispered Hank. "Th' rum-runner an' worse. Th' skipper has been waitin' for her. He probably went to Unalaska to find out when she was comin' north."

"That's the one that Blane is captain of?"

"Th' same, lad, as I was tellin' you about. She's chock-a-block with whisky, no-doubtedly. She's got more of a crew than an honest ship. If she had any boats showin', over an' above what she's got, I'd say she was going to do some illicit sealin' inside th' three-mile line of th' rookeries. She's only got a dinghy an' two whaleboats. That means she's runnin' rum to Siberia an' the American shore."

Traherne rose to his knees. He glanced over the rail. The barquentine had passed the anchoring place of the *Wing and Wing*. It went on through the narrow strait, and disappeared around the high shoulder of black basalt which towered over the Rock of the Bishop.

A shout sounded from the quarter-deck. The

missionary strode to the quarter-deck rail. He leaned over this and repeated his first order.

"Stand by to hoist foresails! Get them up, you there forrard! Mr. Peterson, ye may weigh anchor," he added. "We're going out!"

Traherne followed the mate around the deck. He was shown the various ropes. He assisted with the capstan until the rusty chain ran straight up and down. The schooner, under the impulse of the wind on the inner and outer jib and half-raised foresail, began to swing her head toward the north. The cockney hurried to the wheel-house. He twirled the wheel as the *Wing and Wing* started out into the channel.

"Catt th' anchor!" shouted the missionary. "Haul away sheets! Hi ye there, stand by fore halliards. That's right. Now steady there, aft. Hold her steady, ye!"

The Rock of the Bishop was reached and passed. The schooner starboarded a point or more. It started out of the open funnel which led into the icy waters of the Bering Sea. It reached rough water and darted from the shelter of the high land.

Traherne spent a busy hour about the deck. He helped coil lines and draw the blocks of the

sheets together. He learned the ropes from the mate. He displayed far less indecision than when he had first come aboard the *Wing and Wing*.

It came to him, as he rested in the forecabin over the watch below, that the salty air and the exercise was clearing city fog and weakness from his brain. He felt the wine of the youth within his veins. He gloried suddenly in a remarkable appetite. He heard the seaman called Byrd telling of the big game in the shape of Polar bears and walrus and seals and musk oxen to be found along the Arctic slopes. He wondered, as he rolled over for a two-hours' sleep, why more city-bred men did not sign before the mast on Bering Sea ships. A five or six months' voyage was better than all the medicine and prescribed exercise in the world.

He went on deck at the end of the dogwatch and leaned over the rail. Every sail was set on the schooner from flying-jib to mizzen topsail. She was fast plunging toward a smudge on the smoky sea which denoted the position of the *Hakodate*.

"Holdin' her in sight," said the mate after he filled his pipe and glanced first at the barquentine and then up at the slanted canvas of the schooner. "We'll both fetch in th' ice along about midnight."

"Why is the Shepherd following the ship?" Traherne asked.

"To find out where she is headin' for. If it's Indian Point, Siberia, we go there, too. Th' skipper is mighty down on rum. He'll be likely to mix it with a blow or two. He don't like Blane—never did. Blane's bad! There's going to be hell in these seas pretty soon."

"Won't the Government stop Blane?"

"Government can't! He took th' rum aboard on th' ocean—out of sight of land. He's going where only th' Bolsheviki rule—or th' Reds. There's a lot of bad men livin' with squaws on th' Russian Coast. They want whisky."

Traherne saw suddenly that the barquentine had disappeared from view. He pointed toward a low white bank of clouds. The glint of a cold sun was above the formation.

"Ice," said the mate. "Blane has found a passage north. We'll get it, too. I'll have to go aloft."

The mate finished with his pipe and placed it carefully in his peajacket's pocket. He stumped over the planks and started up the weather fore-shrouds. He hooked his wooden leg through the rigging at the heel of the foretopmast

and shaded his eyes with the palm of his right hand.

Long he studied the sea before the plunging bow of the schooner. He lowered his hand and glanced aft. Traherne, from a position on the forehatch, rose on tiptoe and swung with the motion of the *Wing and Wing*. He, too, stared aft.

The Shepherd, with Moona by his side, was walking the quarter-deck from port to starboard. They turned and came to the rail as the mate shouted:

"Lane to lee'ard, sir. It goes right through th' pack. I raise th' *Hakodate* with all sails set. She's headin' into th' heart of it."

The missionary wheeled and said something to the helmsman. The fast-driven schooner ran off a point. Ice showed in scattered floes. Seals splashed into the sea. A lone walrus raised its head and stared at the schooner.

"How's the course?" shouted the Shepherd. "Are we heading right?"

"Right!" said the mate, laconically. "Hold her steady."

The *Wing and Wing* entered the first of the north pack that stretched through the Bering Straits and to the Pole. All lights were extinguished by the mate's orders given after he had dropped to the

deck. The scattered ice ground under the bow and scraped the planks forward aft. The stars appeared. They lent their cold light to the chase after the rum-runner and the evil crew of the *Hakodate*.

f
d
t
t
o
s

I
t
v
V
h
r

s

CHAPTER V

THE BLOOD BUND

TRAHERNE'S interest in the pursuit lay chiefly in trying to fathom the missionary's intention.

Martin Jordan seemed a hard man who had, fortunately for the world, turned his energies into doing good in his own peculiar way. He preached the Good Word wherever he went, but more than this, he was practical, and sought to get to the root of the evil which he had found along the Arctic slopes.

He had most certainly marked the barquentine *Hakodate* as an unnecessary adjunct to the northern whaling and trading fleet. His purpose was seen as the night passed and the *Wing and Wing* was exposed to the dangers of being crushed by the Polar ice in the mad chase after the rum-runner.

Dawn revealed an ocean of flaked ice and a slaty bank of clouds to the north and east. The

Hakodate was a speck in the distance. Being square-rigged on the foremast, she could be seen from aft better than a schooner.

Traherne watched the missionary as he appeared on deck and allowed the mate to go below for a watch. The big captain was followed by the maid who carried the Bible and the song sheets. The morning service was held despite the absence of the mate and the pursuit of the *Hakodate*. The Shepherd's strident voice vibrated along the schooner's deck as he extolled the seamen to 'ware of rum and evil thoughts and to pray for those who lived their lives on the pale Arctic shores.

The service closed and Moona gathered the song sheets from the seamen in the schooner's waist. Traherne had caught a flash from the girl's black eyes that stabbed through his breast. He heard her mount the weather ladder to the quarter-deck. He walked forward to the break of the forepeak.

The day advanced with the positions of the two ships relatively the same. Both were being skillfully navigated in spite of the broken fragments of the north pack. The wind was almost astern—a fact which served to break up the last of the cemented floes. The current's drift was toward Bering Strait.

Gu
ward
stand
schoo
at an
Tr
show
wind
the t
The
mean
was t
const
flutte
Mo
finish
behir
binna
did r
the n
"T
cours
Tr
head
"T
we n

Gulls and Arctic birds winged their way northward. Seals sported on the ice. A polar bear standing on an ancient grandpa floe watched the schooner go by. He lowered his head and stared at an ice-hole.

Traherne was taken aft at noon by the mate and shown how to steer by compass point and by the wind on the sails. He learned rapidly. He found the trick was much the same as with a motorboat. The mate left him with the injunction that "down" meant putting the bow in the wind and "up" was the reverse; that "full an' by" was generally construed into keeping the leach of the foresail fluttering slightly.

Moona came into the wheel-house before he finished his two-hour trick at the helm. She stood behind him. She glanced at the compass in the binnacle. She watched the steady needle which did not vary a quarter from the point given by the mate.

"Thee is improving," she said. "First thy course wasn't straight. Now it is."

Traherne grasped the spokes. He turned his head.

"I feel like a pirate on a fast lugger, Moona. All we need now is boarding cutlasses and battle lan-

terns and a Long-tom. We'll overhaul the *Hakodate* and have that fellow Blane's blood or pieces o' eight, or the rum in pipes from out his hold."

The girl raised herself on tiptoe. She glanced through the port-window of the wheel-house.

"I see the *Hakodate*," she said. "It's upside down. It's the reflection on the sea, I guess. Do you know why we are following her?"

"No."

"Because the Shepherd, whom I call father, had words with Mr. Blane at Unalaska. Father dared him to show what was in the hold. Mr. Blane refused and told him that there was no law of God nor man that held on the Siberian Coast."

"Is that true?"

"I think thee knowest it is true. I expect there will be trouble at Indian Point, where the *Hakodate* is heading for. Father will watch what the crew of the *Hakodate* does. He is interested in a mission there. He told me that rum was killing many of the Mazekas, as he calls them, only they should be called Eskimos of the tribe Siberian."

Traherne hesitated and then asked:

"Will we pass St. Lawrence Island where you were born?"

Th
whee
"I
until
"I
"I
answ
Tr
lette
(as w
Th
lengt
brow
the c
"I
Tr
strai
"Y
"Y
man.
Tr
the r
and j
"Y
with
spect

The girl stepped to the starboard doorway of the wheel-house and pointed due north by compass.

"It's over there," she said. "We'll not go there until we come back from Indian Point."

"But you want to go there?"

"It's home—the only home I know," was her answer.

Traherne noticed that her English was almost letter perfect, with here and there a suggestion (as was most natural) of a Biblical phrase.

The problem of questioning her at further lengths was decided by a naïve little sigh and a brown hand that reached over his arm and grasped the centre or uppermost spoke-handle of the wheel.

"I am betrothed to the Shepherd," she whispered.

Traherne almost dropped his double hold on the straining wheel. He turned his eyes upon hers.

"You are?"

"Yes. I think thee should know. He is a good man."

Traherne nodded his head slowly. He stared at the maid. Her hand came away from the wheel and pressed against her yellow-and-red waist.

"Thee should know," she repeated like a child with a prayer. "I do not love him. I only respect him!"

"When did this happen?"

"My true father gave me to the Shepherd just before he died. He made him promise that he would bring me up in the way of the Christian girls and then, at eighteen, I should marry whom he chose. He chose himself. He told me so."

"When did he tell you that?"

"About a year ago. He said it was given to him to make me happy."

"How old is the Shepherd?"

"He's fifty-one years old. Now I have told thee everything. You must be sorry for me."

Traherne was more than sorry. He was on the point of blurting out his thoughts when the mate came to the window and shouted to let the schooner off a point, and then added, after a few seconds:

"Keep 'er steady!" Ice in close formation showed over the bow. The *Hakodate* was heading westward through a difficult lane.

Moona climbed slowly to the deck. She passed before the window. She walked to the cabin companion. She turned as she went down, flashed Traherne a pathetic, lonely little glance, touched her purple lips with a finger, and disappeared. The companion hatch was silently drawn down.

Traherne was relieved at the wheel when the

wat
ageo
"
had
"
Lore
com
too i
T
went
turn
drop
Moc
had
for h
in th
Tl
Scot
turn
old r
Scot
the l
Or
He g
readi
close

watch changed. Saul came tottering aft with his aged head shaking dolefully.

"What's the matter?" asked Traherne after he had given the seaman the course.

"There will be trouble on these seas. The good Lord has seen fit to protect us so far, but trouble is coming. The Shepherd will run that fox Blane too far into his lair."

Traherne had considerable to think over. He went into the forecastle. He sat upon an overturned bucket in front of the molasses barrel. He dropped his head in his hands and dwelt on Moona's simple statement of fact. The Shepherd had picked her out for his wife. She didn't care for him, but he would no doubt have the final say in the matter of marriage.

The crew below, consisting of Cocky, Byrd, and Scotty, openly discussed the probability of Blane turning on the schooner and having it out with the old man. Blows and blood were freely predicted. Scotty declared that, "There was noo doot that the Bering Sea was noo place for a gentleman!"

Only Byrd, of the trio, supported the Shepherd. He got out a testament from his bunk and started reading passages that fitted the situation. He closed the book and quoted:

"Strong drink is raging—whosoever drinks it is not wise."

"I'll take a bloody nip o' gin any time!" exclaimed the cockney.

Byrd raised his wrinkled, gnarled hands.

Traherne rose from the bucket. He drew some molasses. The mate came stamping backward down the ladder.

"How does it look on deck?" he asked Hank.

"Middlin', son. We're headin' toward th' south'ard, right after th' *Hakodate*. We'll clear th' Seal Island on this tack. We ought to reach Siberia in two days. Then's where th' music starts. Old Martin Jordan has a righteous eye. He'll not stand for them natives of his'n being corrupted with bad whisky."

"Is there a mission where we are going?"

"They're all along th' Siberian Coast from Anadir to North Cape, which is near Wrangel Island."

Traherne wanted to question the mate concerning St. Lawrence Island where Moona was born. He held his tongue. The mate, although genial enough and painstaking in his explanations, was too close to the Shepherd.

Climbing into a spare bunk, Traherne lay back

on a
hear
sleep
She
her
bloo
act l
T
ern l
of th
slick
Ahe
fain
wate
O
scho
the
fore
if th
T
alm
"J
char
that
for
to b

on a seaweed pillow. He reviewed what he had heard. He summed up the matter before going to sleep. The maid was too young for the old man. She would most likely revolt. There was that in her dark eyes which was a warning. Her mixed blood might flame and burn and lead to an overt act before she would be conquered.

Traherne went on deck at nightfall. The northern lights crimsoned the sky over the starboard rail of the schooner. Ice and patches of oil and whale slick showed upon the surface of the Bering. Ahead of the schooner, far down on the sea, was a faint red light. Traherne leaned over the rail and watched it.

Old Seaford, the cook, stood in the waist of the schooner smoking a pipe. Traherne went down the deck to him and pointed out the red light before he asked: "Why do they keep that burning if they want to get away from us?"

The seaman removed his pipe. He narrowed his almost lashless eyes.

"Blane knows his business, lad," he said. "The chances are, mind you I only say the chances are, that Blane and his crew are keeping that burning for a reason, which we will find out. It's going to be a dark night."

The ancient salt pointed the bowl of his pipe toward the west.

"Clouds," he said. "That's snow coming. Snow an' a mite of wind. It's a spring storm."

The storm came at midnight with a scurry of snowflakes. The Pole Star was blotted from the northern heavens. The aurora died and paled to a pink flush. The ice floes showed in the path of the schooner. The brine hissed and curdled under the *Wing and Wing's* sharp stem.

Hank appeared from forward. He stamped up to the quarter-deck. He leaned over the companion and rapped lightly. The Shepherd thrust his gray head through the opening. He came on deck without hat or coat. He stood with his binoculars focused. Suddenly he turned and gave an order to the wheelsman, who threw the helm over to the starboard and started driving her close-hauled into the wind. The red light was passed far to windward.

Hank came down to the waist of the schooner. He chuckled through his spade-shaped beard. He laughed loudly and clapped Traherne on the back.

"A ruse," he said. "The old man saw them lower a red light on an ice floe. Then they

dous
goin
th' I
M
befo
veal
to th
mast
miss
char
boor
"J
brea
snow
"Y
"J
wher
corre
A
from
lanes
gives
who
of th
guar
a no

doused all their lights an' headed th' way we're going. Blane's smart, but th' skipper is right with th' Lord."

Morning showed a maze of lanes and channels before the schooner's bow. The pale dawn revealed a closed and impassable barrier of polar ice to the north and east. Hank came from the foremast with a shaking head. He consulted the missionary. The course of the schooner was changed. The sheets were loosened until the booms swung almost athwart ship.

"He got away," the mate told Traherne at breakfast. "Blane out-sailed us, somewhere. Th' snow was too thick to follow him."

"Which way was he going?"

"He was headin' for Indian Point. That's where we're going on speculation, which is about correct. He may beat us there."

A long day followed with the course changed from time to time to take advantage of the ice lanes. The drift was northerly. Traherne was given a hair-seal coat and boots by the Shepherd who called him on the quarter-deck. The others of the crew took their selections from a slop-chest guarded by Moona. She made careful entries in a notebook. She explained to each sailor that he

would be charged for the purchases out of his wages at the end of the season.

“But fair prices,” added the Shepherd to each man. “No whale-ship rates. Ye pay me what I paid for them.”

Traherne donned his coat which was trimmed with white deerskin and sewed with bone buttons. He pulled on the Mazeka boots after the mate had showed him how to stuff the toes with dried grass.

He went on deck and paraded around. He felt the warmth of the skins. He glanced aft and saw Moona finishing her simple accounts and puckering her brow over the result. She raised her eyes as if she felt his scrutiny. A pencil was pressed against her lips. She turned her head as the Shepherd started strapping up the chest with energy.

Next morning Hank, who was on watch, called down that land was in sight. “Siberia,” he added, unnecessarily.

All hands were called on deck and summoned aft by the skipper. He had donned a black frock coat and a fur-sealskin cap. A Bible rested in the cove of his right arm. He swung his left hand. He brought it down on the rail with a sound that could be heard all over the ship.

“T
anno
go as
beacl
If the
and t
as ge
of Sh
worl
Th
hym
led t
of hi
demu
ing d
the t

“S
S

For
earne
Th
anch
and k
fanta
rails

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA 81

"There may be trouble at Indian Point," he announced. "But the Lord is with us! We will go ashore to services which I will conduct on the beach. If any of ye see signs of rum, let me know. If the *Hakodate* is at anchor, beware of false words and temptations. I warn ye to conduct yourselves as gentlemen. I warn ye against the wicked snares of Shamanism. I warn ye against the sins of this world! Amen!"

The short service came to a conclusion with a hymn which was half a chanty. The missionary led the singing. He kept time by powerful beats of his left arm. Traherne, with his eyes on the demure maid, heard the cockney at his side chanting different words than were to be expected from the tune:

*"Starvation, starvation, lift up thine eyes an' see
Starvation, starvation, for all humanity——"*

Fortunately for that seaman, the thoroughly-earnest skipper did not hear the parody.

The schooner threaded the last lane and came to anchorage off Indian Point. A swarm of umiaks and kyaks darted from the shore. Half a hundred fantastically garbed natives climbed over the low rails and started bartering with the crew.

Traherne had difficulty getting aft through the Mazekas. He mounted to the quarter-deck and helped lower the dinghy into which he dropped after the missionary and Moona had taken seats.

Rowing with youthful strokes that drove the small boat through the film of shore ice, he had time to study the Shepherd and the maid. She avoided his direct glance and sat with her hands clasped upon her deerskin skirt.

A white man, in the garb of a native, greeted the captain who stepped ashore. Traherne followed the girl up the beach and through a straggling settlement of summer tents which had taken the place of the igloos. He saw misery on every hand. Starved dogs yelped dolefully. Mickinies, or native children, peered from behind their mothers' broad forms. Rotting bones strewed the way. The air was scented with a mingled odour of wild flowers and decaying vegetation. The high cliff behind the village held patches of snow the general effect of which was like mange on an animal's back.

The white missionary, who had greeted the Shepherd, shook his head and paused as he reached a larger tent back of which was a frame house with a cross upon the chimney.

"Blane has been here," he said. "He traded

thirty
The
Tra
the m
huts
festly
rel sh
the tu
"W
herd.
The
"T
of tha
The
a high
native
ary.
She ha
He
the bo
Native
them
that
daybre
started
Tra

thirty barrels of whisky for all the whalebone. The chiefs are still celebrating."

Traherne turned. He followed the direction of the missionary's pointing finger, and saw a score of huts before which stood natives who were manifestly drunk. One waved a bottle. An open barrel showed before a door. Another native lay on the tundra with a sealskin over his face.

"Which way did Blane go?" asked the Shepherd.

The missionary pointed down the coast.

"Toward Anadir," he said. "The wickedness of that man passes all understanding."

The Shepherd stared at the sky as if calling down a higher Power to aid him in the work among the natives. He went inside the hut with the missionary. Traherne turned. He searched for Moona. She had disappeared among the tents.

He started looking for her. He went down to the beach and sat on the bow of the dinghy. Natives gathered around him. He questioned them concerning the *Hakodate*. They all agreed that the "big canoe" had gone south before daybreak. One showed a soda-water bottle and started chattering with his companions.

Traherne caught the gist of the fraud perpe-

trated upon the Mazeka brave. A member of the *Hakodate's* crew had sold him water, with a slight flavouring of alcohol, for whisky. The native's test had been to light the cork or the vapour from the bottle. He had been defrauded. He showed his knife to Traherne and shook it vehemently toward the south.

An hour passed. The landing of the whisky and the condition of the natives prevented the Shepherd from holding services. He appeared at the doorway of the church hut and stared down the beach. His Bible was under his arm. His great yellow beard rippled in the wind. There was a light of high determination in his eyes. He started toward the dinghy where sat Traherne.

"Ye stood a good watch," he said, getting into the boat. "Ye may row me to the ship. We're going down the coast."

"Where's Moona?" asked Traherne. "Isn't she coming with you?"

The missionary deposited his Bible on a thwart, and rising to his full height, looked over the heads of the natives as Traherne said: "I'll go look for her."

He passed through the summer tents, peered into an igloo or two, and shouted:

"Moona!"

Ne
voice
cave
prom
throu
terior
aside.

Mo
and l
smok
tende
the o
had r
Her b
of her
the sk

"M

The
the ca
witch
the e
forehe

"Y

you!"
doing
Her

Near him he heard the chanting of a woman's voice. Wheeling swiftly he saw the opening to a cave which extended into the dark rock of the promontory. Advancing he stooped and stared through the gloom. A skin curtain hid the interior. He stepped to this, and moved it slowly aside.

Moona was kneeling before a fire of *muck-tuck* and bowhead blubber from which the odorous smoke rose in a thin spiral. Her hands were extended close up to the flames. Over her towered the oldest woman Traherne had ever seen. She had matted black hair. Her eyes were sunken. Her bones were almost breaking through the flesh of her face. Her reed-like body was wrapped in the skin of a deer. Her feet were bare.

"Moona!" shouted Traherne.

The girl rose. She turned toward the mouth of the cave and took one step toward Traherne. The witch sought to hold her back. The girl threw off the extended talons, passed her hand across her forehead, and ran for the entrance.

"Your father—the Shepherd is waiting for you!" exclaimed Traherne. "What were you doing in there?"

Her fingers pressed against her breast. She

attempted some explanation which he could not understand.

"Nothing," she said.

"Come, Moona. That cave was no place for you."

He paused among the summer huts. She dragged at his arm. They went down to the beach where the Shepherd was waiting.

"Where were you?" he asked the girl.

"Visiting."

Traherne saved her further questions by showing the boat out through the shore ice and springing aboard. He seized the oars and started rowing.

Moona was silent on the trip to the schooner. The missionary kept glancing south along the coast. His brown eyes flashed.

The dinghy was hoisted aboard the *Wing and Wing* by Hank and Byrd. The two seamen hurried forward and started catting the anchor. Sail was set on all three masts. The natives scrambled overside and dropped into their skin boats. The jib-boom swung and steadied toward the south.

An hour later the fast schooner was well out from land. A white bone was at her stem. A curdy

wake
like
The
Gulf
the
Indi

wake marked her progress. She heeled and dipped like a live thing.

The Shepherd had given orders to make for the Gulf of Anadir, where he expected to meet with the rum-runner that had debauched the natives of Indian Point.

CHAPTER VI

RETRIBUTION

THE Shepherd walked the canted quarter-deck of the schooner with fighting fire in his eyes. He towered over the crew in the waist after he had summoned them aft. He stretched out his black-sleeved arms and clenched one hard, white fist.

Striking the rail with a resounding blow he called on all hands to stand by him in the hour of need. His coat tails fluttered in the on-shore breeze. He reached upward and stroked the icicle-like point of his beard. He fastened his stare upon "Cocky," shifted it to Scotty and Saul, then to Traherne standing beside the one-legged mate.

"The wages of sin is death!" he declared. "Lost are my people of Indian Point. They have forgotten the true God. They swill in the liquor of sin and iniquity!"

The Shepherd shook his fist toward the dark shore along which the fast schooner was gliding.

"
an e
seas
ing
Rus
of B
"
stun
Th
his s
were
Th
burn
of th
"
Call
it an
Th
Saul
and
a few
"
rail a
stand
name
Co

"Blane," he went on. "Blane of the *Hakodate*, an evil ship, has brought much liquor north this season. There is no law of man to stop him trading it for bone and skins. There is no justice in Russia! Ye have seen the misery left in the wake of Blane. Have ye any suggestions?"

"Keel-haul th' shark!" exclaimed the aged mate stamping his leg on the hatch.

The Shepherd bowed his head. He removed his sealskin cap. Traherne saw that his temples were broad—that his hair was thin and gray.

The fighting light in his eyes again blazed and burned. He raised his chin and stared at the cap of the straining foremast.

"Go aloft," he said to Hank. "Stay aloft. Call down if ye sight the serpent. We shall board it and burn it to the water line."

This announcement caused Cocky, Scotty, and Saul to gasp in unison. They exchanged glances and shifted their feet uneasily. The skipper had a few weak members in his crew.

"Ye are with me?" he asked, leaning over the rail and thrusting out his fist toward Cocky. "Ye stand by me in this thing I am about to do—in the name of the Lord?"

Cocky pursed his loose lips and opened his

mouth. Yellow tobacco juice stained his toothless gums. His watery eyes wandered toward his mates.

"Hit's piracy on th' 'igh seas," he suggested.

The Shepherd leaped forward and brandished both fists toward the wavering seaman.

"Liquor ruined your life!" he shouted. "That an' women an' thievery," he added. "I picked ye from the gutters. I made a man o' ye!"

The cockney swelled visibly. He closed his mouth and swung his face toward the sea. His eyes lifted to the Shepherd's.

"Where's Blane gone?" he temporized.

"To Anadir Inlet. We will overhaul him on this tack, board him, throw overboard the casks of red liquor, and clip the devil's wings."

"You're th' skipper," said the cockney. "You can do th' fightin'; we'll assist with th' liquor an' gettin' hit hoverboard."

Traherne followed the crew forward. He laid a hand on the mate's shoulder as he started climbing the weather foreshrouds.

"Is the captain going to do what he said?" he asked.

"Like as not he will. He's a powerful convincer when he gets started."

"But it is piracy!"

"
T
of t
the
dow
T
shor
wer
thei
and
Arc
tent
stoo
F
heln
for
and
of th
T
at h
wat
back
in th
the
aboa
migh

“Th’ same being my opinion, lad.”

The mate reached a coign of vantage at the heel of the foretopmast. He thrust his peg-leg through the rigging at the throat-halliards and settled down with his eyes fixed along the coast.

Traherne went to the lee rail and studied the shore line. He saw rearing mountains whose tops were shrouded in mist. Water coursed down their slopes and spread along the tundra. Here and there a patch of wild flowers brightened the Arctic landscape. Now and then there showed the tent poles of the native shelters. Before these stood staring Mazekas and scrawny dogs.

Floe ice barred the schooner’s course. The helm was put down. The *Wing and Wing* headed for open sea with her sails flattened. Noon came and afternoon passed without sight or indication of the presence of the *Hakodate*.

The Shepherd held the quarter-deck with Moona at his side. The crew were below save for the watch on the deck. Traherne turned in and lay back in a bunk. He could always think better in that position. He closed his eyes and dwelt on the skipper’s determination to destroy the liquor aboard the barquentine. An action of that kind might lead to disastrous consequences. Blane’s

men were undoubtedly armed. They had the worst element of the natives with them. The rum-ship swarmed with Chinese and Kanakas. They all carried kriss and knives.

Youth and the red blood of adventure came to lighten Traherne's thoughts. He concluded, as he sat erect, that he would go to the attack with both fists and a weapon if need be. He dropped to the planks, walked over to the cockney's bunk, and shook him by the shoulder.

"Are there any rifles aft?" he inquired.

"Blyme hif I know," sounded sleepily. "Go ask th' sky-pilot."

Traherne hurried to the foredeck. He went along the lee rail. He climbed the poop and approached the skipper who was talking with Moona.

"Are you armed?" he asked.

"What d'ye mean, lad?"

"Have you got any guns or pistols aboard? I understand that Blane has a fighting crew of Chinese and worse."

"The Lord is with us," said the old man reverently. "We'll take the *Hakodate* when the watch is asleep. Maybe some of the crew will be ashore."

M
wer
dre
Her
wit
fina
"
"Y
of t
into
in h
T
nea
and
by l
"
seer
"
mis
M
the
forv
whe
his
E
aft.

Moona turned away from the two men. She went aft to the wheel-house. She sat down and drew her skirt over her beaded Mazeka boots. Her glance was on Traherne who stood talking with the Shepherd. She saw them clasp hands finally.

"I knew it was in ye!" said the pleased captain. "Ye stand by me and the mate and the rest of the boarding party. We'll heave all that liquor into the Bering. We'll leave Blane high and dry in his iniquity."

Traherne stared at the maid. She flushed beneath her olive skin. Rising, she came forward and slipped her arm through the Shepherd's close by his coat.

"And count me with thee," she said. "I have seen too much suffering among mine own people."

"Thy people are my people!" declared the missionary.

Moona's action in thrusting her hand through the Shepherd's arm troubled Traherne. He went forward and stood at the break of the forepeak where the wind cut against the exposed skin of his left cheek.

He shook his shoulders expressively and stared aft. The maid had disappeared. The missionary

towered with his flaming eyes sweeping the ice-flecked waters ahead of the fast-flying schooner. The on-shore breeze whistled through the taut rigging. The land of Siberia in Asia was a dark cloud over the starboard bow. Ahead, like an enclosing hand, with mountains for knuckles, showed a sea-thrust promontory. Around it was the great Bight of Anadir.

Traherne watched the sun descend in the west. He saw the stars come out. A pale Aurora flamed over the northern heavens astern of the *Wing and Wing*. The bells sounded as the lookout struck the ship's time. The watch below were snoring as if nothing on earth could disturb their slumbers.

It came to Traherne, as he stood a lonely figure on the deck, that he was beginning to know the sea and feel at home there. He could sense the schooner's motion and prepare himself for the next roll.

He breathed the sea air. Lifting his cap he ran his hands through his matted blond hair which had not been trimmed for a month. He felt Viking blood within him. He turned and searched for Moona. She had reappeared on the quarter-deck and was watching him with her black eyes luminous in the starlight.

E
he v
tra
wit
sch
hea
and
wit
war
the
mai
rail
her
wen
T
bra
foot
Mo
figu
mat
“
miss
“
whe
The
T

He had no sense of place, time, or distance as he watched the girl. He was lulled into a pleasing trance which gave him warmth. She had called with her glance. He had answered her. The schooner, the rocking, star-scattered floor of heaven, the seething sea, were all a setting to youth and adventure. He started moving toward her with slow steps. He reached the mainmast forward of the cook's house. He stepped out upon the open space of the waist. He stood on the main hatch not far from her. She leaned over the rail and gazed at him. He saw the expression of her eyes change. They closed. She turned and went aft as silently as a shadow.

Traherne let his shoulders drop. His legs braced with the rolling of the ship. There sounded footfalls upon the quarter-deck. They were not Moona's. The Shepherd appeared, a gigantic figure with his resolute gaze fixed upon the silent mate who sat perched in the fore-rigging.

"See anything, Mr. Peterson?" shouted the missionary anxiously.

"Yon's a point. Yon's a light. It may be where th' *Hakodate* is layin'. Like as not it is. There's more lights ashore; fires on th' beach."

The Shepherd gave the order to the wheelsman.

He called upon the crew to slacken off sheets. The *Wing and Wing* came about to port and drove for the dark coast. Fjords and tundra and jagged rocks showed. An inlet was reached which the Shepherd had marked on a previous voyage. He ordered the canvas lowered and a line hitched to a small kedge-anchor which was dropped into the inlet.

Turning, after the schooner swung her stern toward a shingled shore, he beckoned to Traherne who was assisting in furling the mainsail and fore-sail.

"Go ye!" he said. "Lower the dinghy! Ye are selected to find if the *Hakodate* and Blane are at the village. Ye can go alone."

The maid glided over the quarter-deck and confronted the Shepherd.

"Let me go with him?"

"You?"

"Yes, father."

"There may be danger. A drunken Mazeka may attack you."

Moona pointed to Traherne. "He will protect me," she said, and added, "Thou hast never denied me anything."

The Shepherd stroked his yellow beard with twisting fingers. He glanced from Traherne to the maid. He nodded and said:

"Be careful, do not let Blane or his mates see you. Creep along the beach. Find out how many of his crew are ashore. Come back to me and we shall scotch the snake."

Traherne climbed over the wheel-house, leaped the distance to the taffrail, and started lowering the dinghy. Moona crept down the starboard ladder. They both descended by the falls and cast them off. She took seat in the stern thwart. He noiselessly placed the oars in the locks and started rowing toward the shore. Reaching this, he drew the boat up on the tundra and hitched the painter to a limb of driftwood. They went through the damp grass and stood on the rocky shoulder which enclosed the southern end of the inlet. The *Wing and Wing* lay below them like a graceful swan. No light showed along her deck.

"Come," said the girl as she grasped his arm. "Come, follow me. I've been ashore on this coast. My father, who is dead, brought me over here in an umiak filled with trade stuff for the natives. See, there is a path I know. It leads down to the village where the lights are."

He followed her. The Arctic wild flowers were in profusion beneath their feet. The melting snow from the mountains roared and cascaded through

riffs of black rock. The air was heavy with sea mist and dew. A path branched toward the interior; another led over the uplands and showed a white scar as it dipped toward the sea.

Moona choose this route. She turned now and then and smiled slowly—a smile that revealed an even row of teeth within purple lips. She went on, stepping from moss clump to rock and always in the direction of the far-off village. They came finally to a precipice overlooking the beach and the sea.

Traherne glided to her side and stood with her as she pointed out the dark outline of the *Hakodate*. He narrowed his eyes in an endeavour to make out the deck. He turned and squinted along her pointing arm.

“See, there is the village,” she whispered. “There is the chief’s house where the light is. Watch the men down there. They are not all natives.”

He watched. They counted a score of forms around a barrel. Women were chanting an Arctic song in Eskimo. Dogs howled at the unusual melody. A whaleboat lay drawn up on the tundra. A man slept in the stern of this.

“The crew are ashore,” said Traherne.

“
S
of t
her
late
for
was
pear
wild
“
I ha
said.
Tr
“Y
Th
down
thro
fathe
come
Tr
him.
start
and
“V
Th
stopp

“Wait.”

She was gone like a wild thing over the edge of the cliff and down the path. He lost sight of her around a projecting ledge. Once, minutes later, he thought he saw her. Then he waited for all of an hour. Her coming was sudden. It was not by way of the path up the cliff. She appeared almost at his side and sprang up from the wild flowers.

“They are all there with one or two exceptions. I have seen them drunken with strong drink,” she said.

Traherne regarded her reprovingly.

“You were long gone,” said he.

The girl felt the anxiety in his voice and glanced down. “I went to the summer house and looked through the window. I wished to assure thee and father how many of the white men and Chinese had come ashore. I counted all of thirty.”

Traherne stared at the flickering lights below him. He turned away as Moona passed him and started toward the inlet. He followed her closely and asked:

“Which is the trail to Siberia?”

They had come to the fork in the path. She stopped and glanced first at him, then swung her

arm toward a dark mountain which showed like a pyramid against the velvet of the sky.

"Over there," she said, "between that mountain and low hills. There is a pass there which goes inland. Sometimes fur traders and Russians come through the range. Tea is carried that way by sledges in the winter months. It leads to the heart of Siberia."

"Have you ever been through the pass?"

"Never," she said, and started walking along the trail that led to the schooner. He marked her tiny footprints in the soft moss of the uplands. He stooped and snatched up a flower here and there. Bunching these, he touched her shoulder and handed the bouquet to her. She flushed and placed it within her breast.

They reached the overhanging rock above the inlet and climbed down to the shingled beach where he cast off the painter from the driftwood and assisted her into the small boat. She faced him with demure, thoughtful eyes as he thrust the oars in the locks, then silently dipped them into the sea.

They glided to the schooner where the Shepherd was waiting with the mate. The boat-falls were hooked to bow and stern. Traherne assisted

Moo
by tl

By
the v
for a
natu
even

Th
then
that

"V
"Go
light
paus
the l

Ha
was
sleep
riggi
came
brou
batte
Wing
upon
wate
Hake

Moona to climb to the taffrail as they were lifted by the combined pull of the two seamen.

Briefly, the girl explained what she had seen at the village. She added that there was some reason for all the crew to be ashore—that it did not seem natural that the *Hakodate* should be abandoned, even to the anchor-watch.

The missionary glanced first at the maid and then ranged his eyes along the Siberian mountains that formed a bow in the star-lit sky.

“We shall find this reason,” he said to the mate. “Go forward and lift the kedge-anchor and set light canvas. Set jibs and foresail. And”—he paused thoughtfully—“cast loose the lashings on the longboat when I give the order.”

Hank stumped up the quarter-deck ladder. He was followed by Traherne. They routed out the sleepy crew, sent them to their stations in the rigging, and waited for the Shepherd’s signal. It came in a low voice from aft. The anchor was brought to the davit, the jibs and foresail set, the battens taken off the longboat. The *Wing and Wing* drove into the on-shore wind and struck out upon the silent sea. She was hove-to in deep water, three miles off the misty position of the *Hakodate* and the fires that flared upon the beach.

Traherne was the first man over side and into the longboat when it struck the waves. Hank passed down capstan-bars and belaying pins. The Shepherd appeared with Scotty, Saul, Cocky, Seaford, and Samuels. Moona and the others of the crew were left on the schooner. The boat put rapidly toward the shore. It rounded the *Hakodate's* pointed jib-boom and came broadside on to the rum-runner.

The missionary was the first to climb the barquentine's rail. He hitched a painter to a pin. He charged aft along the ship's planks like an avenging angel. A lone lookout stood upon the poop. He had not time to cry aloud. The Shepherd was up the poop steps and upon him before he realized his danger. A struggle ensued which was all one way. The lookout lay triced and bound to the mizzenmast as Traherne and the crew from the *Wing and Wing* swarmed through the *Hakodate's* fore-castle and galley-house.

The capture of the ship had not been noticed from the shore. Hank appeared at the door of the cabin. He announced that there was nobody inside. He went to the quarter-deck and consulted with the missionary whose beard was awry and whose coat was torn from the struggle with the lookout.

A
by
ings
pee
thru
ope
box
thru
fain
app
brov
mar
blac
of m
He
the
D
"
boat
mea
T
their
he h
T
"
tell :

An order was whispered to open the ship's holds by removing the hatches. Traherne cut the lashings forward. Cocky lifted the main-hatch. He peered down with a calculating squint. He was thrust aside. The Shepherd leaped through the opening and started examining the casks and boxes that comprised the cargo. He disappeared through a forward bulkhead. Traherne saw the faint glow of a match. Then the missionary appeared, lifted himself to the deck, mopped his brow, and stared intently toward the lights which marked the native village. His stare raised to the black barrier of the Siberian mountains. A smile of more than ordinary triumph creased his features. He extended his long arms and stood in silence as the wondering crew gathered about him.

Dropping his arms he said:

"Rig watch-tackle and get two casks into the boat. The rest we will burn with the ship. Ye, I mean!" he added, wheeling upon Saul and Cocky.

Traherne glanced at Hank. They both shook their heads. The Shepherd had some plan which he had not revealed.

The mate stepped back and whispered:

"He's a fightin' parson, all right. What did I tell you?"

The Shepherd hurried forward. He assisted Cocky and Saul in getting out the watch-tackle from a chest near the foremast. He climbed the rigging over the main-hatch and hitched the blocks to a stay. He waited while Hank lowered himself into the hold, and sang out after fastening the whip of the tackle around a cask. It was hoisted out and lowered to the longboat where Seaford steadied it. A second cask followed the first one. Cocky disappeared over the rail. He peered at the ends and felt the hoops and staves of the casks.

"Blym queer rum," he said to Seaford. "It's bloody weird business we're engaged in. There's trouble in th' bloomin' offing."

Traherne joined the missionary on the quarter-deck. He helped cast loose the lashings from the mizzen-mast and carry the fuming lookout down the poop ladder and over the rail to the longboat where he was deposited in the bilge between the two casks.

A lurid light appeared from the *Hakodate's* forecastle. Another sprang from out of the forehold. The missionary went down the cabin-companion and assisted in setting the ship afire by piling mattresses and blankets beneath the companion-ladder.

T
ship
the
war
A s
fire
crev
bat
ing
dru
the
fron
ing
T
ing
of t
blaz
T
the
pear
late
pres
burn
Turn
"
they

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA 105

The peg-legged mate was the last to leave the ship. He climbed over the rail after casting loose the painter. Cocky and Saul rowed the boat toward the *Wing and Wing*. They bent to the oars. A shout sounded over the waters. A gun was fired. The blaze had been seen by Blane and the crew ashore. They lined the beach and stood bathed in the light as the flames ran up the standing rigging and burst out of the portholes aft. A drunken squad started out through the surf with the whaleboat. They rested oars a safe distance from the seething furnace. Suddenly, at a warning cry, they started back to the beach.

The missionary sat with his feet upon the writhing form of the *Hakodate's* lookout in the bottom of the longboat and his eyes turned toward the blaze.

Traherne, who had climbed to the bow, watched the ghost-like outlines of the *Wing and Wing* appear through the mist. He realized that sooner or later the drunkards on the beach would detect the presence of the schooner. The light from the burning ship flickered and reflected far out to sea. Turning, he said to the Shepherd:

"There may be a wireless at Anadir. Perhaps they will radio some revenue cutter. One of

Blane's crew can go down the beach to the wireless towers."

The old preacher shook his head and stroked his beard. He took his feet from the form of the trussed lookout, and stood erect with one hand upon a cask.

He searched the shore line and then lifted his eyes. He swayed with the motion of the long-boat. He breathed deeply as he pointed toward the dark, cloud-like mountains of Siberia.

"Ye see that light?" he asked Traherne.

Traherne strained his eyes. He saw through the smoke and spiralling flames of the burning *Hakodate* a sinister red spark that gleamed and flashed some far-away signal.

"What is it?" he inquired.

"Russians!" said the Shepherd as he stroked his beard. "Methinks there was more than rum in the belly of the snake we scotched."

T
tion
sho
"
kno
T
star
Her
long
whe
winc
Al
vani
emb
marl
"
ney.

the
d his
the
hand
his
ong-
ward
ugh
ing
and
his
in

CHAPTER VII

NORTHERN JUSTICE

THE missionary's statement concerning the cargo of the *Hakodate* admitted of a number of explanations. Traherne started to question him. The old preacher raised a hand and shook his head.

"Some day, boy," he said. "Some day ye will know."

The matter was closed. The cockney and Saul started rowing toward a dark point on the shore. Here the lookout was landed and set free. The longboat had almost reached the schooner's side when there sounded a racking roar and a rush of wind came seaward like the blast of a furnace.

All eyes turned toward the *Hakodate*. It had vanished. A shower of sparks, a few burning embers dying upon the waves, a cloud of smoke marked its former position.

"Wot 'appened?" asked the astonished cockney.

"Justice," said the missionary, solemnly. "So perish all evil deeds."

Traherne stood in the boat's bow when it touched the schooner's planks. He sprang over the rail and assisted in getting the two casks to the deck. They were rolled forward and placed in the hold under the supervision of the Shepherd.

He appeared through the hatch, called to the cockney and Saul who had helped him below, then strode aft and mounted the quarter-deck.

Ten minutes later the schooner, under jibs and fore and mainsail, was gliding on the course toward Indian Point and the Bering Strait. All was made snug. The wind was from the south. The ice had cleared from the northern sea.

Traherne went below to the forecabin, found some bread in a pan, poured molasses over it, and started eating as he stared around the bunks at the ancient, weather-beaten seamen.

Hank appeared suddenly and stumped down the ladder. He turned and reached for his pipe which was under a mattress. Filling it with strong, black cut-plug and borrowing a light from Saul, he said:

"All's well an' hearty, mates. Th' Shepherd's

sta

goc

pip

"

be

The

"

"

a s

pir

pris

"

fear

Mo

yea

The

"

statu

bur

T

into

"W

he a

H

"Th

"

standin' watch—so 'ware of th' cards. Mighty good night's work," he added between puffs at the pipe. "One less snake on th' seas."

"One less, yes," said the cockney, "but there'll be more than snakes arfter hus in 'alf a mo! There'll be tigers o' th' seas."

"How?" asked the mate.

"Th' revenue cutters. D'ye think scuttlin' a ship an' burnin' 'er an' blowin' 'er hup isn't piracy? Hit calls for most anythin' in th' woiy of prison an' 'angin' at a yard's end. Hit does!"

"That's right," echoed Byrd. "Th' law is a fearful an' wonderful thing. Didn't th' Canadian Mounted Police trail an' Eskimo murderer three years in th' Barren Lands, near th' Mackenzie? They never let go. Same with th' revenue."

"But th' skipper was right!" said Hank staunchly. "That ship ought to have been burned. It were pollutin' th' Coast!"

Traherne finished with his bread. He climbed into an empty bunk and stared out at the mate. "What revenue cutters are in these waters?" he asked.

Hank counted on the fingers of his left hand. "Th' *Bear* an' th' *Corwin* an' th' *Alexandria*."

"Do they all carry wireless?"

"Like as not they do."

"Then we're in for it," Traherne said. "We're going to be captured—unless the skipper was acting within his rights."

"Wot rights?" asked the cockney.

Traherne thought of the red light that the Shepherd had pointed out. He remembered the casks which had been carefully stored in the hold. There had been an assurance in the missionary's voice that reflected his innermost thoughts. He had a trump to play which he was holding until forced into action.

"I guess everything will come out fine in the end," said Hank. "Queer about th' *Hakodate* blowin' up."

"Dynamite in the lazaretto," suggested Byrd. "They all carry it to blast th' ice."

Traherne rolled over and pressed his face against the seaweed pillow. He drowsed despite the argument between the mate and Cocky and Byrd. He awoke at daybreak with the bells striking upon the forepeak. Climbing stiffly out of the bunk he stretched his arms and stared around the fore-castle where evidence of a meal showed.

Hank appeared at the companion and glanced down.

"
"Co
hea
reve
T
fore
on t
and
cap
featl
Sl
Tral
with
and
A sh
up i
stoo
"I
th' n
"I
"A
Cape
Tr
east.
away
Ha

"You're up," he said through his red beard. "Come on deck. I want to show you where we're headin', lad. Th' old man ain't dodgin' any revenue cutters—as you could notice it."

Traherne yawned sleepily and climbed the fore-castle ladder. He gazed aft and saw Moona on the quarter-deck. She was bundled in fur-seal, and her dark hair was covered with a blue-black cap upon the side of which showed a single white feather.

She parted her lips and smiled slowly, demurely. Traherne waved his hand and then went forward with the mate. They stood grasping the jib-stay and glancing ahead of the fast-driven schooner. A shore line showed to port. Mountains reared up into a slate-gray sky. A towering headland stood like a lone sentinel on their course.

"East Cape," said Hank. "Yon's East Cape—th' northeastern point of Siberia in Asia."

"How far away is it?"

"About fifteen miles. We'll anchor off th' Cape by noon, with this wind."

Traherne studied the sea toward the south and east. He saw a cloud-like formation. It was too far away to determine whether it was vapour or land.

Hank chuckled through his tooth-broken gums:

"You're starin' at Cape Prince o' Wales an' th' Diomedes. They're all of thirty miles from here. We may go there. There's a bad bunch of Maze-kas livin' ashore at Prince o' Wales. Th' Shepherd has about given up that flock."

"What did they do?"

"They killed some white trappers an' raised hell, generally. Rum was at th' bottom of it. They believe in spirits an' witches an' Shaman, who is their chief."

"Some of the Thlingets around Puget Sound believe in witchcraft. They have totem poles and worship them."

Hank shook his head. "You're partly wrong, lad. This is th' same tribe up here. This flock came in umiaks hundreds of years ago. They don't worship totem poles. Totemism is a coat of arms. Shamanism is a religion what's fast dying out—with men like th' Shepherd exposing its peculiar sins."

Traherne was surprised at the knowledge displayed by the aged mate. He had started to question him further when Byrd came hurriedly out of the forecandle, glanced aft, and then stepped up to Hank.

"Somethin' wrong with Cocky," he said. "He's

sick
he's
S
The
rem
mor
T
deck
Shep
M
forw
of th
med
the
T
ladd
cook
were
smal
cease
wink
"S
more
M
down
blank

sick, I believe. Rather a quick touch, sir. Maybe he's been eatin' too much fried fish."

Seaford had served a huge halibut to the crew. The cockney was never a light eater. Traherne remembered his having stomach trouble upon more than one occasion.

The mate went below. He came out on the deck. He grinned and stumped aft where the Shepherd was standing on the quarter-deck.

Moona was called from the cabin. She came forward with a medicine kit which was the smaller of the two furnished the schooner by a Victoria medical society that took an interest in seamen the world over.

Traherne followed the girl down the forecastle ladder. He aided by getting hot water from the cook. Cocky had a bad attack of cramps which were eased when the girl poured the contents of a small phial into a glass and handed it to him. He ceased groaning. He raised on an elbow and winked sagely.

"Spirits," he said, weakly. "Can I have some more?"

Moona shook her head, pressed the seaman down in the bunk, and tenderly tucked in his blanket. She arose, saying to Traherne:

"You see, I'm the doctor of the ship. When thee gets sick I wouldst nurse thee."

Traherne wished for most any form of illness. He followed her to the foredeck and began asking questions. She glanced aft toward the Shepherd.

"To-morrow," she said, "you must come down in the cabin and visit us. I have my books and sewing there. The Shepherd will permit thee."

Her downcast eyes were raised until her gaze was fixed over the schooner's starboard bow. An expression as if of memories crept over her face.

"The Diomedes Islands," suggested Traherne as he glanced up.

"Yes," she said. "That was where my mother came from. Before that, she was brought from the Alaskan coast in a war canoe. She was the daughter of Chief Samhat of Kassan."

Pride was in the girl's voice. Traherne caught a longing flash in her eyes. He watched her go aft and mount the quarter-deck, with the medical case in her right hand.

Turning, he leaned over the rail, and gazed at the haze upon the sea where the Twin Diomedes were situated. An hour passed with him in the same position. The islands maintained their distance. The immediate waters took on a sportive

appo
shov
ice t
Wha
up-f
A n
only
bless
H:
grow
"I
to h
herd
East
Tr
had t
lifted
rollin
hatch
squea
tion
skin
schoo
East
Co:
starec

appearance. Birds called and swirled. Seals showed their heads. A walrus plunged from an ice floe at the approach of the *Wing and Wing*. Whale food showed in patches. A killer-whale up-fluked and sounded the depths of the Strait. A native paddled frantically after the schooner only finally to wave his paddle in a curse or a blessing.

Hank touched Traherne on the shoulder and growled:

"Day dreamin', lad. We're wantin' a man aft to help shift cargo in th' main-hold. The Shepherd wants to break out stores for his flock at East Cape."

Traherne went aft and down into the hold. He had the strength of at least two of the crew. He lifted barrels and casks and boxes and sent them rolling to where Byrd stood beneath the open hatch. A tackle strained. Blocks and sheaves squeaked. The work brought healthy perspiration to Traherne's brow. He drew off his skin coat and finished the task before the schooner dropped anchor under the shadow of East Cape.

Coming on deck, at a call from the mate, he stared at the shore and the swarm of gaily-clothed

natives who were launching kyacks and umiaks from the beach. The scene was much the same as at Indian Point. The *Wing and Wing* was the first ship to arrive that season. Old Hank pointed out the chiefs' huts and the shore whaling station where three white men stood beneath an American flag raised aloft on a pole.

The Shepherd appeared on the poop. He called for two of the crew to come aft and lower the dinghy. Scotty and Byrd answered and went ashore with the missionary, who greeted the three white men, shook hands with a score of natives, and disappeared in the whaling station which was also a chapel.

Mazekas climbed aboard the schooner. They started trading with the crew and Moona who had spread trade articles out on the quarter-deck. Squaws with babies went down the forecastle and searched for scraps of bread. A hundred kyacks surrounded the *Wing and Wing*. Others were seen coming from around the Cape and over the Strait. It was a scene which Traherne had never imagined possible.

He was offered ivory tusks, whalebone in small slabs, and carved bone, for any portion of his undergarments. He saw Hank grinning at him through

his
and
“
you
C
brou
forec
brav
busin
galle
Su
of th
ing s
the
saw
Dogs
moth
his a
Seatt
hear
cong
He
sat o
wom
Sh
him

his red beard. The mate opened a wide mouth and called across the deck:

“Keep a weather eye out, boy. They’ll skin you alive.”

Cocky, who had recovered from his cramps, brought out a dunnage-bag of trade stuff from the forecabin. He started bargaining with three natives on the fore hatch. The cook did a thriving business with native fishermen. He stocked the galley house and started salting salmon in barrels.

Suddenly there pealed out over the quiet waters of the sea a silver note which came from the whaling station on shore. Traherne stepped through the crowd of natives and reached the rail. He saw a half hundred Mazekas marching to service. Dogs accompanied them. Children ran at their mothers’ sides. A chief arrived with a Bible under his arm. The scene was like a churchyard in Seattle. Traherne felt a desire to go ashore and hear what the Shepherd might say to his northern congregation.

He climbed to the quarter-deck where Moona sat on the companion-light surrounded by native women and children.

She greeted him with a tiny smile, and showed him the objects she had obtained from the

squaws: beaded pokes, Mazeka boots—which she explained had been made on the Diomedé group—a vest of soft bird skins, and knitted stockings.

“I thought of going ashore and hearing the Shepherd preach,” Traherne said.

Moona stood erect and let her hands drop to her side. Her eyes swung from the shore until they rested upon a woman who remained seated against the companion-light.

“This is an old friend of mine,” she explained, artfully. “She is trying to make me buy some tokens and beads that will bring good luck. Should I buy them? Thee shall decide.”

Traherne started as the woman thrust out a dirty hand upon which rested dried birds’ legs, the top-knot of a bluejay, and shrivelled tongues from mice or birds.

“*Ka-ga-ne-e-thlot*,” said she in a thin, cracked voice.

Traherne turned to Moona. “You don’t believe in those things, do you?” he asked.

“They’re charms for certain purposes. I do believe that thee shouldst let me buy them from her. She wants needles and five yards of calico and a red shirt.”

Traherne hesitated. He stared at the woman

cold
smile
“*g*
“Th
“*v*
“I
Tr
and
Moon
witch
of ne
“*v*
comin
Sh
benea
“I
buyin
Perha
“H
“O
“O
“O
I’ll ke
“D
Her
hand

coldly. He turned to Moona. The shadow of a smile was on her lips. Her eyes danced.

"They're tokens of rare virtue," she explained. "Thee should let me buy them."

"What does *Ka-ga-ne-e-thlot* mean?"

"It means love-potions."

Traherne walked to the rail of the quarter-deck, and looked toward the shore. He turned to see Moona thrusting into the greedy hands of the witch a red shirt, a bundle of calico, and a paper of needles.

"What did you do with the tokens?" he asked, coming to her side.

She pressed her hands to her breast, colouring beneath her olive skin.

"I've got them. Do you think I did right in buying them from her? She is a powerful sorceress. Perhaps they will work."

"It depends."

"On what?"

"On whom they'll work."

"Oh, they're for any man I choose to wish for. I'll keep them and use them later."

"Do you believe in such things?"

Her eyes grew large and solemn. She laid her hand on his arm.

"This is not Seattle," she said. "I have seen things in my childhood that you wouldn't believe. There was a bear that followed me. I think it was a bear. I never heard it growl or walk or anything. It just kept following me around at night."

"Where was this?"

"At St. Lawrence Island where I went to school. Then it went away and I never saw it again."

Traherne unconsciously glanced behind him. He saw the staring eyes of the witch fixed upon a spot in Bering Strait.

"White umiak come," she said. "Big smoke canoe."

Moona moved her arm from Traherne's sleeve and cried:

"It is a ship—a revenue cutter!"

The cry was taken up by the crew. The natives joined in. They ran to the seaward rail and pointed.

"What does that mean?" asked Traherne. "Why should a revenue cutter cause so much excitement?"

"They're the police of these waters. Perhaps the natives have been bad. They sometimes are."

Traherne thought of the *Hakodate*. He turned toward the on-shore whaling station, where the



ve seen
believe.
k it was
ything.

school.
”

d him.
upon a

smoke

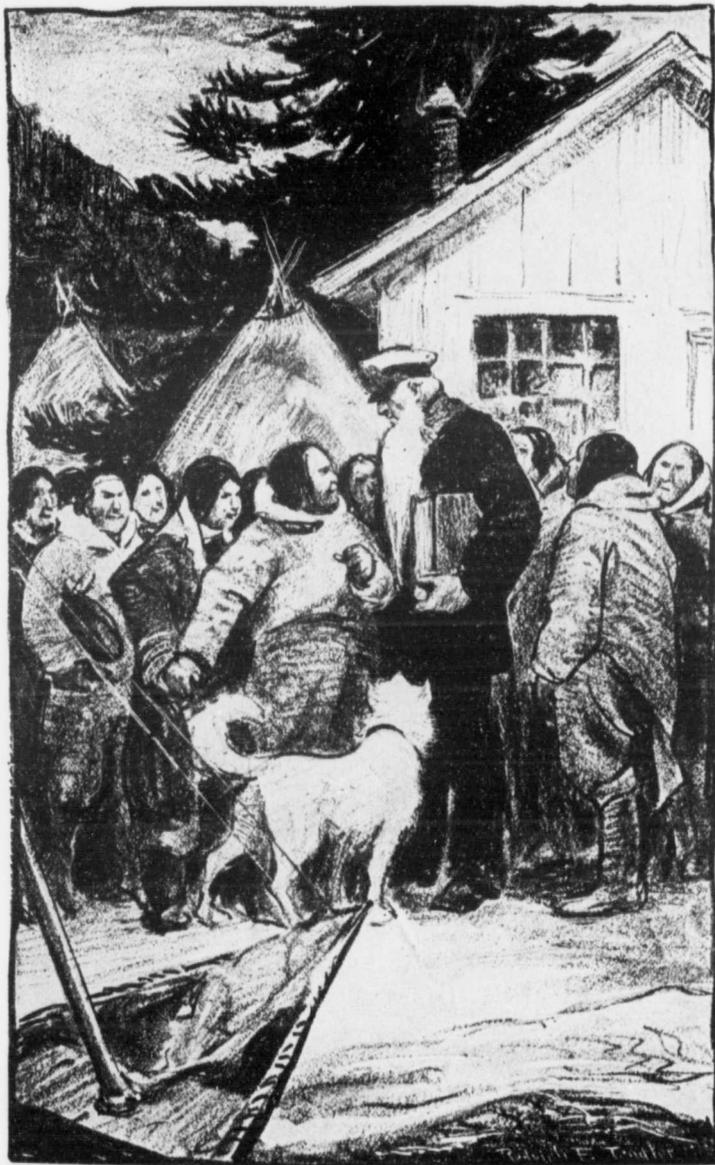
sleeve

atives
l and

herne.
much

rhaps
are.”

urned
e the



“The Shepherd preached the Good Word wherever he went”

Shep
stood
about
“I

The
A
to his
“Y

“You
He

The
padd
beach
static

Tr
cutte
flying
like a

A can
echoe
Cape.

runni
the de

Behin
Bible

The

Shepherd was conducting services. Two natives stood guard at the door. Dogs were scattered about the mud and patches of snow.

"Perhaps," he repeated, "*we* have been bad! The cutter is heading right toward us."

A puzzled frown swept her brow. She stepped to his side and grasped his sleeve.

"You'll watch over the Shepherd?" she asked. "You'll see that he comes to no harm?"

Her concern was communicated to the crew. The mate leaped into an empty umiak and started padding toward the shore. He stumped up the beach and disappeared into the on-shore whaling station.

Traherne and Moona watched the fast-coming cutter. They saw an arrangement of four flags flying at her signal halliards. A puff of smoke, like a ball of fine cotton, showed at her forepeak. A cannon's roar sounded over the waters. It echoed and reëchoed against the high cliffs of East Cape. The natives covered their ears and began running to their boats. The mate appeared at the doorway of the chapel and pointed his finger. Behind him loomed the Shepherd with a great Bible under his arm.

They came down the tundra and shoved off the

small boat. The missionary climbed the schooner's rail at the waist and walked majestically aft. He strode to the cabin-companion, laid down his Bible, and said to Traherne:

"That is the *Alexandria*. She has signalled us to stand by or take the consequences. We'll stand by, for the Lord is with us."

A flashing bone of white water marked the cutter's prow. Her twin funnels belched forth black smoke which trailed across the ice-flecked sea. She came around just outside of shallow soundings like a dancer on a ballroom floor and lowered a whaleboat into which sprang two officers and six marines.

They crossed the intervening waves to the schooner's quarter where Traherne, at the Shepherd's suggestion, had lowered a boatswain's ladder.

The first officer to reach the poop saluted the tall missionary, thrust out a cold hand, and exclaimed:

"You, Jordan? I didn't believe it could be you. You and everybody aboard this schooner are under arrest."

Moona cried aloud. The officer bowed to her politely.

"Yes," he added, looking at the maid, "yes,

every
sorry
"V
"F
Anac
a vil
know
Th
He g
"Tha
are f
the C
"T
Th
towa
he ad
"T
sione
down
eithe
Ther
"V
Th
missi
"C
ceive

everybody is arrested, even to the cook. I'm sorry, Jordan."

"What for, Lieutenant?" asked the missionary.

"For burning and blowing up the *Hakodate* off Anadir. No doubt she had whisky aboard—and a vile crew—but that don't excuse you. You know the law of the Three Nations?"

The missionary stroked his long yellow beard. He glanced at the Bible upon the companion-light. "That is my law," he said, solemnly. "All laws are founded on that. Ye should remember what the Good Book says:

"These are my children——"

The old man turned and waved a broad hand toward the shore and the staring natives. "They," he added, "shall be kept from red liquor."

"That's no excuse in the eyes of the Commissioners," the lieutenant said. "We better go down in your cabin and arrange matters. You'll either have to be towed or follow us to Nome. There's a Commissioner there."

"Wait!"

The lieutenant stiffened. He glared at the missionary.

"Orders," he said, "must be obeyed! We received a radio this morning to intercept you and

arrest all on board. Blane has sworn out a warrant at Anadir. It's an international affair."

"Ye speak the truth," said the Shepherd. "It is international. Come with me."

The old man started forward. He waited at the weather poop steps. The lieutenant hesitated, glanced knowingly toward a second officer who stood by the rail near where the boatswain's ladder led overside, then strode stiffly toward the missionary who led him to the main hatch.

Calling two of the crew he ordered them to bring out the casks which had been removed from the hold of the *Hakodate*. They sprang down and began shifting the cargo. The mate rigged a watch-tackle to the port shrouds. The first cask was hoisted to the deck.

Moona and Traherne stood at the quarter-deck rail overlooking the waist. They heard the Shepherd call for an axe. Seaford ran to the galley-house. He appeared almost instantly with a cleaver.

Swinging this with a mighty stroke, Jordan smashed open the end of the cask and pulled the staves apart with one wrench. He stepped back when the cask fell apart.

There lay on the deck of the *Wing and Wing*

a c
all.
"
said
the
Bl
so l
and
"
ast
"
low
Hal
"
cau
you

a close-packed bundle of rifles—twenty-four in all.

“Mausers from Berlin, via China Coast ports,” said the missionary. “They were intended to aid the Bolsheviki and the Reds in a Siberian uprising. Blane not only dealt in firewater but he has sunk so low as to traffic in firearms against the peace and dignity of these seas.”

“Have you any more evidence?” asked the astonished lieutenant.

“Another cask, which I suspected from its hollow sound when I went down into the hold of the *Hakodate*.”

“That’ll be enough to hang him if he is ever caught. It lets you out, parson. I’m damn glad you burnt up his ship!”

CHAPTER VIII

THE THUNDER-BIRD

THE stores which the Shepherd had brought north in the hold of the schooner were gone over and some of them taken ashore to the natives and whalers at East Cape.

The *Alexandria* was a white speck on the misty waters of the Bering Sea before the *Wing and Wing's* deck was swabbed and made ready for evening service—announced by a continued sounding of the ship's bell.

Hank, who sounded the call, outdid himself and played an ancient chime which drew many of the Mazekas to the schooner's sides. They came bedecked in calico over their furs. A few from Sledge Island and the pale Siberian shore wore birdskin coats whose feathers dropped like those of moulting chickens!

Moona and Traherne stood on the poop, which was also the pulpit of the ship. The Shepherd leaned over the rail and extolled his wild flock. They were attentive where they sat in the waist

or
the
A
form
seer
mis
told
the
vice
It v
was
war
“
ask
S
glan
serv
O
decl
shoc
two
last
the
“
H
on a

or on the deck-house. Some few had mounted the standing rigging.

A scimitar-shaped flare from the northern lights formed a diadem over the Arctic heavens. It seemed a sword drawn by a guardian angel. The missionary's voice rose and grew in volume. He told of the sins of this world and the promises of the next. Moona turned during the simple services and stared out over the waters of the Strait. It was evident to Traherne that a migratory call was in her northern blood. Once she pointed toward the Twin Diomedes.

"Do you know any of the natives there?" he asked.

She nodded and held a finger to her lips. She glanced at the Shepherd who was concluding the services with a hymn—"The Ninety and Nine."

One by one the Mazekas mounted the quarter-deck and spoke to the missionary. They all shook hands on departing. The sea was filled between schooner and shore with skin boats. The last lights went out from the whaling station and the summer huts.

"Good-night," said Moona to Traherne.

He moved forward to the forecastle, leaving Byrd on anchor watch. Hank was below with his pipe

glowing and his wooden stump thrust out from the fore and aft bunk.

"Where do we go from here?" asked Traherne after he had climbed into Byrd's bunk.

Cocky answered with a tremendous yawn:

"Blyme if anybody knows. Th' old man's lookin' for sinners. 'E can find them everywhere in this bloody world."

Morning showed a clear sky and a southerly wind. The Shepherd went ashore, visited the native chiefs, shook hands with them, and then came back to the schooner. His strident voice was heard from the forecabin. The crew tumbled on deck and walked the anchor up out of the sea and set the canvas. Traherne went aft and took the wheel. The course was set for the Diomedes—across the Strait and wind. The *Wing and Wing* heeled and danced and plunged like a live thing that sensed the long trail to pale lands beyond the sea.

Moona and the Shepherd went ashore at the Little Diomede. They came down the cliff and were rowed out to the schooner by Cocky and the cook. Climbing the rail, by a boatswain's ladder which Traherne lowered, the girl stepped toward the companionway and went down into the cabin. Traherne stared after her.

T
 "
 the
 Wal
 T
 med
 Alas
 had
 "
 She
 sad.
 T
 Litt
 and
 S
 star
 the
 did
 hole
 on
 lam
 chai
 M
 and
 over
 Aga

The Shepherd laid a heavy hand on his shoulder. "Ye better get forrard," he said, "and help with the anchor. We're going over to Cape Prince of Wales."

The schooner was half-way between the Diomedes Group and the towering northern limit of Alaska when Traherne went aft. The missionary had called in a strident voice.

"Ye go below," he said, "and comfort Moona. She has looked upon her mother's old home and is sad. I should not have taken her there."

The Shepherd pointed to the ramparts of the Little Diomedes. His brown eyes were troubled and heavy with thought.

Sliding back the companionway, Traherne started down the ladder backward and reached the cabin deck. He glanced around, and at first did not see Moona. His eyes ranged the portholes and the shelves of books. He rested a hand on a centre table over which swung a splendid lamp that was secured to a deckbeam by a brass chain. He coughed a signal and heard a low sigh.

Moona was sitting between a mahogany locker and the side of the ship. Her hands were clasped over her knees. He waited for her to speak. Again he glanced around the cabin. Its planks

were covered with bearskin rugs. Trophies hung from the bulkheads. He saw a few paintings. Ivory tusks, scratched with figures of hunters and seals and spouting whales, were arranged in a glass case upon which rested an ancient sextant-box and a telescope in a leather tube. Curiosities, such as a tiny ship with tooth-pick masts and a paper-cutter with a stone handle, showed upon a second table near which stood a small sewing-machine and a woven-grass basket whose colours were gaudily arranged in the manner of Puget Sound Indian weaving.

"I hope you're well," he said, as he fingered his cap. "The Shepherd told me to come down and see you."

The maid pointed toward a low stool whose four legs were out-turned walrus tusks.

"Pray be seated and talk to me. I'm blue."

"Why?" he asked as he sat down and laid his cap on the deck.

"I met a woman on Diomedé Island who told me there was trouble ahead for everybody on the ship."

"A witch?"

"No, not exactly. She knew my mother, fifteen years ago. She told me about her. You know my mother was the daughter of a great southern chief."

"Y
"Y
dicte
died
pove
fluen
Dion
Her
"A
prop
"I
clasp
"the
out b
there
to w
but
moth
Tr
He g
peare
turne
"V
"F
storm
head.

"Yes."

"Well, this woman—her name is Nulato—predicted the Bad Year when both mother and father died at St. Lawrence Island. She has a wonderful power of prophecy. The Shepherd has no influence upon her. She is really the Shaman of the Diomedes clan, although she doesn't pretend to be. Her word is almost law."

"And you believe that she has the power of prophecy?"

"I do and I don't. You see," she added, unclasping her hands and raising them to her brow, "there is that in your brain and mind which goes out beyond the body. This woman, Nulato, says there are evil days ahead of us. I bought a token to ward them off. Thee may think I am foolish but I can't forget the old blood, and that my mother firmly believed in witchcraft."

Traherne felt the air of the cabin grow cold. He glanced at a porthole. The sun had disappeared behind a bank of southern clouds. He turned his gaze upon Moona.

"What did she predict?" he asked.

"First she said that there would be a great storm, that the thunder-bird would fly overhead."

"She could see a storm brewing. Why, the Shepherd could tell that by the barometer—which isn't witchcraft. I've often learned from the natives around Puget Sound how the weather is going to be on a certain day. They watch the birds and animals."

"Yes, they do watch them. You know animals are almost sacred in the old beliefs."

Traherne leaned back. Moona's face cleared from some of its doubt. She dropped her hands and clasped them on her lap. She leaned toward him and rocked slightly with the motion of the schooner.

"There is going to be rain," she said, without glancing at the portholes. "I feel it, and that part of her prophecy is true. Thee feel it?"

"Yes. The air is heavy. The Shepherd is already shortening sail. I'd better go on deck."

"Wait." Her glance dropped to the bearskin rugs on the deck. Her lips closed in a straight line. Pain showed in the tiny wrinkles that ran from the corners of her mouth. She seemed to have forgotten his presence. He reached for his cap and stood erect with his head almost touching the dark wood of the carved deckbeams.

"Nulato said," she whispered, suddenly, "that

there
not I
bend
sistin
sayin
the E

"T
wron
hearc
thing
guess
going
you
shoul

"I
Suns
cabir
She
indic
and
legs
to th
Ti
hurr
canv
in al

there was trouble for me. She told me that I did not love the Shepherd. That he would try to bend me to his will. That I would resist, and resisting, go down into the sea; which is her way of saying that I was to be cast from all people—the Eskimo and the Mazeka and the white race.”

“That part of the prophecy is part right and part wrong. You don’t love the Shepherd. She has heard that! Those old witch women hear everything. But the other part is all wrong. It’s a bad guess. You’re too sensible to believe it. I’m going on deck now and help with the sails. I want you to come up and watch the storm. You shouldn’t brood down here.”

“I’m not brooding. Thou knowest I’m not.” Sunshine showed in her face as she hurried into a cabin and returned with her skin coat and fur hat. She followed him up through the companion and indicated with a tiny nod that he should go forward and leave her with the Shepherd, who stood with legs braced and eyes upon the southern entrance to the Strait.

Traherne crossed the slanting quarter-deck. He hurried to join the crew who were straining with the canvas. The order had come from the mate to take in all but the inner jib and to reef the foresail.

"Split it!" Hank shouted from his position on the jib-boom, where, despite the handicap of his wooden leg, he was tying square-knots around the thrashing flying jib.

Cocky and Byrd showed Traherne how to gather the foresail to the boom. They went aft and made the main and mizzen sails secure. Rigging vang, they brought the spars inboard and secured them against any blow. They lashed down the two hatches, secured the cook's barrels of salted fish, racked the loose pins in the pinrails, and cleared the deck. The schooner drove under one half of her foresail and the inner jib. Her course was toward the frowning headland of Cape Prince of Wales, with a wide stretch of Arctic for sea room.

The Shepherd walked the quarter-deck from the rail to the wheel-house where Moona sat, staring south and west. Scotty and Saul were at the wheel. They waited the coming blow which had shelved down from out of fleece-white clouds and rimmed a dark line upon the Bering Sea. A shriek sounded overhead and the first of the storm struck the schooner. The wheel was put down a spoke or two at the missionary's orders. The *Wing and Wing* held steady, although almost upon her beam end.

Tr
the f
Hank
shelt
brace
Th
reëch
A pa
and
heav
foam
acros
rail t
Mi
ness.
rimn
a dra
chur
whic
Th
then
fear
he v
sout
seas
They

Traherne leaped to the weather foreshrouds as the first seas came over the rail. He watched Hank struggle from the jib-boom and crawl to the shelter of the brass capstan. Cocky and Byrd braced themselves in the lee of the cook's galley.

Thunder rolled over the agitated Strait. It reëchoed from the far-off walls of the mountains. A pall spread beneath the clouds. A veil of rain and driven ice particles slanted from the shelf of heaven. Spindrift and wave tops and a churning foam leaped out of the sea and came like shrapnel across the schooner's slanted deck from weather rail to lee rail.

Midnight darkness came with startling suddenness. Green and velvet blue and a horrible yellow rimmed the world. The sun had been swallowed by a dragon! The icy waters of the Strait rose upward, churned and milled and formed a maelstrom through which the schooner drove like a chip in a cataract.

The gale steadied, hung at one compass point, then became a hurricane that lunged the spike of fear within the seamen's hearts. Hank, old salt as he was, cried aloud. He pointed toward the south. Cocky and Byrd dipped beneath the green seas and emerged with the schooner's righting rail. They resembled rats, drowned and crushed.

Traherne had the advantage of position. He wound his legs about the chains and clutched the ratlines. His cap blew off and disappeared in the gloom to leeward. The hurricane tore at his face. His hair pulled at the roots. He tried to peer aft. He saw mountainous seas sweeping over the cook's galley and drenching the quarter-deck. He strained his eyes in a second glance. He made out the Shepherd's figure towering at the quarter-deck rail. Clinging to him was Moona—drenched.

A staggering wave broke over the poop of the schooner. Another followed. The sea was shallow, and like all shallow things, easily stirred.

Traherne waited until the wheelmen had laid the *Wing and Wing* back to her course. He studied the straining foresail and the single jib. It came to him that Hank had called. He waited and heard the mate's voice again. He climbed down to the rail, dodged a hurtling mound of green, and staggered over the slanted planks to the break of the forecastle. Climbing to the forepeak, he grasped the capstan's "wildcat" projections and leaned an ear close to the mate.

"We've got to cut away th' foresail!" he said. "She's holdin' 'er too far over. Can you do it?"

Tr
shak
scho
scra
their
“(
the
look
T
The
scho
W
Tral
arm
the
lead
thro
drog
cut
canv
the
T
awa
men
thre
boar

Traherne took a sheath-knife from the old salt's shaking fingers. He saw that the lee rail of the schooner was under. Cocky and Byrd were scrambling to the top of the galley. They flattened their bodies and moved grotesquely.

"Cut halliards first!" the mate shouted above the roar of the wind. "Then cut th' sheet—an' look out!"

Traherne saw the double reason for this order. The shadow of Cape Prince of Wales lay over the schooner. There was no sea room.

Waiting until the deck had righted slightly, Traherne leaped from the forepeak and wound his arms around the foremast. He tested the edge of the knife with his thumb. He sorted the lines leading downward to the belaying-pins and slashed through the halliards. The peak of the sail dropped. He scrambled up the slippery deck and cut the sheet. He heard the boom and reefed canvas thrashing to leeward. It was gone out over the waves like a puff of smoke.

The Shepherd who had understood the cutting away of the sail shouted to the straining wheelmen in the wheel-house. They let the schooner off three points. A jagged rock showed close to starboard. The *Wing and Wing*, eased of all her can-

vas save the inner jib, darted northward toward the wide gulf of the Arctic.

Foaming wave crests went over her quarter-deck. Great vales showed before her plunging bow. The baffled wind whined and snarled. The hours passed with the seamen clutching for hand-hold on the freezing deck.

Again Traherne heard thunder overhead. He waited for the storm to pass, he remembered the witch's prediction. He stared aft at Moona and saw that she was standing erect beside the missionary.

He tore his eyes from her and studied the horizon. It was blacker to the south than to the north. The milling wind had steadied. It blew up through the forty-mile funnel of the Strait with a frosty breath. It tossed and played with the seas. It drove ice-particles that coated the planks and wrapped the rigging in frost.

Hank called from forward. He pointed to the forecastle. Traherne let go his grip on the mast. He went into the forecastle after the aged mate. The scene below was one of wet desolation. Water lapped over the bunks. The *Wing and Wing* rolled and yawled and plunged down green seas. The molasses barrel had burst its lashings. It

ham
the c
U
pillo
swin
alon
phe.
H
hern
"
I ca
We'
dow
"
"
of t
the
T
hat
he s
blac
"
swa
flap
T
me

hammered against the bulkhead that separated the chain-locker from the crew's quarters.

Upon the black tide floated blankets, buckets, pillows, mattresses, and dunnage-bags. The lamp swinging from the chain like a golden pendulum alone seemed to have escaped the general catastrophe.

Hank scratched his head and shouted to Traherne:

"Get th' crew forrard with buckets, if you can. I can't stand on th' deck with my leg—or I'd go. We'll bail out th' fo'c's'le an' fix things ship-shape down here."

"Do you think the storm is over?"

"They're never over in this latitude at this time of th' year. Like as not it'll blow all night. It's the last spring song of th' thunder-bird."

Traherne hesitated as he crawled out of the hatch. "Why do you call it the thunder-bird?" he asked, peering at the mate who stood in a foot of black water.

"Th' Mazekas believe there's a big bird that swallows whales an' brings about thunder by flapping its wings. They may be right!"

Traherne wondered, as he rounded up the seamen, how much superstition prevailed in the

Arctic and Bering. Hank had seemed a very sane man on every other subject.

Cocky and Byrd dropped from the galley-house. Traherne peered through the doorway at the doubled-up form of the cook in the bunk over the stove. Seaford groaned, but did not attempt to climb to the deck.

A high sea curled over the weather rail and drenched all of the forepeak. Another followed close after the first. It cascaded upon the planks at the waist with a hollow roar. Traherne waded aft, climbed the poop steps, and glided to the missionary's side.

"I'd better take the wheel," he suggested. "Those two men there must be pretty near all in."

"Ye can do the work of two?" asked the Shepherd.

Traherne nodded his bare head. Moona turned. She pointed along the mizzen boom which was stoutly lashed to the quarter-deck. "I'll help out," she said. "I want to get warm. I'm freezing!"

The Shepherd shook his head at the girl's offer, but did not object. She followed Traherne aft and allowed herself to be lifted down the ladder to the narrow space between the wheel-house and the taffrail.

T
the
sky
with
curl
The
er's
S
ing
Wi
gar
the
T
legs
E
Mo
her
He
"
the
T
sch
cor
har
Mo
cha

Traherne grasped her arm. He pointed toward the yeasty waters astern of the schooner. The sky was black as ink. A phosphorescence gleamed within the velvet-green of the waves. They curled and came on with resistless regularity. They lifted the stern and foamed along the schooner's dripping rails.

Scotty and Saul were hanging to the great steering wheel and attempting to hold the *Wing and Wing* on its course. They had shed their outer garments. They rocked and strained and clutched the fast-flying spokes.

Traherne pressed Scotty aside, straddled his legs, and shouted, "Let me have her, boys!"

Both aged sailors sank to the wheel-house deck. Moona spoke to each and took her place by Traherne's side. He smiled through the brine of his lips. He showed her the compass point during a lull.

"Magnetic north," he said. "We'll hold her there!"

The sea had an answer to this statement. The schooner's rudder was struck by a smashing comber. The wheel spun out from Traherne's hands. He brought it back to its former position. Moona aided by holding the spokes when he changed for a fresh grip.

"God help ye," Scotty said, as he replaced his skin coat and followed Saul up to the quarter-deck where they were assisted by the Shepherd to gain the waist of the schooner.

He came aft with his beard a frozen icicle and his brown eyes blazing. Peering through the wheel-house window he asked:

"Ye can hold her—ye two?"

"We can!" said Traherne, breathlessly. "North is the point."

"North!"

The missionary spread his legs before the windows and studied the sky. He shook his head. His lips moved. Moona nodded toward him.

"Praying," she said. "He, too, fears the thunder-bird."

"I don't quite understand what you mean. The mate calls it that, too. What is the thunder-bird?"

"A great winged thing that flies over the sea and brings bad fortune to ships and canoes. The natives blame the thunder-bird for the loss of many uniaks that never return from long voyages."

"But it's nonsense!" declared Traherne as he bunched his muscles and lifted the wheel three spokes to hold the course. "We're flying before a

big
ligh
“
“It
7
tho
leg:
ish
glai
hou
the
bar
foll
was
dro
one
eye
“
did
S
Tra
It v
“
cou
and
7

big storm. If thunder comes it's because there's lightning."

"You will hear the bird at dawn," she said. "It is loudest then."

Traherne steadied himself and prepared for a thousand birds. He saw between the Shepherd's legs the three masts of the schooner and the greenish mist that was draped out of the heavens. He glanced astern through the half-opened wheel-house door. A white streak suddenly shot athwart the clouds. There came a rolling sound as if barrels were being moved in a garret. There followed a gigantic clap of thunder and blue light was everywhere. He heard Moona cry. She dropped her hands from the spokes and shrank into one corner of the wheel-house. She covered her eyes with her palms and sobbed.

"It was nothing!" shouted Traherne. "It didn't hit the ship! Come here, Moona!"

She uncovered her eyes and shook her head. Traherne heard the Shepherd's voice above him. It was broken by the gusts of wind.

"Hold her steady, there! Keep her on the course. North's the point. The Lord is with us and He shall not fail."

The schooner tossed and twisted. The rudder

acted like a live thing, or a bone in the mouth of a devil-fish. It jerked the wheel from Traherne's grip. It slapped back again. He struggled and fought with it. The maid watched him and dumbly wondered at his strength.

There was raised from forward the mate's voice in a piercing shout.

"Ice! Ice!" he called to the Shepherd. "Ice over th' bow!"

Traherne bent his knees. He waited for the order which when it came was to starboard a point and hold her there.

The Shepherd had found strength in prayer. He strode the quarter-deck and peered at the tossing sea. Coming back, he gave the course.

"North, northwest!"

This was almost before the wind. Hank loosened the jib sheet and allowed it to balloon slightly. The lift of the gale on the sail steadied the schooner's bow. She darted on the new course with the waves dashing over the stern and ice floes showing to starboard.

Traherne felt Moona's hand on his shoulder.

"Look," she said, in a frightened voice.

He glanced to port. More ice showed. They were in the midst of the pack. White water

plur
sea
tinu
Wi
fell
veal
T
the
row
the
end
B
flas
sout
floe
thu
A
and
arot
as i
retu
froz
of p
"
littl
ther

plumed and rose to the height of the masts. The sea suddenly went down, although the gale continued with fury. A crash shook the *Wing and Wing*. A grating sounded along the run. Frost fell from the rigging. Lightning flashed and revealed the scene.

Traherne strained his neck. He glanced along the white-mantled quarter-deck. He saw a narrow lane which stretched like a ribbon of ink into the horizon. Along this lane the Shepherd was endeavouring to guide the *Wing and Wing*.

Blue fire seemed to burst astern. A dazzling flash illuminated the tortured ocean. Ice stretched south and east and west. Each hummock and floe moved in the turmoil. Then all was dark as thunder rolled directly overhead.

At times it seemed to Traherne that the masts and deck and standing rigging had fallen down around the Shepherd's form. At times it seemed as if the staunch ship spun completely round and returned to its course. The wind from off the frozen sea astern cut through to the bone. Beads of perspiration stood upon Traherne's brow.

"Steady!" said the missionary. "Now port a little. Port more! Hard-a-port! Steady. Steady there!"

The schooner drove on and dodged the worst of the floes. It reached a spot where there seemed no passage. The missionary moved his lips. He stared ahead with confidence. A shift of gale showed open water. He leaned and said through the wheel-house window, "Starbo'rd! Hard-a-star-bo'rd. Now steady her. Port! All the way. There, starboard. Hold her, for the Lord is with us in this hour."

Traherne turned toward the maid. She was crouched in the corner with her hands over her eyes. He called her name, then repeated it. She answered with low moan.

"The thunder-bird!" she cried, dropping her hands suddenly. "Hear it? It is up there."

Traherne shook his head. "That's nothing," he said. "It's a natural phenomenon. See, the sky is clearing."

She covered her ears and bent her head. He watched her as he twisted the spokes and held the course. She rocked back and forth. Her dark hair touched the planks of the wheel-house deck.

"Moona!" he cried. "Come here!"

There was that in his voice which was not to be denied. She looked at him. She stopped rocking and rose to her knees. She glanced through the

who
in t
boo
glov
aga
the
T
sun
pul
van
smi
"
It's
wav
S
"
"
"
you
T
whc
to t
"
"
T

wheel-house windows and saw the patch of light in the clouds before the schooner's pointing jib-boom. It widened to a sun dog. It cast a golden glow over the icy world. It disappeared and came again. Slanting spears of morning struck athwart the eastern heavens.

The girl glided to him. She turned toward the sun's rays. Her face flushed. The blood slowly pulsed up through her veins. The ashen pallor vanished from her cheeks and lips. She tried to smile.

"See," said Traherne. "See the open water? It's rough but there is no lee shore. See, where the waves are tossing? We're going there."

She laid a brown hand on his shoulder.

"Thee has suffered," she said.

"How?"

"There are lines under your eyes. Think what you went through."

Traherne raised an arm toward the Shepherd who had stepped over the quarter-deck and called to the crew.

"Think what he suffered," he said.

"But he had his God to call upon."

"There's something in that," said Traherne.

The missionary turned from the crew. He

shouted to hold the schooner a point more to the westward. Traherne steadied on the compass-point. He heard Moona creep out of the wheel-house and climb the icy steps to the quarter-deck. She swayed, glanced around the horizon, grasped her skirts, and went to the Shepherd's side.

He bent his head toward her. She pointed over the schooner's tossing bow. He raised his hands as he saw the land her sharp eyes had discovered.

"Point Hope!" he called to the weary crew. "Ye are in sight of the Point."

A feeble cheer came aft against the wind. The schooner leaped from the last of the ice which had almost destroyed her. The girl turned from the missionary's side. She came across the deck to Traherne who was leaning through the wheel-house window.

"Point Hope," she said.

"And your old thunder-bird is gone!"

wa
wa
I
the
cou
son
bue
T
wai
aga
hea
and
cou
T
the
crev

CHAPTER IX

THE PALE COAST

THE *Wing and Wing* had survived the gale. Her foresail was lost. Her forehold and the forecastle were almost filled with water. Much of the gear about the deck had been washed overboard or smashed.

Hank put the aged crew to work at unfurling the mainsail and setting it so that the schooner could be speeded to Point Hope, which was still some distance across the open gulf of Kotzebue.

The mate discovered that the longboat in the waist of the *Wing and Wing* had been crushed against the rail. He climbed out and shook his head. The Shepherd leaned over the quarter-deck and ordered him to get the boat inboard where it could be repaired.

Traherne assisted at this task and helped set the ship in order. He was the one member of the crew with youth to call on. He did the work of

three men and earned a nod of approval from the missionary.

"Ye are of good blood," said the Shepherd. "Ye never tire!"

Traherne pressed back his untrimmed hair and smiled up at the preacher. He said nothing. He glanced around the horizon and then overhead where the Arctic clouds were scattering before the pressure of the southwest wind. The air was bracing—almost enchanted.

It came to him that the blood the missionary had noticed was Norse. There was that in the call of the sea which was deeper than life. It resembled misty dreams come true. He seemed to be enacting his roving ancestors' lives over again. The Trahernes of Seattle had helped build an empire out of a forest land.

The schooner drove all that morning under easy canvas. The shore rose out of the sea. There came in view the scattered tents and huts of a Mazeka settlement around Point Hope.

Threading through the ice came kyakas and seal-hunters and finally the whaleboat of the shore station. Two men sailed in this. They waved their arms, lifted centreboard, and glided alongside the schooner.

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA 151

The Shepherd received them. He learned the news of the Pale Coast. Spring bowhead whaling had given to these men three tons of bone. They came forward and examined the wreck of the long-boat. They offered to exchange it for a spare whaleboat which was at the station. The Shepherd closed the bargain by adding a fair amount of flour and man-pemmican.

A week was spent at the Point in getting the schooner ready for further voyaging toward the east. A drift-log, which Hank declared had either come out of the Mackenzie or the Yukon, was rudely fashioned into a spar to take the place of the foreboom which had been carried away in the gale. Seaford and Scotty broke canvas from the main-hold and made a presentable foresail with the assistance of two native women.

Traherne went ashore with the Shepherd and Moona each day. The missionary conducted services in the whaling station. He was pleased to find that no rum had been landed at the Point. He questioned a native voyageur, who had wandered along the coast and found that the situation at Point Barrow called for energetic measures. Whisky, immorality, and starvation ruled the most advanced outpost on the American Continent.

Also, there came news from farther north that an Arctic expedition, which had gone to Banks Land in search of the Blond Eskimo, was wrecked in an unknown cove on a barren shore.

As the voyageur put the matter: "Everything very bad up there."

The Shepherd bent his energies upon preparations for a summer of hard work. He had the new whaleboat brought aboard and hung on the after davits. He conducted meetings for the benefit of the natives within a radius of fifteen miles. He caused word to be sent that he would stop at Cape Lisburne over one day, and for his flock to be ready for services.

Moona showed Traherne the coal fields above the tundra line and the witch's hut where an aged hag sat before a fire which the girl stoutly maintained was perpetual.

"That can't be," Traherne told her. "I think the old sorceress lights it up every month or so."

"It's the everlasting flame," she insisted. "I do believe it. They are burning all over the coast."

Traherne began to question her. He found that the ancient belief resembled the story of Prometheus. A fire had been sent down from heaven. It was supposed to be an altar flame

bu
tha
ran
'
oth
in
tha
'
liev
fish
chi
of a
'
Tra
rea
mu
I se
tro
M
"is
and
the
kno
mo
T
for

burning to propitiate the bad gods and the spirits that roamed the land from Spirit Lake to the ramparts of the Mackenzie.

"It's the same," he explained, "as some of the other legends up here. They have a foundation in mythology—the thunder-bird and all the things that native voyageur was telling us."

"I do believe in the everlasting flame. I believe in evil spirits. My mother told me that the fishes of the sea were formed by a man whittling chips on the shore, that the mosquitoes are ashes of a great giant that burnt up."

"Your mother may have been right," said Traherne. "I'm beginning to see why there are reasons for her beliefs. Only," he added, "you must not let yourself be carried away by them. I sometimes feel the call of Norse blood, but I control myself."

Moona smiled delightedly. "There," she said, "is your fetish! I hate people who don't see things and have no belief in fairies and good spirits and their ancestors' religion. Is it natural that we know more than our grandfathers and grandmothers did?"

Traherne thought over her question. He was forced to admit that under the thin veneer of civili-

zation there lurked primal emotions which would not down. He reviewed his studies. He took the question up with Hank, who was always ready to maintain that the sea held its mysteries.

The aged mate had sailed on other oceans than the Arctic and Pacific. He described his voyages and told of weird lights on the ends of spars, and of inexplicable tappings about ships, and of the evil days which would surely come if an albatross were killed.

"Like as not," he said, "there's more than we know. We laugh at the natives up here, but what can you expect from them? They believe animals understand everything you say. They're right! I had a dog once, at Singapore an' th' Straits, that followed me about the deck until I'd say to th' skipper: 'I wish he'd go an' lay down,' an' th' dog would go lay down. He even knew my thoughts. I'd sit forrard an' wonder where he was, an' there he'd come along lookin' for me.

"Another thing," added the mate, "that supports these natives up here in sayin' animals know what you're sayin' or thinkin' about is th' seals. Ever look at a seal's eyes?"

Traherne tried to remember doing so. He shook his head.

lac
an
sai
Co
of
eat
in
fro
sto
dre
ou
ab
coa
Tr
sar
my
a k
of
wh
the
Vil
voi

"Next one that comes alongside, I'll show you, lad. They got eyes like you an' me—only softer an' better. Like as not they're th' souls of all th' sailors that ever drowned."

Traherne questioned Scotty and Byrd and Cocky. The cockney nursed few, if any, illusions of youth or old age. He was more concerned with eating than anything else.

"It's a bloody sham!" he declared one morning in the forecabin. "Most of them religions come from dreams. Dreams come from an empty stomach or a full one," he added, longingly. "I've dreamed I saw pink elephants and ladders running out of th' sky an' whales comin' up an' climbin' aboard. Give me a snug berth an' tobacco an' coaster wage an' I'm satisfied."

"During the storm we went through," said Traherne, "it came to me that I was doing the same things I had sometime done before. It was my subconscious mind at work. I never steered a boat through a gale in my life. I was never out of sight of land before I came on this voyage. Yet when I felt that wind I knew what to do. I turned the wheel and eased it off and met the seas like a Viking. I know deep down in me there was a voice telling me what to do. My ancestors were

seafaring people—way back. My father told me once that he remembered a saga which he had never heard or seen in print. Can you explain that?"

"Dreams," said Cocky.

Hank tapped his pipe on the edge of a bunk. He gathered his red beard in his hand as he placed the pipe in his pocket and declared:

"Th' lad's right! Once a sailor always a sailor. There's a thread reachin' up from our ancestors. It's th' reason for these natives being so cocksure of witches an' spirits. There's th' Shepherd—a good man! Search me if I haven't seen him knock a mate down for whistlin' on th' poop. I've seen him cover his mouth when he yawned. What's that for, except to keep th' devil out? We all do it, an' yet we say we don't believe in signs an' spirits."

Traherne went on deck and leaned over the rail. He studied the shore line and the misty, barren land beyond the tundra. He heard chanting from the whaling station. Native girls and boys were singing hymns. The Shepherd's strident voice rose above the others. A silence followed as he prayed. He appeared at the door of the whaling station and started the rounds of the village.

ea
cu
M
fin

of
pa
in
sic
de

M

"S
en
th
th
gi

wa
th
fo

sa

It was practical Christianity. He glanced into each tent. He had a cheerful word for the occupants. Dogs and skin-clad boys followed him. Mothers whined for food. They pointed their fingers down their throats. He fed them.

Moona went ashore. She distributed presents of beads and calico and flour. The Mazekas stood partly aloof from her, although they took her offerings. She came out to the schooner with the missionary. Both disappeared below the quarter-deck.

Hank explained Traherne's question concerning Moona and the natives.

"She's above them, an' they know it," he said. "She has the best education of any of the St. Lawrence girls. They understand old Martin Jordan, they savvy you an' me an' th' rest of th' crew; they're afraid of th' on-shore whalers, but with th' girl it is different. She's caste—whatever that is."

The Shepherd came on deck at sundown, which was late owing to the high latitude. He studied the wind and the scattered ice floes. He stared forward, then shouted:

"All hands on deck. Hoist anchor and loosen sail. Send a man to the wheel, Mr. Peterson."

Traherne went aft and guided the *Wing and*

Wing out through the shore-driven ice and into the open waters beyond Point Hope. The course he held was toward Cape Lisburne.

The schooner made fair headway between the grounded pack and the shoal water near the tundra's edge. Mosquitoes swarmed through the wheel-house windows and doors. A pale light shone in the south. The northern stars were almost lost in the overhead mist.

Moona, without hat or skin coat, came out of the companion-hatch. She wished the mate a pleasant evening. She started walking back and forth along the quarter-deck.

Traherne, at his position in the wheel-house, wondered if she knew he was on watch. She avoided the after part of the poop. She leaned over the starboard rail with her eyes fixed upon the ghostly shore.

Suddenly she straightened up and came down the ladder leading to the stern. He heard her sigh. She stood, soon after this, in the after doorway, regarding him.

"Good evening," he said. "We're making grand progress toward Lisburne."

She came to his side and looked at the compass. Her hand touched but did not grasp the spokes

of
wa

ov
be

wl
lif
an
bo

a s

da
ac
tir
I
ma

gl
qu
wa

re

of the wheel. Idly she played with them. He waited for her to speak.

Finally she asked, "Am I a bad girl?"

"Why, no!"

"The Shepherd says I should spend more time over my Bible. He says that only there will truth be found."

Traherne frowned. "Truth," he said, "is everywhere! You can find truth in nature and animal life and all over the wide outdoors. He is an example of truth. His religion is bigger than any book. It consists in doing good."

She glanced at him. Her fingers lowered from a spoke and clutched at her skirt.

"I'd like to fly," she exclaimed. "I'd like to dance and see strange, big cities. I'd like to be an actress. I don't want to read all the time. I'm tired of sitting in a stuffy cabin and doing nothing. I want to walk on the shore and pick flowers, or make a long sledge journey, or——"

Her voice trailed into a pathetic sob. Traherne glanced at the mate who stood swaying on the quarter-deck near the rail which overlooked the waist of the ship.

"You and I," he said, "have the heritage of unrest, the nostalgia of the free. You were that way

at birth. My ancestors were roamers. We tire of things—ships and cities and the same seas. The Shepherd has found himself. He believes in concentration and keeping his fold together from Anadir to Point Barrow.”

“There may be trouble at Point Barrow. I want to get there and see. Thee knowest the whale ships give the natives whisky.”

“They didn’t at Point Hope or East Cape.”

“They do at Point Barrow always. It’s the last place they stop at before going into Beaufort Sea and the whaling ground off Mackenzie River.”

“But I should think the on-shore whalers bought all the bone before the whale ships came up.”

“The on-shore whalers don’t trade whisky. They trade flour and calico and guns. The Mazekas and trappers want whisky. They save the whalebone until the ships come.”

Traherne saw the magnitude of the Shepherd’s task along the Pale Shore. He was fighting the white men who were corrupting the natives. It was a one-sided battle. The white men were many. The missionary was almost alone.

Moona stepped from the wheel and stared out of the starboard door. She raised one hand and

gra
wa
]
for
Ti
sch
Ar
dri
,
scr
anc
tha
]
the
ber
wh
He
to
,
,
wit
,
son
,
]
“G

grasped the woodwork. Traherne alternately watched her and the compass point.

He heard someone come aft, then turn and go forward as the mate gave a whispered order. Time passed. The shore line came close to the schooner. A wreck lifted gaunt, white ribs to the Arctic sky. It was the last of a whaling ship, driven on the tundra by a northeaster.

The girl turned her head. She resumed her scrutiny of the shore. Traherne studied her hair and supple-muscled body, and the tiny, pink ears that showed below the dark plaits.

He stood erect. A heavy stride sounded on the port ladder's steps. The Shepherd appeared, bent his head and shoulders, and stalked into the wheel-house. His brown eyes were on the girl. He reached for her with a long arm, and drew her to him.

"What are you doing here?" he asked.

"Nothing—looking at the shore," she answered with a sly glance at Traherne.

"Nothing! Have you studied your Bible lessons?"

"Yes—no. I thought I'd do them later."

The missionary pointed a rigid finger forward. "Go to the cabin!" he said. "Ye should not

be on deck without a coat and hat. It's seven bells."

The girl bowed her head and disappeared through the starboard door of the wheel-house. The Shepherd turned to Traherne.

"How many tricks at the wheel are ye standing?" he asked

"One, sir!"

"One? You've stood two. It's seven bells and ye were here when I went below. Hereafter ye stay forward, and when ye come aft stand one two-hour trick at the wheel."

He was gone before Traherne had recovered from his surprise.

"He's had bad news from Point Barrow," suggested the mate. "There's a fleet of whalers there. They've been trading whisky for bone. They do it every season."

"He shouldn't take it out on me. I don't have to stay on this schooner."

"Aye," said the crafty mate. "But you'll stay! There's more than the sea an' th' north an' adventure holdin' you. I was watchin' you, lad. I sent Cocky back when he came aft to take th' trick at th' wheel. Aye, lad, youth will be served when it comes to a maid."

Tra
come t
the scl

He
Cocky
tricks
the qu
dinghy
ashore
Lisbur

"He
occasic
th' ski
maids

He'd d
her pla
away f

"Sh

"No
promis
goin' o

"Wl

"He
her m
Scotch

"Bu

Traherne realized that suspicion had suddenly come to the Shepherd as the voyage continued and the schooner put in at Lisburne.

He was kept forward and never called aft. Cocky or Scotty on his watch stood most of the tricks at the wheel. They did the odd jobs about the quarter-deck. They lowered or raised the dinghy. They rowed the missionary or Moona ashore at the many native villages scattered from Lisburne to Point Barrow.

"Hold fast!" said old Hank on more than one occasion. "Don't give up th' ship, lad. I'm with th' skipper in everything save when it comes to maids an' women. He's above them, maybe. He'd do better if he forgot Moona an' let you an' her play. She's as wild as a heron. She'll wing away from him some-day."

"She's old enough to know her own mind."

"Not yet, but soon, lad. I hear talk that she's promised to him when she's eighteen. That's goin' on a month or two yet."

"Who made that bargain?"

"He did, maybe. Maybe he didn't. Maybe her mother or father. He was Scotch! The Scotch are careful people, lad."

"But a child can't be promised to any man."

"She can be promised, lad. But will she keep the promise?"

Traherne watched for the first signs of Point Barrow. He counted the frames of five ancient wrecks on the shore as the schooner's bow was starboarded and the course was resumed toward the magnetic north.

Wind, ice, and snow held the *Wing and Wing* back from her schedule. They were entering desperate seas. The currents of the Arctic have never been exactly charted. Reefs thrust up jagged fangs along the course. Native fires, seen by night, paled under the Aurora's glow. There came a day when the sun rimmed the slaty horizon and sent aslant the world a cheerless shaft of light.

The first evidence of the most northerly inhabited point on the American Continent was a whaling ship which Traherne had seen passing through Dutch Pass in the early days of the voyage.

"*Beluga!*" cried the mate from forward. "Yon's th' *Beluga* an' th' *Grampas* an' th' *Bernecia*. It's part of th' fleet. Th' rest have gone on."

The Shepherd appeared on the quarter-deck. He surveyed the whale ships with flaming eyes. He turned and studied the land. A mission house

showed
ing stat
and un
was fly
fur trac

"Son
"That'

The
dinghy
Moona
wrappe
followe
small b

"We
man wi
the nat

why th

A K
best he
assisted

"Ple
pointed
come.

but thr

The

"Wh

showed within a circle of huts. An on-shore whaling station was built over the tundra. Whaleboats and umiaks were drawn up on the beach. A flag was flying at half mast from a pole in front of a fur trader's store.

"Somethin' wrong," said Hank to Traherne. "That's a signal to every ship."

The missionary ordered the sails furled and the dinghy lowered. The schooner came to anchor. Moona appeared on the quarter-deck. She was wrapped in furs. She nodded at Traherne, then followed the Shepherd over the rail and into the small boat.

"We'll be shiptenders," said Hank. "Th' old man will find out what is th' matter. Here come the natives with trade stuff. Perhaps they'll know why th' flag is at half mast."

A Kanaka squawman explained the situation as best he could after Traherne and the mate had assisted him over the schooner's rail.

"Plenty hell," he said, unemotionally, as he pointed ashore. "Maybe revenue cutter, they come. Whale ships go to Herschel Island—all but three. They go on to Banks Land, over there."

The Kanaka bobbed his head toward the north.

"What's over there?" asked Hank.

"Men they die. Plenty men die. They lay down and die."

"In Banks Land?" The mate glanced at Traherne. He tapped his leg on the deck vigorously.

"They die in Banks Land," continued the Kanaka. "The big expedition go wrong."

Traherne recalled that there was a ship in the Arctic which had set out from San Francisco in search of the White Eskimos of some Polar land.

He said to the mate, "O'Kane's expedition. That's what this man means."

The Kanaka nodded. He went toward the forecabin hatch where Cocky sat surrounded with trade stuff and bread. They started trading as Hank drew Traherne to the rail and pointed over the ice-flecked waters.

"Those whalers won't go!" he said, bitterly. "They forfeit their insurance if they do. There's no one to go. The sea is open. It's almost a thousand miles—maybe more."

Traherne felt his blood flush his face. "We can go!" he said. "We've got to go! Why, O'Kane had fifty or sixty men with him—scientists and crew. It's up to us!"

"Leave it to the Shepherd," cautioned the mate.

1
"Like a
fists ra
Point.
figure t
eye ash

The 1
seen sti
ceived a
It was
over the
poop.
sail:

"Get
the wha
as soon

"Wh
the ma

"Th'
ary. "
until we

Trahe
compan
then alc
lashes c
routing
castle ha

"Like as not he'll come out hell-roarin' with both fists raised. He can't do anythin' here at th' Point. All his flock has strayed from th' fold. I figure there's as many as a hundred barrels of red-eye ashore right now."

The mate was partly right. The Shepherd was seen striding down to the beach as if he had received a blow. He lifted Moona into the dinghy. It was rapidly rowed to the schooner. He came over the quarter-deck rail and towered upon the poop. His voice reached forward like the flap of a sail:

"Get off hatches and break out cargo! Lower the whaleboat! We're leaving this iniquitous spot as soon as you can land the stores, Mr. Peterson."

"What's th' matter ashore, Mr. Jordan?" asked the mate.

"Th' devil has been here," answered the missionary. "But God calls and we must leave our work until we come back."

Traherne saw Moona bow and walk to the cabin companion. She glanced first at the shore and then along the schooner. Her eyes met his. Her lashes dropped. She was gone as Hank began routing out Cocky and the Kanaka from the fore-castle hatch and calling up the sleeping crew.

They came on deck and joined in getting out the few stores consigned to the mission at Point Barrow. Tackle strained. The whaleboat made seven trips to the beach where a tipsy squad of Mazekas helped carry the barrels of flour and cases of books and tracts up the tundra.

It was at the beginning of the dogwatch when all was clear on the *Wing and Wing*. The missionary from the Point came out to say good-bye to the Shepherd. They stood and talked on the quarter-deck. The crew placed capstan bars in the capstan and loosened the halliards on fore, main, and mizzen masts.

Traherne went to the waist of the schooner. He lashed the whaleboat securely to the rail and davits. He glanced now and then at the two missionaries.

The one from shore was insisting that the Shepherd remain and preach to the natives.

The Shepherd shook his head. "The Lord has called," he said, solemnly. "There are men starving on Banks Land. It is an errand of mercy to go there."

"But you may never come back, Mr. Jordan."

"I will come back!" declared the Shepherd. "I'll sail the Beaufort Sea until I find O'Kane and his unfortunate men!"

T

Their
at the
were a
pilots
Hersch
turn.

Han
He sho
lay off

"Th
shore
Macke
They

Tral
Barrov
schoon

CHAPTER X

THE BLOND ESKIMO

THE *Wing and Wing* set out through the shore ice and headed for Beaufort Sea.

The three whale ships were passed. Their crews lined the rails and stared stubbornly at the schooner. Mutiny, whisky, and bad food were aboard the northern fleet. The skippers and pilots had yet to make the dangerous passage to Herschel Island from which many ships never return.

Hank explained what was ahead of the whalers. He showed Traherne the lane of open water which lay off the Alaska coast.

"They follow that," he said. "They hug th' shore to Herschel Island an' th' mouth of the Mackenzie. Some, they winter at the Island. They do it to get th' early spring bowheads."

Traherne watched the shadowy outlines of Point Barrow vanish over the starboard quarter of the schooner. A snow flurry descended upon the sea.

When it lifted, late that afternoon, the *Wing and Wing* was out of sight of land. Her bow was headed toward an open lane which the Shepherd believed would lead to far-off Banks Land.

Ice floes and hummocks barred the progress in a northerly direction. The ship tacked and worked eastward. It was on the sixth day that Hank announced that the way north was closed. There remained only one chance to win through to Banks Land. This was to run south before the northwest wind and take the lane of open water along the American shore.

The mate came down from the rigging thrashing his arms and railing bitterly against the conditions he had seen from aloft.

"Ice an' ice an' more ice!" he declared in the fore-castle. "We'll do well to turn back."

Scotty crawled from under his blankets. He started shaking the grate of the sheet-iron stove which was located between the molasses barrel and the chain locker's bulkhead.

"Ah hae seen the Shepherd's eye," he said. "Ah hae noo doot he'll persist to the end o' his resources. He can strike a wee bit north when we reach Herschel Island. There's usually open water there."

1
Traho
that wi
who are
Cocky
served
of geog
ship wa
explor
"Ope
and sit
always
a delusi
open se
miles l
bo'rd a
"Doc
herne.
"Lik
to wor
Banks]
"Ah
was gr
Alaska
tribe o
Eskimo
"Hal

Traherne studied the crew. He had learned that wide seas and the North breed a type of men who are in the main dauntless. Scotty, Byrd, and Cocky would have gone to the Pole if food was served at the right hours. They had a misty idea of geography. Banks Land, toward which the ship was working, had been visited by very few explorers. Its interior was unknown.

"Open water!" exclaimed Hank, filling his pipe and sitting on the forecastle ladder. "They're always talkin' of open water—th' Polar Sea. It's a delusion! There's lanes in summer time but no open sea. We're in a lane now. It may be fifty miles long, but it's a lane an' there's ice to starbo'rd an' port."

"Does it lead to Herschel Island?" asked Traherne.

"Like as not, but that won't help. We've got to work easterly. The old man knows that. Banks Land is a point north o' east from us."

"Ah saw it in th' nineties," said Scotty. "It was green in spots—like Wrangel Island or the Alaskan shore. Some, they say an unknown tribe o' Eskimo live in th' interior. Blue-eyed Eskimo," he added, staring at Traherne.

"Half-breeds?" asked Hank.

"No one knows how they got there. Ah hae a theory."

All eyes levelled on the Scot who glided to the stove and turned with his gnarled hands clasped behind him.

"What is your theory?" inquired Traherne.

"It's simple an' yet a wee complex. Did ye ever hear tell o' th' Franklin Expedition what was cast away in northern waters and never seen again?"

Traherne nodded. "The *Erebus* and *Terror*," he said. "Lady Franklin spent years trying to find the survivors. Bodies were picked up along some frozen river's bed."

"A few bodies!" Scotty exclaimed. "A verra few. The rest had disappeared. This was in th' early fifties—or maybe th' late forties. Twa hundred men were missing. Some, they say went west an' north across Boothia Inlet. They reached Banks Land, maybe. They found natives there. They married and that's the truth o' the Blond Eskimo."

Cocky snorted and sat erect in his bunk.

"It's a bloody yarn!" he declared. "I studied history an' geography when I was young. I'm a St. Paul's pigeon, I ham! I went to common school in England. It's six thousand miles from

Booth
woiys.

Hæ
bunk.
of Be
measu
beard

"Si
hundr
that d
made
That
ramp:

"T
like th
don't
lieve
palace
icy th

Th
from
Scott
found
of the
cuss &
point

Boothia Inlet to Banks Land. It's a weepin' long woiys."

Hank rose from the ladder and stumped to his bunk. He came back with a well-thumbed chart of Beaufort Sea and the western Arctic. He measured off with his finger, then worked his red beard up and down as he glared at the cockney.

"Six thousand miles!" he said. "It's not six hundred—countin' everything. Men can walk that distance over th' ice. O'Kane, ten years ago, made a sledge journey of four hundred miles. That was from Fort Yukon to way beyond th' ramparts of th' Mackenzie."

"These Blond Eskimos," said Cocky, "are like the rest of th' yarns about the North. They don't exist. Blyme hif you could make me believe anything about blue-eyed Mazekas with ice palaces and cities an' a pale queen what sits on an icy throne with a whackin' crown on 'er 'air."

The argument became heated. Saul came down from his trick at the wheel. Traherne joined Scotty's side of the Blond Eskimo question. He found that the principal amusement of the seamen of the schooner was in debates. They would discuss anything under the sun and try to prove their points.

Hank had his map and an ancient almanac. Scotty nursed a dictionary. Cocky put trust in his memory, which was apt to be wrong. Saul had the Bible—that he declared infallible.

The play of cross questions and defamation brought out each man's character. Their ancient faces lighted. They spat on the planks. They shook fists at each other. They turned, finally, and pounced upon the cockney.

He ended the wordy battle by fleeing to the deck where he stuttered through agitated lips, "You're blym smart, you all har! You say th' height of Mount Cotapaxi is twenty-one thousand feet. You're all wrong. There ain't no mountain in th' bloody world that 'igh. I've been hup most of them."

Traherne wondered how the arguments had possibly turned to the height of mountain peaks. He followed the cockney to the deck, where Scotty declared that the Lord Mayor of London was a particular friend of his. Traherne had had enough of simple minds each seeking its own glory in debate, so he leaned over the rail and watched the slow progress of the schooner.

Low floes showed within the Arctic mist. The wind was abeam—which was the schooner's fast-

est bu
and to
boom
times
He w
alone
days.

Th
water
Soun
sea pi
floes

Th
said
ceive
Adva
leadir
at all
the A

She
flatte
ern w
ment
boom

Ha
gigan

est but most dangerous sailing point. She yawled and tossed her tapered jib-boom. The outboarded booms jerked at the sheets. The Shepherd called times innumerable to the wheelman to steady her. He walked the frozen quarter-deck muffled and alone. Moona had not put in an appearance for days.

The *Wing and Wing* was entering the perilous waters north of the mouth of the Mackenzie. Soundings were taken from time to time. The sea presented a dirty, yellow appearance. The ice floes were sometimes piled high with driftwood.

The Shepherd stood most of the watches. He said little to the crew. Hank went aft and received the orders. They were simple enough. Advantage was to be taken of every open lane leading to the north and east. The *Wing and Wing*, at all hazards, was to be kept from the menace of the American Continent and the lee shore.

She plowed athwart the seas with her canvas flattened. Lowering clouds blotted out the northern world. Seals and walrus sported in their element. A bowhead whale appeared under the jib-boom.

Hank sighed as the monster turned upward a gigantic pair of black flukes before it sounded.

"If we were only whalin'," he told Traherne. "There went ten thousand dollars—two thousand pounds."

"The whalers should be about here."

"They should be, but they're not. They're far to south'ard. We're the only ship within hundreds of miles."

"How does the Shepherd know our position? There hasn't been a sun or star for days."

"By drift an' wind an' soundings. It's yellow mud below. That marks th' delta of th' Mackenzie an' th' shoal water off Banks Land."

Traherne stared ahead of the schooner. He saw only ice and gray clouds and a narrowing lane of murky water.

"How near are we to Banks Land?" he asked.

"We ought to sight it to-morrow—if th' wind holds an' th' flocs permit."

"Is it low land?"

"Most is as flat as your hand. I was up here ten years ago. It's th' wildest spot on th' chart!"

The mate stamped his leg on the deck, and stared at the schooner's straining rigging. He went aft and climbed the poop. He stood by the Shepherd. Finally he called to Traherne:

"C
trick
Tra
leewa
bell s
given
"A
cockn
in' th
Th
the w
der v
tiller.
Tra
rude
Cock
along
her c
A tin
snow
pepp
to sar
Th
at th
whee
pered

"Come here, lad, an' take th' wheel. Cocky's trick is up."

Traherne passed the Shepherd and the mate to leeward. He relieved the cockney as the ship's bell struck four double taps. The course was given as northwest by north.

"An' keep your blym eyes hopen," finished the cockney. "Th' Shepherd is peeved. 'E's watch-in' th' tell-tale like a 'awk."

The tell-tale was an arrangement on the top of the wheel-house which showed which way the rudder was turned. It resembled the handle of a tiller. On it was a small red ball.

Traherne felt the pressure of the sea against the rudder. He strained to hold the course given by Cocky. It was a difficult thing to do. Ice grated along the *Wing and Wing's* planks. Seas slapped her counter and curled beneath the rocking stern. A tinge of frost was in the air. Fine particles of snow fell from out the dome of heaven like gray pepper from a shaken box. This snow turned to sand on the frozen deck.

The Shepherd turned from Hank and gazed aft at the tell-tale. He took one step toward the wheel-house. Hank touched his arm and whispered something into his ear.

"Starboard!" ordered the missionary. "Now, steady! Now, port. Put her down. Keep her there. Now, back to your course."

A towering mass of century-old ice drifted close by the wheel-house and passed astern. Water spurted from the honeycombed openings churned out by the sea. A great yellow bear stood atop of the floe. He eyed the schooner without any sign of alarm. It was evident that he had never before seen a ship.

Spirals of vapour grew spectre thin and vanished. The sea seemed to smoke. Weird lights showed as night came on. Traherne held the wheel, wondering what manner of world they were entering. A pale glow overspread the sky. The wind died and then rose with a cutting whine. The schooner listed and righted. Frost shone from standing rigging and sails. The blocks filled with ice.

Seaford brought hot water in kettles whenever it was necessary to execute a manoeuvre. This water was poured on the frozen sheets. He returned each time to the galley with shaking head. Traherne thought he resembled the Ancient Mariner who had shot the albatross, and his dire forebodings were heard over the ship.

The
and w
to por
He th
order.
come v
Moc
glided
wheel-
"Ar
"Ye
"Th
"Ne
The
felt a b
the co
on a s
illusion
Sheph
the sc
wrecke
Goin
Traher
thund
"Ay
A m

The Shepherd turned the ship over to the mate and went below. Hank walked from starboard to port with his peg-leg testing the ice on the deck. He thrashed his arms. He moved aft to give an order. Traherne saw that his red beard had become white with hoar frost.

Moona appeared at the companion-hatch. She glided aft, and got down on her knees before the wheel-house windows.

"Art thee there?" she whispered.

"Yes!" said Traherne.

"Thee is cold?"

"Not a bit. This exercise keeps me warm."

The maid stood erect. She sighed. Traherne felt a bond of sympathy as she disappeared through the companion. She was alone and he was alone on a silent ship. They were youth with all the illusions of youth. The rest of the crew and the Shepherd had no interest in common save to lay the schooner near to where O'Kane had been wrecked on Banks Land.

Going forward at the change of wheel tricks Traherne stopped and said to the mate: "I hear thunder overhead."

"Aye, lad. Th' old bird has returned."

A midnight storm broke over the schooner. The

wind shifted to the west. The sea rose in long, running waves. It was with difficulty that the course was held.

Cocky, from the warmth of his bunk, explained the sea's rising by predicting a lee shore and open water.

"Blymed little does th' skipper care for hus," he whined. "'E's thinkin' of other souls what came hup 'ere on their own free will. O'Kane got hinto hit 'imself. 'E ought to get hout of it 'imself."

"But we were the only ship handy," said Traherne. "The whalers couldn't go."

"Woiy couldn't they? Some of them have engines an' boilers. They could 'ave made it nicely."

Scotty thrust a wrinkled face forward.

"You're going to be a hero," he said to Cocky. "Think o' what th' papers will say."

"A 'ero? It's th' Shepherd wot'll get th' bloomin' credit—'e an' th' mate. We don't count, except to work."

"It seems to me," said Traherne, "that we may need rescuing ourselves. The storm may bring back the ice."

"Gawd 'elp hus hif it does!" said Cocky, covering his long, blue nose with his blanket.

Tral
Hank
watch
would
a worlc

The
on. E
began
hoar fr
his nee

Tral
month
the d
lamp,
forms
heard
sifted
iron st

Red
as the
grippee
schoon

"Yo
has cle

A w
It was

Traherne turned in as the mate came below. Hank explained that the Shepherd would stand watch on the quarter-deck until dawn. "It would not be many hours," he added. "We're in a world of midnight sun."

The mate lay down with all his frozen clothes on. He thrust his peg-leg out over the deck and began to snore. His beard changed to red as the hoar frost melted and the moisture trickled down his neck.

Traherne suddenly realized the change that three months had made in his life. He stared around the dingy fore-castle. The swinging, smoking lamp, the squalor, the fumes, and the breathing forms seemed almost unreal. He listened and heard the wind in the rigging. Fine ice particles sifted through the fore-castle hatch. The sheet-iron stove was roaring, but finally burnt itself out.

Redoubtable and compelling stood the Shepherd as the watch was called to the deck. Hank gripped Traherne's arm. He pointed over the schooner's ice-sheathed bow.

"Yon's th' land glint," he said. "See, th' sea has cleared."

A white streak lay athwart the slaty clouds. It was the horizon-down reflection of Banks Land.

The sun broke from behind the world of snow. It was cold and uncheering.

Seaford served coffee and salted meat. The crew ate at their stations. Scotty took the wheel. Cocky stood lookout. Byrd paced the waist from rail to rail, ready to take the missionary's orders.

The Shepherd called down the companion-hatch. Moona appeared with the long glass which Traherne had seen on top of the case in the cabin. The missionary steadied his elbows on the quarter-deck rail. He studied the far-off horizon. He closed the glass with a slow smile.

"Land ho," he said to the mate. "Get aloft, Mr. Peterson, an' see what you make out. There's a high spot on th' coast. Perhaps O'Kane was wrecked there."

Hank climbed the weather shrouds. He thrust his leg through the rigging. He held the frosty position for over a bell. Coming down he called to the Shepherd:

"No wreck in sight. There's nothing, sir, but ice an' snow an' a few wild flowers in th' sheltered hollows. Do you want to run north or south?"

"We'll run north," said the Shepherd. "Stand by sheets. Get ready to go about."

Tra
the cr
the sk

The
the pa
mount
snow.

"So
Trahe
mount

"Ay
have l

Tra
tered
humm
bloodt

"R
count
tains.
tablek

"O
spent
in the
bears
white
prom

Traherne noticed blank looks upon the faces of the crew. They had crossed Beaufort Sea—now the skipper was heading toward the Pole!

The *Wing and Wing* came about and started up the pale shore line of Banks Land. Far off, high mountains reared. Their crests were domed with snow.

“Something hidden, go and find it,” quoted Traherne to the mate after he had pointed to these mountains. “I wonder what is beyond them?”

“Aye, lad, wonder what is before us. Few ships have laid Banks Land on their starboard beam.”

Traherne studied the shore line. He saw scattered patches of moss and flowers. Mosquitoes hummed about the schooner. They were big and bloodthirsty.

“Reminds me,” said Hank, “of th’ Yukon country. There may be a river beyond th’ mountains. See, they’re flattening out to hills. There’s tableland over there.”

“Over there” was toward the Pole. Traherne spent the long day watching the shifting changes in the crystalline shore line. He saw birds and bears and seals. They were unafraid of man. A white wolf stood on a floe which jutted from a promontory and eyed the passing schooner.

Its long howl sounded after they had passed the floe. It was seen leaping from hummock to hummock and vanished inland.

The sky paled and grew overcast with gray clouds which contained the hint of more snow. The *Wing and Wing* sailed on. The Shepherd stood most of the watch with the glass held to his eye. He searched in vain for some evidence of O'Kane's unfortunate expedition.

Traherne asked the mate at sundown how it happened that news of the disaster had reached Point Barrow.

Hank shook his head. "It is another of th' mysteries," he said, solemnly. "O'Kane got word down someways. Maybe an' Eskimo brought it to Herschel Island an' then along th' coast. Maybe a note was tied to a bird's leg. Maybe nobody knows how he did it."

"But the Shepherd wouldn't take this chance without some good reason."

"Chance it is, lad. O'Kane has been missing for over a year. That's enough to know he's wrecked somewhere."

The Arctic night passed. Snow fell at dawn. The wind shifted to an on-shore breeze. The schooner sailed past ice floes which had come

throug
there

Ha
He ex
pointi
piled.

Coc
sudden
missic

"T

spar s

The
for th
Seafo
beach
froze
west

An
beach
land.

came

Hank
ped f

had

of O'

winte

through Banks Strait. A point was reached where there was no way north or east or west.

Hank descended the foremast and stumped aft. He explained the ice situation to the Shepherd, pointing to where hummock upon hummock was piled.

Cocky, who had been standing on the forepeak, suddenly leaped to the deck and ran toward the missionary crying:

"There's your bloody wreck, sir! There's a spar stickin' out of th' ice, close to shore."

The schooner was brought around and headed for the spar. The dinghy was lowered. Hank, Seaford, and the Shepherd started toward the beach. They landed and hurried out over the frozen surface of a tiny inlet which was open to the west and northwest.

An hour passed. The missionary went up the beach and climbed upon the first ridge of the tableland. He swept the interior with his glass. He came down and was rowed out to the schooner. Hank, after lashing the dinghy to the taffrail, tapped forward with the news that the spar Cocky had raised was undoubtedly the maintopmast of O'Kane's ship. There was evidence ashore of winter quarters. A shack had been built out of

dunnage boards and tar paper. No record or sign had been left to indicate where the survivors of the expedition had gone after leaving the inlet. No cairn was raised.

"That settles it," said Cocky. "We're going home."

It was time! The wind increased in volume. A sea ran from north to south. The floes, like timber wolves, came dashing toward the schooner.

Hank and the Shepherd, by skillful seamanship, got out of the ice difficulty. They ordered all canvas set for a swift run along the pale shore. Watch was kept for any sign of smoke or life. The sea dashed the schooner with icy waves. The sails and rigging were frozen solid. The quarter-deck was cuirassed in white ice.

Night followed day in a drive toward the south and open sea. The great north pack was closing its grip on Banks Land. Already aged ice was seen to starboard. Hank shook his head. He cautioned the Shepherd who hugged the shore in a vain hope of finding the survivors of O'Kane's expedition.

Their danger drew the crew of the *Wing and Wing* together. Old arguments and threats were forgotten. Cocky told of seeing his mother call-

ing hi
Samue
Sheph
him to
tricks
was b
were v
pair c
been
had li
"Ye
"I
We ar
He
she es
was o
it. T
the pr
Pole.
ashore
crushe
The
stepp
Trahe
pass
hung

ing him in dreams. Hank prayed with Saul and Samuel in the small hours of the night. The Shepherd summoned Traherne aft. He allowed him to talk with Moona. They stood the wheel tricks together. The shelter of the wheel-house was better than the ice-sheathed deck. Her furs were warm. She brought him mittens and a new pair of Mazeka boots which she explained had been made on Diomedes Island where her mother had lived.

“You’re too good to me,” he said.

“I fear thee should not have come with us. We are in desperate plight.”

He sensed anxiety in her voice. He listened as she explained the schooner’s position. The gate was open to the south, but every hour was closing it. The north pack was swinging shoreward under the pressure of the wind that blew from over the Pole. When it closed it would drive the schooner ashore or crush it like O’Kane’s ship had been crushed.

The Shepherd came down the ladder. He stepped into the wheel-house. He laid a hand on Traherne’s shoulder while he glanced at the compass and then consulted the barometer which hung against the cabin’s bulkhead.

He went on deck stroking his yellow beard. Moona tiptoed from her corner and said, "He's worried. I fear for thee."

A prophecy was fulfilled within that watch. A cry rose from forward. Hank and Scotty called to the Shepherd that ice showed ahead. Traherne rose on tiptoe and glanced through the wheel-house windows. He saw towering spires of glittering menace. Hummocks, floes, and ancient ice barred the way. A roar sounded in the west. Crunching and grinding noises echoed and re-echoed. The north pack had closed the door sooner than was expected.

Hurtling his orders, the missionary called upon the crew for superhuman efforts. The *Wing and Wing* was driven toward the shore. A spot was picked which offered a slight shelter. It was such a cove in which O'Kane had attempted to winter. It was open to the north and west. Heavy ice would leap the sand-bar and nip the schooner. The one chance was to tie to the shore formation and wait for a doubtful lifting of the frosty gate.

Night fell with the sails furled and draped over the booms. A hawser was hitched to a hummock where Cocky and Byrd carried it. Hose was

taken
snow
leavin
wheel
back
ten.
head,
crysta
He
brace
stared
which
The
starbo
from t
The s
floes l
Car
herne
swath
Her e
towar
"C
on the
Tra
out of

taken over side and water pumped from the melted snow to the ship's tanks. The crew turned in, leaving Traherne on watch. He selected the wheel-house as the warmest shelter. He paced back and forth. Now and then he paused to listen. Each time he heard the roaring wind overhead, the crack of ice, the sand-like sifting of crystalline particles over the frozen quarter-deck.

He had never been given over to fear. He braced his shoulders and resumed his pacing. He stared at the wet track across the wheel-house deck which had been made by ice melting from his boots.

The *Wing and Wing* moved restlessly. Her starboard side ground against the ice. Frost fell from the rigging and broke on the sheathed planks. The sea went down. This was a sign that more floes had closed about the inlet.

Came footsteps upon the weather ladder. Traherne raised his head and saw Moona. She was swathed in furs. Her cap was pulled over her ears. Her eyes seemed to burn. She nodded her head toward the deck, and raised a finger to her lips.

"Come," she whispered. "There's someone on the ice."

Traherne started. He glanced at her and stepped out of the wheel-house. He climbed the ladder.

She drew him within the shadow of the rail. She shook her head when he tried to question her.

He heard the ice cracking and the wind whining. He could feel the presence of the barren slopes and hills of Banks Land. The clouds hung heavy and gray. An ethereal light shot from behind them. It was from the Aurora. It paled and thinned and died. It came again with rosy flush.

Glancing at her, he raised his brows. She reached out a hand and pressed him down. She lifted her head over the rail. A sound made him look up. They stared over the ice like two quick children.

A shadow moved from hummock to hummock. It came across the frozen inlet. It stood bathed in the light from the Aurora.

"A man," said Moona. "A man, watching the ship."

Traherne felt his flesh creep. He gripped his mittened fingers. He bunched his fists. He waited with the white breath frosting from his mouth. He saw Moona's eyes. Fear was in their depths. She shivered and drew close up. "I'm afraid," she said.

"Nonsense, it's an Eskimo."

She shook her head. "See," she whispered,

"he's
don't

The
left to
school
somet

Mo
slippe
He st
turne

Swi
He m
and g
the p
moun

Tra
exami
rail.

book.
light.

"C

She
wheel
heads
neath

"It

"he's got a rifle. He's wearing skis. Mazekas don't wear them."

The figure straightened, changed the rifle from left to right hand, and crept up to the waist of the schooner. Traherne waited. He saw the man lay something on the rail and fasten it with a block of ice.

Moona pointed. Traherne dashed over the slippery deck. He sprang down the poop steps. He started after the man who raised his rifle, turned, and fled across the field of ice.

Swifter than some wild thing he seemed to pass. He mounted the edge of the shore, turned north and glided away, a shadow within the shadows of the pale land. He appeared, a speck, upon the mounded hill's side. He disappeared.

Traherne came back to the schooner. He examined the object which the man had laid on the rail. It was a scrap of paper torn from an ancient book. He tried to read it under the Aurora's light. He brought it to Moona.

"Can you make it out?" he asked.

She climbed down the ladder leading to the wheel-house and went inside. They bent their heads together where the tiny lamp glowed beneath the binnacle compass.

"It's a note," she said, as she straightened up

and stared at him. "It's part English. It says something about O'Kane and party going over the ice last winter to Herschel Island. It tells us to beware. I can't understand it all. I think we better show it to the Shepherd. It is meant in a friendly spirit."

Traherne took the note. He studied it by striking matches to obtain a better light than the binnacle lamp gave.

He read:

Friends: Beware the . . . you are in. You will be nipped. O'Kane, if him you seek, has gone last winter to Herschel Island, which is. . . . He lost five of his party. They are buried at Banks Strait. Beware the crushing ice.

and etc.,

Your friend.

"Who could he have been and where does he live?" asked Traherne.

"Methinks I know. He is not of O'Kane's expedition. He is of the Blond race—who live beyond the hidden mountains."

"Blond race?"

"Didst thee not see his eyes? They were blue!"

M She sensed of the Tra it. H glance ually c Con wake t "I'l He cabin. showe trail o The in and

CHAPTER XI

AN OPEN BOAT

MOOONA'S statement concerning the strange visitor to the *Wing and Wing* was probably true.

She had the keen sight of the native. She had sensed that the man was not of the white race or of the Eskimo.

Traherne studied the note and carefully folded it. He went to the taffrail of the schooner and glanced out over the north pack which was gradually encompassing the inlet.

Coming back to her he said, "We had better wake the Shepherd and tell him what we saw."

"I'll go do it."

He waited for her and heard voices within the cabin. The missionary came on deck. Traherne showed him the note. He pointed toward the trail over which he had seen the stranger skiing.

The Shepherd turned to Moona who stood half in and half out of the open companionway.

"Thee saw him plainly?" he asked.

"As I see thee. He was different than any man I ever saw. His skin was copper-coloured. His eyes were big and blue. His hair was yellow."

The missionary shook his head. "The children of the Lord are many," he said. "Perhaps this man was of the unknown tribe, of which I have heard. We will act on his advice—if we can. Go forward and wake the crew. The ice is closing in."

Traherne hurried to the forecandle. He called loudly down the booby hatch. He heard Hank stirring and Cocky cursing.

All hands, including Seaford, came straggling aft. They stood beneath the break of the quarter-deck. The missionary opened his coat and spoke rapidly.

"Men, we have had a warning to leave the inlet before it is too late. O'Kane has gone south with the survivors of his unfortunate expedition. He may have reached Herschel Island last winter. We will try and go there, if the Lord is willing."

A loud crack sounded in the ice to windward. Snow fell from the rigging, narrowly missing the crew by the main hatch. Cocky's face grew livid as he exclaimed: "It's a bloody fine time to be

givin'
'ere?"

Har
over th
the mi
sea.

"Se
The La

The
humm
poles
Wing
from th
foresai

Tral
mission
schoon
the wa
heavy
around
terror
helm"
sounded
house
lifted a
The

givin' orders! 'Ow are we goin' to get hout of 'ere?"

Hank seized his arm when the Shepherd glared over the quarter-deck rail. A high light came into the missionary's eyes. He pointed over the frozen sea.

"See," he declared. "See, the ice is opening. The Lord has answered our prayer."

The hawser which held the schooner to the hummock was hauled aboard. Oars and long poles were pressed against the shore floes. The *Wing and Wing's* bow sheered away. She started from the inlet under the pressure of the wind on her foresail and jib. Both sails were crusted with ice.

Traherne sprang to the wheel. He took the missionary's orders. It seemed as if the staunch schooner would be nipped. A time came when the way was open clear to the south, then a heavy wind, laden with snow and frost, swung around a huge arm of the north pack. A cry of terror rose from forward. A shout to "Port the helm" thundered from the Shepherd. A sob sounded from Moona who stood close by the wheelhouse windows. The ship was gripped by floes lifted and thrown on her beam end.

The racking roar which followed was like

heaven's artillery. The mainmast tottered. It crashed through the galley-house. The foresail and jib fell over the bow. The rudder snapped, and jerked the wheel from Traherne's hands. He staggered from the wheel-house. He climbed to the deck.

Moona was his first thought. He reached and grasped her by the waist. The Shepherd stood stunned and silent. Hank burst from the wreckage of the mainmast. He stumped up the canted quarter-deck.

"We're done for!" he cried.

Cocky's voice was heard on the ice alongside the schooner. He called for help. Traherne stared into Moona's eyes and rubbed her hands.

"We're not lost," he said, and led her toward the Shepherd. "We can leave the ship any time."

"Thee knowest best," she answered, obediently.

The missionary called loudly for all hands to come aft. Scotty appeared, supported by Byrd. Saul and Samuel were with the frightened cockney on the ice. Traherne left Moona standing between Hank and the Shepherd. He climbed upon the shattered deck-house. He found Goodwin attempting to extract Seaford from beneath the wreckage. They got the cook out and partly

carried
poop.

"No
think
off the

Han
squint
er's pl

"W
get ou
be an
well u

The
sudden
to the
the sel
quarte

"Co
up the

He
fallen
ney, v
broken
of the
hatch
man-p

carried, partly led him, up the ladder to the poop.

"No one killed," announced Traherne. "I think Cocky was only scared. He was knocked off the forepeak."

Hank tapped the deck with his wooden leg. He squinted at the ice which was grinding the schooner's planks.

"We're filling!" he exclaimed. "We'd better get out some stores and go overside. It won't be an hour before she goes down. See, the bow is well under now."

The missionary took charge of matters with a sudden lift of his bowed shoulders. He called to the seamen on the ice. They worked around the schooner and stood under the overhang of the quarter-deck. They stared upward.

"Come aboard!" ordered the Shepherd. "Climb up that ladder and help break out stores!"

He pointed to a boatswain's ladder which had fallen overside. Hank assisted the whining cockney, who declared he had three or four bones broken. Traherne led the squad over the wreckage of the deck-house. They started removing the hatches. A tackle was rigged. Boxes of biscuits, man-pemmican in tins, kegs of molasses and sugar

were lifted to the deck and taken overside to a safe position on the ice.

The Shepherd, assisted by Moona, went into the cabins. They brought warm clothing and blankets from their supplies. These were carried out and piled upon the other stores.

The whaleboat in the waist had fortunately escaped the pressure of the ice and the fallen rigging. It was lowered from its davits and dragged to safety. Traherne assumed command in getting everything movable away from the schooner. The mate and the Shepherd momentarily lost grip on themselves. They gave confused orders which the weary crew did not obey.

It was two hours after the first nip from the floe before the ice began to exert its pressure. Ridges formed in the pack. Cracking sounds reverberated. A ripping sound shot athwart the north pack. It began to crush the schooner. Hank and Moona and the missionary sprang overside.

They ran toward the spot where Traherne had piled the stores. All hands saw the final catastrophe. The mizzenmast alone remained to mark the position of the *Wing and Wing*. Its topmost spar pointed out of a vast sea of ice.

Th
They
to a
He r
merci
Th
surfa
miles
throu
provi
mont
muni
Tra
ward
possil
be a
at the
Co
it ou
Islan
Th
climb
scann
to hi
"Y
"The

The tiny group gathered around the Shepherd. They bent their heads as he prayed, his voice sunk to a whisper. Then it rose in strident volume. He raised both hands and thanked God for the mercies extended to him and his flock.

The situation was desperate. The land—a flat surface backed by misty mountains—lay three miles to the east. The sun attempted to struggle through the overhanging clouds. There were provisions enough on the ice to last for several months. Moona had brought a rifle and ammunition.

Traherne studied the group. He turned toward the stores. He mentally calculated the possibility of getting them to the shore. It would be a week's task for the aged seamen. He stared at the whaleboat and went over to it.

Coming back, he said to Hank, "Can't we drag it out to open water and try to reach Herschel Island?"

The Shepherd looked toward the west. He climbed on top of the nearest hummock. He scanned the dark horizon. He called Traherne to his side.

"Your suggestion is the only one," he said. "There is open water not more than five miles to

windward. We can drag the boat there, with God's help. We can launch it, store it with pemmican and biscuits, and try for the American Continent."

Traherne gave the order to the crew. Saul and Seaford commenced making a skid out of planks and spars. The boat was examined and righted. A broken gunwale was repaired by the mate. Tins of man-pemmican, with red covers, were piled in the stern. Biscuits, blankets, and all the light stores were securely packed beneath the thwarts. The single triangular sail was examined. It would serve.

Nightfall found the small party dragging the heavy boat around hummocks and over crusted ice. Their way led toward the open sea—dimly discerned in the west.

The Aurora and the stars flamed in the sky. The ice cracked and ground like teeth which are on edge. A moan sounded at each step Cocky took. His aged limbs were palsied with weariness.

Traherne sent the girl ahead to pick out the best trail. She climbed hummocks and searched the ice. She pointed the way. She called cheerfully when the squad at the ropes stopped and lay down on the snow. The Shepherd joined her.

Ho
It see
open
when
He cl
took
again
A f
Ice g
their
and c
by M
ing of
The
of me
pack
The v
It po
lane c
"P
answ
Tra
ice.
It wa
aboar
the ti

Hours went by with progress at a snail's pace. It seemed to Traherne as if they would never reach open water. He assisted in righting the boat when it overturned. He had youth to call upon. He cheered the company with his promises. He took the rear position and pressed his shoulders against the sharp stern of the boat.

A fissure was reached. This had to be détoured. Ice gave way and let two of the party down to their hips in water. A fire was built from wood and oil to thaw their clothes. Coffee was boiled by Moona. She passed it around and told of seeing open water not far to the west.

They came, finally, to heavier floes and patches of melted snow. The way led across the ancient pack which piled as high as the deck of a ship. The whaleboat was dragged over the obstruction. It poised on a ridge of ice. Below shone an inky lane of sea. It stretched toward the south.

"Praise God!" said the missionary. "He has answered our prayers."

Traherne hitched a line around a fragment of ice. He let the boat slide to the edge of the pack. It was launched. The last of the crew climbed aboard. The sail was set. The missionary took the tiller. A nipping breeze swung from the north

and west. Athwart this wind the fast boat sailed with sheet pulled taut and centreboard lowered.

The crew crowded to windward and held the craft on an even keel. Hank crouched in the bow with his red beard thrust out toward the south where he watched the ice floes and the open water.

Traherne tended sheet. Moona sat between him and the Shepherd who stood erect like a Viking of old. The whaleboat was overloaded. It dipped seas at times. Scotty acted as bailing-boy. His arm rose and fell. He started an old hymn in lieu of a chantey:

“In the hour o’ death, after this life’s whim,
When th’ heart beats low, an’ th’ eyes grow dim,
An’ pain has exhausted every limb—
Th’ lover o’ th’ Lord shall trust in Him.”

Traherne studied the rude picture. The cans of pemmican were used as seats by the huddled crew. The mate’s whiskers began to freeze from dashing sea water. The sky was overcast and gray. The open lane down which they were speeding allowed waves to form before the pressure of the frosty wind.

He
her h
upon
proba
warni
know
reach
the bl
ing.
noted
Mo
pointe
“T
“Y
She
she su
wind
The
ward
He pro
The
with p
ing se
Lower
let do
The

He turned and glanced at Moona. She sat with her hood thrown open and her slanted eyes fixed upon the far-off shores of Banks Land. He was probably thinking of the visitor who had left the warning. He was a sentinel, outpost for an unknown race that dwelt in the interior. Traherne reached in his vest and removed the note which the blue-eyed man had left. He studied the writing. There was that to the phraseology which denoted Old English of a time of fifty years ago.

Moona laid her mittened hand on his arm. She pointed to the centreboard.

"Thee has it fully lowered?" she asked.

"Yes."

She looked up at the Shepherd. "Methinks," she suggested, "thee could pull it up a little. The wind is almost abeam."

The missionary nodded. Traherne moved forward and drew the centreboard to its upper notch. He pressed the bolt and saw that it was secure.

The wind veered to the true north. It came with puffs that urged the light craft over the rolling seas. The sky grew pale and then black. Lowering storm clouds gathered astern. They let down their burden of snow and rain.

The crew and Hank huddled beneath what

shelter they could spread with the blankets and a spare sail. Ice formed in the bilge. A leak developed where a plank had been loosened by dragging the boat over the hummocks. This was stopped by Traherne with biscuit dough held in place by a tin of pemmican.

Midnight, by the Shepherd's watch, revealed an open lane ahead. The speed of the whaleboat was all of seven knots an hour. It was an ideal craft for the purpose for which it was being used. The builders had been New Bedford men.

Double-bowed, it was fitted with a crutch for the steering oar, which could be employed in place of the rudder. Its lightness made for fast running before the wind. The half-inch planking was covered by a thin batten instead of being calked.

The Shepherd was a seaman of the ancient school. His control of the boat seemed perfect. He met the cross-running waves and glided the boat down their furrows. He brought the bow into the seas with a light touch of the tiller. He shook his head once when Traherne pointed to the huge steering oar which was lashed alongside the centreboard well.

"All right for whaling," he said, "but the rudder is better now. It don't drag ye back."

Tra
night
point
"Jo
awake
The
down
herne
was v
"Y
boy w
Now,
Mo
head.
glance
"W
slept :
"Al
the til
the bc
Slov
dropp
from s
into sl
Mo
herne'

Traherne watched the missionary, and, at midnight, offered to handle both sheet and tiller. He pointed to Moona sleeping in a crouched position.

"Join her," he suggested, "for a nap. I'll stay awake."

The Shepherd relinquished the tiller and sat down on the stern seat. He scrutinized Traherne's form and weather-exposed face. There was vague pride in his eyes.

"Ye have broadened," he said. "Ye were a boy when I picked you up in the Straits of Juan. Now, ye are a full-grown man."

Moona awoke with a start. She raised her head. She stared around the sea. Turning, she glanced at the Shepherd and then at Traherne.

"Where are we?" she asked, sleepily. "Have I slept all night?"

"About an hour," said Traherne, leaning against the tiller handle and swinging with the motion of the boat. "Not more than that."

Slowly the missionary nodded. His beard dropped to his sealskin coat. His head swayed from side to side. He jerked erect, then fell back into sleep. He remained motionless.

Moona rose, squeezed by him, and stood at Traherne's side. She allowed her hands to rest on the

tiller. She felt the quiver of the rudder. They swung in silence as the boat dipped and yawled and glided on. A half hour passed.

"I dreamed," she finally said, "that my bear came back and was following me. He was the same bear I saw when I was at St. Lawrence Island." She glanced astern and covering her face with her mittened hands, relaxed into further silence.

He was of a mind to scoff at her dream, but he remembered the witch woman and the tokens Moona had bought; he recalled the superstitions of the North, so he said nothing until she whispered through her fingers:

"My mother died soon after I saw the bear. Do you think it is an evil omen?"

"No!"

"But we are in great danger."

"Not if we're careful," he assured her.

Hank awoke from his crouched position in the bow of the boat. He rubbed his hands and stared ahead. He looked at Traherne and Moona. He studied their faces and then the straining canvas that ballooned before the wind.

"We're gettin' on!" he cried. "Like as not we'll make it."

Scotty and Cocky woke. They moved stiffly

and t
shone
to wa
They

Da
reveal
which
astern
off by
a cha
waves
again

"Y
It's o
in'."

Tra
tiller a
was sw
came
southe

Har
floe a
a boat
He sh
Scotty
The s

and threw off the ice-sheathed blankets. Water shone black in the bilge. Scotty started bailing to warm himself. Byrd and the others stirred. They began making coffee on a small alcohol stove.

Daybreak over the misty shores of Banks Land revealed the yellowish waters of the open gulf into which the boat drove. The last land was left astern. Ice gathered to leeward. It was held off by the pressure of the wind. Hank predicted a change of weather. He watched the yellow waves. He suddenly rose with his peg-leg thrust against the bow thwart.

"Yon she comes!" he said. "The shift o' wind. It's out of th' east. See where th' seas are cross-in'."

Traherne assisted the Shepherd to unship the tiller and unlash the long steering oar. The boat was swung toward the ice. The wind died and then came in fitful puffs from the south. It steadied southeast. There was no sailing against it.

Hank raised a warning hand. The first of the floes appeared over the plunging bow. He got out a boat-hook and warded them away from the boat. He shouted for Traherne to lower the mast. Scotty dropped his bailing dipper and stood erect. The sail and mast came down. The light craft

swung into an icy cove. The Shepherd threw his weight on the steering oar. Hank climbed to the pack and hitched the painter around a small hummock.

The party landed, leaving Moona and Traherne in the boat. Scotty and Byrd started building a shelter from the wind which had been tempered by two thousand miles of snow and ice.

The Shepherd strode back and forth along the edge of the pack. He stopped now and then with his lips moving in prayer. Moona watched him. She whispered to Traherne, "I told thee the bear was a bad omen. See, he is worried."

"We can land the stores on the ice and walk toward the American shore. It can't be far now."

"There may be lanes that thee knowest nothing about."

"But," he cheered her by saying, "the wind may change at any hour. A two-point shift will allow us to go on with the boat. We're bound to win in any event!"

His prediction was carried out in an unexpected direction. The wind shifted and then died before advantage could be taken of it. Snow commenced falling. It seethed and hissed alongside the boat. It wrapped the ancient floes in a white mantle.

It cov
the sh
erecte

"W
no fine

Mo
oars.

He ba

The l

seized

its bla

Saul f

spite i

of the

Thro

nated

was ma

Nigh

sailors

defied

with t

alcohol

whittle

The o

brough

Moona

It covered part of the crew who were sleeping in the shelter of the half-igloo Byrd and Scotty had erected out of blocks of ice.

"We can row!" exclaimed Traherne. "There's no finer weather in the world for rowing!"

Moona called the Shepherd. She pointed to the oars. He woke the crew with vigorous thrusts. He bade them carry their blankets to the boat. The last tools were brought aboard. Traherne seized a sixteen-foot oar, thrust it out, and dipped its blade into the sea. Hank, Goodwin, and old Saul followed his example. The light craft, despite its load of stores, was soon skirting the edge of the pack and working out to open sea.

Through the downfall of snow the crew alternated at the oars. A three-mile-an-hour progress was maintained toward Herschel Island.

Night and day seemed the same. The weary sailors cursed the sea and the lack of wind. They defied the Shepherd. He vainly remonstrated with them. They boiled coffee and wasted the alcohol. They built a fire forward out of chips whittled from the centreboard well and the seats. The odour of fried pemmican came aft. Hank brought a pan to the missionary. He passed it to Moona and Traherne without tasting it.

Alternately rowing and sleeping they made progress. Hank kept a rough rule-of-thumb reckoning. He called each day's journey to the Shepherd who entered it on a fly-leaf of his Bible.

Scotty and Cocky ceased to assist at the oars. They lay in the bow with their heads pillowed on a roll of blankets. Scotty began a chant. His voice was weak. It was one verse of a hymn repeated over and over.

Traherne decided he would never forget the words to the longest day he lived.

“When th' last sigh is heaved, an' th' last tear shed,
An' th' coffin is waiting beside th' bed,
An' th' widow an' child forsake th' dead——
Th' angel of th' Lord shall lift this head.”

A period of rest from this hymn was gained when the aged Scot sank into sleep. Other hymns were sung by the weakening crew. The whaleboat became a bedlam of pain-racked men who flatly refused to row any longer.

Traherne and Moona took the oars. They alternated with Hank and the Shepherd. The drift was steadily north. Thin ice formed upon the surface of the sea. It ground against the

whale
ripped
knife

Old
in dan
herne
The sc
head r

“Ch
The
herne
stared
mission

He s
saw to
yeast
rection
air fan
downw

“A v
Old
his han
up the

“Get
come!”

Trah

whaleboat's thin planks. The slow-moving bow ripped through each night's formation like a dull knife cutting satin.

Old Seaford went mad from exposure. He was in danger of throwing himself overside when Traherne dropped an oar and seized him by the arm. The seaman struggled and then lay back with his head resting upon a pemmican tin.

"Christ!" shouted the cockney.

The Shepherd rose. He began to pray. Traherne lifted Moona's hands from the oars. He stared at her calloused palms. He watched the missionary and leaning forward kissed one swiftly.

He straightened himself and looked away. He saw to the east and north a ripple run across the yeasted surface of the sea. It came in their direction. Another followed. A breath of moist air fanned his face. Snowflakes started slanting downward.

"A wind!" he called. "Here is the wind!"

Old Hank looked over the gunwale. He capped his hands to his eyes. He rubbed them. He took up the cry and shook his mates.

"Get up!" he shouted. "A fair wind has come!"

Traherne and the Shepherd raised the mast.

They set it in the chock. They shook the ice from the canvas and unsnarled the sheet. The oars, which had been dangling from the locks, were brought inboard. The boat careened and started southward. The tiller was rigged and the handle fitted.

Old Seaford, alone of the crew, remained unaware of the turn of fortune. Scotty commenced a different hymn than the dirge he had repeated so often.

“Salvation, salvation, lift up thine eyes an’ see
Salvation, salvation, for all humanity.”

Moona went forward. She passed biscuits to the crew. She dropped a cheery word into old Seaford’s ear. He partly roused himself, peered over the gunwale, and relaxed with a weak sigh. The boat darted south. It picked up speed. The wind freshened to a light gale.

The course was held all the day and night. Ice floes showed in profusion to the westward. The sea was clear of obstructions in the east. Hank remarked about this to Traherne.

“Queer,” he called it. “This isn’t an open season an’ yet it is.”

He
chance
the pa

A sli
for tac
progres
and tal
sisted t

A y
dodged
Parts o
a floati
by the

Moo
stern s

“Lai
ice!”

The
shore.
the till
side M
loomed
to snow

The
know
matter

He explained himself by declaring that the chances were that Herschel Island was blocked by the pack ice.

A slight shifting of the wind to the south called for tacking and going about. The boat made slow progress. It was finally decided to run to the west and take chances with the ice. The Shepherd insisted that the shore should be near.

A yellow torrent surrounded the boat which dodged the heavy floes. The sea grew calm. Parts of land mud drifted by on ancient ice. Once a floating tree was sighted which had been uprooted by the spring freshets.

Moona sighted the shore. She stood on the stern seat and pointed south and west.

"Land-ho!" she exclaimed, weakly. "Land and ice!"

The crew cheered. They could not see the shore. An hour passed with Traherne leaning on the tiller handle and the Shepherd standing alongside Moona. Again, through a rift in the ice, land loomed up in the form of a mud bank which rose to snow-covered hills.

The missionary was perplexed. He did not know whether to sail west or tack east. The matter was settled when the cockney leaned over

the gunwale and scooped up a handful of water. He tasted it shrewdly. He closed one eye as he stared aft. His old face lighted up with his triumph.

"It's fresh!" he declared. "Try hit an' see! We're in th' bloomin' mouth of th' Mackenzie River. That's where we har!"

The missionary ordered Traherne to run before the southeast wind.

The sheet was loosened. Moona hitched a new purchase around the cleat. She crept forward and stood with Hank in the bow.

The whaleboat passed among ice isles that slowly turned in the great river's current. It threaded new for mationsof fresh-water floes. It worked along a barren coast. A cape was rounded. An open sea showed to the west.

Moona called attention to native tents and summer huts. A sorry-looking group of Mazekas waved spears and called hoarsely toward the boat.

"Fish-eaters!" declared the Shepherd. "They are a nomad tribe of Shamanites."

He made no attempt to put in at the village. He explained the omission to Traherne by stating that he expected to find the great north pack aground near Herschel Island. There was no

time
with

A I
They
some
weeks
skins
eyes s
voices

The
of the
raised
called

"H
The
case.

Hank
"N

two fl
Stripe
distre

The
forenc
puff o
the la
with i

time for missionary work. Winter was coming with icy breath to the barren shores.

A night passed with the crew watchful and alert. They presented the appearance of spectres out of some Arctic graveyard. None had been shaved in weeks. All had bundled themselves in the last skins and blankets aboard the whaleboat. Their eyes shown like dull jewels in deep sockets. Their voices contained a whine. Scurvy had started!

The morning revealed higher land and the first of the north pack. Traherne stared ahead. He raised a black mass at the edge of the ice. He called Moona to his side. She said, simply:

"Herschel Island. I see no whale ships there."

The missionary and Hank opened the telescope case. Both studied the land Traherne had found. Hank turned and shook his head.

"No ships," he announced, bitterly. "There's two flagpoles with a Union Jack an' th' Stars an' Stripes flyin' at half mast. That means double distress in the Arctic."

The journey to the Island consumed all of the forenoon. A gun was fired from the shore. A puff of white smoke drove the gulls winging from the landward cliffs. They circled the whaleboat with its strange crew.

Traherne held the tiller. He steered for a shingled beach where showed a crowd of natives and skin-garbed white men. He shouted to Hank in time to have the mast and sail lowered. Moona and the Shepherd sprang ashore. They advanced to meet a stockily built man who stepped from the crowd and came down the beach with a rifle slung under his arm.

"O'Kane!" exclaimed the Shepherd. "How came you here? I've been looking for you there." The missionary pointed toward the true north.

"The hell you have! Where's your schooner?"

"Wrecked off Banks Land. Crushed!"

"Did you bring any provisions?"

"None. We've only a few tins of pemmican left."

"Well, you've come to a bad place! The whale ships couldn't get to this island on account of ice conditions. Two were lost trying. Their crews are with my men. We haven't food enough to last until the middle of next month—when winter starts."

T
crew
the e
peara
"Y
a hun
seven
Christ
The
statio
showe
"W
man i
"G
won't
rifle on
Moon

CHAPTER XII

CASTAWAY

TRAHERNE heard O'Kane's announcement. He went up the beach and joined Moona and the Shepherd. The weary crew of the whaleboat followed him, surrounding the explorer, who shook his head at their appearance.

"You're in for it!" he declared. "There's over a hundred and fifty white men here and sixty or seventy natives. We're all going to starve before Christmas."

The Shepherd glanced at the on-shore whaling station and the Hudson Bay Post upon which showed the Union Jack at half mast.

"Where's the factor," he asked, "the Hudson Bay man in charge?"

"Gone to the mainland for provisions. He won't get much." O'Kane dropped the butt of his rifle on the beach and stared from the missionary to Moona. He touched his cap and shook his head.

"She shouldn't be here," he said. "There's a rough element from the whaling crews. They were driven ashore trying to get through the ice near Demarcation Point. They straggled along the coast until they reached this Island. They're a wild lot! See them."

Traherne and Moona followed O'Kane's pointing finger. Seamen and whalers and harpooners lay around a corrugated iron hut. Oaths floated upon the wind. Kanakas, Gay-Islanders, Chinese, and the scum of the San Francisco waterfront were forgathered in one ragged squad. It was evident from their clothes that they had saved little from the wreck of the ships. They paid scant concern to the crew of the whaleboat and the Shepherd. A few rose from the sand and stared boldly at Moona.

"A surly crew!" declared O'Kane. "They won't take orders from anybody. They had whisky, but that's gone. Now they're looking for more."

Traherne studied the explorer. O'Kane was masterly and alert. He had steel-blue eyes. His face was round and clean-shaven.

"Better get all your gear up the beach," he told the missionary. "There's sheet-iron at the whal-

ing s
winto

Th
order
and
levell
and
iron.
want
quest

He
facto
meeti
food
praye
the si
and g
spat

"M
law o
get re
has g
wait
is—w
ing c
consti

ing station for a shack. Build one and get ready for winter. We'll manage for provisions somehow."

The day was spent in carrying out O'Kane's orders. The whaleboat was repaired by Hank and Byrd. The site for the hut was cleared and levelled off. The Shepherd insisted on double walls and a grass packing between the sheets of rusted iron. He showed Traherne exactly what he wanted. He went among the whalers and started questioning them.

He held services that evening in the Hudson Bay factory. Natives and white men came to the meeting expecting to hear something concerning food for the winter. They joined in the songs and prayer. They waited and heard O'Kane explain the situation. He mounted beside the missionary and glanced keenly at the packed audience. He spat on the floor and snapped out:

"Men, we're going to establish a court and have law on this island. We're going to clean up and get ready for the winter. Mr. Donald, the factor, has gone to his nearest post for provisions. We'll wait for his report. I don't give a damn what it is—we must have law and order! The two whaling captains, the Shepherd here and myself, are constituting ourselves a court to sit on all cases.

Undesirable members of this colony are going to be thrown out. They will be taken to the mainland. You know what that means—with winter coming on.”

The whalers stamped out of the room. Traherne joined Moona where she had come forward to speak with the Shepherd and O’Kane.

“Better build her a single house,” O’Kane was saying. “Make it warm and strong. There’s seven or eight native women on the Island. There may be more when winter comes. Trappers and voyageurs bring their wives here. We’ll get everybody settled and take up the food problem. We should start to-morrow and go after seal and walrus for the dogs. We can live on frozen meat, if we have to.”

A week passed in preparation for the winter. Traherne and Hank, with the assistance of members of the crew, finished the large hut for the Shepherd and built a wing wherein Moona would live.

A whaleboat load of hunters and trappers was taken to the mainland by O’Kane. He sent them along the pale shore in search of game. He offered high prices for seals and bears. He counted mouths and estimated that there would be more

than
He t
eight
Do
was s
all it
that
Islan
“A
ever
got t
barre
sea is
O’
confe
capta
called
into
perat
A
forme
the l
land.
ern w
Mc
of th

than two hundred and seventy-five people to feed. He told the Shepherd that the winter would be eight months long.

Donald arrived. The outpost he had visited was scantily supplied with provisions. He brought all it could spare. He was aghast when he learned that the Shepherd's men had reached Herschel Island in a boat instead of on the schooner.

"Ah doot," he declared, "if a like situation was ever known. We're cut off from th' world. We've got to exist on th' land—an' th' sea. Th' land is barren—to th' ramparts of th' Mackenzie. Th' sea is sterile—or almost so."

O'Kane, the Shepherd, and Donald went into conference. They were joined by the two whaling captains. These seamen had little to say. They called Traherne and Hank and five whaling mates into the station. The situation was rated a desperate one.

A week later the temperature dropped. Ice formed. Winter with its grim nip closed in on the Island. Natives straggled from the mainland. A blizzard began that wrapped the northern world in a winding sheet of snow.

Moona stood one day on the outermost point of the Island. Below her the great north pack

groaned and lifted and tossed in wild phantasy. Her garments were old fur-seal skins, resewed and patched. Her boots had come from the Diomed Islands. Her hood was drawn down. She heard Traherne coming up the icy path along the cliff. He climbed to her side and stood with her. They studied the world of ice that stretched over Beaufort Sea to the Pole.

"Thee art suffering?" she asked.

"No! But some of the men are. Hank an' Scotty an' old Seaford are the worst hit. Scotty can't stomach the frozen seal meat. He says it's fit for dogs."

"I can eat it."

"And so can I. Then we have the pemmican left."

She lifted her hood. She looked at him. "The natives come to me," she said, "with little offerings. They have a way of getting things. They say that many of the *Kabalunet* will starve."

"*Kabalunet*?"

"White men."

"They're starving now—if they can't eat what is offered to them."

"Has Donald or O'Kane any flour left?"

"None! The last went some time ago. O'Kane

reache
He wa
ped.
boat.
Barro
two so
She
turnec
asked
winter
He
"Er
"I
them
last ni
He
wonde
thing
to the
Rea
mound
the H
replac
"H. B
"Do
"Hu

reached the Island without a pound of biscuits. He waited for the whale ships and they were nipped. He expected relief and we came—in a whale-boat. The passage along the shore to Point Barrow and the Yukon ports has been closed for two seasons. That's unprecedented!"

She nodded and pulled down her hood. She turned from contemplation of the north pack and asked: "Hast thee mittens and boots to last the winter?"

He held out his hands and pointed to his boots.

"Enough, I guess. Why?"

"I am making thee extra ones. I shall give them to thee very soon. The fire was almost out last night or I would have continued knitting."

He detected a shyness in her manner. He wondered at it and waited for her to say something more. They started down the trail that led to the beach.

Reaching this, he pointed out the snow-mounded huts and the tattered flag flying on the Hudson Bay Post. The Union Jack had been replaced by a white pennant bearing three initials, "H. B. C."

"Do you know what they stand for?" she asked.

"Hudson Bay Company."

"Not with the natives! The Mazekas say 'H. B. C.' means 'Here Before Christ!'"

"Was the station here before Christ, Moona?"

"Yes! The old factories were along the shore before the missionaries came. The old religion of the Mazekas and natives was here thousands of years ago. My mother taught me that. She said that witches and priests and chiefs were always with the tribes—from Puget Sound to Greenland. She told me that the Mazeka belief was the same as the faith in China and Siberia."

"It's old," admitted Traherne. "But you don't believe it's a better religion than Christianity?"

"Methinks no one knows which is the better. None will keep us from starving unless the men return with game and provisions. The whalers will murder everybody some night unless they are fed. They have threatened the Shepherd. They don't go to his meetings any more. He goes to them and preaches. They say things which are not nice to him."

"What do they say?"

"They told the Shepherd that Donald and O'Kane and I were getting extra rations. It isn't true. Thee knowest it isn't true."

"Moona," said Traherne, "you must not believe

they
starv

"I
of sh
Tr
learn
Bible

"Y
the S
you.

They
numb
plenty
from

"I
Tra
at the
quart
Arctic
down
toward

Wing

"H
better
She
whispe

they will do anything. They're sheep! They're starved and too weak to attempt an uprising."

"But there is nothing more terrible than a revolt of sheep."

Traherne started. He wondered where she had learned the quotation. It had not come from the Bible.

"You are partly right," he admitted. "I'll see the Shepherd, and have him leave the rifle with you. We built the door to your room very strong. They can't break in without losing a lot of their numbers. O'Kane is a dead-shot. Donald has plenty of ammunition left. I might get a revolver from him."

"I wouldn't shoot those poor men."

Traherne closed his lips tightly. He stared at the snow-covered shed where the whalers were quartered. Blue smoke rose straight up in the Arctic air. The sound of voices in argument came down the beach. A seaman strode out. He went toward the hut where Hank and the crew of the *Wing and Wing* were quartered.

"He means no good," said Traherne. "I'd better stop him."

She laid a mittened hand on his sleeve. "No," she whispered, "let him go in. He's only gamming."

"Gamming" was whaler and native talk for visiting. Traherne led the girl over the snow toward the landward edge of the Island where was a cove in which whale ships had wintered.

They stood and gazed at the illimitable ice pack that stretched to the cold western horizon. A clear-cut line of mountains showed at the edge of the world to the south. It marked the American Continent.

Traherne breathed deeply. He hooked his arm in the girl's. He felt her draw toward him. Suddenly she said demurely:

"Wilt thee go with me to the native village? There are dogs there. Thee should learn to drive dogs."

"I can drive them now—a little. O'Kane has been teaching me."

"But he does not have the time. There is a chief at the village—Oom-Nuck-A. He is a great man with dogs. He will teach thee."

Traherne nodded and followed the girl around the cove and toward the southwesterly part of the Island. She pointed to a group of igloos and shacks beneath a sheltering cliff.

"See, they know where to build," she said. "It is in the lee of the Island. No north or east wind

can re-
turies.
came.'

A s
from a
beame
Mazek
the fir

Moc
toward

"Th

"Here

Trak

wore,

parka

the do

drive t

He poi

"We

day a li

Trah

an invit

with T

Sudden

over the

He gl

can reach them. They have lived here for centuries. They were here when the *Kabalunet* came."

A stout native, swathed in skins, crawled out from an igloo as the dogs barked. He rose and beamed at Moona. They began talking in the Mazeka tongue. Other natives came and joined the first one.

Moona glanced around the circle. She pointed toward the largest igloo.

"The chief, Oom-Nuck-A, lives there," she said. "Here he comes."

Traherne was introduced to an aged native who wore, in addition to deerskin furs, a checked parka and a woollen cap. Moona explained about the dogs, that she wanted Traherne to learn to drive them. The chief nodded good-naturedly. He pointed to the ice pack.

"We go to-morrow," he said. "We go every day a little. You got rifle?"

Traherne thanked the native. Moona declined an invitation to visit the igloo. She started away with Traherne following close in her footprints. Suddenly she stopped and said shyly, "Thee seest over there?"

He glanced at the cliff where her gaze had fas-

tened. A black opening showed beyond a fence built of driftwood and bone.

Smoke floated from the roof of the cave. It curled up the cliff. A hag appeared and called. The call was repeated in shrill tones.

"Who is that?" asked Traherne.

"The woman Shaman of the tribe. Canst I go see her a minute?"

Traherne furrowed his brow. He nodded. The hag kept calling in loud tones.

The maid lifted her hood. She allowed it to hang down her back. Traherne from the beach saw the plaits of her dark hair. He kicked at the snow as she glanced demurely back, then followed the hag into the cave. He waited with impatience. He recalled the witch woman on the deck of the *Wing and Wing*, when the schooner lay off the Siberian coast. Moona had purchased tokens from her. She had again answered the call of ancient superstition.

Ten minutes passed. They seemed to Traherne like hours. He was sure that the hag had thrown more wood or blubber upon the fire. The smoke doubled in volume. It hid from view the opening to the cave. Chanting sounded within in a high, thin voice.

Mooc
and st
her ho
"I kep
"Ye
"Th
me."
"Ye
in ther
The
"let us
mitten
You m
"Wh
"It i
"For
She c
light-h
and rea
Bay P
"Go
"Reme
day. I
through
will sho
Trah

Moona emerged suddenly. He glanced about and stepped through the smoke. She replaced her hood and came down the snow, asking faintly, "I kept thee waiting long?"

"Yes."

"Thee seest the woman had not [expected me."

"Yes, I saw that, but you shouldn't have gone in there."

The girl dropped her eyes. "Come," she said, "let us go back to the Post. I shall have boots and mittens and a warm muffler for you very soon. You must wear the muffler, always."

"Why?"

"It is a charm."

"For what?"

She did not answer. Her manner grew gay and light-hearted. They climbed over the hummocks and reached the covered beach before the Hudson Bay Post.

"Good-bye," she said at the door of her cabin. "Remember to go hunting with the Chief every day. He will show you how they catch seals through the ice—if there are any. Perhaps you will shoot a bear."

Traherne went around the shed. He entered

the small room where the crew of the schooner lay playing cards and talking with the whaler who had come from the shore station.

Cocky glanced up from his blanket and said, eyeing the whaler: "There's going to be bloody 'ell poppin' hif we don't get more grub. There ain't enough frozen meat to last till Christmas. An' damn that kind of meat!"

"I'm going bear hunting to-morrow," Traherne said after he had removed his skin coat and mittens. "Maybe I'll get some bear meat. I'm going with chief Oom-Nuck-A."

Scotty sat erect, laying his cards on the floor.

"Th' natives," he said, craftily, "are feeding weil. It's only th' white men who are suffering. We had a wee bit o' seal to-day an' a pan o' gruel what was wormy. A Mazeka wouldn't eat it. They're living on th' fat o' th' land."

"You're blym well right!" exclaimed Cocky. "They know this bloody country—we don't!"

Hank got up from the game. He stumped to the sheet-iron stove. He opened the door and peered inside. He went to the wood-box and returned with an armful of driftwood.

"We might as well keep warm," he said, cheerfully. "Wood's plenty."

He
clasp
man f
Slo
Trahe
"Y
don't
Tho
test.
hurlec
up the
Tra
Slowly
ing b
His h
the flo
Han
until
march
out.
oath p
lowed
in the
"N
group
out, t

He closed the door and turned with his hands clasped behind. He eyed Traherne—then the man from the whale ships' crew.

Slowly one lid closed in an expressive wink. Traherne nodded and stepped to the whaler.

"You better get out of here," he said. "We don't want you around."

The seaman, a 'Frisco dock-rat, started to protest. He called upon Cocky and Scotty. He was hurled toward the wall by Traherne who followed up the blow with a double punch in the chest.

Traherne stood over the whaler. He waited. Slowly the man rose to his knees and stood, swaying back and forth. His eyes were bloodshot. His hands were raised to his chest. He spat on the floor.

Hank stumped to the door. Traherne waited until it was open. He seized the whaler and marched him across the shack. He shoved him out. Hank slammed the door shut. A lurid oath penetrated the sheet-iron walls. It was followed by a string of curses. The man slunk off in the direction of the on-shore station.

"Now," said Traherne, glancing over the group, "if there are any kickers here, they can go out, too. I can promise you that everybody on

the Island is getting a square deal. The natives are taking care of themselves, but they are also hungry."

"They're blym used to being that woiy," said the cockney.

"Yes, but they hunt and fish and even go to the mainland in search of food. We're not doing anything to help ourselves. There's five months more of this. We ought to work together—not pull apart. That whaling outfit expects to be fed without assisting in any way."

"Why don't O'Kane or somebody go to one of th' forts?" asked Scotty. "It's a verra long voyage on snowshoes, but it's been done. Fort Yukon an' Circle City would send provisions if they knew th' fix we were in."

"The plan is under consideration by the Shepherd," said Traherne. "Blizzards may block any land party—particularly if they are bringing provisions. They couldn't carry enough."

The seamen suggested other ways of getting assistance to the Island. None of the ideas seemed practical. Hank stumped around the cabin and sat down on the woodbox near the stove.

"This reminds me," he said, "of an experience I had on Herald Island, which is off th' coast of

Siber
ried t
a hut
We s
We h
Th
pipe.
burni
"T
iron,
other.
all th'
They
with
outsid
of th'
They
shiver
"W
pause
"O
ups a
other
They'
cold v
Tra

Siberia. I was marooned there when th' ice carried th' old whaler, *Karluk*, out to sea. There was a hut like this for three of us to live all winter in. We speared seal an' caught fish through th' ice. We had some provisions, but not much."

The mate paused and filled his cord-wrapped pipe. He opened the stove door and lifted out a burning stick. Between puffs he continued:

"Th' shack we wintered in was made of sheet-iron, like this. Along comes a bear. Then another. We barricades th' door an' battens down all th' windows—which was three. Then we waits. They were th' biggest bears I ever saw—all yellow with long teeth. They ate th' seals we'd stored outside. Then they started chewin' on th' corners of th' shack. I can hear their teeth scrapin' yet. They clawed an' scratched th' iron. It sent th' shivers through me."

"What 'appened?" asked Cocky as the mate paused and stared at his pipe bowl.

"Oh, they went away in th' spring! But I ups an' says then an' there I'd never spend another winter in a sheet-iron hut with bears around. They'll drive you mad with their scratchin' on th' cold walls."

Traherne glanced apprehensively around the

cabin. The door opened and the Shepherd strode in. He shook off the snow and said:

"O'Kane's going to leave for Fort Yukon tonight. It's our one chance, men. The Lord has seen fit to preserve us so far. We're to hold services in the whaling station at six. I want you all there."

Traherne told of throwing out the whaler. The missionary shook his head. He stroked his yellow beard with a thoughtful motion.

"There will be trouble over that," he mused, "but you did right. Every man is getting an equal ration. God knows it's little enough."

"This passage to Fort Yukon," asked Traherne. "Is it charted?"

"Partly so, lad. It's been made in the spring. O'Kane has to go in the dead of winter. He may never get there. Then, if he does, there is little chance of the miners and trappers bringing anything back to us. The way is hard and the road is long."

Traherne closed his eyes and tried to recall a map of the American Continent. He remembered that Hank had one and got it from the rude chest in the corner. He spread it out over a table. The seamen gathered about him.

"I
herd.
Coul
"C
miles
don't
Th
by p
Islan
tiani
whale
Th
upon
O'Ka
situat
He fir
Mc
walke
who v
"T
five d
"T
"T
O'Ka
"I
"T

"I have an idea," he said, glancing at the Shepherd. "There's a reindeer station at Colville. Couldn't reindeer be driven overland?"

"Colville is too far from here. It's one hundred miles farther than the bend of the Yukon. I don't believe it could be done."

The meeting in the whaling station was attended by practically all of the white men on Herschel Island. Among them was a sprinkling of Christianized natives, Kanakas and Chinese from the whalers' crews.

The Shepherd mounted a platform and called upon the castaways to have patience. He told of O'Kane leaving for Fort Yukon. He compared the situation to the famine which was lifted in Egypt. He finished with a short prayer of thanksgiving.

Moona led Traherne from the station. She walked with him through the scowling whalers who were gathered about O'Kane's sledge.

"Thee seest the dogs?" she asked, pointing to five dogs loaned by Chief Oom-Nuck-A.

"They look thin and savage."

"They're the Chief's best. Do you think O'Kane can get to Fort Yukon with them?"

"I don't."

"Then what shall we do? Thee knowest best."

The whalers will kill everybody, or take all the stores. They will not wait for O'Kane to come back."

Traherne had heard of cannibalism in the Arctic. He shuddered and drew Moona to the door of her hut.

"Did you get the rifle from the Shepherd?" he queried.

"Not yet."

He bade her wait. He rounded the shed and entered the cabin. The Shepherd's stores were behind the stove in a chest. He reached and found the rifle and two boxes of ammunition.

"Take these," he said to her, as he hurried back. "Keep the gun loaded and your door barred at night. I'll see Donald and get another rifle in the morning. I want to use it when I go hunting with Chief Oom-Nuck-A."

"Wait," she said, disappearing into the shed. He heard her strike a light. The door opened. She held out a knitted muffler. Tassels were on the ends. Beads were worked in a design which he could not distinguish in the half light.

"For you," said she. "Wear it always. I'll give you the boots and mittens as soon as they are finished."

He
the of
They
taking
"W
out of
long,
"W
ought
A
tighte
trips
went t
sons.
snows
tireles
The
of bea
compl
heated
and th
ginnin
Tra
that M
her sk
She s

He went away and into the cabin. Cocky and the others of the crew straggled through the door. They stamped their feet about the stove before taking off their skin coats.

"Well, he's gone!" said Hank. "O'Kane went out on th' ice. I wish him luck, lads. But it's a long, long ways."

"We'll wait five weeks," Traherne said. "We ought to hear from him in that time."

A month passed with winter fastening its grip tighter about Herschel Island. Traherne made trips with the Chief out over the pack. Once he went to the American shore with two of the Chief's sons. He learned the way of dogs and how to use snowshoes without tripping up. He was almost tireless, for he had his youth to call upon.

The old men in the shed were gladdened by gifts of bear steaks and seals' livers. They had ceased complaining. They fell into a lethargy. The heated interior of the shed, the lack of exercise, and the constant threats from the whalers, were beginning to be felt.

Traherne kept the woodbox full. He saw to it that Moona received every attention. He brought her skins of fox and ermine and once a wolverine. She sewed these into mittens and vests. Her de-

mure position before the stove, with her skin-needle plying nimbly, was a picture he retained on his long trips with the Chief.

At times he found her in the native village, and once at the entrance of the witch's cave. They climbed the rocks and searched the north pack for some glimpse of bears. A cry would bring the native hunters out of their igloos. Donald was a dead shot with a rifle. He and the Shepherd hunted together. Their luck was not good, for all wild things had learned to shun the drifting smoke from the Island.

A blizzard was followed by a cold spell where the spirit thermometer registered fifty degrees below zero for more than a week. The last of the gruel was served to the men. The Chief reported that his people were starving. Little remained save frozen seal, whose flesh was tough and rancid.

"Hit's hall hup with hus!" exclaimed the cockney to Traherne and the Shepherd. "Where's O'Kane? Where's th' bleedin' grub you promised? What's goin' to stop th' whalers from murderin' hus in hour sleep?"

The seaman's vehemency showed that he was not yet starved.

"The Lord will provide," said the missionary,

feebly.
sions."

The
cedent

The
broker
the Sh
spoke
were a

The
tibles
Island

Sno
spent
wande
with li
meat l
or thro
the cal
meal.

away
dogs w

"An
quarte

She
went c

feebly. "O'Kane will come with help and provisions."

The winter, according to Donald, was unprecedented. He had given up trying to hunt.

The whaling captains reported that scurvy had broken out in the whaling station. Traherne and the Shepherd visited the seamen's quarters. They spoke to the men who would listen to them. They were answered with curses.

The blizzard was followed by a fall of ice particles which rounded off the sharp angles of the Island and blotted out all view of the frozen world.

Snow-locked and without food, the days were spent in idleness. Traherne grew thin. He wandered over the ice. He returned to Moona with little to show for his trips. A few scraps of meat kept her alive. A seal meant food for two or three days. It was divided with the crew in the cabin. A bird or an Arctic hare served for a meal. Once Traherne shot a bear, but it lumbered away through the misty snow and fought off the dogs which followed it.

"Another month," he told Moona, "we'll be on quarter rations. Could you live on that?"

She glanced at the muffler around his neck and went on with her sewing.

"I'll go see the Shaman," she said between stitches. "I'll ask her when O'Kane is coming."

"Nonsense!"

"I'll go to-night," she insisted. "I'll tell thee what she says in the morning."

The Shaman's prediction was Delphic. "O'Kane will come when his dogs come," announced Moona the next morning as Traherne carried the wood in for her.

Again he exclaimed, "Nonsense!" but the witch's prophecy was fulfilled in a measure.

Traherne had gone out on the ice between the Island and the American Continent. He was watching at a hair seal's hole when he heard a shot from the direction of the native village.

Gathering up his rifle, he plowed over the snow and climbed the southwest point of the Island near the village. The shot had come from the Chief's gun. The Eskimo stood before his igloo, pointing to the snow. A dog crawled on its stomach. It whined and lay still. It came on with mute yes.

"Mine!" exclaimed Oom-Nuck-A.

Traherne laid down his rifle and approached the animal. He saw a sealskin poke tied to its neck,

close
by the
Ope
sheet

Don
Imposs
cabins
unless

Tra
The w
leered
note.

"Yo
Tra
the Cl
der.

"Yo
guttur

"Iv

"An
most d

He
whalin

close under the ears, where it could not be reached by the dog's teeth.

Opening this poke he read, scrawled upon a sheet of note-book paper:

DONALD: Am snow-bound at Sixteen-mile Creek. Impossible to advance to Fort Yukon. Only two burnt cabins here and no provisions. Shall starve, myself, unless blizzards cease. God be with you. O'KANE.

Traherne turned. A step crunched at his side. The whaler whom he had thrown out of the shack leered at him. A mittened hand reached for the note.

"You heard from O'Kane?" he snarled.

Traherne pocketed the note and turned toward the Chief. He felt the man's breath on his shoulder.

"You got word from O'Kane?" was repeated gutturally.

"I've a note for Donald!" exclaimed Traherne.

"And it's bad news! Look at that dog. Almost dead! I'll go tell the men what I saw."

He started over the snow toward the on-shore whaling station. Traherne raised his rifle. He

drew a sight upon the whaler's form. He threw off his mitten to press the trigger.

The Chief struck the gun up.

"No kill man, now," he said. "Why kill now? He die pretty soon. We all die."

M asked
"No
He
glance
and D
whalin
plain C
Com
"Th
always
She
her ha
herd a
I have
trouble
"Th

hrew

ow?

CHAPTER XIII

STARVATION

MOONA heard the news of O'Kane's plight in silence. She glanced at Traherne, and then went on with her sewing. She asked him finally:

"Now you believe in the Shaman?"

He strode across the floor of the room and glanced out of a frosted window. The Shepherd and Donald were standing before the on-shore whaling station. They were attempting to explain O'Kane's note to the famished whalers.

Coming back from the window Traherne said:

"The witch only guessed about the dog. Dogs always come back—if they can."

She rose from her stool and stood at his side, her hand touching his sleeve. "Go join the Shepherd and Donald," she said. "Take thy rifle. I have mine. It's loaded. The men may give trouble to-night."

"They're bound to! Everything is lost—to

them. They were counting on O'Kane. He being snowbound, there is no hope save hunting and fishing. I'm going to start in and see if I can store up a supply of meat over and above our needs. There is some pemmican left."

"The Shepherd told me about it. He is keeping it for the last resort. Mr. O'Kane took two cans with him. The men don't know."

"They have mentioned it. They claim Donald and the Shepherd are holding out provisions. They're going to demand it within a few hours."

"Whatever happens," she whispered, "I will do what thee tells me."

He paused in the doorway. "Lock it," he said, pointing to the key and bolt. "Keep it locked until I come back. Don't let anybody in but the Shepherd."

He heard the door softly close and then the bolt thrown. He drew the muffler close around his neck and slung the rifle under his arm.

Donald and the Shepherd were loudly expostulating with three of the whaling crew. The windows of the on-shore station were lined with evil faces.

Traherne stood back from the five men and lightly played with his rifle. He glanced now

and
about
stret
movi
faint
a hor
Th
agita
herd
"V
"T
Bols
and
is—
Th
He r
the v
Th
the c
the c
had r
Tr
tails.
to h
about
to Ha

and then around the frozen shore. He swung about and stared at the great north pack that stretched to the continent. No fox or bird or moving thing disturbed its rough surface. The faint light that sifted through the clouds was from a horizon-down sun. It was midday in the Arctic.

The voices of the five men stopped. The three agitators went back into the station. The Shepherd and Donald came over the snow.

"What are they going to do?" asked Traherne.

"Talk," said Donald. "They're worse than Bolsheviki. If I could get them to work and hunt and fish we'd be better off—all around. As it is——"

The factor's voice ended in a husky whisper. He rubbed his mittens together and glared toward the windows of the whaling station.

The Shepherd bowed his head and went toward the cabin. Traherne followed him. Cocky and the crew were sleeping around the stove. They had not yet heard the news of O'Kane's failure.

Traherne woke them and related the full details. He counselled cheerfulness as the best answer to hunger. He told of the seal holes scattered about the Island. "We'll live through it," he said to Hank who had started filling the stove with wood.

The mate slammed the door shut and shivered. He counted the seamen on the floor, then gazed at the windows. He crossed his peg-leg with his up-standing good one and declared through his gray-ing beard:

"Hell, ain't I told you about them bears on Herald Island! They tried to eat me, leg and all. I fooled them! I'll fool these whalers with their cry of starvation. We'll fight, we will! We'll let Donald an' th' Shepherd here ration out what we get. When it's gone we'll eat th' natives. They're tough, but we can do it."

Cocky tried to climb to his feet. He fell back on his blanket. He groaned and pointed to sores on his wrists.

"Scurvy," he said, weakly.

"Lack of exercise!" exclaimed Traherne. "If you would go outdoors for an hour a day, you wouldn't have those marks."

The cockney canted his head and listened. He pointed a shaking finger toward the sheet-iron pipe which extended through the roof.

"Wind," he whined. "Wind in th' Arctic. I'd freeze hif I went hout of this place."

The Shepherd opened his Bible and began reading from the Psalms. Traherne bent his head in

thou
after
port
Post.
even
"T
room
attac
store
Th
unde
the c
stare
Th
had
surr
mad
pose
Post
D
for t
ing
this
of t
A c
stre

thought at the majesty of the words. He heard, after the missionary finished reading, a sharp report from the direction of the Hudson Bay Post. It was followed by more shots—spaced evenly.

“Trouble!” he exclaimed, leaping across the room and snatching his rifle. “The whalers have attacked Donald! They are after the remaining stores!”

The Shepherd picked up a cap, tucked his Bible under his arm, and followed Traherne out through the door. They stood ankle deep in the snow and stared toward the Hudson Bay Post.

The whalers, to the number of thirty or forty, had rushed from the on-shore whaling station and surrounded the Hudson Bay Post. They were maddened by inaction and hunger. Their purpose was to get the few stores remaining in the Post.

Donald and two loyal natives had been prepared for the attack. A lurid light flamed from a burning shed under the Island’s cliff. By the light of this the factor was picking off the more aggressive of the whalers. Three or four lay upon the snow. A crimson splotch showed where a Kanaka was stretched flat with both arms extended.

The Shepherd, despite Traherne's shout, started toward the whalers. He held out a warning hand. He called upon them to return to their station. His aged voice rang through the frosty air.

Traherne cocked his rifle. He let it swing under his arm. He had learned to use it in seal hunting. He could not well miss the dancing marks seen in the glow from the crackling flames.

A maddened and wounded whaler appeared at the back of the Hudson Bay Post. He shouted to his followers. A score sprang from behind snow mounds and sheds. They came running toward the missionary. They surrounded him. He raised the Bible and commenced praying. He called on them in the name of the Lord.

He was felled by a blow from a club. Rising with a rebound he forgot his teachings. Two-fisted and agile, he plowed through the squad and found the man who had struck him, wound his arms about the whaler, raised and tossed him over his shoulder.

Traherne dropped to one knee. He fired low into the snarling mass of men. He saw them scatter, leaving the Shepherd standing alone. They rallied near the whaling station and came running toward the cabin and the wing where Moona was quar-

tered
unde
Ba
open
hook
"I
He
coile
it cr
Moo
the s
again
rifle
A
dang
reach
"
then
H
He t
ing
surg
wer
slip
"Ar
I'll

tered, shouting, "The food's there! It's hidden under the floor!"

Backing step by step, Traherne passed the half-open door where Hank stood on guard with a boat-hook's point extended toward any chance aggressor.

"Hold them out!" said Traherne.

He dodged around the corner of the cabin, recoiled, grasped the rifle by the barrel, and brought it crashing through the guard of a skulker near Moona's door. The man went down, face first, on the snow. Traherne leaped his body and backed against the entrance to the hut. He cocked the rifle and, holding it at his hip, waited.

A low voice appealed to him to come in out of danger. The door opened to a crack. Moona reached out.

"Wait," said Traherne, "until I stop a few of them."

He fired at a shadowy form. Another appeared. He fired again. There sounded the far-off crackling of Donald's rifle. A concerted rush of whalers surged around the cabin. Traherne saw that they were dazed and weak. He fired the last cartridge, slipped through the open door, and said tersely, "Another clip of bullets, Moona. Get it for me. I'll hold them back!"

She glided into the shadows. He reached out, pointed the rifle aggressively, and saw a spade-pointed harpoon come hurtling in his direction. It missed. It stuck quivering in the panel of the door.

Traherne clubbed the rifle and leaped out upon the snow. He charged the harpooner who had thrown the weapon. A weak cry came from the Kanaka. He turned and fled toward the whaling station. Others of the whalers followed him. They dragged their wounded inside the building and barred the door. They cursed Donald and the Shepherd through the windows. They were silent as Traherne appeared, after obtaining the cartridges from Moona, and reloading the rifle.

"Coom out!" shouted the factor who was doubly armed with revolver and a magazine shotgun. "Coom out, ye scum!"

The Shepherd glanced at the alert poise of Traherne. He boldly went to the door.

"Send two men out!" he demanded. "Ye have sinned this day beyond understanding."

The whalers conferred. Two came down the single step and slouched toward Donald. Traherne covered them. Hank appeared with his boatbook. He was backed up by Saul and Byrd.

"L
"The
They
He
Trah
"T
"He
Th
of th
tion.
"Ye
requi
Post.
noo
from
Th
porte
meet
two
attac
after
vigor
tain
the
resto
H

"Listen, men," said the factor, metallicly. "There's been blood spilled, and it's yer own. They'll be more if ye want it. We're ready!"

He paused, shifted his shotgun, and pointed to Traherne.

"That lad could have killed ye all," he said. "He didn't try. Now what d'ye want?"

The two whalers snarled. They stated that ten of their number were dying of scurvy and starvation. Donald listened, then said to the Shepherd, "Ye go ascertain what medical attendance they require. Tell them Ah have bandages in th' Post. They're verra welcome to them. Ah hae noo doot more be dying of gunshot wounds than from lack o' food. An' weil do they deserve it."

The missionary made his investigation. He reported the whalers for the most part cowed. A meeting was called at the Hudson Bay Post. The two whaling captains, who had taken no part in the attack, represented their men. It was agreed, after argument, that plans should be made for a vigorous hunt on the ice and shore in order to obtain seals or bears. Traherne offered to attempt the overland journey to Fort Yukon if peace was restored and the whalers quieted down.

He insisted, as Donald showed interest in the

undertaking, that the native chief had predicted a cessation of the blizzards and clear, cold weather over January and February.

"It can be done in four weeks—going and coming," he added. "I can do it! I've had training with dogs and snowshoes. There's nobody else to try."

The Shepherd left the conference. He attended to the wounded men in the whaling station. He worked among them by word and deed and gained some converts. Five agreed to venture with the natives and Traherne in search of seals.

The hunting started, and, owing to the clearness of the Arctic atmosphere, brought good results. Three bear, seventeen seals, and a number of foxes were shot. These, added to the stores on hand, were sufficient to provision the Island for two weeks. The Chief declared, however, that for a long time all wild things would keep away.

"Plenty shoot," he said to Traherne. "No come now for long time."

A light snow descended during the first week of January. The Shepherd read the services over two whalers who had died from gunshot wounds and their wasted condition. Two crosses were added to the little graveyard on the northernmost

point
down

The
by Tr
that t
for C
agree

"Y
Fort
deer.

not c

"W

Tra
him p
Hudso
snows
last of
and a
save f

"H
the ex
food

Tra
He di
station
Moon

point of the Island. The whaling crews settled down to the long, brooding wait for succour.

The missionary watched the preparations made by Traherne for the sledge journey. He suggested that two should go, and offered to start, himself, for Colville. Donald was consulted. The Scot agreed after inspecting the Chief's dogs.

"Ye both go," he said. "Traherne can try for Fort Yukon. Ye can try for Colville, an' th' reindeer. Ye hae picked th' hardest trail. Ye may not come back."

"With God's help I will," said the missionary.

Traherne hurried to the Mazeka chief and made him promise to bring ten of the hardiest dogs to the Hudson Bay Post. Donald had sledges and spare snowshoes. The two outfits were packed with the last of the pemmican, a few biscuits, alcohol cubes, and a stove for making tea. Little else was added save frozen fish and seal for the dogs.

"He travels th' fastest who travels light," said the experienced Scot. "Ye can eat the dogs, if th' food gives out."

Traherne assisted Donald to lash the sledges. He drew them in the shelter of the fur-trading station, placed a native on watch, and hurried to Moona. He met the Shepherd stalking from the

hut. The old man's manner was preoccupied. He carried his Bible under his fur-coated sleeve.

Moona sat with her sewing scattered around her. She glanced up at Traherne. He blinked at the light and wondered what had happened to her eyes. He saw a tear start. She sighed profoundly.

"Thee art going to leave me?" she asked, solemnly. "Thee should stay."

"But we'll all starve! I'm going to try and rescue O'Kane from Sixteen-mile Creek. He's at the burnt cabins. He can go on with me to Circle City or Fort Yukon."

The seriousness of his manner was reflected in his garb. Donald had furnished a skin vest, a heavy parka, and new trousers which were tucked into Mazeka boots. His mittens hung from his neck. He wore a fur-seal cap over his head. His neck was muffled in the scarf she had given him.

She glanced at this, then rose, saying: "The Shepherd was here. He just left."

"I met him. He is going to try and reach Colville—where the reindeer station is located. It's a harder trip than mine. It's farther, for one thing. It's over the coast ranges."

"I know," she said, vaguely. "He can never do it. The natives say he will lie down and die."

She
right k
Abstra
then g
"TH
startin
goes."
Tra
"W
She
do it.
"TH
"H
"Bu
ise?"
She
hand.
"I h
him.
to hur
now,"
Tra
could
stood
by th
withir

She sighed, glancing down her long lashes. Her right boot moved the articles she had been sewing. Abstractedly she arranged them into a little pile, then gazed upward.

"The Shepherd," she whispered, with more tears starting, "has asked me to marry him before he goes."

Traherne closed his fingers.

"What did you tell him?" he asked.

She started sobbing. "I told him I would not do it. I told him I did not love him."

"Then what did he say?"

"He said I was promised to him."

"But you don't have to keep that kind of promise?"

She rubbed her eyes with the back of her right hand.

"I hate to break a promise. But I can't marry him. I can't bear the thought of it. And yet I hate to hurt him, he has been so kind. I am eighteen, now," rising on her toes, "I can choose for myself."

Traherne held himself from her. The Shepherd could probably force the girl into marriage. He stood high with Donald and was at least respected by the whalers. There was no other minister within hundreds of miles.

"Do you want to wait," he asked, "until I come back from Fort Yukon? Perhaps I won't come back. Perhaps things will turn out badly. Then it doesn't matter, as far as I'm concerned."

"I never told thee I loved thee."

Traherne laughed boyishly. "Don't tell me," he said. "Just let things take care of themselves. Put the Shepherd off. Tell him you will consider the proposal and decide when he returns."

"He will never return!" she declared. "I don't want him to! The Shaman says he won't come back. She says his Christian belief will not avail him in the least."

The girl's eyes smouldered. Then swiftly her expression changed to one of demureness.

"I'll do what thee thinkest best," she said, pressing him toward the door. "Go now and make ready for the trip. Leave me to think."

He kissed her hand and was gone. He found the Shepherd at the Hudson Bay Post. There, over a smoky oil lamp, Donald explained the two trails. They converged for a certain distance which he traced for them on a map. He told of the ice conditions on the continent. He pointed out spots where there might be caches of frozen meats.

"Ah hae noo doot," he finished, "one of ye two

will make slightly tl

Traherne shone a beard was ter had a his should

"We'll til mornin

will take Traherne finished, t where Ha

Wing with

Cocky their touc moss had Island. the nativ

when take "Lie do off your c won't bot to cross t been stud ice an' sn

will make it. 'Tis a gamble which one. Ah favour slightly th' lad's chances."

Traherne glanced at the missionary. There shone a high light in his great brown eyes. His beard was frosting rapidly. The trials of the winter had aged him. His lips moved as he squared his shoulders and towered over the table.

"We'll pray," he said. "Then we will sleep until morning. A fresh start, with God's blessing, will take us far in this Barren Land."

Traherne waited until the simple prayer was finished, then left the station and went to the cabin where Hank was amusing the crew of the *Wing and Wing* with a story of the South Seas.

Cocky and two others had nearly recovered from their touch of scurvy. Green lichens and Arctic moss had been obtained from the rocks of the Island. These had been prepared by Seaford in the native manner. They arrested the disease when taken with lime juice.

"Lie down," said Hank to Traherne. "Take off your outer clothes an' get a bit o' sleep. We won't bother you. You need sleep if you're going to cross th' wickedest passage in th' north. I've been studyin' it from th' chart. It's a desert of ice an' snow an' blizzards."

Traherne threw off his parka and curled up near the stove.

He awoke and stared sleepily about the room. The seamen were silent in a deep slumber that indicated weakened bodies.

He put on his coat, filled the stove with wood, took up his rifle, and stepped out into the frosty air. It was twilight—a gray darkness which lasted from November until late in March. The stars did not shine. The great north pack loomed to the southward like a Kingdom of Ice.

He trailed along the shore. He came to the place where the sledges were arranged under the overhang of the Hudson Bay Post. Upon one was strapped a Bible and pole. Upon the other was a sleeping-bag which Donald had added after lashing the stores.

Traherne looked around for the native whom he had left on guard. He called, but received no answer. He shifted his sledge with a feeling that it had been disturbed. He went on along the shore line and stood upon a high pinnacle of ice.

The frozen world gave forth no sound. He breathed the nipping air and felt it burn in his lungs. The temperature was well below forty degrees.

Suddenly he turned and stared at the Hudson

T
Bay Po
shadow
disappea

“Moo
“What i

He he
ing stati
No light

A dog
village.

started a
Moona h
explained

He rea
the gray
dog cam
It backe

He gla
wandere
spiralling
sounded.
the black

He cli
listened.
rifle at t
through

Bay Post. A shadow moved behind it. The shadow went on toward the native village. It disappeared between a snow mound and the cliff.

"Moona!" exclaimed Traherne, lifting his rifle. "What is she doing out this early?"

He hesitated. The blue smoke from the whaling station and the cabin rose straight up in the air. No light shone from any of the frosted windows.

A dog howled dolefully in the direction of the village. Traherne slung his rifle under his arm and started along the ice. He intended seeing where Moona had gone. Her actions would have to be explained.

He reached the first igloo. Others showed in the gray light. No smoke rose from them. A lean dog came over the snow and sniffed at his boots. It backed, snarling, as he attempted to pat it.

He glanced about the village, and as his eyes wandered from frozen sea to cliff he saw smoke spiralling from the witch's cave. Chanting voices sounded. A pale yellow light showed and marked the black opening.

He climbed the snowy slope, hesitated, and listened. He heard the witch's voice. He set his rifle at the side of the entrance and tiptoed in through the suffocating smoke.

A deer skin was slowly brushed aside by his reaching hand. He strained his eyes to view the interior of the cave. A fire burned on a stone altar shaped like a frog. Flames curled and leaped upward from toasting blubber. A stench filled the place.

Out of the smoke there appeared an almost naked woman. She stretched her arms toward the roof of the cavern. Her hair was long, black, and matted. Her cheek bones tented parchment-like skin. Her teeth were yellow and sharp. Her mouth gaped. She commenced chanting an Eskimo dirge.

Ugly and repellent as was the hag, Traherne was drawn by the witchery of her chant. He took one step nearer, and saw Moona crouching against the wall. The girl had covered her face with her brown hands and was peering through her fingers.

The view faded as the light died. It came again. The hag's face grew incandescent. Her bright tongue darted from her mouth. She bent back and began the dance of the Shaman.

Wild were her arms and voice. She circled the frog-shaped altar and dipped before the maid. She straightened up and leaned into the air. Her tones changed to piercing shrieks which made the

T
walls of
the noise
Trahe
Echoes
cavern.
solemn,
"Peop
"People
and Thl
She w
Shadows
cave. T
shadows
reached
thrust h
a small r
Holdi
"Grea
Sha-heh
red bird
calling.
ga-ne-e-
Trahe
from hi
witch's
stone.

walls of the grotto ring. The air was filled with the noise of wheeling bats.

Traherne covered his ears with his hands. Echoes and mocking laughter rolled from the cavern. The notes descended the octaves to solemn, dirge-like supplication.

"People of the Tynne Folk," said the witch. "People of the Bear and Otter and Fox—Swanees and Thlingets and Siwash—come hear my song."

She writhed and squirmed while the girl moaned. Shadows seemed to troop from the back of the cave. The altar light flared up and drove the shadows back. They came again. The sorceress reached her skinny arms and pleaded. Then she thrust her talons deep within the fire and drew out a small red stone.

Holding this token aloft she chanted:

"Great Spirit of Great Waters! Sha-hehe! Sha-hehe! Come hear my prayer. Come, for the red bird and the crow and the goosh-ta-kah are calling. Great Spirit, charm has been given to Kaga-ne-e-thlot. Come, grant my prayer."

Traherne breathed tensely and lowered his hands from his ears. He leaned farther forward. The witch's fingers were burning from the heat of the stone. She started the wild dance of the Shaman-

ites. Faster and faster it grew. She leaped over the flames and circled them. She dipped to the floor of the cave and pressed her forehead to the dirt. She rose. She squirmed, and floated on the heated air. She suddenly stood rigid as a bar of steel and called:

"Sha-hehe! Sha-hehe! Thou hast come! Thou hast granted my prayer. The false prophet will go over the Barren Land to the place of dead things. He will fall and crawl and lie down. He will eat snow and ice. He will starve and die! The gray wolves and the carrion birds will come and pick his bones. He dies. He dies in the Barren Land. Thou hast said he dies!"

"And what of the brave voyageur?" asked the trembling girl.

The Shaman reached and lifted a handful of square-cut blubber from the floor of the cave. She tossed it on the fire, which leaped and blazed.

The witch peered into the flames. Her eyes glowed. She rose, crying:

"The young and brave voyageur shall pass over the Barren Land like the wild heron. He shall reach the City of Gold. He shall come back with meat and flour. It is written, daughter of the Eskimo!"

T
Trahe
threw he
his rifle,

Moon
passed a
the slop
like a sh

Trahe
ful at fi
frosted
puzzled

She r
upon th
visions.

"He s

She v
heard h
pistol.

Dona
way of
two nat

"Goo

"Are ye

"I'm
dogs an

Traherne backed from the cave as the witch threw herself across a sodden bear skin, and seizing his rifle, hurried to the igloos of the village.

Moona appeared at the entrance of the cave, passed a hand dizzily over her forehead, came down the slope, and turned toward the east. She moved like a shadow among shadows.

Traherne followed her. He was silent and careful at first, but his footsteps finally rang on the frosted surface. She did not glance back, which puzzled him.

She reached the two sleds. Her gaze rested upon the one with the Bible lashed over the provisions. He heard her cry aloud:

“He shall not come back!”

She vanished with running footsteps. Traherne heard her door slam. It sounded like a report of a pistol. He studied the sledges.

Donald, muffled in furs, appeared at the doorway of the Hudson Bay Post. Behind him were two native storekeepers.

“Good morning!” he said with frosty breath. “Are ye ready to start?”

“I’m ready,” said Traherne. “Send for the dogs and call the Shepherd.”

CHAPTER XIV

THE BARREN ISLAND

THE entire population of Herschel Island came down to the shore to watch the voyagers start for the south.

The natives brought their children and the dogs which were left. The Chief had selected the ten best animals from his scanty stock. They stood lashed to the two sledges, chewing the lines and snarling the harness.

Hank and Scotty bade good-bye to the Shepherd and Traherne. The crew of the *Wing and Wing* stood aloof from the whaling men. No truce had been declared.

Donald saw to the lashings and delivered his last instructions. He pointed southward at the gray horizon.

"We'll wait," he said to both voyagers. "We'll hang on until we starve. Ah hae noo doot one of ye will be back."

The scanty stock of frozen meat at the whaling

T
station
three w
pected t
come du
Moon
hands a
herne.
gotten t
as he pa
upon th
instilled
knowled
Colville
over the
Donal
cheered
hand, t
Moona,
the ice.
The
from the
great n
and lay
them g
Trahe
smooth

station was sufficient to feed the population for three weeks. Some, but not much, meat was expected to be gained from the sea. Starvation would come during March or April unless relief arrived.

Moona stood with the Shepherd. He shook hands and prayed over her. She turned to Traherne. He eyed her keenly. He had not forgotten the scene in the witch's cave. He wondered as he parted from her what bearing it would have upon the trip. There had been a presentiment instilled in his mind that the sorceress had some knowledge concerning the ice conditions on the Colville trail. Perhaps many men had perished over the route the Shepherd had selected.

Donald fired a rifle. The whalers and natives cheered weakly. Traherne raised his mittened hand, touched his cap, smiled reassuringly at Moona, and dragged the unwilling lead dog on to the ice.

The Shepherd followed. They worked away from the shore formation and struck out upon the great north pack. The dogs fought and snarled and lay down. They had to be lashed to make them go on.

Traherne turned and glanced back as he reached smoother ice. The island rose from the frozen

world like a dome of snow. A thin wreath of smoke marked the Hudson Bay Station. A flag flew from this. It was a tattered British ensign, upside down.

The way was crossed with fissures and ridges which it was necessary to lead the dogs around. The sledges were heavy and none of the runners smoothed by actual work.

The first day's journey, according to the Shepherd's calculations, was not more than twelve miles. Traherne built an igloo and unpacked the seal meat and stove from his sledge. He saw the missionary remove the great Bible and carry it into the shelter. They fed the wolfish dogs, drove them outside, and lay down within the glow of a tiny alcohol stove.

"Forty-five below," said the Shepherd. "Ye stand it well, lad."

Traherne finished making the tea, placed the meat over the flame, watched it frying and answered:

"To-morrow will be lower. There is no wind at all. The Chief told me that we should gain what time we could during the calms. He said that under no circumstances should we venture out in a blizzard. That's the way they all go."

7
"Yes!
from fro
with dry
rememb

The t
days of
and som
frozen to

The I
ice like
the over

"For
pointing
together

Trahe
missiona
old mar
was long
projectio

The
called th
pale Arc
talline s
had fled
of the M
from the

“Yes! I recall a number who died in the north from frost bite. Keep your Mazeka boots filled with dry moss. Don’t expose your fingers. And remember, lad, to trust in the Lord.”

The two men reached the continent after five days of struggling. They dragged the weary dogs and somewhat lightened sledges up the first of the frozen tundra. They both glanced back.

The Island lifted within the far-flung ocean of ice like a tiny hummock. One black spot showed the overhang of a cliff on the southern side.

“Forward!” said the missionary, turning and pointing to the trail. “We go one day’s journey together, lad, and then we separate.”

Traherne dragged on his sled and watched the missionary packing the snow ahead of the dogs. The old man’s breath filled the Arctic air. His stride was long. His keen brown eyes searched out each projection. He tested the tundra with a long pole.

The world they were entering was fittingly called the Barren Land. It stretched from the pale Arctic shore to the Yukon. Across its crystalline surface nothing moved. All animal life had fled to the southward or along the ramparts of the Mackenzie River where there was shelter from the Arctic blizzards.

River and stream and swamp were filled to the same dead level. The sky was gray, with now and then a pale flush along the southern horizon that marked the position of the sun below the edge of the world.

The Shepherd turned after a six hours' struggle and said to Traherne:

"We'll build an igloo here and camp. Tomorrow I leave you and go west. The trail divides where ye see that hill. Ye take one side—I, the other."

Later, he said in the igloo as he closed the Bible:

"Lad, this land is like the desert—it reminds me of mankind without God."

"It's hell!" admitted Traherne. "Hell on earth!"

Morning, by both watches, revealed a cloudy sky and swirling puffs of snow.

Traherne started first. He reached the divide where the trails separated. It was marked by a stake and an Eskimo graveyard. He heard, as he dragged the dogs up an ice-sheathed incline, an exclamation from the Shepherd. He turned and peered through the frost which had formed on his hood.

T
The r
was bro
harness.
and plea
Trahe
Standing
which c
over the
"You
"Transf
Bible an
food is t
same nu
"And
"I'll t
as the v
fish-line
able to g
"The
missiona
that ove
Trahe
from the
while th
and said
ther to g

The missionary's sled had upset. A runner was broken. The sulky dogs lay snarled in the harness. The old man was alternately striking and pleading with them.

Traherne went back and inspected the damage. Standing erect, he studied the sky and the wind which cut through to his bone. His eyes swung over the trail on the right-hand side of the hill.

"You take my sled and go on," he suggested. "Transfer your stuff to mine. You've only got the Bible and sleeping-bag and one axe to change. The food is the same. We've both got stoves and the same number of cans of pemmican. You change!"

"And leave you here?"

"I'll unload your sled and fix the runner as soon as the wind goes down. I've a piece of ash and fish-line. My dogs need a rest. Yours are better able to go on."

"They're all filled with the devil," said the missionary, huskily. "No doubt it was the dogs that overturned the sledge."

Traherne began transferring the light objects from the overturned sledge to his own. He worked while the old man looked on. He added the Bible and said, "Good-bye, Shepherd. You've got farther to go than I have. Go!"

The missionary was gone around the hill. Traherne started building a shelter from the wind. He hewed the blocks and built them into an igloo. He tossed his sleeping-bag and stove inside. He went back and dragged in the seal meat. The pemmican tins he left. They were of metal. The dogs could not bite through them.

He cooked seal meat, and with tea and biscuits made a hearty meal. Sleeping soundly, he was awakened by the howling of the dogs and the whine of the wind. He crawled out and saw that a blizzard had descended upon the Arctic wilds. Mounded snow marked the position of the overturned sledge. Snow drove in fine particles from northwest to southeast.

The days passed with the dogs creeping closer to him for warmth. He lay in the sleeping-bag and waited for the wind to go down. The spirit thermometer had been taken by the Shepherd. He estimated the temperature as not more than thirty degrees below zero. The wind would make it seem much lower.

A cessation of the gale on the sixth day allowed him to repair the damaged runner of the sledge. He packed the pemmican tins on the bottom. "Emergency rations" Donald called them. They

7
were to
the last

He to
found i
It was
strangel
Wind fo
The wh
progress

He lo
landma
sledge a
had eat
at each
three th

His p
a proces
up the r

They
morning
away fr
flurry a

Two
dragged
the tra
Chief h

were to be used after the dogs had been killed and the last meat consumed.

He took up the journey toward the south. He found it more difficult each mile. A dog died. It was fed to the others. The compass acted strangely. The Northern Lights flamed the sky. Wind followed wind from all points of the horizon. The white world seemed determined to bar his progress.

He lost the trail. Finding it again by native landmarks and the map, he began pulling the sledge and allowing the dogs to walk free. They had eaten the last of the seal meat. They snapped at each other. He killed one with his rifle. The three that remained snarled over its carcass.

His progress toward Sixteen-mile Creek became a procession wherein the starving animals brought up the rear like scrawny mourners.

They refused to haul the sledge save in the mornings. They sulked and whined. One broke away from the harness and vanished in a snow flurry as Traherne sped a bullet after it.

Two remained. These were useless. Traherne dragged or pushed the heavy sledge. He packed the trail with his snowshoes in the manner the Chief had taught him.

Once he shot a white fox, the first wild animal he had seen. It was thin and tough. The dogs devoured the skin and head and entrails. They worked that day, but refused to work the next. One laid down on the trail. Traherne dragged it to the sledge. It moaned and died.

The last dog he shot, out of mercy. Starved on the Island, they had not been able to live through the blizzards. Traherne went on along the frozen valley of a river. He had remaining on the sled the dog meat, some biscuit, and tea, a few small tins of potted beef, and the pemmican.

Many days followed. Each night he built an igloo which took all of an hour's work. The Chief had counseled this. His strength ebbed until the time came when he dragged the sledge between five-mile stations marked by his rude shelters.

A gale was followed by a calm. The cold became intense. He struggled with hopeless energy. The landmarks danced before his eyes.

He sighted the two burnt cabins, of which O'Kane had sent word, through swirling snow. He left the sledge and plunged head downward toward their shelter. The ice of Sixteen-mile Creek was smooth and polished from wind friction. He crossed it on his knees. He staggered up the bank.

T
A voice
peered b
O'Kan
sleeping-
his side.
tion. B
floor of t
"Hello
with his
"Hello,
"You,
"Yes!
about al
"I'm
Trahe
explorer'
"You
"Yes.
we go on
O'Kar
I can't,"
of grub
sake get
Trahe
out of th
the snow

A voice greeted him as he uprooted a log and peered beneath a leanto of planks.

O'Kane lay wrapped and double wrapped in a sleeping-bag and skins. A cooking lamp was by his side. His eyes were deep sunken from starvation. Bones were scattered about the frozen floor of the shack. A dog's skin hung from a pole.

"Hello!" exclaimed Traherne, moving the log with his shoulder and stepping into the shelter.

"Hello, O'Kane!"

"You, lad?"

"Yes! I came from Herschel Island. I'm about all in."

"I'm all in!"

Traherne reached out his hand and clasped the explorer's bony fingers.

"You got my note?" asked O'Kane, weakly.

"Yes. They're starving back there. Can't we go on to Fort Yukon?"

O'Kane shook his matted head. "You might, I can't," he whispered. "It's too far. I'm all out of grub. I crawled in here to die. For God's sake get me something to eat."

Traherne covered the explorer and crawled out of the shack. He faced the wind and tracked the snow prints to the sledge. He had eaten the

dogs. There remained two cans of potted beef—barely a pound—and the pemmican. He unlashed the sleeping-bag and found the meat. He hurried back.

He soon had a fire going at O'Kane's side. "We'll eat the potted meat," he said, cheerfully, "and save the pemmican for to-morrow. How'll you have the meat—fried or hashed-brown?"

The explorer tried to smile. He sat erect and took the warmed portion which Traherne handed over the fire.

"I'd like some more," said O'Kane. "Let's eat the other half-pound. We'll go light on your pemmican. It's our life saver."

The two men talked. They passed through a fitful sleep. Traherne rose and wound his watch. It was daybreak in more southern latitudes. He peered through a crack in the logs.

The white world dazzled his eyes although there was no sun. Stunted trees were draped with snow. A pepper sky bowed overhead. The wind whined around the leanto with a sound like timber wolves.

He shook O'Kane's shoulder, said good morning, put on his snowshoes, and started across the creek from the spot where he had left the sledge. He

brought
overlook

The ex
He watch
knife unc
Traherne
can on er

It was
"What
swaying
pen?"

O'Kan
mass. F
He fell b

"Hell!
you!"

Traher
brought
He open
were fille

His m
changed
the wite
He reme
the sledg
Post.

brought back a circular pemmican can and an overlooked rubber-corked bottle of alcohol.

The explorer eyed the can with hungry glance. He watched Traherne insert the point of a hunting knife under the red cover. The cover snapped off. Traherne thrust his hand inside. He turned the can on end and peered at the contents.

It was packed solid with ice and snow!

"What the devil?" he exclaimed, rising and swaying over the explorer. "How did that happen?"

O'Kane seized the knife and jabbed at the frozen mass. He ripped through the bottom of the can. He fell back on his sleeping-bag.

"Hell!" he said, weakly. "Somebody tricked you!"

Traherne staggered from the leanto. He brought two more cans. They were all he had. He opened them with nerveless fingers. Both were filled with snow and ice!

His mind ran back to the time when he had changed sledges with the Shepherd. He recalled the witch's threat that Christianity would fail. He remembered the watchman being away from the sledges when they stood by the Hudson Bay Post.

The witch, or Moona, had removed the pemmican from the missionary's load and substituted snow. The fate intended for old Jordan had fallen upon others.

Traherne left the leanto, replaced the log, and started wandering about in the snow. He had no idea of time nor place. He was thinking of Moona's statement, overheard as she regarded the Bible on the Shepherd's sledge:

"He shall not come back!"

It all seemed plain. The girl had conspired with the Shaman. She wanted the Shepherd removed. She had assisted in exchanging the pemmican for snow. Or, thought Traherne, she had done the job herself!

He laughed bitterly. The end of life seemed close at hand.

A out of bo
O'Kan
of coma.
Youth dr
ble with
cabins.
creek, an
brush.

Comin
threw do
first he h
bullet ho
each one.

"I cou
missed it
up and g

CHAPTER XV

THE JOURNEY BACK

A LONG day passed before Traherne returned to the leanto. He rested and attempted to make a soup for the explorer out of bones and skins.

O'Kane refused the offering and lay in a state of coma. Traherne felt himself sinking into death. Youth drove him outside once more in a final gamble with nature. He trailed a circle around the cabins. He widened his tracks, crossed the creek, and beat a way through the crusted underbrush.

Coming back fully exhausted, but smiling, he threw down the carcass of a lean wolf which at first he had mistaken for a fox. There were five bullet holes in the animal. Frozen blood marked each one. Traherne pointed them out to O'Kane.

"I couldn't kill it dead enough!" he said. "I missed it more times than I hit it. We'll cook it up and get out of this place. We'll start back for

the Arctic and Herschel Island. There are seals there, if we can walk that far."

The explorer tried to crawl from his sleeping-bag. He motioned toward his feet.

"I can't move far," he said, weakly. "I'm frost bitten, I guess."

"I can drag you after I eat some meat. We'll go over the old trail. I'm going to settle a few scores before I die!"

Traherne dragged O'Kane back to the coast. He had no recollection of that passage. It was a nightmare of ice and frost and starvation. There were a score of times when he gave up and lay down with the explorer to die. Each time youth called in his veins. He rose and tracked grimly on.

The sledge was trimmed and lightened. All the outfit was thrown away save one sleeping-bag, a gun, and an ice-axe. The broken runner had to be repaired again. The explorer fell into a state in which there was no pain or protest.

His frozen toes were cut off by Traherne. His breath made a white mound at the opening of the sleeping-bag. He neither moved nor spoke during the last days of the Barren Land's crossing.

Traherne recalled dimly the place where the





"Traherne dragged O'Kane back to the coast"

TH

trails divi
yard. Ho
valley wh
off Colvill

An Arc
shroud.
sledge dip
own weigh

“The se

The exp
hummock
He eyed t
near the
wood or g
started a

Alterna
water tha
in dull re
surface fu
later, drov
Traherne
quick ma

The sm
kind. T
ice. It h
the fire.

trails divided. He camped in the Mazeka graveyard. He stared long and anxiously down the valley which the Shepherd had taken toward far-off Colville and the reindeer station.

An Arctic gale swirled the snow like a winding shroud. The journey was finished when the sledge dipped over the shore ice and ran by its own weight out upon the great north pack.

"The sea!" said Traherne to O'Kane.

The explorer was silent. Traherne studied the hummock-like speck that marked Herschel Island. He eyed the frozen pack. He built a large igloo near the shore, then started in search of driftwood or game. He found a seal hole after he had started a roaring fire.

Alternately watching the smoke and the restless water that rose and fell in the ice, he passed hours in dull reverie. A dead fish which floated to the surface furnished a meal. A hasty shot, two days later, drove a seal away. No more came although Traherne set his rifle so that he could not miss a quick mark.

The smoke signal required labour of the hardest kind. The driftwood was imbedded deeply in the ice. It had to be chopped out and trimmed for the fire. It sent forth half steam, half flame.

This signal was finally seen. Traherne heard a shot from the direction of the sea. He rose from near a seal hole and climbed an ice pinnacle. Slowly he dragged himself to its top. He stood swaying in the Arctic gale.

Two specks showed far out on the crusted surface. They struggled with a light sledge. They waved mittened hands. An hour passed before they reached the shore.

Traherne crawled to them. One was the Chief, Oom-Nuck-A—the other was Moona.

The girl was so swathed in skins that Traherne did not recognize her. She spoke to him twice before he answered.

"I'm all in, Moona. But go to O'Kane."

She seized his arm and guided him up to the fire and the igloo. Oom-Nuck-A rapidly unpacked his sledge. He held up a strip of seal's blubber with a solemn shake of his head.

"Plenty starve over there," he said, pointing toward the Island. "We all starve."

Moona went in to O'Kane. She succeeded in getting him to recognize her. She crawled from the igloo. The Chief took in the seal's meat and a pan of soup which he had boiled on the drift-wood fire.

TH
He ba
twinkled.
"He li
Traher
meat. F
at Moona
"Any
"There
He lay do
Her vo
how he s
the subst
Shepherd
"Come
"Come o
She fol
to the to
She start
glowed.
"You
that the
were fille
She gla
"You
the witch
She sh

He backed out and stood erect. His eyes twinkled.

"He live," he said. "Pretty bad, but he live."

Traherne finished chewing a strip of roasted meat. He rose from the end of a log. He stared at Moona.

"Any news of the Shepherd?" he asked.

"There is no news. The Shaman was right. He lay down and died."

Her voice was low but positive. He wondered how he should accuse her of having knowledge of the substitution of the snow for pemmican on the Shepherd's sledge.

"Come," he said, in a voice strange to her. "Come out on that hummock."

She followed him over the floes. They climbed to the top and sat down. He opened his hood. She started back at his unshaven face. His eyes glowed.

"You tricked us!" he accused. "You knew that the pemmican tins on the Shepherd's sledge were filled with snow instead of meat."

She glanced at him.

"You knew that!" he said, hotly. "You and the witch knew it!"

She shook her head. "What art thou saying?"

"It was clever, Moona. The Shepherd and I never suspected the substitution. His doom was sealed if he went on with the sledge that had the Bible lashed on top. He didn't go on with that sledge. It broke down where the trail divided. I gave him mine. I took his!"

She did not change countenance. He searched her face. It was thin and composed. Tiny wrinkles of doubt showed at the corners of her eyes.

Feeling himself losing his hate he blurted hastily, "How much did you pay the witch for changing the pemmican to snow on the Shepherd's sledge?"

"I paid her nothing—for anything like that! I gave her beads and scissors and thread if she would cast a charm for thee and none for the Shepherd. She despises Christianity!"

"Then you had no hand in substituting the pemmican for snow?"

"Did you find something in your pemmican tins?"

"I did! I had the Shepherd's sled, remember. O'Kane was dying of hunger, and all I had to give him was snow!"

"And that is the reason thee didst not go on to Fort Yukon?"

T
He no
her knee
thrust b
Arctic ai
the great
Turnin
"We'l
"You
"I kno

He nodded and stood erect. She struggled to her knees. She poised by his side. Her hood was thrust back. She bared her white teeth in the Arctic air. Her eyes blazed and burned out over the great north pack.

Turning savagely she exclaimed:

“We’ll slay that Shaman—thee and I!”

“You believe she changed the pemmican?”

“I know she did!”

CHAPTER XVI

REINDEER

TRAHERNE helped the girl down from the ice and followed her to the shore. She climbed up the tundra and spoke to the chief. Oom-Nuck-A shook his head at her questions.

“O’Kane very weak,” he said. “We wait one day.”

She explained to Traherne that she could hardly remain quiet until the matter of the pemmican was settled. He counselled caution. The witch could not escape from the Island. She was there for all time, according to the Mazeka belief.

The next morning, despite O’Kane’s famished condition, one sledge was packed with everything that could be piled upon it and the journey commenced toward the Hudson Bay Post.

The native Chief and Traherne dragged the frozen runners over the ice. Moona went ahead

T
and pic
skeeping

The
Island a
finished
explaine
killed ex
left the v

“Bad
fore ice l

Trahe
Moona t
the jour
his rifle
vasse.

He wait
meat wh

The t
game in

The C
Moona a
the line
followed
He saw
alert ser

The a

and picked the trail. O'Kane, wrapped in the sleeping-bag, lay on top of the load.

The midway spot was reached between the Island and the mainland. The Eskimo built a finished igloo out of crystalline blocks of ice. He explained to Traherne that all his dogs had been killed except one, and that one was dying when he left the village.

"Bad winter!" he added. "Everybody die before ice breaks up."

Traherne was more optimistic. He requested Moona to take his place in pulling the sledge when the journey was resumed. He went ahead with his rifle. He searched each hummock and crevasse. He thrust his heel through the seal holes. He waited and watched in the anxious search for meat which the sea might give forth.

The third day of the journey brought sight of game in an unexpected manner.

The Chief, tugging at the sledge ropes with Moona assisting, called to Traherne. He dropped the line and came bounding over the ice. Traherne followed the direction of his gesticulating arm. He saw a great yellow polar bear standing like an alert sentinel upon the top of a far-off hummock.

The animal was watching the Island and the

smoke that rose from the on-shore whaling station. The wind was from the north. Bruin had not scented the danger behind him.

Traherne crept along the rough surface of the pack. He reached within rifle range of the bear. He dashed off his right-hand glove and pressed the trigger slowly. Flesh clung to the cold metal as the gun jerked. Again he fired.

The bear, although struck in the haunches and head, showed fight. Traherne advanced, firing wildly. He was too anxious. The soft-nosed bullets glanced from the solid bone of the skull. The bear reared and came lumbering aggressively over the crusted ice.

"Me get!" exclaimed the Eskimo. "You wait, me get."

A lean knife flashed out of the native's belt. He walked to the snarling bear. He stepped in as the great yellow paw swung. Deep the blade went under the shoulder. It reached and opened the animal's heart. Traherne fired the final shot through its ear and into its brain. Bruin fell as both men sprang aside.

Traherne dropped the rifle and extended his hand.

"Me get," smiled the Mazeka. "Plenty eat

T
now—for
there."

Moona
its claws

"A ch
"We'll s

The f
Island.

his nativ
relief ha

He sta
then at

lifted th
greeted

plained.
"Ye d

herne.

that the
open the

them on
Trahe

He sa
and said

I think t
the whal

Donal

now—for days. One, two hundred, hungry over there.”

Moona helped skin the animal. She cut out its claws and teeth.

“A charm to wear,” she said to Traherne. “We’ll scratch the old witch with these.”

The fusillade of shots had been heard on the Island. Donald came over the ice followed by his native storekeepers. He at first believed that relief had arrived from Fort Yukon.

He stared at the stacked flesh of the bear and then at Traherne. He went to the sledge and lifted the flap over the sleeping-bag. O’Kane greeted him weakly. The situation was explained.

“Ye did what you could,” the Scot told Traherne. “Ye saved O’Kane. How did it happen that the snow got in th’ pemmican tins? Ah didn’t open them—they seemed all right when Ah packed them on th’ sledges.”

Traherne feared to implicate Moona.

He saw her eyes fixed appealingly upon him and said, “I don’t know how the snow got there. I think that it can be laid to some of the men in the whaling station. They are capable of doing it.”

Donald lifted his frost-coated brows. “We’ll

see," he said, turning away and staring at the Island. "Ah'll shoot th' man or men that did it! Ah'll question them closely."

The native Chief agreed to watch the bear meat. He explained that wolves or foxes might make way with it at any moment. Donald nodded. He ordered his men to drag the sled to the Post and return for the meat.

Traherne and Moona walked toward the Island. She had recovered her spirits. She painted glowing hopes of more game and seals, and relief from starvation. She finished with a savage little threat against the witch.

"Winter's just starting," cautioned Traherne. "There's three months more of it. We'd better let the witch alone. We need the natives' goodwill in the hunting expeditions. We'll keep the secret of the pemmican until spring—if it ever comes. Then we'll attend to that dancing hag in the cave."

"Thee hast seen the Shaman?"

He realized that she had no knowledge of his eavesdropping. He answered, "I've heard of her. Hank and Cocky have spoken of the sorceress in a cave above the native village."

The maid climbed up the shore and entered the

T
cabin.
around
was hop
plentiful

He too
heard he
gleamed
Hudson

Donal
reported
off a ma
of the m
their sha
brought

He sai
parted, '
have any
burning

The w
sumed.
filled by
hand clo

The n
Hank too
Byrd br
fever, an

cabin. The crew of the *Wing and Wing* crowded around her. Traherne told the mate that there was hope. He explained that game was getting plentiful and cited the case of the bear.

He took Moona to the door of her quarters and heard her enter and strike a match. Yellow light gleamed from her windows as he passed to the Hudson Bay Post.

Donald called the two whaling captains. They reported that scurvy and starvation were carrying off a man a day. They drew a gloomy picture of the months to come. The Scot promised them their share of the bear meat as soon as it was brought to the Post.

He said to Traherne after the whalers had departed, "The fight's all out o' them. We won't have any trouble from that direction. It's now a burning question of food."

The weeks passed. The bear meat was consumed. A horde of hungry mouths could not be filled by chance catches of seals. Starvation's hand closed in upon the ice-bound Island.

The natives suffered and came to the Post. Hank took to his blanket. Cocky and Scotty and Byrd broke out with scurvy scars. Dysentery, fever, and anemia were rife. The Scotch factor

acted as doctor, judge, and said the final prayers. He was assisted by O'Kane who had partly recovered from his passage to the burnt cabins on Sixteen-mile Creek.

Traherne haunted the ice about the Island. He was the most successful of all the hunters—native or white. His quota to the general supply of food was seven seals.

The first of March was marked by a high wind and afterward a sixty-five-below-zero temperature according to the spirit thermometer on the side of the Hudson Bay Station.

Few ventured away from the roaring stoves. Traherne made the trip to the ice. He was forced ashore with a numb feeling in his legs. He went to Moona and assisted in keeping her fire burning. They talked in whispers. Her hands were too cold to sew.

"Thee has suffered," she said.

"I'm game for anything, Moona. Do you want to try and reach Fort Yukon with me?"

"Again?"

"We've got to do something. I can't sit here and watch you starve. It cuts!"

She laid her chilled hands on his unshaven face. Her eyes burned like living coals.

7
"You
He dr
ing it be
neck and

"Why
"It is
wears a
luck."

Traher
through
hole with

"Don't
judge of
ably been
die in the
food on t
perished

She sh
her body

"Don't
week," sh

Traherne
each one.
to her, "b
Danes. I
didn't cra

"You still wear the muffler?" she asked.

He drew it from the pocket of his parka. Bunching it between his blue fingers, he raised it to his neck and shoved it down his breast.

"Why did you ask about that?" he queried.

"It is a good token. Many a Mazeka brave wears a maid's neck scarf to bring him good luck."

Traherne strode over the floor. He glanced through a frosted window, after scratching a tiny hole with his finger nail. He came back.

"Donald," he said, "can marry us. He is the judge of this territory. The Shepherd has probably been lost. We can be married and we can die in the week that is to come. There is no more food on the Island. Eleven natives and whalers perished yesterday."

She shook her head. A shiver passed through her body.

"Don't talk of death and marriage in the same week," she said. "We must live! We must!"

Traherne went to the windows and stared out of each one. "It's almost the end," he said, coming to her, "but let's die fighting. My ancestors were Danes. They must have died that way. They didn't crawl into corners. They went out in the

open. We can go out. We'll take the rifle. I know a seal hole near the Island. It's the only one I haven't watched lately. We may get a seal or a fish."

She drew on her deerskin coat and hood. She followed him through the door. They held hands. They walked slowly along the tumbled mass of ice which marked the shore.

The cabin where Scotty and Hank and the others of the *Wing and Wing's* crew awaited their end had no smoke pluming from its chimney. The on-shore whaling station loomed up in the Arctic air. Its windows were frost-covered. The Hudson Bay Post seemed deserted. Death had lowered a pinion over the Island.

Traherne and the girl reached the native village. No dogs greeted them. The igloos were sealed. Bones were scattered along the snow.

He led her toward the sea. They climbed over the hummocks and searched for the hole in the ice where a seal might appear. It was frozen to the thickness of a foot.

He sat down and laid the rifle at his feet. She rested a hand on his shoulder.

"You're right," she said. "This week is our last one."

The v
around t
frozen s
snow-lad
ing came

Trahe
slowly u
her glan
America
said: "

"Whic

"West

He sta
more mc
added, "

She fo
saw her
cliffs of
with a c
cliff.

"Lool
See, tha
the cave

He ru
watched
snow w:

The wind echoed her statement. It whined around the crags of the Island. It roared over the frozen surface of the great north pack. Dark, snow-laden clouds wrapped the ice fields. A moaning came from the under sea.

Traherne shivered. He watched the girl climb slowly upon a hummock. She poised there with her glance swinging toward the south and the American Continent. She came down to him and said: "I saw a winter bird."

"Which way was it flying?"

"West."

He stared at her. "That means two or three more months of freezing weather," he said. Then added, "Even the birds are leaving us."

She folded her arms and dropped her head. He saw her suddenly start and glance up at the misty cliffs of the Island. She dashed back her hood with a convulsive motion. She pointed toward a cliff.

"Look!" she cried. "There's the Shaman! See, that's not an animal. It is the sorceress from the cave."

He rubbed the frost from his eyelashes and watched the cliff. Something blacker than the snow was climbing from crag to crag. It disap-

peared, then reappeared. It scrambled steadily upward. Traherne rose unsteadily.

"Where's she going?" he asked.

"Up! Up! There is a path there. See, it is the witch woman!"

He felt the girl's mittened fingers clutch the sleeve of his parka. They both stared through the gray twilight toward the sorceress who pulled her ravished form up over the edge of the cliff. She pointed a skinny arm at the snowy haze. She started to chant a wild dirge which came down the wind. Swifter and swifter the measure grew. It rose to an ear-piercing shriek. It stopped suddenly.

She flung both her hands on high. The skins fell from her form. She bared her breast toward the south, leaped out into the gulf, and fell with a crunch of bones.

"Driven insane by hunger," whispered Traherne.

"No! It is something she heard or saw. There is something in the south."

Traherne followed the girl up the slippery incline toward the witch's cave. He dragged himself along the first of the path that led to the top of the cliff. He turned and grasped her extended hand. They moved slowly, finally gaining a shelf and resting.

T
The gi
bent he
hood. S
gray sno
dome of
windrow
the nort
"I see
somethin
She al
cline. '
which th
glanced
between
Raisin
the down
a curtain
"Let'
"Wai
He wa
from he
through
Her las
She rais
"List
thing?"

The girl gazed intently toward the south. She bent her head and listened. She removed her hood. She peered again with straining eyes. A gray snow fell like pepper from the dark, inverted dome of heaven. The wind screeched and drove windrows of fine ice along the crusted surface of the north pack.

"I see nothing," said Moona, "and yet there is something moving on the ice."

She allowed him to assist her up the last steep incline. They stood on the dizzy lip of the cliff from which the Shaman had thrown herself. Traherne glanced down. He saw the witch's body wedged between two crags.

Raising his eyes, he attempted to search through the down-falling snow. It blotted out all view, like a curtain. It grew thicker. He shook with chill.

"Let's go down," he said.

"Wait."

He watched the girl. Her lips were drawn back from her chalk-white teeth. A glow coursed through her cheeks. The hollows were softened. Her lashes fluttered—each one a tiny ice prong. She raised an arm and pointed.

"Listen," she whispered. "Do you hear anything?"

"The wind?"

"No, beneath the wind—within the wind?"

He feared that she, too, had gone mad. He stepped between her and the edge of the cliff. The witch's deerskin cloak lay on the rock. He dropped to this and peered out over the gulf of ice and snow.

A faint sound echoed against the cliff. It was repeated. The steady throb of crunching steps came up to him. There rose suddenly a song:

"Salvation, salvation, lift up thine eyes and see——"

Traherne sprang from the deerskin. He swayed by Moona's side. He saw things clearly. First there appeared climbing over the ice a sharp-nosed wolf dog. After him came another. Then, as the snow ceased falling, he saw the Shepherd bearing aloft a crook whose handle resembled a cross.

After the missionary flocked a score, a hundred reindeer—guarded at flanks and rear by husky dogs. Men in Laplander costume walked with the animals. They took up the Shepherd's chant as a shot was heard from Donald's rifle at the Hudson Bay Post.

Moona threw herself into Traherne's arms.

"We're saved!" she exclaimed.

I TV
he
H
the farm
All o
the gre
sufferec
The res
first ray
started
Don
hands
They p
posts c
and bre
Moo
the co
searche
Mazek

CHAPTER XVII

THE END

IT WAS a month after the arrival of the Shepherd and his strange flock of reindeer at Herschel Island before the last ravages of the famine were stamped out.

All of the crew of the *Wing and Wing* survived the great hunger. The natives and the whalers suffered to the extent of one tenth of their number. The rest were on their feet and cheerful when the first rays of the sun shot aslant the north pack and started melting the snow on the cliffs.

Donald, O'Kane, and the missionary had their hands full. They organized hunting expeditions. They portioned out the rations. They established posts on the continent where game was obtained and brought over the ice to the Island.

Moona and Traherne buried the Shaman, with the consent of the native chief. Her cave was searched and food found hidden away from the Mazekas. This angered Oom-Nuck-A. He went

to the Shepherd and renounced all faith in the old religion. He had heard, through Moona, something concerning the pemmican and the snow. He questioned the native watchman who admitted that the witch had lured him away from the sledges with false promises that a bear could be obtained on the northernmost point of the Island.

"No bad spirits now," explained the Chief to his people. "The Cross and the Good Book saved us when we laid down to die."

The Shepherd overworked himself in organizing a native school where the Mazekas were taught the rudiments of English as well as convincing chapters from the Bible.

He was stricken with a high fever. The privations of the Colville trail, the long journey back, the work of reconstruction at the Island, laid him low.

He hovered for a time between life and death. Moona faithfully nursed him through a week of suffering. It was during this period that she had frequent speech with him. She told him that she was more than eighteen years of age and that she had chosen Traherne.

The missionary suffered a slight relapse, then

recover
though
beard c

He
called
Arctic
ance of
made s

A pr
Hudson
Union
side up

Han
aged r
O'Kan
whaler
them c
gaily b

The
human
looked
glances
drawn
His eye

A sil
greeted

recovered. He appeared undaunted of eye, although his great shoulders were stooped. His beard changed to gray.

He went among his flock and preached. He called a Thanksgiving service for the first day of Arctic spring. This was marked by the appearance of the sun above the horizon. It glowed and made splendid the Kingdom of Ice.

A procession wound through the doorway of the Hudson Bay Post upon which jauntily flew the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes—right side up.

Hank stumped through the door followed by the aged members of the *Wing and Wing's* crew. O'Kane brought in the two whaling captains. The whalers followed their leaders in silence. After them came the natives led by Chief Oom-Nuck-A gaily bedecked in white-man's garb.

The storeroom was packed with sweating humanity. The Shepherd mounted his pulpit and looked over the heads of his congregation. He glanced keenly at Moona and Traherne who had drawn to a dark corner. He stroked his beard. His eyes dropped to the Bible he held in his hands.

A silence as profound as in any house of worship greeted the sermon that followed. He spoke for

an hour. He told of the sins of this life and the happiness which was promised in the next. He dwelt upon the passing of the spirit of Shamanism among the natives of the pale Arctic shore. His voice raised when he explained the good results which were being obtained by the mission schools on the islands and at the reindeer station.

He paused and then went on with vigour. He deplored the rum situation and showed how it had wrought ruin to many—white and native. He pictured a happy village, free from whisky, and one where whisky was rampant. His delivery changed to force and gesticulation. He dwelt in heavy measure upon brimstone and future punishment. He preached the Old Testament and glorified it.

Changing his voice, in strident tones he called on each man and woman in the room to lead a true life, fear God, and expect punishment unless they did. He closed the sermon with a short prayer.

Those nearest the door started to go. He called them back and added what had been on his mind from the beginning.

"There are two among ye," he said, "who represent ye all. Moona, my ward, once believed in Shamanism. It was her mother's religion.

T
Trahern
believed in
tianity c
atheism.
Cross!

Donal
to Trahe

"A we
end was
ould mo
married;

Trahe
He sugg
native v
break up
mainlan

He lec
to reach
turned to
"See,"

Through

He b
squared.
as we c
whalebo
roses blo

Traherne, whom I rescued out of a dark strait, believed in no religion. They both have seen Christianity conquer over the forces of witchcraft and atheism. There is a star to guide them now—the Cross! They will carry it—as man and wife!”

Donald's eyes twinkled as he held out his hand to Traherne.

“A wee bit dry,” he said of the sermon, “but the end was convincing. Ye were scotched by th' auld mon, but he's a gude soul at heart. He married ye according to the law north o' 53.”

Traherne went to Moona's cabin the next day. He suggested that they climb the cliff above the native village and watch the great north pack break up in the strait between the Island and the mainland.

He led her along the beach and assisted her to reach the top. They stood with their faces turned toward the south.

“See,” she said, “there is an open lane of water. Through it the ships will come.”

He breathed the warm air. His shoulders squared. “We'll go to Nome,” he said, “as soon as we can. Hank offers to sail us there in the whaleboat. He wants to go to Seattle, where the roses bloom, Moona.”

"And so do I."

Traherne glanced along the cliff. He stooped and picked a pale Arctic flower. He handed it to her.

"The only one in sight," he said.

She smiled at his sanguine face. Her eyes fastened upon the muffler wound around his neck. They dropped toward the native village where the aged Chief was skinning a hair seal. She pointed to the beach and kyack which Oom-Nuck-A's two sons were launching. Spring had come to Herschel Island. Birds winged their way overhead.

Traherne watched a flock flying in a V-shaped formation.

"They're going to Banks Land," he said. "They'll mate in the land of the Blond Eskimo."

Moona shivered at a memory. She again glanced at the muffler, then said happily: "But we'll go south—where the roses bloom the year around. South to Seattle and Puget Sound. South where my mother was born."

"I'll take that kyack and paddle you all the way!" he exclaimed, pointing to the tiny Mazeka canoe.

Her dark eyes glowed. She reached to him and slowly unwound his muffler. Running it through her fingers she said:

T

"There
not help
She fir
blue feat
threads.

"How
"Tis
of a blue
put it th
me."

He la
given up
craft and
"I hav
thing wh

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SEA 303

"There is a *great* charm in this. Thee couldst not help loving me."

She fingered the fringe and drew forth a tiny blue feather which had been gathered within the threads.

"How did that come there?" he asked.

"'Tis a wonderful love charm. 'Tis the topknot of a blue-jay. I got it on the Siberian shore. I put it there so that thee wouldst always think of me."

He laughed boyishly. "I thought you had given up your belief in thunder-birds and witchcraft and tokens?"

"I have, but the feather of a blue-jay is a potent thing when it is given by a maid to a man."

THE END



THE COUNTRY LIFE PRESS
GARDEN CITY, N. Y.