

The Stowaway

By LOUIS TRACY.
Author of the "Pillar of Light," "The Wings of the Morning" and "The Captain of the Kansas."
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CHAPTER III.

WHEN THE ANDROMEDA NEARS THE END OF HER VOYAGE.

"FIVE bells, miss! It'll soon be daylight. If you want to see the cross, now's your time!" Iris had been called from dreamless sleep by a thundering rattle on her cabin door. In reply to her half-awakened cry of "All right!" the hoarse voice of a sailor told her that the Southern Cross had just risen above the horizon. She resolutely screwed her knuckles into her eyes and began to dress. In a few minutes she was on deck. A long coat, a tam-o'-shanter and a pair of list slippers will go far in the way of costume at night in the tropics, and the Andromeda's seventeenth day at sea had brought the equator very near. At dinner on the previous evening—in honor of the owner's niece fashionable hours were observed for meals—Mr. Watts mentioned by chance that the cross had been very distinct during the middle watch, or, in other words, between midnight and 4 a. m. Iris at once expressed a wish to see it, and Captain Coke offered a suggestion.

"Mr. Hozier takes the middle watch tonight," said he. "We can ask 'im to send a man to pound on your door as soon as it rises. Then you must run up to the bridge, an' 'e'll tell you all about it."

If Iris was conscious of a slight feeling of surprise she did not show it. Hitherto the burly skipper of the Andromeda had made it so clearly understood that none of the ship's company save himself was to enjoy the society of Miss Iris Yorke that she had exchanged very few words with the one man whose manners and education obviously entitled him to meet her on an equal plane. Even at meals he was often absent. So Coke's complacency came now quite unexpectedly, but Iris was learning to school her tongue.

"Thank you very much," she said. "When shall I see him?" "Oh, you needn't bother. I'll tell 'im meself."

She was somewhat disappointed at this. Hozier would be free for an hour before he turned in, and they might have enjoyed a nice chat while he smoked on the poop. In her heart of hearts she was beginning to acknowledge that a voyage through summer seas on a cargo vessel, with no other society than that of unimpressive sailormen, savored of tedium, indeed almost of deadly monotony. Her rare meetings with Hozier marked bright spots in a dull round of hours. During their small intercourse she had discovered that he was well informed. They had hit upon a few kindred tastes in books and music. They even differed sharply in their appreciation of favorite authors. And what could be more conducive to complete understanding than the attack and defense of the shrine of some tin god of literature?

While, therefore, it was strange that Captain Coke should actually propose a visit to the bridge at an unusual time—at a time, too, when Hozier would be on duty—it struck her as far more curious that he should endeavor to prevent an earlier meeting.

"I shall be delighted to come at any time. I have often read about the Southern Cross, yet three short weeks ago I little thought—"

"You really didn't think about it at all," broke in Coke. "If you 'ad you'd 'ave known you couldn't cross the line without seein' it."

Here was another perplexing element in the skipper's conduct. That Iris was a stowaway was forgotten. She was treated with the attention and ceremony due to the owner's niece. Coke never lost an opportunity of dining into the ears of Watts or Hozier or the steward or any members of the crew who were listening that Miss Yorke's presence in their midst was a preordained circumstance, a thing fully discussed and agreed on as between her uncle and himself, but carried out in an irregular manner owing to some girlish freak on her part. The portmanteau, with its change of raiment, brought convincing testimony, and Iris' own words when discovered in the lazarette supplied further proof, if that were needed.

A keen, invigorating breeze swept the last mirage of sleep from the girl's brain as she flitted silently along the deck. A wondrous galaxy of stars blazed in the heavens. In that pellucid air the sky was a vivid ultramarine. The ship's track was marked by a trail of phosphorescent fire. Each revolution of the propeller drew from the ocean treasure house opulent globes of golden light that danced and sparkled in the tumbling waters. It was a night that pulsated with the romance and abandon of the south, a night when the heart might throb with unutterable longings and the blood tingle in the veins under the stress of an emotion at once passionate and mystic.

Iris, spurred on by no stronger impulse than that of the sightseer, though not wholly unaware of an element of adventurous shyness in her expectation of a tete-a-tete with a good looking young man of her own status, climbed to the bridge so speedily and noiselessly that Hozier did not know of her presence until he heard her dismayed cry:

"Is that the Southern Cross?" He turned quickly.

"You, Miss Yorke?" he exclaimed, and not even her wonder at the insignificance of the stellar display of



"YOU, MISS YORKE?" HE EXCLAIMED.

which she had heard so much could cloak the fact that Hozier was unprepared for her appearance.

"Of course it is I. Who else?" she asked. "Did not Captain Coke tell you to expect me?"

"No."

"How odd! That is what he arranged. A man came and rapped at my door."

"Pardon me one moment." He leaned over the bridge and hailed the watch. The same hoarse voice that had roused Iris answered his questions, and in the faint light that came from the binnacle she caught a flicker of amusement on his face.

"Our excellent skipper's intentions have been defeated," he said. "He told one of the men to call him at seven bells, but not to wake you until the cross was visible. His orders have been obeyed quite literally. He will be summoned in another hour, and you have been dragged from bed to gaze at the false cross, which every foremast hand persists in regarding as the real article. The true cross, of which Alpha Crucis is the southern pole star, comes up over the horizon an hour after the false one."

"But Captain Coke said he would see you and warn you of my visit."

"I can only assure you that he did not. Perhaps he thought it unnecessary, meaning to be on deck himself."

"Must I wait here a whole hour then?" Hozier laughed. It was amusing to find how Coke's marked effort to keep the girl and him apart had been defeated by a sailor's blunder.

"I hope the waiting will not weary you," he said. "It is a beautiful night."

"I am glad of the accident that brought me on deck somewhat earlier than was necessary," she said. "True, and I have not said much to each other since you routed me out of the lazarette, Mr. Hozier."

"Our friends at table are somewhat difficult. If only you knew how I regretted—"

"Oh, what of that? When I became a stowaway I fully expected to be treated as one. I suppose, though, that you have often asked yourself why I was guilty of such a mad trick."

"Not exactly mad, Miss Yorke, but needless, since Captain Coke partly expected to have your company."

"That is absurd. He had not the remotest notion—"

"Forgive me, but there you are wrong. He says that your uncle and he discussed the matter on the Sunday before we left Liverpool. His theory is rather borne out by the present state of the ship's larder. I assure you that few tramp steamers spread a table like the Andromeda's mess during this voyage."

Iris laughed with a spontaneous merriment that was rather astonishing in her own ears.

"Being the owner's niece, I am well catered for?" she cried.

while it perplexed. "Please pardon me if the question hurts, but if that is not your motive and there never was any real notion of your coming on this trip why are you here?" he said.

"Because I am a foolish girl. I suppose—because I thought that my presence might interpose a serious obstacle between a criminal and the crime he had planned to commit. If one wants to avoid hateful people a change of climate is a most effectual means, and I had not the money for ordinary travel. Believe me, Mr. Hozier, I am not on board the Andromeda without good reason. I have often wished to have a talk with you. I think you are a man who would not betray a confidence. If you agree to help me, something may yet be done. At first I was sure that Captain Coke would abandon his wicked project as soon as he discovered that I knew what was in his mind. But now I am beginning to doubt. Each day brings us nearer South America, and—"

She was breathless with excitement. She drew nearer to the silent and impassive man at her side, dropping her voice almost to a whisper. She caught his arm with an appealing hand.

"I am afraid that my presence will offer no hindrance to his scheme," she murmured. "I am terrified to say such a thing, but I am certain, quite certain, that the ship will be lost within the next few days."

Hozier, though incredulous, could not but realize that the girl was saying that which she honestly thought to be true.

"Lost! Do you mean that she will be purposely thrown away?" he asked, and his own voice was not wholly under control, for he was called on to repress a sudden temptation to kiss away the tears that glistened in her brown eyes.

"Yes, that is what he said—on the rocks this side of Montevideo."

"He said—who?" "The—captain."

"To whom did he say it?" "Oh, Mr. Hozier, do not ask that, but believe me and help me."

"How?" "I do not know. I am half-distracted with thinking. What can we do? Captain Coke simply swept aside my first attempt to speak plainly to him. But—make no mistake—he knows that I heard his very words, and there is something in his manner, a curious sort of quiet confidence, that frightens me."

After that neither spoke during many minutes.

"That is a very serious thing you have told me, Miss Yorke," muttered Hozier at last, not without a backward glance at the sailor in the wheelhouse to assure himself that the man could not by any chance overhear their conversation.

"But it is true—dreadfully true," said Iris, clasping her hands together and resting them on the high railing of the bridge.

"It is all the BUT IT IS TRUE—more serious, DREADFULLY TRUE," inasmuch as SAID IRIS.

"We are helpless," he went on. "Don't you see how impossible it is even to hint at it in any discussion with the man principally concerned? I want to say this, though—you are in no danger. There is no ship so safe as one that is picked out for willful destruction. Men will not sacrifice their own lives even to make good an insurance policy, and I suppose that is what is intended. So you can sleep sound of nights—at any rate until we near the coast of Brazil. I can only promise you if any watchfulness on my part can stop this piece of villainy—Hello, there! What's up? Why is the ship falling away from her course?"

The sudden change in his voice startled the girl so greatly that she uttered a slight shriek. It took her an appreciable time to understand that he was speaking to the man at the wheel. But the sailor knew what he meant.

"Something's gone wrong with the wheel, sir," he bawled. "I wasn't certain at first, so I tried to put her over a bit to south'ard. Then she jammed for sure."

Hozier leaped to the telegraph and signaled "slow" to the engine room. Already the golden pathway behind the Andromeda had changed from a wavering yet generally straight line to a well-defined curve. There was a hiss and snort of escaping steam as the sailor inside the chart-house endeavored to force the machinery into action.

"Steady, there!" bellowed Hozier. "Wait until we have examined the gear boxes! There may be a kink in a chain!"

A loud order brought the watch scurrying along the deck. Some of the men ran to examine the bearings of the huge fan-shaped casting that governed the movements of the rudder, while others began to tap the wooden shields which protected the steering rods and chains. In the midst of the hammering and excitement Captain Coke swung himself up to the bridge.

"Well, I'm blowed! You here?" he said, looking at Iris. "Wot is it now?" he asked, turning sharply to Hozier. "Wheel stuck again?"

"Yes, sir. Has it happened before?" "Well—er—no this trip. But it 'as 'appened. Just for a minute I was mix'n' it up with the night you nearly run down that bloomin' hooker off the Irish coast. Ah, there she goes! Everything O. K. now. W'en daylight comes we'll overhaul the fix'n's. Nice thing if the wheel jammed just as we was crossin' the Reef!"

Hozier tried to ascertain from the watch if they had found the cause of the disturbance, but the men could only guess that a chance blow with an adz had straightened a kink in one of the casings. Coke treated the incident with nonchalance.

"Thought you was to be called w'en the cross how in sight, Miss Yorke?" he said abruptly.

"I am sorry to have to inform you that some people on board cannot distinguish between falsity and truth," she answered. "But please don't be angry with any of the men on my account. Mr. Hozier tells me they often confuse the false cross with the real one, and the mistake has been enjoyable."

"A reglar 'umbug, the Southern Cross," grunted Coke. "It ain't a patch on the bear."

Coke grinned at his own pleasantry. To one of his hearers at least it seemed to be passing strange that he was so ready to forget such a vital defect in the steering gear as had manifested its existence a few minutes earlier.

CHAPTER IV.

SHELLED BY A MYSTERIOUS FOE ON SHORE COKE remained on the bridge until long after Iris had seen and admired the cluster of stars which old-time navigators used to regard with awe. When shafts of white light began to taper pennon-like in the eastern sky the girl went back to her cabin. Contrary to Hozier's expectation, Coke did not attempt to draw from him any account of their conversation prior to the inexplicable mishap to the wheel. He examined a couple of charts, made a slight alteration in the course and at 4 o'clock took charge of the bridge.

"Just 'ave a look around now while things is quiet," he said, nodding to Hozier confidentially. "I'll tell you wot I fancy. A rat dragged a bit of bone into a gear box. If the plankin' is badly worn anywhere, get the carpenter to see to it. I do 'ate to 'ave a feelin' that the wheel can let you down. S'pose we was makin' Bahia on the homeward run an' that 'appened. It 'ud be the end of the pore ole ship, an' o'd credit it? Not a soul. They'd all say, 'Jimmie threw 'er away!'"

Hozier found a gnawed piece of ham bone lying in the exact position anticipated by Coke.

The carpenter busied himself with sawing and hammering during the whole of the next two days, for the Andromeda revealed many gaps in her woodwork, but the escapade of an errant ham bone was utterly eclipsed by a new sensation. At daybreak one morning every drop of water in the vessel's tanks suddenly assumed a rich blood red tint. This unerring discovery was made by the cook, who was horrified to see a ruby stream pouring into the earliest kettle. Thinking that an iron pipe had become oxidized with startling rapidity, he tried another tap. Finally there could be no blinking the fact that by some uncanny means the whole of the fresh water on board had acquired the color if not the taste of a thin burgundy.

Coke was summoned hastily. Noblesse oblige, being captain, he valiantly essayed the task of sampling this strange beverage.

"It ain't 'pison," he announced, gazing suspiciously at the little group of anxious faced men who awaited his verdict. "It sartainly ain't 'pison, but it's wuss nor any teetotal brew I've tackled in all me born days. 'Ere, Watts, you know the tang of every kind o' likker—'ave a sup."

"Not me!" said Watts. "I don't like the look of it. First time I've ever seen red ink on tap. For the rest of this trip I stick to bottled beer or something with a label."

"It smells like an infusion of permanganate of potash," volunteered Hozier.

"Does it?" growled Coke, who seemed to be greatly annoyed. "Wot a pity it ain't an infusion of whisky an' potash!" and he glared vindictively at Watts. "Some 'ijit 'as bin playin' a trick on us, that's wot it is—some blank soaker 'oo don't give a hooraw in hades for tea an' coffee an' cocoa, but wants a tonic. Stooard!"

"Yes, sir," said the mess room attendant.

(To Be Continued.)

HAS NARROW ESCAPE.

E. J. Finch, R. F. D. Carrier, Painfully Hurt When Car Wrecks His Buggy Near Inman.

Inman, Jan. 17.—In an accident on the Southern railroad here yesterday morning about 7.45 o'clock, E. J. Finch, R. F. D. carrier, was painfully hurt. His buggy is a complete wreck. It seems a miracle that he should have escaped, especially since the vehicle in which he was riding was specially prepared for this kind of business, being small places on each side for entrance and exit. One of these openings saved his life, but no one knows how.

His buggy was struck by some cars from above the crossing that had been set in motion by the momentum of one car which had been "punched in" in shifting.

The theory of his escape is that the horse acted as a pivot and threw him from the track when the buggy was struck. He was thrown about 20 feet. The horse escaped injury.

Mr. Finch is a very quiet man, but prominent in church work.

Ralph Riley, the young negro who shot Norman Whittenberg near Gaffney some days ago, has been placed in jail. Whittenberg has died from the effects of the wound.

BLEASE'S INAUGURAL SPEECH.

"GREATEST POLITICAL VICTORY IN THE HISTORY OF THE STATE," SAYS BLEASE.

Address Typical of Man Who is Now Governor of the State—Denounces Newspapers—Platform Outlined.

Columbia, Jan. 17.—Declaring that "independence of thought, freedom of action, an abiding trust in and devoted love for God won for me the greatest political victory that has yet been recorded in the history of South Carolina," Governor Coleman Livingston Blease of Newberry, Tuesday afternoon delivered the most notable inaugural address that has ever been heard in the State. Nearly one-half of his address was taken up in a denunciation of the South Carolina press, the other part being devoted to a discussion of issues, all of which were discussed in the campaign last summer. As Governor Blease was too ill to render the speech himself, it was read for him by Mr. S. M. Simkins of Batesburg, the reading clerk of the house of representatives.

In the introductory of his speech Gov. Blease said: "Aligned against me were a united daily press and an almost solid weekly and semi-weekly press, pouring forth all kinds of falsehoods, vituperation and abuse, receiving the assistance of a number of men who called themselves ministers of the gospel—God save the mark!—who stood behind their pulpits and gave vent to envy and malice and slanders of the most virile and malicious nature against me" * * * all of these, combined with others, making a set of political character-thieves, the meanest and most contemptible people known to man."

Governor Blease singled out the Columbia State from among the other papers for his choicest epithets, although he did not fail to pay his respects to The Daily Record, Charleston News and Courier and all other papers which opposed his election as governor. Over two and one-half columns of his six and one-half columns are devoted to the newspapers. He quoted freely from a number of them and included all in his general denunciation.

After concluding his discussion of the newspapers and taking up his recommendations to the general assembly, South Carolina's new governor closed his address with an apostrophe to the Diet, to whose goodness he ascribed in large measure his remarkable victory at the polls.

In his address Mr. Blease merely repeated parts of his platform, as announced at the beginning of the campaign last summer. His principal recommendations are:

Honest administration of all laws and enforcement of all laws.

Obedience to the constitution of the State and the United States.

Keeping separate and distinct the legislative, judicial and executive departments of government.

Trial by jury for all persons accused of crime. He considers "government by injunction vicious and degrading."

Biennial sessions of the legislature. Liberal appropriations for Confederate veterans and State institutions of learning, but thinks the legislature has been too extravagant in its appropriations to educational institutions.

Opposes the use of white people's taxes to educate negroes.

Recommends marriage license law or registration of marriage.

Favors having mileage pulled on trains, as the present "system of ticket collection is abominable."

He calls attention to the cocaine evil, would prohibit the sale of cigarettes, would prohibit boys under sixteen years from smoking them, would outlaw toy guns and pistols and prohibit boys under sixteen years having guns in their possessions or owning them.

Recommends that each judicial circuit be allowed a representative on the board of regents of the State hospital for the insane.

Would have white convicts worked in different camps.

Would amend the dispensary act so that a majority of the white citizens may have a license system of saloons under strict regulations, instead of the dispensary or prohibition. This, he says, is the only true form of Democracy.

Would make executions for rape and attempts to rape public.

The governor makes a general recommendation for economy, and says that he had rather have a poor government and a rich people than a rich government and a poor people.

He closed his address with a prayer for the people of the State and an apostrophe to the Diet.

Mr. Ballinger's own opinion is somewhat open to question in view of the preponderating percentage of opinion against him.

NEW YORK FACES DEADLOCK.

It Seems to be Sheehan Against Field, With Some of Insurgents Very Determined.

Albany, N. Y., Jan. 17.—William F. Sheehan against the field. This sums the situation tonight after the first day of legislative balloting for United States senator to succeed Chauncey M. Depew, and for the first time since the bitter fight that followed the resignation of Senator Conklin and Platt in 1881 the legislature of New York faces a deadlock on this question.

The senate and assembly balloted separately today, but neither gave any candidate the majority required for a choice.

The first joint ballot will be taken at noon tomorrow and if Mr. Sheehan holds all the legislators who voted for him today he will lead the field with 91 votes. Five members were absent today. Of the remaining 105 votes, 79 were Republicans. The other 26 Democrats divided their votes among Edward M. Shepard, Alton B. Parker, James W. Gerard, Martin W. Littleton and D. Gerry Herrick.

Of the 26 Democrats who voted against Mr. Sheehan today 21 have solemnly pledged themselves not to abandon their stand. Three of the remaining five voted for Mr. Shepard today and resolved to be in sympathy with the pledge taken by the 21. Mr. Sheehan's opponents declared today that five of his 91 votes would desert after the first joint ballot tomorrow.

The insurgents, as they have been called, are led by Senator Franklin D. Roosevelt, a young millionaire of Dutchess county and a distant relative of former President Roosevelt. This evening they renewed their mutual pledges.

Efforts to induce Gov. Dix to declare for some candidate continued today, but the governor reiterated his refusal to interfere. Tonight he made this statement, however:

"I think the atmosphere will probably clear after the joint ballot tomorrow."

COURT AT MANNING.

Heavy Docket Faces General Sessions Court Next Week.

Manning, Jan. 17.—The Court of general sessions for Clarendon county will convene here next Monday, with Judge J. W. Devoe, of the 14th circuit, presiding. This will be Judge Devoe's first term at this place and he will find himself confronted with a rather heavy docket, including two murder cases, three for assault and battery, seventeen for liquor selling and a number of others charging various offences.

The law library and office furniture belonging to the late Joseph F. Rhame, Esq., were sold at auction yesterday, realizing a total of about \$2,000. A practically complete set of South Carolina Reports, both old and new series, sold for \$933.

New Orleans and San Francisco are acting as if the Panama Canal is to run down their main streets.

The man is made of the right stuff who will call the bluff of the one who doubts his ability; a man with ability all things can do in the face of every doubting hoodoo.

It's a delight to feast on Nunnally's candies because they are so good and pure and fresh.

She knows—all women know—that Nunnally's are the highest grade candies made in the South.

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are shipped us by fast express. They're the freshest, as well as the choicest money can buy.

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