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LAST PORT OF GALL

LAST PORT OF CALL

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Translated from the German by
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EDITION



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LAST PORT OF CALL

THERE were only a couple of minutes left before the departure of the *wagon-lits* train. Jorg stood at the window, looking down at Helen, who was on the platform below. He looked into her large brown eyes, raised to him, through a rising mist of tears. He saw her anxious little face ; he heard her speak, many trifling words, artificially gay, with an undertone of intense effort. With set teeth, with a strangling feeling in his throat, he kept repeating to himself, " Stick it out. Stick it out—even this. Only five minutes more ; this is the last thing."

How little she was, how delicate. How she shivered in the autumn wind that whistled across the platform ; how wrought up were her nerves in some mysterious foreboding ! And yet she knew nothing.

His wife, whom he was leaving now for such a long, long time. And she did not know it. And by her head bounced the two toy balloons—the green one and the red one. It looked so funny, so tragi-comic, the pale, sad face with the beseeching eyes, and the gay, bright balloons bumping the ridiculous, pert little hat. The balloons would be the last thing the children got from him. Tomorrow morning, when they woke up, they would find these tied to their beds. Laughing and shouting they would reach for them. They would scarcely listen when Helen told them Father was on a trip. That would be nothing new ; he was often on a trip. Only this time it would be for such a long time that they could not grasp the idea.

" —You must stick it out. You must stick out even this. The last thing.¹¹ He took pains to talk—trivialities, what one always said during any ordinary leave-taking.

He took pains to make his voice calm, sure, confident. He stole a look at the illuminated dial of the station clock. The figures jumped. There was the man in the red cap already. "—Stick it out. Stick it out just one minute more/'

Bending down, he took in his hands the little face, framed in its fur collar, and kissed it. Helen rose on tiptoe to reach his lips. How light she was ! With a swing of his arms he could have pulled her up to him. " Go home safe, darling ; kiss the kids for me. Don't forget you need to fill up the car."

" Have a good trip, Jorg, and come back soon—come back soon, do you hear ? And take care of yourself ! "

He let her go. She ran a few steps alongside the train—her quick, short steps in her little high-heeled shoes, alongside the great sleeping-car, which moved ever faster. He could still have dashed to the door and jumped out. " The last ; the very last is here. Stick it out." He ground his teeth together still harder, for there she was, crying, waving a tiny handkerchief. He *had* to look through her ; he could not bear to look at her.

" How much longer do I have to bear looking back at her ? " he asked himself, but then the long wall of the car bulged toward the platform, and a merciful curve took her from view.

He sank down on the bunk. He wanted desperately to howl like a lost dog. The leave-taking—the deception of it—the months of deception while he got ready. The years of struggle for determination. The nervous collapse that followed the decision. The harried years of the life that had gone before. He felt like a man who has opened the arteries in his wrists ; the stream of life had almost run out. He was pale, feeble, ridiculously weak and empty—perfectly empty. If he were to howl now, it would be simply from weakness. The last strength, even for pain, was exhausted.

But with him in the compartment was a perfect stranger, who was preparing for sleep with the same zeal and the same haste as for a money transaction. As if through a veil, Jorg saw this man creep into horribly striped coloured pyjamas, and, growling at the draught and the inconvenience of the ladder, climb up above.

No, it had not quite ended, this business of pulling one's self together. It was easy now, ridiculously easy, compared with the long, horribly anguished farewell that had gone before. It's a good thing I drank something, Jorg thought. In fact, that I drank a good deal; there was no other way.

The train was now roaring along. The electric locomotive tore arcs of light from the overhead wires ; they flickered pale and blue as heat lightning along the line. A big flying-field was illuminated by floodlights ; red lanterns shone from neighbouring factory chimneys. There was a buzzing, a red and a green light in the air : a plane was landing.

Waking up, Jorg was in Berlin, astonished to find he had slept soundly.

That morning in the capital he had a great deal to do. He had to think of Christmas and of Helen's birthday. The children—for Christmas they were to be reminded of Father. He went into a big toy-shop, quite empty so early in the morning. It was disagreeable to be the centre of attention for a dozen shopgirls, all in black with little white collars. A tall, stout person with grey hair done up high, obviously the senior on the floor, rustled towards him.

" What can I do for you ? "

" I don't exactly know yet ; I'd like to look first."

She nodded graciously and with dignity, a queen-mother : " Boy or girl ? " Her voice overflowed with encouraging affability. (As false as a lady's voice on a parish visit, he thought.)

" Both/¹ he said curtly.

" And how old, if I may inquire ? " She was still affable, but making an effort, with an injured undertone.

He stood and stared at her, frowning. What business of hers were his children ? How dared she torture him by asking about the children he was leaving ? He said nothing, but his eyes spoke plainly. The woman grew anxious and uneasy ; this was a difficult customer. Was not his look, in fact, quite crazy ? " We only want to help you find something, sir/" she trilled sweetly.

We—the royal We—a plague, these old queen-mothers in grand shops, he thought. He said aloud, " No need, miss; I'll make my own choice. Where's your winter sports section ? "

She nearly lost command of herself. Her corsets cracked as she struggled for breath. " Our winter sports section ? But this is September, sir ; our winter sports section is not open yet. For the autumn season, for instance, we have kites : Steiff Monoplanes—something absolutely first-class ..."

" Give me your catalogue." He was brusque to the point of rudeness ; he hated the creature. With a silent inclination full of grave disapproval, she rustled off. She did not come back.

In her place a shy, very young girl brought the catalogue. She blushed and looked up at him with scared eyes as she handed the book over at arm's length. Jorg smiled and became gentle at once. She had nothing to fear—she was half a child herself. The old dragon apparently had had enough of him, and now they had turned loose the youngest of all the girls.

He skimmed through until he found the skis. She was seven now, Elke, his little girl. He felt instinctively for the spot in his ribs : this was how high she came when she stood beside him. When she raised her arms, she

could encircle his neck. He saw the garden, the garden gate and his little girl. How she rushed up, hair flying in the wind ! The books thumped in her schoolbag, and the pencil-case rattled——Even yesterday——

"A ski has to be as tall as you can reach with your hand, doesn't it ? "

" For children not quite that long/' How eager she was, and how proud that she was managing the " difficult customer " !

They agreed on the size. He chose the binding and the poles. She described the air-tight fastening of the ski-suit ; she understands children, and knows the things she's selling.

" All right, now you can help me find something for the boy. He's three ; he'll be four about Christmas." Suddenly it was no longer torture to speak of the children. On the contrary, it was good for him ; he had the feeling that this young girl understood.

He chose a splendid Noah's Ark for Jan, with many animals. Was it solid enough for the bathtub and other perils ? Yes, it was solid enough.

" You'll promise me that the things will be sent in good time for Christmas ? " She promised, and he knew he could depend on it. The cashier asked for his address : " We'd like to send you our catalogue regularly."

He smiled. Where would this catalogue reach him, if at all ? Then he wrote : *Jorg Borcke, o/o Crosby Mann & Co., Adelaide, South Australia.*

He said good-bye to the little salesgirl, who held the door for him, and the cashier gazed after him with a look of astonishment. " Crazy, that fellow; absolutely barmy," came the voice of the queen-mother from the background. No longer sugary and oily, it was sharp and hard like the stones of the great city. He nodded : probably she was right. He probably seemed that way to most people. He had long suspected it.

He was very glad that the whole day was filled with errands, that he had to rush to catch the night train for Copenhagen. It was good to be busy and on the go ; protected him from thinking.

In the dining-car he drank several bottles of strong Swedisch beer. He wanted to sleep—to sleep under all circumstances, and forget his fear. He knew that this fear was ridiculous, but that altered nothing : it was there.

The fear that something about the trip might have leaked out. Perhaps a telegram at the next station was waiting to call him imperiously back. Perhaps he would be arrested at the border. Why ? There was not the slightest reason. He was no criminal ; even his taxes

It was mad, but all through recent years he had felt »boundary walls growing higher, ever higher around him. It had grown ever harder to travel.

It was not the fault of his country, not the fault of his country ; it was the joint fault of a Europe torn down in its foundations.

He gave passport and ticket to the guard and lay down to sleep. It was a restless sleep ; several times he started up out of a dream that high walls were crashing down on him, but each time it was only the train hammering across bridges or junctions. When the border came, he was lying wide awake. More and more slowly the painted globes of a platform slid by the rain-splashed window of the sleeping-car. Voices echoed from the iron roof ; outside in the corridor one could hear the creaking of wheels and murmuring voices of customs and police officials, a few compartment doors slid back, light-switches clicked, benches scraped, keys jingled. Would they come in to see him, too ? He waited with the tenseness of a thief in hiding. And yet he had nothing to declare ; his baggage is absolutely in order. It was the matter of being super-

vised in general—a psychosis, of course ; a psychosis that developed all too easily in these times.

The steps, the voices departed, as the last water sucks out of the bathtub. Gently, with no jarring of the buffers, the train slid forward. A rail joint thudded under the wheels, and then came a strange feeling : the ground grew soft, as when one steps from pavement to a bridle-path, and it sank under the weight of the car, rocking gently. The train braked to a standstill.

Jorg rolled over in bed with a deep sigh of relief, and in the next moment was fast asleep. A load had fallen from him, a heavy weight. In his dream he saw the scene outside. Waking he had seen it often enough—the station, the quiet harbour close beyond, the masts of the fishing-boats with nets hoisted on high. The long mole with the exclamation-point of the lighthouse, the white sabre-strokes of the circling lights over the sea and over the night-blackened roofs of the little city. The big white ferry-ship with the single visible red eye ; it looked like an albino. The flags of smoke from its stacks waved loosely across the starry sky. It had opened its bow as a mighty whale opens its maw. Into this maw the train had now ridden.

How pleasant it was to sleep, rocked on the sea ! Wood creaked round about ; through a faint vibration one felt the work of the propellers. Now he was fast, fast asleep ; the sleepless exhaustion of weeks, of months overtook him, fell upon him.

When the guard knocked, the suburbs of Copenhagen were already sliding by.

He bathed and took breakfast in a little hotel which was not yet awake. To the harbour ! Would it be there, the ship—*his* ship ? He crumpled the telegram in his pocket: " Notre Dame cleared 23rd September. Peterson/¹ The trip from Mariehamn might take three days, but it might also take a week. It depended on

the wind. This was what Magnus Peterson's shipping firm had written. Schliebach, the firm's agent in the Amaliegade, would know the state of affairs in any case.

When Jorg got to the Amaliegade, past the royal palace, past the sentries who marched up and down out in front (they looked like stuffed cloth soldiers, with their bearskins and chin-straps, their bandoliers and fat, bright red cheeks), Schliebach's office was not yet open. "They won't open before nine," said one of the red-coated letter-carriers, who seemed to be from the same box of toys as the castle, the sentry-boxes and the soldiers.

Jorg Borcke strolled past the naval observatory. There hung the weather-map of the Baltic, with all its barometric curves and painted wind indicators. He studied it. North wind. Not bad for a course from the Aaland islands over to Copenhagen ; but how long had that wind been blowing ?

He went through the customs gate by the harbour out on to the broad, stone quay.

The goods that lay there were still covered with tarpaulins ; it was still quiet over at Burmeister's dock-yard ; only on a battleship which lay anchored could you hear drums and whistles, the beginning of the day's duty. The sun was just rising over a cloud-bank. The grey stone of the quay took on a warm colour, and the air over it flickered. The first boats furrowed the harbour, the first workmen gathered at the ferries. Life was beginning.

Jorg let his eyes roam the harbour. There was smoke-stacks enough, and short, bare steamer-masts.

To the left was the harbour mouth. It was quite empty. Far outside one saw the sea, a silvery ribbon, perfectly smooth ; in the same way that a great, wrinkled face grows smooth in sleep. An islet, round, mounted with cannon (they poked out like pins from a pin-cushion),

divided the horizon, and beyond, far, far away, hardly recognizable, were two ships.

Mere dots—no, not dots, exclamation-points—tiny wedges.

The man turned hot and cold ; he did not know whether what he saw was the longed-for sight, but he rushed forward to the edge of the quay, and even as he ran he dug in his overcoat pocket for his field-glasses. He put them to his eyes, and suddenly the flickering light grew sombre, and wavered vaguely ; the horizon was no longer smooth, but stirred by the swell ; and as the glasses moved in uneven jerks across the horizon, something large shot into view, spookily distorted by the wavering air : a four-masted sailing vessel.

The man kneeled on the quay and rested the glasses on the bulwark ; he could not hold them still, his hands trembled so. There it was again, ghostly, unreal, floating high over the water, as though it did not sink in at all. High, high masts, slender, infinitely slender ; yards and rigging seemed scratched with the finest of etching-needles. Forward and upward the long bowsprit rose boldly from the arched prow—beak, neck and breast of a great, beautiful bird. From the rear mast waved the Finnish flag, white with a blue cross, like snow and blue snow-shadow. Letters danced on the bow and arranged themselves if you held the glasses quite firm ; slowly he spelt out through the tremulous air, "*L'-A-v-en-tu-re.*" The glasses whipped onward ; the second ship came into view and remained there. With bated breath he read, "*Notre Dame—des Vogues.*"

His ship. He lowered the glasses, stood up, took a deep breath. His ship ; his dream had come. It had come true. He would live on that thing out there, distant and unearthly as a star. It drew him with the mysterious force of those stars which guide our destiny.

It was destiny out there waiting for him. He could feel it.

Schliebach's office was open when Jorg got back to the Amaliegade. Jorg was shown into a room as small as a cabin. An old man with wrinkled face and dangling pince-nez, beaming with business and hospitality, brought a glass of port. This is how the ship-chandler receives captains, his best customers, and so, too, he received the rare bird who was shipping as a passenger for Australia on Peterson's ship.

Jorg liked the room ; it was homely, with its panelled walls, with its shelves bearing bottles and samples of provisions, with its many photographs of sailing ships on the wall, even though these pictures mostly showed disasters—ships on reefs, ships rammed by steamers, derelict sailing ships with stumps for masts, towed by tugs.

The old man put down a writing-pad, took his pencil from behind his ear, and looked at Jorg, expectantly, with wrinkled brow.

Jorg smiled. It was really time to think of his outfit. He ordered Marseilles soap in heavy, yard-long blocks. China tea. Cigarettes in sealed tins. Dutch tobacco in blue packets with gold labels. Some bottles of lemon-juice. Shaving things and toothpaste. And then the most important thing—a case of whisky.

The old man looked up anxiously : " Ninety days, a hundred days—it may be a hundred and twenty days, Mr. Borcke. ..."

" All right, then, two cases of whisky/¹

" And when do you want to go aboard ? You've plenty of time. *Notre Dame* won't be finished fitting out to-day ; you can perfectly well have another evening in Copenhagen/

He shook his head. "I'm through with dry land. I want to go aboard. As soon as possible/

" You can go this afternoon with the provision boat. Four o'clock,"¹

That was splendid. He went to his hotel and wrote a letter.

" DEAR HELEN,—The worst part of this letter will be that I couldn't tell it to you before. . . ."

He took a long time. He tried to explain everything to her, and felt how hopeless explanation was. It couldn't be grasped with the understanding at all. He did not understand it himself. But what drove him was unchanged. It was a matter of life and death.

Writing was easier when he came to the arrangements for the time of his absence. " And kiss my children for me," the letter closed.

Much too early he was standing with his hand-luggage in front of the provision boat, a clumsy lighter remodelled into a motor-boat. The skipper stowed the things way down under the oiled tarpaulin. " It's going to be wet; there's a gale blowing outside. But there's a good hour before we leave,"

Jorg strolled along the waterfront, but he saw the city no longer. With all its life and its people it had become strangely shadowy. He would not have been surprised to see it dissolve into the sky like a *fata Morgana*. The air seemed oddly thin to breathe. Only the tower of the Bourse seemed real, a copper queue, huge and pointed, fantastically braided of the tails of sea-monsters which slavered with wide-open mouths after the men far below. The Hanseatic merchants had lived with this threat of the sea ; they had felt it ; the leviathans, the sea-serpents, the storms were something very real.

He bought an oilskin and an Iceland sweater of heavy, rough wool, brown and white ; it smelt of sheep ; there were still moss and twigs in the wool. Now there was nothing more to get ready.

The crude-oil motor blubbered ; the broad-bellied

provision boat turned her prow seaward. Jorg crouched beside the skipper in the tiny, glassed-in pilot-house. A short, hard sea rolled towards the harbour mouth. The boat stamped, shattered the waves with her bow as with a blunt hatchet. Beyond the fortified island the waves grew longer. The bow raised itself like a threatening fist, crashed into the waves ; spray, surging up, hid the view and foamed across the decks. The motor ran irregularly ; when the screw bobbed out of water it had an ill-tempered roar. Blue, stinking oil fumes filled the pilot-house. In the wind was a hardness, an implacability such as Jorg had not felt for a long, long time. He stuck his head above the sliding roof ; icy as it was, the wind was better than the oil fumes. He wanted to see his ship.

It lay before the cloud-bank of sunset, and it grew. The anchor chain was stretched out far in front of it ; its sails were reefed so tightly that the masts looked bare, like trees in winter ; you could see the waves running along the white flanks of the ship below the waterline.

It was almost dark by the time the rolling, pounding boat was near enough for the *Notre Dame* to bulge over it. Jorg felt as if he were standing before a cathedral of dizzying height. He saw faces leaning over the rail ; a voice cried something which the wind blew away. But the skipper seemed to understand ; he steered the provision boat through a curve under the stern of the barque, over to the other side.

" When we're alongside the ladder, jump. Nothing doing with the provisioning to-day; too much sea running. I'll be back to-morrow early, at six in the morning. Tell them that up there."

" And the baggage ? "

" We can't get at it now, it's all on the bottom."

A rope ladder hung overside ; its end, trailing in the water, was yanked hither and thither by the waves. Breakers slapped high between provision boat and

Notre Dame. The motor ground whiningly in neutral. "Now!"

Jorg jumped. As he grabbed the ladder it slid sideways, so that his feet found no purchase. He felt a sudden stab of cold; a wave had licked up to his knees. He clambered. The ladder tilted sideways; his overcoat caught, he was conscious of being very clumsy. Then a fist grabbed his shoulder, a huge force which caused him almost to fly up the last rungs; he was swung over the bulwark, and found himself standing on the deck. "Good evening," he said.

From the shadowy forms which stood around him in the dark came a gentle, friendly murmur. Then there was silence.

It was as silent as when you shut the door of a noisy factory behind you. Behind the bulwarks you did not feel even the wind. But above, in the ghostly, airy regions of the masts, roared the storm, a strangely hollow humming and singing: like giant wind-harps, mingling with the sky. Or like a mighty organ about to give out its first note, except that the note does not come.

Jorg was unspeakably disconcerted. This was the strangest place he had ever been in. He looked around at the shadowy forms of unknown objects and felt the eyes of the human shadows resting on him—men of another people and another tongue.

At last a young man approached him, shook his hand, spoke incomprehensible words, and led him inside the ship.

A white corridor. A door. A glimmer of yellow light. Jorg stumbled over a high sill, and the door closed behind him.

It was a low room with dark panelled walls. The brass frames of portholes shone in the light of a big oil-lamp hanging in a lyre-shaped frame from the ceiling. A long table with a sofa on one side, and swivel chairs,

screwed down, on the other side divided the room. At the far end of the table sat a man.

He looked up from a book. They looked at each other for seconds ; and Jorg, every instinct alert at this moment, knew: " This is a man such as you have never seen before ; this is the loneliest man in the whole world,"

It was a lion's head, framed with a blond beard, but it did not have a lion's eyes. Big, blue eyes, deep-sunk, burned in that face ; they looked at him, yet they were looking wholly into the distance—into the distance and into eternity. From these eyes it welled, the wave of loneliness which flowed around the man.

He stood up. He was not tall—a good deal shorter than Jorg. But he was so broad-shouldered that he seemed as massive as a very tall man. He raised his arm when he held out his hand, and it seemed as if a sledge-hammer was lifted. Jorg felt his hand gripped as it had never been since he was a small child, and he had to grit his teeth to keep back a cry of pain.

" I'm your passenger," he said, and saw that even these words were superfluous. After all, the captain knew who he was.

Captain Andersson pointed to a chair. Both men sat down. Both looked in embarrassment at the table-cover, which was of green baize. Neither spoke.

Jorg looked up first. A strange, shy smile, not at all unfriendly, was about the captain's lips. The mighty hands were spread on the green cloth like the paws of a great St. Bernard, and yet as well-mannered as the hands of a strictly brought-up child at table. He wore a blue suit of thick, rough material, stiff, as if chiselled in stone. The shirt was very white, but not ironed. There was no ash-tray on the table, and no smell of smoke. The man appeared to be a non-smoker—a disquieting thought.

He looked around further. A green tile-stove in the background. A cloudy mirror above it. Mahogany cup-

boards in the corners. Over the table a skylight, surrounded with flower-shelves from which sparse greenery hung down. Two doors in the wall opposite the entrance. The dark mahogany of the walls reflected the light and the things in the room. Beside the stove, hung in rings, was a big mercury barometer. The book the captain had been reading was a number of *The National Geographic Magazine*.

Jorg noticed this last with satisfaction : he could be sure of finding some relation to the man who was reading that.

Jorg got up; he was to live her£* for a long time, perhaps for half a year.

" It's really blowing some outside now,"

" Did you get wet ? The steward will be coming with tea."

Jorg looked, rather ashamed, at the puddle spreading from his feet across the carpet. The voice had been very friendly, and yet distant, peculiar, dignified—a voice such as one sometimes finds in very old people who live in retirement.

The steward, very clean, very careful in his motions, spread a white cloth over a corner of the table. Tea came, steaming hot, and a cold supper. These were encouraging things, the first warmth amid this great, cool strangeness.

" When do we sail ? "

" As soon as the provisions are aboard. We're just waiting for a favourable wind. With the west wind we can't get out of the Kattegatt."

The steward came back with a little brass oil-lamp in his hand. He disappeared behind one of the doors in the background.

Jorg reported on the provision boat and the absence of his baggage ; the captain replied hesitantly, carefully, shyly. Perhaps it was because he did not speak English

very well, Jorg thought. Jorg felt the leaden exhaustion, the dead-tiredness of many wakeful nights, descending on him again. He was limp. He had reached his goal, but he no longer had the strength to take in anything unfamiliar.

" May I see my cabin ? "

The steward showed him. As he got up, Jorg said good-night to the captain, glad that this day was over.

He saw hardly more of his cabin than was absolutely necessary at the moment. A little mahogany washstand. A piece of soap (thank Heaven that *at least this was there*). A berth, made up with sheets, the blanket turned back. Two portholes ; outside, the rush of the sea.

He crept into the bed, long unused and damp with sea air. He would have to get up again to blow out the oil-lamp. That was a horrid thought. For the moment he lay shivering, blinking at the light, too cold and too much shattered to get up. Contrary to his hopes and expectations, he could not sleep for a long time. His notebook was within reach, and he wrote in it :

" No pyjamas,
No toothbrush,
No shaving things,
No whisky,
Nothing to smoke,

but plenty of cold, wet, headache and sniffles.

" Such is Wednesday, 2gth September, the first evening aboard the *Notre Dame*."

Over night the wind went down, but the provision boat was not yet in sight when Jorg went on deck early in the morning. He felt very strange and embarrassed under the eyes of the crew. People were tactful enough to pay no particular attention to him as he passed, but he could feel on his back the eyes looking after him. He had to pull himself together vigorously. There was no

sense in postponing an acquaintance that had to' come. He had had a definite preconception of the Finnish people as being of a Slavic type ; it was wrong. These seamen were unquestionably of purest Nordic blood, tall, slender almost to emaciation, and strangely supple, almost cat-like, in their movements. Their faces, too, were narrow and bony. Steel and longing were oddly mixed in their eyes; the expression was quite indescribable. How young they all were, how astonishingly young ! Jorg saw only one man, the cook, with a rounded figure. Two had Slavic cheekbones and Slavic eyes in their triangular, sharp-edged faces, and one was a Latin, a fisherman type from the Mediterranean—black-haired, dark-skinned, with rather thick lips, so that one might have imagined a dash of negro blood. Most of them wore Iceland sweaters, whose sprinkled wool covered the trunk thickly like feathers ; others had grey overalls ; the steersmen, leather jackets. Knitted or fur caps were pulled down on heads ; the men's big hands looked purple and frozen. It was bitterly cold ; a thin layer of hoarfrost on the planks of the deck crunched under foot. There was rime, too, on yards, on shrouds, and stays, clinging to the railing and the furled sails. The ship looked old—old and grey.

And old she was, *Notre Dame des Voques* : everywhere Jorg saw traces of it. There was the verdigris-covered copperplate of her shipyard at St. Nazaire, with the year she was built—1900. That was Jorg's year. Perhaps our birthdays are the same day, he thought; who knows ? He approached the huge steering-wheel. It was two wheels on the same axle ; each one was as high as a man, built like a heavy wagon-wheel with strong brass fittings. The handles were worn down : sailors' hands of many years had rubbed them away. The chart-room was open, a little penthouse of mahogany planks, bleached and almost lilac-coloured, soaked in sea-water and rain. In-

side was a battered leather sofa, screwed to the wall, and opposite it a big table. Rolls of charts were behind lattice partitions under the low ceiling. Curled up in a corner of the sofa lay a huge cat, yellow, and striped like a tiger. She was asleep.

Jorg looked over the bulwarks, and in the slanting light of the new day he saw the ship's side, salt-encrusted, rusted at the waterline, and everywhere covered with scars, covered with bruises, spattered with old and new paint-spots—an old, much-patched dress. He saw new rigging aiming upward at the sky-high masts, fresh golden flax like girls' hair ; but most of the rigging was old, dark grey, crumbling, stretched, frayed, with dangling fibres. Blocks like great fruits hung in the rigging ; similar blocks rose from ring-bolts on deck and sprouted like buds from the bulwarks. In the course of years and years, cables had, by rubbing, worn them down, ground the edges to a curve, ground them off, ground them thin. The yards were fastened to the masts in a peculiar fashion : steel double arms, quite human-looking, gripped the yards with gigantic claws. What a thick and mighty beam one such yard was—a weight of many tons. Almost menacingly it hung over the pigmy man. How tremendously strong and heavy it all was !

By way of a narrow gang-board, Jorg went forward upon the fo'c'sle, and as he walked he felt how the body of the ship curved upward. Steamers, he knew, were much flatter. The bowsprit went steeply heavenward ; it was so thick that one could comfortably walk it. A net of rope was spread underneath it ; at the very tip was a shark fin, sitting like an admiral's hat. From there one could survey the ship as from a hill. The shark fin felt like stiff rubber.

Jorg sat down astride, bracing his feet on the edge of the net. He looked up, along the curved line of the stays to the mastheads, and downward along the bow,

which cut the water like the blade of a sabre. He was almost dizzy. How far away he was here from the solid body of the ship ! How large all the proportions were—they seemed bigger than those of any steamer he had known (and he had travelled on many a great ship). The *Notre Dame* was a whole world, a saurian, a prehistoric ship which reached over strangely into our age. And yet she's no older than I, he thought. But how weather-beaten ! How much she has been hurled about during her life by the seas and their storms ! How long will she hold together ? This trip ?

And it was strange : he felt a strong attraction for this ship, a nearness, a family relation. Were they not of an age ? Had not he, too, been flung about, dishevelled, weather-beaten by life ? Steeped in the dregs of life, bearing a burden, weary, used up ? Perhaps he was better preserved outside ; that was the tailor's handiwork. But this was how he felt inside. The unspeakable fatigue, the *tedium vita*, descended upon him again. He ran his hand over the rough rust of the bowsprit ; " Brother," he murmured.

From the harbour mouth the provision boat came pounding through the sea, rough as it was still. On the *Notre Dame* a motor was got ready. Yes, they had motors on deck—four, one behind each hatchway. But Jorg had not recognized them as motors ; weren't those steam-engines ? They were like the toy steam-engine he had had as a child, tall and narrow like a chimney. They had tremendous flywheels, and were heated up with a soldering torch. A helmsman, a mechanic and a whole troop of sailors stood about the prehistoric machine. The soldering torch hissed, many little wheels were turned, nuts were twisted ; afterward the men shook their burnt fingers. There was a stink of petrol and frying cup-grease. Now the whole cluster of men turned the fly-

wheel. Steam hissed from petcocks, and a hollow boom-boom came from the cylinder ; then the flywheel stood still again. They tried again and again. Jorg, leaning over the rail of the gangway, was astonished and touched to watch the machine, as if he were meeting a grandfather long believed dead. He was used to pressing a starter button : that was all, and then the motor would be running. At last the monster started with an ever-quicker boom-boom. Six men wiped the sweat from their eyes ; from the crankcase came a rattle like the shaking of a basketful of old screws.

Heave by heave the provisions came aboard in big baskets. It was like Christmas : the whole crew, with beaming faces, helped unpack and stow away. Here was provision for the long journey ; it was a good feeling to know all the things that were coming aboard. Corned-beef kegs with American trademarks, sacks bursting with peas and beans. Shiny, golden margarine tins, packed by the dozen in crates. Great piles of codfish, grey, feeling like dry wood and almost as hard. Tinned vegetables, jam, oatmeal in zinc drums. Cases of hard-tack, cases of bottles, new boat rudders, bags of flour, a foghorn, potatoes, bottles of acid for the batteries, tools, pots and pans for the galley.

It was quite impressive to see how much thirty men needed ; of course, it was for almost a year.

Finally came the biggest pleasure of all : all the little packages, shopping for the crew, which the ship-chandler had done—oilskins, work clothes, blankets, soap, writing-paper, fishing-tackle. Most of them could not wait to see their treasures, but opened the packages on the spot, and showed them around admiringly. What childlike pleasure, what children's faces when they laughed ! The oldest sailor certainly was not more than nineteen years old, the youngest boy probably scarcely fifteen—a handsome youngster with glowing cheeks, always on the jump,

running out of sheer joy in life, laughing with sparkling white teeth.

Jorg got his things together out of the big pile and carried them to his cabin. It looked like a warehouse for several hours before everything was stowed away. A bottle of raspberry-juice had leaked ; had ruined the bundle of books.

But each thing he unpacked reminded him of the home he had left. The little clock in the leather case had been a birthday-present. The handkerchiefs—Helen had ironed them, and put them in his bureau. And now the letter was on its way, the awful letter, the confession of his flight. In an express train it was roaring across the broad plain to the mountains where the little house stood. To-morrow morning the letter would probably be there. Jorg broke open one case of whisky. It was excellent wood; the nails resisted, and the sharp iron bands cut his fingers. But it had to be got open. Taking a deep breath, he drew the square bottle from its straw covering. The whisky had a fine amber colour ; it smelt like a peat bog, and ran down the throat like a gentle flame. He felt an urge to get drunk, to forget at any price, until every possibility of return was cut off. " This is a hell of a state," he murmured to himself, " you miserable weakling. Cowardly dog ! I do believe I'm quick sick," he added.

Captain Andersson had gone ashore to settle with the ship-chandler and to clear the *Notre Dame* ; Jorg did not see him all day. At dusk, under a lowering, rainy sky, the ship's tiny motor-boat battled its way back. The captain sat at the wheel, his eyes squinted up, his oilskin shining and dripping with wet. On the horizon sparkled the red electric advertisements of Copenhagen.

At supper there was a bottle of *aqua vitce* on the table. The captain poured with a certain solemnity, as if at an

unusual event. The glasses were long-stemmed, small and delicate. They touched glasses : " To the journey. Skoal," Jorg smiled. He knew they would drink together this evening, sniff at each other, try each other out. Then they would know how they were going to get along at sea. He was pleased. That was a fine idea : " Skoal! " The glasses were filled again at once.

" What are we waiting for ? "

" For the wind. It's hard to get out of the Kattegatt with the prevailing west wind."

" Can't we tack ? "

" No. We have no cargo. We're sailing in ballast. Now the *Notre Dame* draws so little water, and the channel is so narrow in the Kattegatt, that you don't gain anything by tacking. Too much leeway,"

" Do you always sail in ballast on the way out ? "

" For the last six years."

" How does that happen ? "

Andersson laughed bitterly. " We can't get any more cargoes. The shippers will no longer have anything to do with us. We're too slow for them. We can't promise any definite delivery dates. We're forgotten—a hundred years—oh, what am I talking about, a thousand years behind the times. You'll find that out."

" But the sailing vessels do still get wheat in Australia."

" Yes. But do you know why ? Because the shippers save storage charges ? "

" Storage charges ? "

" Storage charges. Wheat prices mostly go up in the spring. The speculators count on that. Not only are our rates lower, our trips are so long that we store their wheat in our hold for them all winter, free of charge."

" I've read a lot about the grain race of the sailing vessels from Australia to Europe."

" That's what they write in the papers. But it's

not true. The longer we're on the seas, lost to the world, the better the world likes it."

Andersson filled the glasses. At first he had spoken cautiously and hesitantly; gradually his voice filled with a passionate bitterness. Jorg could tell clearly, as if it were a visible process, that the lonely man was about to open his bosom. It was as if there were a mountain of loose rubble below the lion's head; a few stones were breaking loose and tumbling; soon would come the avalanche.

"Does sail still pay, then?"

"No. For years and years we've been running at a loss. Even in good years we scarcely earned anything for the owner—perhaps fifty pounds each ship. But that doesn't even cover depreciation. It can't go on much longer. He's already saying that he'll have to buy a steamer."

He looked toward the wall. Jorg followed his eye, and saw a picture of Captain Peterson. The slender head, grey, a Viking head, but much refined. The eyes had a look of grave concentration; the mouth was very thin. There was something tired and sad in the expression; a long, thin necktie with a small knot added to the effect. That was he—the last shipowner in the whole world who put his faith in sail. And even he seemed to have given up hope of success; he, who owned the last fleet of sailing vessels: eleven great barques.

Jorg felt the first fumes of the alcohol rising to his head. "Welcome, welcome!" He raised his glass toward the picture, and the captain followed: they drank to Captain Peterson.

"Is there no possibility of making the ships pay any more?"

"No. We already have the lowest wages in the whole world. A mate with us doesn't even get as much as a sailor anywhere else. We have only six A.B.'s on

board. And even they are half children. The rest are apprentices. They don't get paid at all; they have to pay extra—about twenty pounds for two years' training. Apart from that, the only others on board who get paid are the three workmen—the motor mechanic, the carpenter, the sailmaker."

"What are the Peterson ships worth to-day ? "

A new avalanche crashed down. " Their scrap value. Seven years ago we bought the *Notre Dame* from the Frenchmen for a thousand pounds. Even that was about the scrap value. It can't decline much more. For similar prices we bought sailing ships from England, from Germany, from America, wherever they were giving up sail. After all, there are only two dozen big sailing vessels left in the world ; of those, Peterson has eleven. Of the rest, probably five or six have already sunk or been scrapped."

"Do the insurance companies want higher premiums for sailing vessels ? "

"That I can't say. We run without insurance."

"Uninsured ? " Jorg was astonished ; he came from a world where everything was insured.

¹¹ Absolutely uninsured. We have no wireless, either."

"But I saw the antenna——"

"Yes, that's still there. We *had* a wireless. It was taken out. You have to pay a fee, and you have to have a man who's passed the operator's examination. That's too expensive for us."

Jorg was moved and staggered. What impoverishment ! That was more than he had expected—yet greater loneliness, more irrevocable isolation. An idea occurred to him : "A radio ? "

The captain turned in his swivel chair and opened the little corner cupboard. "Here."

Jorg squinted ; already he had to take pains to keep from seeing double. He burst out laughing.

There was a radio, a model from the infancy of wireless, a comical little box with a weird structure of bulbs. The whole thing was wrapped in a tangled net of kinky wires. Beside it stood a storage battery.

" It only receives close to shore. And we can only use it to receive weather reports and time-signals. We have but the one storage battery. It's usually gone before we get to Australia."

" All right: *Prosit!*"

They drank. The bottle was empty. Jorg fetched the whisky bottle from his berth. When he got back to the cabin, Andersson had put a bottle of wine on the table. It was a wine Jorg had never drunk, wine from Australia. " Sparkling Hock " it was called ; it was bitter-sweet and heavy. It was strange to roll on your tongue the flavour of a continent you were about to visit.

Jorg watched the captain sharply. His heavy hand held the bottle in a vice. He filled the glasses with the precision of a machine, but his eyes were beginning to glow. The whole man seemed to be filled red-hot, as though the eyes were but peepholes to look inside. He watched his passenger with incredulous astonishment, like a creature from another world. Jorg returned the look ; he felt the same : the man opposite, with the lion's head, was a creature from another, an absolutely different world.

" You are married ? " It sounded urgent, as if the captain had wanted for a long time to ask.

" Yes,"

" Ah ! I've wanted for a long time to know a married man,"

Borcke leaned back in his chair. What was this ?

" You have children ? "

" Yes. Two. A boy and a girl,"

" And then you sail with us ? You have to travel—you have business in Australia ? "

Jorg shook his head. " No. I'm sailing to take a long sea trip. On a ship without passengers. Australia doesn't interest me."

The other man put his arms on the table ; they looked like sledge-hammers. He did it very cautiously, as if he had to prevent them from pounding down with a crash. " Wife—children—a house—you have a house ? "

" Yes, a house "—Jorg's speech was forced. Then defiantly, " A house in the mountains. With a garden round it."

" A house in the mountains," the captain repeated, as if in a dream. " Green country—trees—earth, flowers in the garden, aren't there ? And a wife. And children—children of his own. And he sails with the *Notre Dame*. Without having to. —I don't understand it. No, I can't understand that."

Jorg gazed at Andersson with burning eyes. How had the man stumbled on this abyss ? With what incredible accuracy he had pointed to it ! Was it instinct, vision, second sight ? Or was it that his—Jorg's—distress, torment, despair cried out without his opening his mouth ? Was he in such bad shape that he could no longer conceal his inner self from the world ?

He wanted to answer and explain. But too much came crowding up in him: boundless bitterness and helplessness. Impossible to express all that in words. There was the house in the mountains, but had he really possessed it; had he lived in it ? No : it gave his wife a home, and it gave the children soil on which to grow up properly. But his own life for years had been a chase that led him from one end of Germany to the other. Visions rose before him. Hotel rooms, a hundred different ones, and all alike. Shrill telephones, clock hands leaping from minute to minute, rattling typewriters, masses of cigarette smoke. He heard his own

voice ; hoarse and tired, it talked with hundreds of different people, always supporting the same proposition with almost the same words. He was exploiting that one of his talents which had proved to have market value, to be profession that would gain a livelihood. So long as this talent was still developing, its specialization was being perfected ; it ossified, and the emptiness began. He had struggled to get away from the whole business. He had tried to develop other things, new things ; but these ideas had proved to have no market value because nobody saw their future.

He had been confined, tied down to that one speciality, to that one tiny part of his brain. That was what people wanted of him, and nothing else. He had struggled, he had fought a good fight, and life had conquered him. It was necessary to live, to find bread for wife and child and for himself. He had submitted to the yoke, had let himself be enslaved⁷. A dull hate had gnawed into him deeper and deeper first at first only for his profession, and then for the people with whom he had to deal, who wanted only the one thing of him.

He was unjust; he knew he was. Millions of people had occupations just as unsatisfying and much more paltry. But then you could see the results ; you could see how these people grew numb, and finally died, mind and soul. One day he had discovered that he was on the verge of becoming one of those. This was so fearfully true that he had tried to kill his mind and soul. If only they were dead, life would be easier to bear, he had thought.

But drink did not have this power over him. The life within would be neither killed nor stupefied. But drink had another power: it could spoil this life within. It made him ugly. Ugly to people whom he loved more than anything in the world. " For them the wretched wildgoose-chase, for them this yoke, this self-degradation,

this fruitless slaving; condemned to life for them." When he first heard this voice whispering within, he was seized with hate for himself. It made him ill.

A new vision rose : the clinic, the operating-room, the tremendously bright, clear light, the whole fantastic apparatus which was gathered around him and somehow connected with his body. And he was all covered up except for the one spot the doctors were operating on, and he was awake. Even the anaesthetic could not dull this fearful wakefulness. Fascinated, the doctors looked at the one spot where they were performing their highly specialized miracles with their incredibly specialized fine instruments. " And nobody really cares about me ; not one has a trace of human sympathy. They dare not, or they could not operate so well. But that's why nobody knows what's really wrong with me."

And then the sick-room, the copper chamber of the inhalator humming softly, the tube in front of his mouth, the night-nurse nodding in her chair, the pale light before dawn against the window-frame. And outside on a bench, he knew, sat Helen ; she had waited for him all night, the woman he loved, the woman who loved him, his wife. And so great was his hatred of himself that he did not want to see her. He was like a beast that tries to perish alone, that creeps into its cave where no one can see it. But it was the inner anguish, not that of the body, which made him creep into his hole ; the operation had succeeded brilliantly—as was to be expected with such good surgeons.

And another image : he was himself getting into his car in front of the house, and heard his little boy's voice, disappointed, callous. " Oh, he's going away again, Father is—he's always going away from us, the old stupid. ..."

Many, many such pictures. They crowded up, they jostled one another; the figures pushed one

another from view, and new ones kept coming, and others yet.

He swallowed. He wanted to put the whole thing into one sentence. I came aboard here—I *fled* here to become a man again. I wanted to save myself and my work from a ruin that is worse than drowning at sea. . . .

But he was silent. How could anyone else understand that ?

Across from him a new avalanche came down unexpectedly and distracted him.

"That's what I've wanted. That is what I have longed for, my whole life long. A wife. Children. I'd have served them like royalty. Everything that you have, and—that you are leaving now." The voice filled with a bitterness that choked it, and the fists clenched on the table. "But it's no good for a seaman, wife and child. I probably wouldn't have been a good seaman if I had had them. Now I guess it's too late. I'm older than you, and I suppose your children are getting big already. You have to have children while you're young."

He drained his glass with a thirsty gulp, and Jorg emptied his ; he was wide awake now, with that clear head which comes after the first period of drunkenness—with that second-wind clarity which alone had made him capable of work lately. There was a man who was suffering, who was struggling with himself, whose soul was aflame, a living human being. This filled him with astonishment—was not that the rarest of all things in these times—a *man* ?

The captain got up and walked around the cabin with lowered head. Quick steps, and such a swing of the body that Jorg could feel the draught of air. Each time that he reached the wall, he flung himself restlessly around. He paced the cabin as a wild beast paces a narrow cage, Jorg thought.

Suddenly the lion's head straightened up, and the flaming eyes fixed on Jorg. "Do you by chance suppose that anybody is on the *Notre Dame* of his own free will? The boys? They're here because they have to serve their time on the last sailing ships. Legal requirements—already antiquated and abolished in most countries. The few sailors? Fisher boys that don't know anything else, that couldn't amount to anything on land with all the unemployment. The mates? Twenty-one, twenty-two—once we would hardly have made them A.B.'s. To-day we *have* to promote them, because we can't get any others! They're just waiting their chance to get a steamer. On my ship—aboard my *Notre Dame*—I'm the *only one* who loves this ship, who believes in it." He pounded his chest, and there was a dull echo through the thick, blue jacket. "The only one. When these ships have died out, that will be the last of me, too. I won't run any steamer."

Jorg stared. Mechanically he emptied his glass. The wine began to taste flat. It was impossible that what the man said could be true. He was exaggerating. How could ships sail if that was the state of things? But he could not contradict. After all, he knew nothing about it.

He reached for the whisky bottle and filled the glasses; it was time to change to a clean, clear drink. Wine confused things; whisky made them clear—that much was certain.

Andersson was silent. He seemed to be ashamed; he had said too much. His face was dark red. "I'm going over to the *L'Aventure*. Coming along?" he said roughly.

"Splendid idea!" Jorg swayed as he got up; he had to pull himself together to stand straight and walk straight.

On deck the wind was blowing in icy puffs; a nearby

beacon whipped over their heads. In the depths below danced the little boat. The captain blew a shrill whistle ; the man on watch hauled in the painter. Jorg followed Andersson down the pilot ladder, the whisky bottle in his jacket pocket. He felt a pleasant shudder : this was adventure, with a dash of danger. It was a long time since he had done anything like this. It was like being young again.

In the boat a flashlight blinked. The captain poured petrol into the petcock of the motor cylinder ; Jorg saw the drops dribbling. He cast off the painter, and suddenly the boat shot away. It was a very primitive engine, with neither clutch nor reverse.

The black buffalo-backs of the waves plunged up and down threateningly, foam boiled along the sides, spray whipped over the gunwale, hissing angrily. Jorg sang at the top of his lungs ; it was magnificent to ride through the wild, black night ; it was magnificent to be drunk. Now he knew definitely that he was drunk.

After quite a while the shadow of the *L'Aventure* fell on them. The mass of the dark ship was tremendous ; only the anchor-light was burning.

The watchman threw them a line, and Jorg made it fast to the bow of the boat—very firmly, for fear he was too drunk to make the proper knots. The ladder seemed to wobble fearfully, and the wind tore at him.

Although he was no longer very capable of receiving impressions, he did feel the strangeness of the strange ship. He followed blindly in the wake of Andersson, who strode confidently into the saloon. He struck a match. The captain's oilskin glinted in the flickering light as he took off the chimney of the oil-lamp and held the flame to the wick—hand and arm still preserved the same iron, machine-like ease and certainty. The lamp burnt ; the cabin was bathed in light—a cabin just like the one on the *Notre Dame*.

" Captain Bjorklund is asleep. Come, well get him out of his bunk ! " Laughter sparkled in the great face, the laughter of a child ; the white teeth glittered. Jorg followed without more ado, the prickle of adventure behind him. By now he was ready for anything.

With both hands Andersson parted the curtain which shut off Captain Bjorklund's room. The brass rings sang shrilly along the rod. In the high, wide berth lay the man they were looking for, snoring heavily.

"I'll take the top, you the bottom ! " whispered Andersson. With a jerk he yanked off the covers, seized the man under the arms, and snatched him from his berth as if he were no weight at all. Jorg grabbed for the legs. The man uttered strange sounds as if he were being choked, and struggled ; but it did no good. They lugged him into the saloon, and threw him on the sofa, where he bounced like a big white ball. Jorg looked down on tangled strands of grey hair, on a big, reproachful face, on an open mouth from which streamed abuse in an unknown language. Then the face smoothed out and became the face of a child, despite the wrinkles, despite the grey hair. It began to smile, to beam. Jorg observed this phenomenon in astonishment, objectively, just as, when a child, he had watched a toy that made strange movements when one wound it up.

He mopped his forehead : the heat of the cabin was flooding his brain with a new wave of drunkenness. Suddenly there were several new people in the cabin. They all talked in Swedish at once, all shook hands with Jorg ; glasses tinkled, and suddenly bottles were standing on the table. Andersson stooped over Captain Bjorklund, who was lying in his night-shirt on the sofa, and stuck a cognac bottle between his lips. It looked as if he were trying to feed a suckling, and the man in the night-shirt sucked and sucked and laughed good naturedly, and salt water dripped from Andersson's oilskin on to

Bjorklund's face, and cognac ran yellowly over the white shirt.

Jorg felt himself positively overpowered with politeness ; that was his way when he was really drunk, and it was seldom enough he got that far. He heard himself talking, and heard himself begging pardon in every direction for having intruded so late and so inconveniently. A perfectly strange man in a black leather jacket pushed him down on the sofa and assured him everything was all right and simply lovely. And they drank.

The second (or was it the third ?) wave of soberness swept upon Jorg. All at once he heard Andersson speaking English again : he and Captain Bjorklund were old friends, or rather enemies. They had sailed on the last trip the same day ; north of Scotland they had met again, and then a second time near the Cape Verde Islands. Then for a long, long time they had not seen each other, but the race had gone right on. And one night the *Notre Dame* had entered Spencer's Gulf, had cast anchor seven miles off Port Lincoln, and he, Andersson, had gone to sleep after three sleepless nights. Five hours later, Bjorklund had dragged him out of his berth—just arrived. And now this was revenge.

Then nobody spoke English any more, but it was wonderful how Jorg suddenly understood Swedish, word for word, and everything was all friendship, and the bottles passed from mouth to mouth, and nobody thought about glasses any more. Drinking brought more than forgetfulness : it produced such a triumphant feeling that pain no longer ached. Jorg thought clearly of Helen and the children, but without agony, and at the same time he watched the people around him.

What heads! Large, narrow, close-cropped, with arcs of deep wrinkles around the mouth. Eyes, big and grey, like the North Sea in November, under heavy lids.

Grey beard-stubble in furrows of grey skin. Faces like distant landscapes. Faces of a hardness that never yields. Faces of childlike friendliness and gentleness. Ha, he thought (or perhaps he said it aloud), and I believed the Vikings were extinct. They are still alive. Perhaps we may see such faces again when the present generation of fliers has grown old. Perhaps we can win back the lost face of the Nordic people. But not these bodies. Not these powerful, catlike, supple bodies. Flying doesn't take bodily exertion, and sport doesn't develop bodies so massive.

Somebody accused him of not drinking enough out of the bottle. He defended himself vehemently. He drained a bottle, and turned it bottom up to show how empty it was. Then he felt himself seized as if by great waves, flung about, unresisting and happy.

How he got into the boat he did not know. Andersson was sitting at the wheel, and told him to crank the motor. He found the handle, turned ; the motor started, and Jorg collapsed like a wet sack across the wooden motor-housing. Shivers ran up and down his back; spray hissed against him, the roar was overpowering. He had no idea where they were going.

He heard Andersson give a rough and sickly cough, like a very old man. The boat danced, and he was afraid it might throw him into the water. Then everything was over, and it was proper that everything should be over. He hung with his head over the gunwale. Suddenly he heard the voice of the captain screaming at him : " Turn off the motor ! "

Jorg groaned with the exertion of finding the right handle. He fumbled, turned something, and the knocking of the machine ceased. The boat coasted to the pilot ladder. Andersson held it fast. How he got on board once again, Jorg did not know.

But when he awoke he found himself in his berth. He

was undressed. "Wonderful, really wonderful, what human energy can do!" he groaned. He did not feel at all well. But he had been happy, he had forgotten; and now it was right that he should pay for it.

Wretched, broken-down, he wandered the decks. Still the north wind. He hated the skyline of Copenhagen, which lay there immovably in the bright, cold sunshine. He hated the round, fortified island, that fat nest-egg in the ocean. He hated himself, hated the shameful condition he had brought himself to. And he had had a frightful dream, which still tormented him: he had taken leave again of Helen and the children, but they lived in New York in a slum street. Many neighbours and a whole flock of reporters had come to see the farewell. They crowded between him and the children, and his children looked hollow-cheeked and pale; they were indifferent to him; did not know him.

Could they not sail at last and free him of the insane temptation to throw himself into a boat and row ashore? He looked over the rail; the little motor-boat was hoisted out of water. Couldn't one swim over to the fortified island?

Late on the afternoon, while Jorg was sitting dully and gloomily in his dark cabin—he wanted to see no one—he heard the trample of many feet above him. He ran on deck.

A favourable wind had sprung up, south-south-east. The *Notre Dame* was putting on sail! The sun sank, cloud-banks grew from the sea; already the beacons were slashing about with their swords of light, and the skies glowed.

It was an incredibly beautiful sight to see the *Notre Dame* awake to life, to see her bare masts fill with sails. First the staysails went up; like snakes they crept up the wire ropes, then rustlingly unfolded like giant butter-

flies. Up forward one of the prehistoric engines hammered, driving the capstan. You could hear the rattle of the links as they tilted through the hawse-hole, and the rumble of heavy weights falling deep down in the belly of the ship ; the deck trembled. Ever more sharply the outline of the *Notre Dame* stood out against the flaming sky, and ever more sharply yonder the outline of the *L'Aventure* : you could see that they, too, were making ready to sail. The crew cast across jealous glances, even amid their frantic efforts. Who would have the canvas up first ? Captain Andersson swept a narrow strip of deck with his tiger pace. He did not interfere in the ringing commands of the mates. Often he stopped in mid-stride, cast a sharp look at the rigging, and paced on. He looked like a man in a trance ; he did not see Jorg at all, and Jorg took care not to speak to him.

The crew fairly raged with zeal as it worked, bubbling with youth and eagerness to be off. At last they were on their way ! The boys ran : they leaped high across timber-heads and loose cables ; they fell upon the pulleys like a pack of wolves, tore at the ropes as if they would tear flesh off slain prey. Each group had its leader, who set the time with unhuman sounds, now hollow, now shrilly dissonant, exciting, wild, uncanny, the howl of hyenas.

The shrouds trembled under hastily climbing feet. A black, wriggling pillar of men climbed into the evening sky ; yard-sails fell, shaking out their huge surfaces. On deck the young mates danced with impatience ; they roared up to the little men high in the heavens, who swayed hither and thither on the thin wire ropes that held their feet. They wished they might go aloft themselves—those fellows up there could do nothing right !

The upper yards were hoisted higher on the masts. Everyone helped, even the cook, in his high, white cap, which looked like an old-fashioned bathing-cap. Jorg

took a hand at the winches, and his blood grew hot like the others ; his breath came in gasps; he broke into a sweat, and he smelt the healthy, fresh sweat of the other men. Stars danced before his eyes from the exertion.

Yonder on the *L'Aventure* they had a steam-engine to hoist anchor. A white cloud came hissing from the ship's side, and a thick, black column of smoke whirled up between the masts. The old steam frigates must have looked like that, Jorg thought. A picture by Turner, seen in London, came to mind : a towering frigate with half-reefed sails, towed in by a side-wheeler against a green-and-pink sunset, the same sunset as here.

The anchor of the *Notre Dame* was now apeak, free of the ocean bed, trailing in the water. The head of the motor glowed cherry-red. Night had fallen. The lights of Copenhagen flamed and shifted slowly : the *Notre Dame* was dropping down the harbour. Slowly, infinitely slowly she glided toward the harbour mouth. For'ard two men climbed the steps to the fo'c'sle—one with a red, the other with a green, lantern. You saw nothing but the lanterns ; they seemed to float by magic. The loveliest red, the loveliest green in the world, Jorg thought. He turned and saw that the compass light, too, was lit, and in the weak yellow light appeared the ghostly figure of the man, the silent, watchful man at the helm, his eye fixed alternately on compass and sails, his hands firmly on the spokes of the wheel. Electric flashlights threw cones of light on the rigging, and one saw giant human shadows dancing on giant sails. Pulley-blocks came down in jerks from the brighter sky, down to the Hollow " Ho—ho—ho " of the sailors on deck, to their swinging bodies, their wild song.

Captain Andersson still strode up and down with a gaze of intense concentration ; he saw everything—everything except what was near.

The course was north by east, half east.

The chain of lights of Copenhagen seemed to crowd closer together, like beads strung on a cord. On both sides of the ship now chains of lights passed by, infinitely slowly, so that one light took minutes to cut two shrouds. More pressure came on the sails ; the wind was freshening a little. Jorg heard the ropes tauten, grinding and cracking. He took hold of one ; they felt like violin-strings. Softly, very softly, a swish became audible along the sides of the *Notre Dame*.

And as he leaned over the railing, listening to this new, exciting sound, he heard in the distance the put-put of a motor-boat. The boat came rapidly nearer ; it swung under the stern of the *L'Aventure*, which was a little astern, and headed for the *Notre Dame*. Its lights grew, and one could recognize the outlines of people waving. Greetings were shouted ; no doubt the ship-chandler and his friends, wanting to say good-bye. Or was the boat bringing more than greetings ?

Jorg saw one of the mates throw the pilot-ladder, which had been taken in, over the bulwark again. He clambered down. He hung out over the water, holding on with one hand, leaning outward at a wide angle, the other hand stretched far out, and the boat shot in. The mate suddenly had something in his hand. The boat sped off with its waving, calling passengers, and the mate climbed back on deck, holding the something in his teeth, An air-mail letter. An air-mail letter for Jorg.

He seemed to be in boiling water ; the letter burned his hand as he ran to his cabin with it. . . .

" To-day I got your letter, the letter I had been longing for. I had three days to expect it. I have known for three days that you would not come back to us, I had nothing to go on ; I just knew. . . .

" I wish with all my strength that this journey may bring you what you hope for, and that you will grow whole again. . . .

" You are gone ; it's done, it can't be changed. Now I need all my strength for our children—and for you, because I pray you may come back.

"It is of the children you must think, and for their sake you must come back healthy and happy. They both need their father. They don't want to hear about anything except you and the big ship. Elke says you must go fishing on the last day, and bring us some fish when you came back. . . .

"Be as happy as your little son, who is tumbling about in the meadow here. Be as contented as Elke when she helps look after the goats that come up to the house.

" And send me some of the warmth without which I cannot live. . . ."

Staring blindly, Jorg sank back in his chair. Outside, the murmur had grown louder. The wood of the cabin walls creaked ; the floor slopped a little. He was on his way. Irrevocably on his way. Whither ? To the other end of the world. The earth itself was not greater than the distance which was coming between him and his.

He folded the thin, crackling paper of the air-mail letter, and thrust it in his jacket pocket. He took it out again, and put it in his breast pocket, down at the bottom. It burned there like fire. Then he charged out on deck, and he felt as if his heart were torn straight through the middle. Far, very far astern the lights of Copenhagen sank away.

In the gangway the steward, cook and cabin-boy were dancing to a gramophone, stamping heavily, aglow with high spirits.

When Jorg waked up next morning, he discovered that the ship stood at a steep slant. Close by his head was a loud hissing ; it swelled and faded, masses of foam rushed past the porthole. From time to time the room

was suddenly darkened. Jorg stared at a dark green sea that leaped at the ship like a tiger. The ship's side groaned hollowly, and from the edges of the porthole thin streams of water shot into the cabin. Why had it not long since awakened him? Peering over the bunk, he saw a big puddle in which his shoes floated like little boats. He tried to get up, but on the first attempt he fell back; it was against the law of gravitation. It was an accomplishment to get his legs over the edge of the bunk. He landed on the floor as if on a hillside. Clambering and using his arms he reached the washstand where the water had run into a corner of the basin near the upper edge.

The cupboard door came at him heavily when he opened it, and hit him in the face. He had to lean with all his might against the cabin door to get it open.

In the main cabin the captain stooped over the table, which was surrounded with a ledge. There were several bottles and dishes, bandages were spread out, and in one of the screwed-down chairs sat a boy from the crew. The boy had an inflamed hand.

The hand was swollen to three times its normal size, purple, with shapeless fingers and yellowish swellings of pus. Jorg was horrified; something should have been done for this long since. Captain Andersson held the boy's wrist gripped in his left hand as in a vice. His naked forearm lay on the table like an iron ingot. One could tell at a glance that there was no wincing and no struggling against that arm. The boy was very pale. Now the captain's right hand descended slowly, carefully, as a marksman sights his gun for a dead shot. Between thumb and forefinger flashed a razor blade. Jorg saw it pierce deep into the affected hand, and saw the pale boy grow still paler and turn his head so as not to see more. Jorg walked up behind the boy, seized his shoulders, and pressed them hard against his chest.

He knew that this helps a man to bear a painful operation. Blood and pus oozed, first slowly, then even faster, over the edges of the wound into the basin below. The captain began a second cut; he was perfectly concentrated, implacable, sure. Jorg heard the boy's teeth grind, saw his jaws tremble, and not a sound passed his lips when the blade penetrated again, and drew through the taut, creaking skin. Jorg felt the boy's body grow slack in his arms when the captain squeezed the edges of the wound apart, but no plaint came, not a sound, not a twitch. The stern, powerful lion's head, the powerful heavy hands, their machine-like functioning seemed inevitable, necessary, just. Even the mouse does not struggle in the cat's jaws, thought Jorg.

It was horrible, and yet a release to see the pus welling up thickly, flowing and flowing. Jorg cut tampons, dipped them in iodine, and handed them to the captain, who thrust them deep into the wound with tweezers. Jorg slid back to his cabin as if on a roller-coaster, found the whisky bottle, clambered back, and poured a large mouthful down the boy's throat.

" Thank you very much," said he, and went.

" Nice boy," said Jorg, when the door had fallen shut.

" Yes. I don't like cutting and the rest of the doctoring business. You seem to know something about it, Mr. Borcke. Will you take over my invalids in future ? "

" I don't like cutting either, Captain. Wouldn't it have been simpler to send the boy to a doctor in Copenhagen while there was still time ? "

Captain Andersson gave him a thoughtful glance.

" Yes. But we have no money. Do you understand, Mr. Borcke ? *We have no money.* That's how poor we are, we of the last sailing ships."

Somehow it's good to see the pain of others ; it brings one's own pain back to reasonable proportions, Jorg thought.

The steward cleared the table and set it for breakfast. At the moment Jorg found it impossible to eat. The scene just past and the smell of creosote in the place were too fresh. But he accepted Andersson's proposal that he should look after the medicine cabinet. He didn't know his way around with all that junk, the captain had said.

Right after breakfast, Jorg went to work. He had never seen so much confusion in so little space. The cabinet had evidently not been put in order for years ; it was no wonder that the captain did not know what was there. Of every common medicine there were at least half a dozen bottles or boxes, full, half full, almost empty, dried up, spoilt. There were bottles from Australian chemists, from Danish, Irish, Finnish, German chemists. There were nine bottles of castor-oil, eleven tins of vaseline (some rusted through), seven of opodeldoc, five of iodine. There were bandages in profusion, but many of them had been stuffed among the bottles to keep them from breaking, and were wet and impregnated with various medicaments. The drawers were in utter confusion—plasters eaten by mice, a set of surgical instruments covered with rust, cracked rubber tubing, sick-room equipment green with verdigris, dozens of pill-boxes with the names of sailors long since gone, and big paper bags of linseed which had sprouted into the confusion.

With a regular fury Jorg cleaned up, swept out the drawers, and made the steward throw great masses of spoilt medicines overboard.

No, Captain Andersson did not like to play the doctor ; that was plain.

With a long sigh of relief, Jorg came on deck about noon.

A stormy west wind was blowing from dead ahead, and the *Notre Dame* was tacking in the narrow channel of the Kattegatt.

The ship lay as close to the wind as possible, under topsails, beneath a low, grey sky. Now and again a glimmer of the hidden sun fell on the ocean ; then the water shone like green gold, broken by nets and stars of spray and combers. Blue whirlpools passed alongside and in the wake of the windward side.

The masts were four mighty ^Eolian harps ; there was a humming, a whistling, a singing in them. Seen from below, the sails were like hawks' wings, sharp-cut and narrow. But looking forward or aft, one saw the sails as broad-arched gates. Full sails are the most beautiful arches one can see ; in their forms the work of nature and the work of human hands are strangely united.

Harder and harder it blew ; more and more sails were taken in. The sailors in their stiff oilskins looked as if they had been hewn out with axes ; the oilskins rattled as the men pounded around the decks in heavy sea-boots.

Now the roaring was hoarse as the clusters of men flung themselves upon the ropes. Jorg crowded in, felt the hard ropes painfully in his soft hands, and felt that he captured the rhythm of leaning forward and back best when he closed his eyes. Sea-water dripped from the ropes into his open sleeves and splashed in his face.

But he felt no desire to go aloft when the sails were made fast to the yards. The men would go aloft on the windward side ; when the shrouds shook under the pounding of many feet, there was a flickering image like an ancient motion picture. On wire cables stretched below the yards the men walked sidewise. From below they did not look like human beings at all. Their chests pressed to the yard, they seized the sail, and took it in tug by tug, and each time the wire cable swung with all the widespread legs. One thought of birds clinging to a waving branch. You saw the soles very large, above them the slender ankles and the trouser legs blown out

thin by the wind. At the ends of the yard the men hung far out over the boiling sea, roaring masses of water below them, tumbling masses of clouds above them.

It was necessary to come about, or rather to "box-haul,"¹ because it was impossible to bring the *Notre Dame* about, in ballast as she was, rising high from the water, with her tremendous wind-resistance. Both watches were piped for this manoeuvre, which took them a long time hauling at an apparently infinite number of pulleys. Jorg did not quite understand what was going on. He understood only the frantic work, the endless exertion of the journey.

They did not gain a yard to westward. On the contrary, Captain Andersson said, they were being driven slowly back toward the Strait of Helsingor.

Jorg was dead tired that evening when he crept into his bunk, his left arm and shoulder lame with rheumatism. The life of a passenger is something to make one ashamed, he felt. The passenger can go to sleep when he likes, and can creep under the dry, warm blankets.

The howling, the wild, uncanny, magnificent howling outside. The voice of the jungle. A voice which city-dwellers and even we of the land no longer know. Where this voice is still heard, man is seized with dread. One creeps into his room, into his bed ; one pulls the curtain. One keeps a feeling of security. Of false security. . . .

Are there many people who do freely and without compulsion what I have done ?

I think that is the reason why I feel close to sailing ships : they are as " unscheduled " as I am. Just as much the playthings of nature.

And precisely as the life on these ships is more perilous and requires more exertion than the life on steamers, my life needs more peril, higher stakes than an existence that runs on rails.

And precisely as these ships earn so little by so

long and hard a struggle, almost no measurable profit appears from my life.

Now my children are being put to bed at home, and Helen is singing them to sleep with a song of Father and the great ship.

He had left a good wife at home, a wonderful wife. What incredible wealth such a wife was in a man's life. And she was not alone, either ; after all, she had the children. He felt suddenly that he did care whether or not he drowned with the *Notre Dame*. How odd : I know intellectually that I can't be at home. But the knowledge has no power over my feelings. I'm like a man after an amputation : I still feel the lost limb just as if it were there. It's like a dream. I still keep thinking I need only pass my hand over my eyes, and home will be around me in an instant.

But if I really went home now it would be too early. All the little, ugly things would be there again. I should not be changed. The whip has not yet broken the skin. The lash of suffering must *hit* me. And it will. I shall not go down without feeling it first.

For five days the *Notre Dame* battled with head winds, fog, calms in the narrow channel of the Kattegatt. More than once she got as far as Skagen, but this brought her so hard upon the Swedish coast that they had to box-haul in haste. Almost reversing her course, she was driven back to Anholt.

Captain Andersson was devoured with chagrin. He took a hand in operations like a madman ; his arm had a longer reach ; his hand greater strength than those of anyone else on board. Work simply flew from his hands ; blocks, rigging, sail-cloth, the spokes of the wheel obeyed him like his own fingers. It was rather like watching a war game or a dance. His reddish beard was like a fire-brand ; his voice filled space as if the *Notre Dame* were the nave of a great church. His restlessness, his concen-

trated energy seeking an outlet, his way of taking hold, of moving—all reminded Jorg of a big anthropoid ape he had once seen shaking the bars of its cage so that the iron rods rattled and the spectators fled in alarm.

Only, the expression of his eyes was far from animal. In them was rage, but rage ice-cold, hard, observant. There were great reserves of patience there; wildness tamed in the struggle with nature, and therefore capable of taming nature. He took his meals hastily, with perfect indifference to what he ate : staring fixedly as if in a waking dream, and without a word. He seemed never to enter his cabin ; he slept in the chart-room—if he slept at all.

But for hours Jorg saw him sitting at the radio. Like a spider he sat before the tangle of wires, red, black, green. Twice a day, morning and evening, Andersson put the two chronometers in front of him on the table, clamped the headphones to his ears and listened for weather reports and time-signals. It looked so strange—the lion's head chained to the thin electric cord, the clumsy black ear-muffs, the big hands fingering the ridiculous little screws of the instrument. He reminded one a little of the early photographers, solemn, bearded gentlemen with their unshapely light-traps on tripods. His glance was turned inward. From time to time he took off the earphones, and said: " West wind, still nothing but west wind." He said it with a faint smile and with a sigh. Only when the time-signal came in did he grab hastily for his pencil and fix his eyes on the ship's clocks in their mahogany cases.

" Why is the time-signal so important, Captain ? "

" I have to check up on the chronometers. Our chronometers haven't been overhauled and regulated for six years. It ought to be done every year,"

" Didn't you have time in harbour ? "

He looked gravely at Jorg. " We have no money."

Jorg had the same ugly, anxious feeling as once before : the poverty of this ship. It seemed so complete that even things which were absolutely essential to safety had to be neglected. " How far can you hear ? "

Andersson laughed bitterly. " A hundred miles; under good conditions, two hundred. That's why I have to make use of the opportunity as long as we're still close to shore."

Jorg had to laugh, this disordered sewing-machine of a radio was so touching, so pathetic. " If a wireless station is too expensive, and a good radio is too expensive also, Captain Peterson ought to introduce snail telegraphy on his ships : simple, cheap, practical,"

" Snail telegraphy ? "

" Yes. The French invented it. They discovered that snails are the most faithful of loving couples. ' Whither thou goest, I will go,' it says in the German marriage service, and the snails take it literally. If the scientists cruelly parted a snail honeymoon-couple, both would creep in the same direction, even if they did not see each other. They left the male in Paris, abducted the female by air to Marseilles, and put through a trunk-call between the two cities. It still worked; in Marseilles the female marched towards a lettuce-leaf, and the male in Paris went in the same direction, even though there was no lettuce-leaf there. If they forcibly put one of the creatures in a new position, the other immediately took up the same position. They were connected by mysterious, invisible threads.

" Soon the scientists in Paris and Marseilles began to carry on conversations by means of snails. They put a board with the alphabet on the table, put a snail on one letter, and held it there with an upturned tumbler. A thousand kilometres away its companion crawled on to the same letter. With several pairs of snails they found they could telegraph quite nicely, even if not so fast

as with electric waves. How about a snail telegraph, Captain ? "

Andersson had listened like a child, attentively and perfectly seriously. " That couldn't be very expensive. Of course you'd have to figure out the food."

" Perhaps tinned lettuce ? That ought to work all right,"

" Captain Peterson has eleven ships ; he would have to have at least twenty-two pairs of snails. Office snails and ship snails ; you'd have to mark the pairs so they wouldn't be mixed up."

" Easy : you paint the names of the ships on their shells."

" Big steamers have an emergency wireless station on the bridge."

" Let's keep a reserve pair of snails in the chart-room, so that if we sink we can send Captain Peterson our farewell greetings."

Now they both laughed ; the idea was magnificently grotesque.

On the sixth day, with a slightly more favourable wind, the *Notre Dame* crowded past Skagen. It was a flat, sandy cape with dunes in the background, with the exclamation-point of a lighthouse in the middle, and with a lightship on the east side. Rather disappointing, like everything famous or notorious, Jorg thought.

During these days he made himself a cap. It was urgently necessary, for peaked caps were ridiculous in this wind and this cold. He tried the leg of an old pair of blue trousers, and found that it could just be pulled over head and ears. He cut off the leg and tied it together above, but the wind-resistance was still too great. He cut off half the leg above his head, pulled the other half across the top of his head, and stuffed it in the trouser-cuff. Sewn with a few stitches, the cap fitted like a bathing-cap, and kept him warm. The work made

him smile when he thought of Helen—how she would have laughed at the cap !

A south-west wind sprang up ; the *Notre Dame* went roaring along, her course set for Scotland. The feeling on board changed ; everybody was happy. Steering a straight course for somewhere was a different matter from tacking against a head wind. Skagerrak had been like a cage to the *Notre Dame*. These big sailing ships needed open spaces, like eagles, to spread their wings. At last came the North Sea ; the fjorded coasts of Sweden and Norway, which had held the ship as if with tentacles, sank away.

Far astern the *L'Aventure* came into view. You could see her sails, recognizable only through the big glass, a chalk-white, leaning tower, bent by the wind. The hull was hidden below the horizon. It was as though a giant ghostly broom were sweeping the sea.

Two starlings were blown on board, dishevelled, exhausted, frozen, but still loudly peeping defiance. The yellow cat crept close. It was a difficult leap to the high box of lifebelts where the starlings sat ; she bounced up like a rubber-ball and nabbed one. She took it into a corner and began to tear at it. Masses of little feathers got into her mouth, making her spit and shake herself in disgust. But then the blood came, and her eyes sparkled ; the little bones cracked.

Jorg was occupied in getting to know more and more of the ship and its people. Every morning at a certain time he heard gramophone music. He followed the sound and found that it came from the cabin of the first mate. The mate sat quite still on a sofa, his young face slack from night-watches, his eyes reddened with salt water. The yellow cat lay curled up close against him ; he stroked her with one of his great paws, which were still soft from sheer youth like those of young St. Bernards. With a friendly gesture he invited Jorg to sit down. He had eleven

records : they were a veritable treasure to him. He put them on carefully, as if they were little children ; he blew off the dust, and very solemnly changed the needle each time. As long as the music lasted, he looked up, way into the distance, through the low ceiling. Jorg, who had the ability to read people, suddenly knew that Olaf was thinking of a girl at home in Mariehamn. He knew they had heard this music together, and that she had sat beside him, where the cat was lying now, and that he had stroked her. This was the bitter-sweet hour of remembrance. Jorg was silent, so as not to disturb him. It looked so strange, this twenty-year-old's child face, now slowly growing lean from watchfulness and responsibility, with the barbed-wire entanglement of soft red-blond stubble on the cheeks. He knew they would be good friends, and he christened Olaf " Barbarossa " on account of his red-growing beard.

The second starling remained alive two days longer. The cat chased it ; she climbed for an outlook to spy it out. No matter how far away the starling perched, she crept up to it. It was easy to see with what deliberation she went to work. Numerous obstacles blocked her path ; various routes were possible, and quite plainly she would consider the best ways, one against another : " No, I believe I'd better use the gangway," she would decide ; it was clearly to be read in her face.

The starling, warned by the death of its companion, was on guard. There was still enough life in it so that it always fluttered up again. How frightful this rescuing island must be for the shipwrecked bird : it housed a cruel, yellow tiger. The little bird grew ever more dishevelled, ever more feeble. It hunted food, and set its head askew at a scrap of rope : would that by chance be a worm ? Suspiciously it picked at the hemp, and was disappointed ; tar did not taste good. Upon what its digestion continued to function was a puzzle. The next day it had disappeared.

Northward, northward ! What an odd law : to sail to the south, one had first to go far up into the north, almost to the Arctic Circle. One had to go in the opposite direction to get where one wanted. An odd law, not confined to sailing ships.

It was magnificent sailing with the fresh wind, which pushed into the sails diagonally from astern ; it was like flying in a dream, or like glider flight in reality. With a peculiar swinging motion the giant body of the *Notre Dame* was hurried forward. It stayed long on the crest of a wave, until at length the wave overtook the ship. Suddenly it sank in the deeps, seeming to lose its power of flight—the lower sails caught no wind in the trough of the wave. Then the next wave would raise the stern, the wind filled all the sails again, and a new, mad flight began. " Once, in the old days, they would even have hung the crew's mattresses in the wind, the lower end weighed down with a cannon-ball," Captain Andersson said. Now he could laugh again so that his strong wolf-teeth sparkled. Jorg stood for a long time leaning on the mainsail sheet and let it lift him ; each time that the wind took a new hold of the sail, it raised him with irresistible force. And each time in the trough of the wave he was set softly back on deck as if by a parachute.

There were many gulls with the ship. They moved over the waves without moving their wings ; one could see how they used the wind from the combers, sailing along them, always a little into the wind. Or they floated above the stern of the *Notre Dame*, in the updraft created by the hull. When they landed on the water, they stretched their legs out toward the seas. They always took a few steps on the water before they allowed themselves to sink in. Then at the same instant they would fold their wings so neatly that not a drop touched them. They floated like corks ; it seemed a matter of indifference to them whether they went athwart the waves or parallel

to them. Our seaplanes have yet to learn from the gulls, Jorg thought. They will have to learn to fold their wings ; so far there is no flying-boat so seaworthy as an ordinary boat of equal size.

The nights were clear and starry, cold, the air like glass. Shooting stars fell; this was their season. " Keep everybody well at home," he wished. To starboard were the Northern Lights. They sent a ghostly radiance over the greater part of the northern horizon. They sent up beams to the zenith, which rapidly shifted their shape and location—an unearthly light. Their lure was supernatural, mysterious; one could easily imagine the Vikings steering northward, ever northward, enchanted by this light. Andersson seized Jorg's arm, and pointed : on the eastern edge of the Northern Lights a pink cloud shot up, pointed like a dagger, fiery and pale. The phenomenon persisted for several minutes ; after half an hour it reappeared. The centre of a storm was passing by to the north, Andersson thought.

The ship was perfectly ghostly as it sailed with its eagle wings. The wind howled and whistled. Jorg could feel the howling pierce his soul and demand that he become part of the jungle, but the disease, the weakness in him prevented. He stared over the rail. The seas slid along the sides, white, hissing, gurgling; they sparkled in a hundred little whirlpools. As the ship sank, one seemed to be deprived of all weight. The white of the foam was now close by his face, now a black abyss lay far, far below him. He felt fear—how small was the realm of safety ! Only as big as the ship. And a poor safety at that.

After midnight he went below decks. The oil-lamp burnt dimly in the cabin. The captain was sitting at the radio in his old, shabby leather jacket, his legs stretched far out in their high white sea-boots.

" What's new ? " asked Jorg. He got a shock : the

lion's head suddenly fell forward as if at a blow from a sword, its brow striking the table. Then Andersson started up, passing his hand through his tangled hair. " Ah, I was dreaming of a farm on Aaland. . . . "

Jorg laughed, and asked for the earphones. Andersson handed over the instrument as though it were something precious. England was giving news broadcasts, but they were absolutely trifling: A prince flew to Rome.—What did he do ? He reviewed a guard of honour, and laid a wreath on the grave of the Unknown Soldier. What a cliché ; how conventional this gesture of respect for the dead had become.—The President of France visited a provincial city. What happened ?—A cornerstone-laying, of course ; a " consecration " accompanied by fine speeches. And afterward ?—Obviously a banquet with still more speeches.—Within a few years a new epidemic would break out in the world, a general hoarseness of aged politicians. And the world would be none the worse for it.

Jorg considered. What had Europe given him as a last impression for his journey into solitude ?

The last newspaper he had bought reported a triumph of science : zoologists had taught some big anthropoid apes the concept of money. They had distributed coloured counters, and taught them that these were exchangeable for bananas, peanuts and other delicacies. The apes had actually understood this, and had eagerly collected and exchanged the counters. Probably the apes would soon found banks and savings accounts, and distribute dividends.

What had been the last film ? Jorg did not remember the plot. After all, films were made solely to be forgotten at once. But there had been one unforgettable scene in the midst of the chromium-plated steel furniture and the chromium-plated girls. One of the chromium-plated girls, somehow deserted, stood by a highway,

and wanted to be picked up by a car. So she exposed her entire leg, apparently to adjust her garter; the next car stopped—with screeching brakes, with the rutting-cry of mechanized lust, it stopped.

The last American magazine he had bought—after all, even America was nothing but transplanted Europe—had contained an article on modern love. The text was illustrated with graphic statistics like the annual report of a corporation. So the average girl had her first kiss at the age of sixteen. In the month of May. At ten in the evening. In an automobile.

Her virginity she lost at the age of seventeen. Preferably also in an automobile; in second place came the living-room, third an hotel, fourth the woods, fifth a furnished room—in last place, the haymow.

She was most likely to lose it between eleven and twelve o'clock at night, but ten o'clock in the morning also seemed a favourable time. For intimate relations before marriage three men were a sort of magic number: girls who once passed this limit progressed in a steep curve to many men. As seducers, men of nineteen, and then later of between thirty and thirty-five, were outstanding.

In general one gained his end in less than a month. When married, they were faithful in 55 per cent, of cases; 45 per cent, committed adultery. And this in 22 per cent, of cases more than fifteen times, which was regretted by 65 per cent.

What a world !

The *Notre Dame* neared Scotland, a ghostly ship in a ghostly realm of fogs. For days the calm held them bewitched, the fog-horn groaned, the sails were wrinkled and dripping with moisture; a very old woman, she weeps, the tears run down her wrinkles, Jorg thought when he looked up at the sails. It was uncannily still on the ship; the steersman stood motionless, the first

mate, Barbarossa, walked up and down, soundless in his rubber boots ; the crew worked below in the hold. Never had Jorg felt the character of a country so clearly from the climate alone as he did here the character of Scotland in the walls of fog ; in the plaintive cry of invisible gulls ; in the peculiar sadness, which seemed to rise from the heavy swell, which sank from a heavy sky. In the evening fire from the galley flickered upon the great foresail. The binnacles glimmered from within like rotten stumps.

That night the *Notre Dame* ran before a south-west wind through the straits between the Orkneys and Fair Isle. It had cleared up ; a triangle of lights was in sight—a red and a white beacon, with the moon above as an apex. *Notre Dame* sailed close under the northern point of Orkney. The sea was high ; it threw black mountains in the path of the circling beacons. By midnight the moon had dived into the clouds, the beacons were far astern : *Notre Dame* was in the Atlantic. The North Sea was behind her. One could feel a difference in the seas—higher, longer waves. The ocean was black, the night was black ; only the masses of foam glowed greenish-white when they rose above the rail.

Toward morning the south-west wind died down to uncertain puffs from the south. A heavy swell came in from the west ; the *Notre Dame* staggered drunkenly.

Andersson sat in oilskins and sou'wester by the radio : rapt by concentration, listening amidst the crackling and snapping for the confused, almost incomprehensible, voices which gave weather reports. From time to time he got up and tapped cautiously, gently, on the front of the barometer. The glass fell far, and stopped at 735. The air in the cabin was oddly heavy and oppressive ; several times hail cannonaded furiously on the skylight.

Jorg went on deck in his sea-boots, which were still hard, and which rubbed his ankle-bones painfully. This

sky looked very threatening, with black mountains \)f cloud in animal shapes which changed quickly. This territory was rich in weather. A poor land, rich only in weather ; the sea, too, was rich. The most changeable weather and the richest fishing-grounds were at the north and south of the globe ; while the tropics, on the contrary, were decidedly poor in weather.

Toward noon the sun appeared for a moment, very palely. Hundreds, thousands of gulls followed the ship ; they were white with black spots on the ends of their wings. Against the black sky, standing out against the pale sun, they were a fluttering, fantastic shadow-show.

Jorg watched the gulls, saw how the flock swelled across the sun as if moving behind a translucent screen. Their flight was like that of owls. How they screamed ! Harshly and piercingly, with the voice of the pitiless ocean. The air was full of lamentation, as if they were messengers of woe.

In the creatures' restless flight, in their hungry cry, in the uncanny light of the far north, in the staggering of the ship among the effortlessly rising water mountains, in the menace of the storm he felt the lash of pain ; regret.

What was the trouble ? Why had he left them, Helen and the children ?

He rubbed his forehead. Everything—the thousand reasons he had known so perfectly before the trip—was washed away. He simply could not remember anything. But all the rest, everything good and lovely, stood before his eyes in letters of fire ; it burned his heart as if the heart were bound in red-hot wire. What wealth of love had been around him, and he could not seize it. He had let it fall. Never to be made good. Never again would there be such love in his life.

Once in summer Helen had run into the mountains. He could still see her hurrying down the garden-path, a linen smock hastily thrown about her. She ran with

quick, little steps, her face tense with the effort not to cry. Her eyes were shiny and staring, and she was swallowing down tears. She was running ; the garden gate slammed ; it was like a flight.

For one moment he felt he must run after her, put his arm around her, go with her or fetch her back. But then the red wave of anger rose in him again. Why ? Why had anger overpowered him ? He could not remember. Oh, it must surely have been some indifferent trifle.

He stayed and dug his anger into the soil of the garden. He dug, and planted seeds, and knew the whole time that no good could grow from it. How could earth be fruitful which one tilled with hate and bitterness, how could seed flourish which one thrust absently and mechanically into the ground ?

He was alone with the children at lunch. He filled their plates, tried to take their mother's place, and yet felt how clumsily he did everything, how little he succeeded. They asked about their mother; how false the tone of his answer, which was supposed to be reassuring and was not. Beyond the windows stood the gloomy shapes of the cliffs.

Evening fell, and Helen had not returned. It was no longer possible to fight his alarm. More and more often he raised his eyes from the earth to the mountain-ridges above. The wave of the forest broke steeply upon the grey cliff wall. The trees towered one above another ; the crown of one seemed the root of the next. Bright green leaves became green-black needles ; then the trunks grew shorter, changed to bushes, and with the red glimmer of the alpine rose all plant life died out on the rocks. He knew how it felt when one stood up there, how steep the cliff, how deep the abyss; how the brooks roared, how one felt the mysterious urge to hurl oneself after them. How the birds of prey circled, how in the thin air

one had the fantastic feeling that, like them, one could fly.

He imagined what must be Helen's despair. She was love, nothing but love, and she could not live if she knew there was an end of love, that this end was there. Oh, she was brave ; she had never in her life hesitated to draw a conclusion from anything she had once recognized.

She would not hesitate now.

Had she run to the mountains to make it easier for him and the children, to counterfeit an accident ?

A mad fear smote him, the fear he had already been fighting for many hours in secret. He hurled the spade into the ground as one violently hurls a spear, and ran—ran from the mountains.

With sobbing breath he scrambled through the woods. It was maddening how the paths crossed and branched ; he had no idea where Helen was. He knew only that he must find her.

Below in the valley the evening bells rang ; their sound rose from the misty plain as if the villages were submerged many fathoms deep in the sea. The reddish trunks of the evergreens shone in the setting sun, the birds sang, the snow on the peaks glimmered like peach-blossoms. Peace round about, and the noble stillness of a cathedral. But the raging fever of terror was stronger. His heart pounded as he jumped roots and scaled cliffs. Stones tumbled under his feet ; on a forest path a deer sprang away in loud alarm. As he ran he peered into abysses, half in the dreadful expectation of seeing a white patch of smock among mares'-tails, sparkling water and rocks. From time to time he interrupted his climbing to listen. The sleepy call of the cuckoo was the only sound, that and the murmur of brooks, the rustle of the tree-tops. The plain was blanketed in mist.

Instinctively he chose paths which he had walked before with Helen, believing that she would also have

picked them. He reached the limit of the forest, where scrubby bushes, wind-twisted, as if in torment, struggled out of the thin, scarred earth. He halted a moment, exhausted by his furious climbing.

And then, as his pulse grew slower, as the red fog faded from his eyes, he heard a light step. And there she came, gliding downward along the foot-wide path, a little white figure—Helen !

A sob rose in his throat ; he ran a few steps towards her, folded her in his arms, knowing that he must never let her go again. She laid her head on his chest, sobbing, her face streaming with tears. " I couldn't do it. I had to think of our children."

He kissed her brow, her eyes, the trembling mouth, with an overflowing feeling he had not known for years. She was saved—Helen, this little, hot, overflowing heart, which belonged to him, to him alone—to him and the children. As long as they lived they would be inseparably bound together by Helen's love, by the children. He had a holy gratitude for Heaven's mercy which had preserved him from the horror of which he had dreamt.

His arm around her, he led her the long way home, and they seemed to have become a bridal couple again, endowed with a purer, a holier love than ever before. Vanished and forgotten was all that had separated them. In the last light of dusk they picked flowers, wound the stems with moss, and with the posy decorated the little Mother of God by the side of the path. She had a kind smile, and stood in a weather-beaten shrine by the side of the path. A little spring at her feet flowed into a stone trough. They drank from the water, and felt that it was holy water.

He moved his lips as if he could still taste on his tongue the rock-born water below the light blue figure of the Madonna.

She had been forgotten. How was it possible that

this consecrated moment had been drowned out in ugliness?

" Helen ! " He called the name. The hard screeching of the gulls was the echo. It seemed that an implacable fate was crying, " There is no retreat ! "

The whole day there was such an oppression over the *Notre Dame* that the men sometimes struggled for breath. They wished the storm were there ; the waiting was now almost unbearable. On the mizzen-mast only the lower-most sail was set, and most of the staysails were taken in. The gigantic fore, main, and cross-jack sails were reefed half-way to the yards. Heavy nets were drawn over the hatchways. All morning the carpenter's hammering had been heard, wedging fast the tarpaulins over the hatches. The gentle, nervous tapping of knuckles on the barometer was almost the only sound in the chart-room. " 728." The mates' voices murmured; the young faces were very grave.

Towards evening it broke loose.

The darkness seemed to fall with a whistling and humming which increased fast and terribly, as if night were a gigantic bomb falling from the sky, faster and faster. Jorg heard the shrilling of the whistles, piping both watches : the next moment he was trampled, torn forward. The deck was suddenly alive with black shapes. They raced; the great roaring smashed together over the *Notre Dame*, devouring even Andersson's mighty shout.

As if on an ice-rink, Jorg skidded across the deck, which all at once was incredibly aslant. A whole man-slide went down, skidding, staggering, falling, with arms outstretched. Amidships, Jorg thumped against the iron of a winch, felt iron in his hand and other hands beside his hand ; you saw the drum, on which a wire rope was slowly winding up, saw wet oilskins tied to bodies with string ; gaping mouths, steaming breath, wild eyes like those of startled horses.

They turned the cranks like madmen. Jorg was dizzy ; his breath whistled, sparks danced before his eyes, he felt he could not keep up the pace, but must collapse.

A shattering crash, an explosion in the sky, near, very near. Jorg tried to dodge, to fling himself down : " The yards are falling ; we'll be smashed," But the others cranked on, even faster, even more pantingly than before ; it was like a command. Heavy, rolling thunder now came from on high, faster and faster, mixed with revolting sounds of tearing and gnashing, and suddenly lightning flamed out—long, blue lightning like arc-light. Jorg looked up. As his body pumped he caught glimpses of lightning shooting from the shrouds, saw a thing like an enormous bird fluttering between the masts with mad beating of wings, saw that these wings beat, crashing and flashing, against the shrouds : a staysail was split. It flew away in tatters, smashing itself against the shrouds. The hands all around him let go ; half creeping, half jumping, the figures disappeared in the dark. The next moment the remnants of the sail rattled down on its iron rings, jingling and grinding.

" My God, this is insane ! " thought Jorg ; terror seized him—naked, revolting, strangling terror. Clinging fast, he looked aft. There stood Andersson beside the helmsman, his eyes screwed up against the lashing spray, his body thrown half over the base of the steering-wheel. Both men swayed, bracing themselves with all their might ; the wheel jerked and bucked as if to fling them off.

A new crash for'ard on the fo'c'sle-head, and while Jorg was still holding his breath there came thence the rolling thunder, the arched lightning, the mad flapping ; and while another lot of men were rushing forward pell-mell along the gangway, the beat of a third explosion came from aft. Instinctively Jorg ran across the after

gangway, and felt himself squeezed against the wire hand-rail by pounding wind and as if by centrifugal force ; it was rather progress by dangling than it was running. With others he skidded down steps ; with others he grabbed a rope which jerked, kicked, resisted like a snake •—then they hung to the cable, and felt themselves dragged with scraping feet across the deck, as if they had a mad bull by the tail. Something alive, something tremendous sped past them over the bulwark—a mountain, a flaming green mountain. The sides of the *Notre Dame* trembled, and down it came, thundering and roaring—the first great sea. The men's bodies in an instant were motionless ; they were frozen, clinging to anything that would hold them, clinging with all their might. Jorg felt a blow, ice-cold, rising from below to his heart ; he gasped for air : a white flame whipped across the deck like a snow-slide : beyond, at the bulwark, the water-ports opened thunderously. Jorg spewed ; he was pumped full of salt water, and yet felt as though he were squeezed flat. He saw the men around him hastily shinning up ropes and superstructure ; he did likewise, and this time the white flame roared past beneath his feet.

In a few minutes two of the *Notre Dames* topsails, two jibs and the last three staysails were in shreds. She leaned as Jorg thought no ship could have leaned without capsizing. Unloaded as she was, she sailed with the lee rail under water. One stood at the windward rail as if on a mountain ridge, looking down on both sides to dizzy, raging abysses. " We're still alive," thought Jorg ; " how odd," There was a wretched feeling of salt water in his stomach ; his eyes burned with salt. Below, in the roaring depths, men hung to ropes as if hanged. At the windward rail, where he was clinging, there was strangely little wind ; a contrast that made the wild uproar in the masts, the fearful roar of the deep

all the more uncanny, all the more fantastic. The wretched terror was still there ; now it was lower, more in the heart, more in the pit of the stomach. But his thinking was full of reverence, of a strange clarity and solemnity : something great was happening, something cataclysmic; Nature was giving a sign that at this moment men's lives did not matter. The air was so full of white spray that one could hardly breathe.

Now Jorg saw the sailors going aloft in the windward shrouds. Their black forms crept like slow-motion pictures ; the storm pushed their bodies against the ratlines ; painfully they thrust forward, almost horizontally, it seemed, so far was the ship lying over. Above Jorg's head hung bodies (much like drying hides), forcing themselves slowly forward to the tops, to the yards, to the black flame-tongues of the shredded sails.

He let go the rail, and slid down to the chart-room, where he thudded like a snowball. There were now three men at the helm. Around their shoulders they had web belts made fast to the helm-grating. A fourth belt lay on deck ; Jorg put it around him, gripped the spokes of the great wheel, and imitated the others. The wheel jerked and twitched with tremendous force. Andersson stood at the compass, embracing the pillar as a wrestler does his opponent : the lamps had gone out. Intermittently a flashlight shone on the compass, and at these times the captain's cheeks would glow red ; Andersson was holding the light in his teeth.

Jorg looked up to the yards. The black forms hung doubled over the slanting cross-arms as if crucified, and still the hands reached for the black flames of the torn sails ; still through the spasms of the storm one could hear faintly the hollow tones with which they urged one another on from man to man along the chain of bodies. He was terrified for the men up there ; he wanted to turn his eyes away. He saw the fo'c'sle-head, a black,

sharp triangle, and in its lee, white, shining, and boiling, a broad meadow of sea, and in front, spray—a tower of spray—green-white and luminous. It shot upward, it collapsed over the bows, poured roaring and thundering from the fo'c'sle-head, poured, thundering hollowly, upon the fore hatches, rolled in white waves of flame to the water-ports, fell bubbling, sucking, hissing back into the sea.

A new tower shot up, crashing and monstrous.

Turning, he saw through the grated window that Andersson had gone into the chart-room. Andersson stood over the table, holding down with both elbows a half-unrolled chart. Sea water dripped from the sleeves of his oilskin upon the chart. He had a pair of dividers in his hand. He was measuring on the chart. He looked up, and his eyes stared into emptiness, and his lips moved, and his brow was furrowed, and the skin around his eyes was wrinkled. All this one saw, half-erased, through the pane running with sea-water, in the dim yellow light of the oil-lamp.

An endless time passed ; weaker and weaker grew the hoarse cries from the yards, ever slower the motions of arms taking in sail. At last they slid together, the human shadows, and moved crabwise to the centre, to the mast, step by step, and dangled down the shrouds, tatline by ratline. Jump for jump they landed on deck, and skidded to the chart-room ; the shadows became men. Nobody spoke ; probably one could not have heard anyway. Barbarossa, the mate, dropped on his back near the wheel, raised his legs in the air, and a rush of sea-water poured from his white rubber boots. Only the topsails were still set, three slender pinions ; their pointed ends seemed to dip in the spray to leeward. Otherwise the masts were blown as bare as winter trees. Gazing upward, Jorg saw a fire-bird flying around the peak of the mainmast in mad circles, spirals and ellipses ;

its appearance was supernatural. Suddenly he understood : it was a star—a star that had broken through the clouds. The staggering mast had given a deceptive imitation of flight. The bell at the helm struck four bells, faintly and indistinctly. Was it ten o'clock already ? Jorg looked at the clock in the chart-room. It was two in the morning. For eight hours there had been no time to look at the clock or to sound the hours. Between two towers of spray a man with a ruby-red lantern made his way up the fo'c'sle-head ; a couple of minutes later a man with a turquoise-green lantern followed. *Notre Dame* had been sailing without side lights ; there had been no time to hang them out, and no opportunity.

Quiet fell. The quiet of a mad, whizzing flight through spray and night. The wrinkles in Andersson's brow had smoothed out, the chart was rolled up in its holder, the binnacle lamps were going again, their brass housings wrapped in woollen socks ; half the crew disappeared noiselessly from on deck. Quiet fell, quiet in the midst of the storm.

Jorg went below. He used the companionway that led down from the chart-room ; the main deck was constantly being flooded. When he shoved open the door to the passage, he heard water swishing. The passage-way was full of water ; it slapped and sloshed against the door-sills. The darkness stank of oil and stale sweat. The rectangle of the door opening on to the deck was askew and distorted, and kept crashing against the bulkhead. The strong mahogany door had been shattered on its hinges. Jorg felt his way to the cabin. The oil-lamp inside was turned down, almost extinguished ; the chimney was black with soot, the air choking with sooty flakes. The carpet, soaked with sea-water, squashed under his feet ; sea-water sloshed in the corners, and Jorg stumbled over the fragments of shattered flowerpots, which had come down from above with their greenery.

He moved bent double, like an old man ; his back pained him, and would not be straightened. Knees like rubber ; it was a painful journey, clinging to chairs, clinging to the stove, up a very steep hill to his cabin.

He found his flashlight, and sent the beam flitting around the little room. Good heavens ! His trunks, battered, with smashed edges and corners, whizzed in front of his feet. He was up to his ankles in water, on which books floated, swabbing about with wavy leaves. One of the two portholes was crossed with a crack ; an ugly, poisonous hissing came from outside, and a thin stream of water shot through the crack under high pressure as if from a fire-hose. The cabin was soaked. The closet door had come open ; in the bottom drawer, shoes were afloat, and neckties, the dye gone, floated in the salt water like dead blind-worms.

" Not nice, not nice at all," Jorg murmured. But he laughed ; it hurt when his wrinkled face, stiff with salt, spread in a laugh. This destruction of earthly goods was humorous. What a funk he had been in—what a disgusting, vile, low funk ! He looked at his hands. The skin of knuckles and palms was white, bleached, much wrinkled, and full of dirt in every wrinkle. His hands were scratched and they burned ; the salt water bit into the scratches. The oilskin seemed as stiff as sheet metal when he took it off. It was a painful business to pull his sea boots over the raw ankle-bones. He trembled with cold. He crept into his bunk, shattered like Don Quixote after the battle with the windmills. His left arm seemed quite insensible and useless. The blankets were like wet bandages. Shivering, chattering, he lay with his knees drawn up to his chin. He bit his teeth together, and still it was impossible to keep them quiet.

" For Christ's sake ! " he mumbled, quite without sense. Half thawed, he gritted his teeth, crawled from his bunk, wrung out blankets, socks, trousers and

sweater, and clambered painfully back in, with the feeling of having done everything in his power.

"My boy, you are a damned cripple," he said to himself; "why didn't you go aloft with the sailors? You cowardly cur, you cowardly cur."

So far the bunk had been much too narrow to suit him; now it was good to lie in a solid, tight space. One was not flung too about much; there was always something solid to push against. Even so, it was tremendously exhilarating to feel the huge steel hull tremble under the pounding of the waves outside. Like a long bridge in an earthquake, Jorg thought. Our thinking and feeling have grown so mechanized that we feel it is a crime for heavy steel structures to tremble; they are not supposed to tremble!

He heard the tramping of the sailors, dull thumps above him on deck—over his head and away. He started up—some new manoeuvre was in progress; he wanted to be up and in it, but he was too limp. What more could it be, with almost all the sails blown away or taken in? He sank back. He saw Andersson's face, leaning over the chart—first frowning, staring into nothingness, then smooth, with clear, certain gaze. This was a man one could trust. Jorg stretched; wool kept one warm, even when it was wet—he sighed, murmured, "Helen—my children." He fell asleep, squeezed into the sack of the wet mattress, head and shoulders wrapped in the Iceland sweater, with only a hole to breathe through. But often he started up, beating about him with his elbows, knocking them painfully against the sides of the bunk, struggling for breath, half-smothered and choked by horrid dreams: the cabin door would burst open, a glittering black wall of sea-water would rush gurgling in. Or people in gleaming, black oilskins, dripping with sea-water, would groan as they dragged in something long and heavy, and laid it on the carpet—a

man with shattered limbs. Or the impact of the waves, the trembling vibration of the steel would bring the awful dream that some of the plates had been burst in. Under the bunk the trunks still scoured about, bumping noisily against the boarding ; and he had been so sure he had stowed them tight this time.

Even in the bunk life was hard ; even in sleep one had to tauten the muscles first on one side of the body, then on the other, to absorb pressure and break momentum and impacts.

Next morning, when Jorg came into the main cabin, he found it transformed into sick-quarters. Ledges surrounded and quartered the table. Five or six sailors sat tensely wedged in the chairs, holding on with both hands to various basins and medicine bottles. Even so liquids slopped over, and the red baize table-cover was stained dark. There was a strong smell of iodine and creosote. The boys' faces were grey, streaked with dirt, stiff, as if they could not stir a muscle ; their eyes were red and swollen, their hands purple, bloated, covered with scratches and wounds. Just at that moment the mate, Barbarossa, thrust through the door a new patient who seemed to come most unwillingly. Andersson was so holding a man's head in his hands that nothing was to be seen but a blood-soaked head of hair, which the captain was just shearing with scissors. Andersson looked up, nodded to Jorg, and said in English : " Who would have thought that the mates would have to fetch the boys out of the fo'c'sle with a lantern ? The fellows hide in the corners like cockroaches."

Jorg inspected the head-wound, which was deep and gaping. The boy had been on watch when a block, grazing him, came down on deck beside him. The block came from the mainmast ; it had snapped and flown in a great curve to the fo'c'sle head. It weighed

almost half a hundredweight. The boy had had luck and a thick skull. They shaved the spot, and Jorg fetched the curved needles from the case where they were kept bedded in vaseline, and the catgut thread, which was in a little bottle. Andersson sewed, pressing the boy's head firmly to his breast with one hand. The needle went through the skin with difficulty ; ever paler, ever more peaked grew the boy's nose. When everything was bound up, the boy hung limp in the chair. He had not made a sound. Barbarossa grabbed him under the arms, and dragged him away. The cook, on the other hand, made a great scene when they cut a rusty wire out of his palm. He wriggled like an eel, could hardly be held, whimpered, and when finally blood and pus streamed out he vomited on the table. The men jumped up cursing, rescuing the medical things ; the scene was grotesquely comic, despite its awfulness.

Two of the boys had only bad styes ; Jorg spread zinc ointment on, filled the eye-sockets with batting, and put celluloid eye-shades over them. One man had dislocated two fingers. He stood grinding his teeth while Jorg embraced him from behind, and Andersson took the arm in the vice of his hands. Andersson seized the fingers, the man dug his teeth into his arm : with a loud snap the fingers went back into joint. When the man relaxed his jaws, one could see deep bloody marks.

The cabin emptied itself, Andersson and Jorg put away the medicines, while the steward cleaned the table, and set it for breakfast. But when they sat down for coffee, it choked Jorg ; he could swallow only once.

Immediately the captain was back again at the radio. From time to time he pushed up one of the earphones, and reported in fragmentary sentences : " Violent storm from the west in the North Atlantic and in the English Channel."—" Two ships sending S.O.S."—" A steamer

drifting with damaged engines in the Irish Sea ; four tugs are powerless,"—" *Queen Mary* six hours late. Many passengers injured,"—" Great floods in England—telegraph lines cut—cities without water or light—railway traffic interrupted."—" Inundation on the Danish coast. Fourteen fishing-boats missing, probably lost,"—" The *Estonia* is aground on the Swedish coast. Crew rescued.—The *Estonia* is a Peterson ship, a sailing vessel with auxiliary motor. The captain is the father of our first mate. He'll be glad his father is alive. But it's a severe loss for Captain Peterson."

Jorg fetched the mate, Barbarossa, into the cabin, and heard the short, excited Swedish exclamations with which he received the news. Then he went on deck. Good heavens, he thought, what a strange, topsy-turvy world ! Is this all real ?

Notre Dame was still lying far over, bare though her masts were. It was ice-cold on deck, and it blew so hard that one could not breathe against the wind ; one's mouth sounded like a sea shell if one let the wind between one's teeth. All the windward rigging was so taut that it sounded like violin-strings. The masts looked like falling towers, and Jorg, clinging to the windward rail, thought, how much longer ? Thirty-five years these masts, these yards, the bolts they turn on, have defied the storm. Some time the day must come when even steel grows tired, when it breaks. And that day is coming soon.

He looked across the fo'c'sle, shrouded in spray : it is inconceivable that man can gain confidence on, or a feeling of superiority to, the sea. Such a feeling would be an illusion. After all, it is not man that battles with the ocean ; it is the ship. Man can only steady the ship as a rider does his horse. In Viking songs, in the Edda, indeed, they sing of heroes who swam and battled with the sea—an intoxicating thought. But probably

it has never been more than a human dream to conquer the sea with bodily strength.

Ahead was the southern tip of the Faroes : like a battle cruiser with long, flat bow, with a massive super-structure, with gun towers, the stern lost in a squall of hail. *Notre Dame* came about. Toward noon the storm gradually died down, the barometer rose, and the wind shifted to the north. But there was a tremendous swell, and the *Notre Dame*, on her south-westerly course, rolled as though she wished to fling away her masts like javelins. Sails were set. Torn sails were cut loose, and let down on ropes from the yards. They dangled far out over the sides ; people caught them by lassoing them like wild horses. They were spread out on deck. The captain strode over them as a farmer walks a field that has been ruined by hail. The sailmaker followed after him like a dog following his master. From the sailroom new sails were dragged on deck, giant snakes as thick as a man, which had to be carried by a dozen men. Slowly the bare masts were filled. First there were two, then three, and toward evening finally four yard sails on each mast. Just at the moment of sunset the sun came out of the clouds. The wet decks of the *Notre Dame* shone in inky rainbow colours, and rainbows spread in the spray for'ard, as the ship hewed its way through the wild, violent sea. The sails were so full in the wind that one could see the sun through their taut cloth as though through a million pores. The cross of the log at the stern spun so fast that one saw only a blur ; *Notre Dame* was sailing at almost fifteen knots. At the last disappearance of the sun a splendid rainbow spread across the cloud-banks which stood tall and menacingly black on the northern sky.

For the first time the stove in the cabin was lit. It was wonderful when one came in, stiff and frozen, from on deck. It was, however, not on account of the people,

but in order that the steward might dry the wet bed-clothes. The air, shut in, was full of steam and fog. The sailmaker squatted on the floor with two assistants : they were sewing up torn sails with thick, three-edged needles. They had straps around their hands with ribbed steel plates on the ball of the thumb ; with these they pushed the needles through the thick cloth. Captain Andersson unrolled bales of new sailcloth on the carpet, and cut the proper lengths. It was cosy, like an old-fashioned spinning-room ashore. The needles flew, the sail-yarn hung over the men's shoulders like queues, they chatted in Swedish. Andersson sat with a thoughtful, benevolent look, with paternal solicitude, like the kind father of a family.

About ten the sailmaker and his boys knocked off work. Until then, too, one had heard the sawing and hammering of the carpenter, who was fixing the smashed door. " How these people work ! " Jorg thought ; " sixteen, eighteen hours a day they're on the go like nothing human." And last night, besides, they had hardly closed an eye.

" You have a good carpenter," he said to Andersson. " I've been watching him. He's very skilful, young as he is."

Andersson smiled. " They say about us of the Aaland Islands that we're born with a piece of wood in our hands." He was in good humour. " This loss of sails isn't so bad as it usually is. We've a lot of sails on board from the *Loch Lynnhe* that was wrecked last year. They don't fit our yards exactly, but they work. If this north wind holds, we'll be in the English Channel in three days."

" It's a good thing the tacking into the wind is over with."

Andersson laughed softly. " Do you know the legend of the Flying Dutchman ? "

" I saw the opera once—many years ago."

" Oh, the opera. I saw it too, and I've never been in a theatre since,"

" Why ? "

" Right at the beginning. It was night, and it was supposed to be a storm. The clouds moved across the theatre sky from left to right, and when they got to the right corner they moved back again from right to left. What an outrage. You can't expect anybody to sit and look at a thing like that. No. I've had no use for the theatre from that day to this. I walked right out. Besides, they didn't understand the story."

" How should it be understood ? "

" All the stories say that the Flying Dutchman's ship always sails against the wind. He has to tack ; always and for ever he has to tack into the wind through the centuries. *That's* his punishment. Eternal tacking is the worst punishment there is. Sailing, eternal sailing can never be a punishment for a seaman."

Jorg looked up in surprise : he saw the big, flaming face of the captain. The man was enthusiastic, was afire with this magnificent sailing in the tail of the storm at fifteen knots' speed. He felt that for this man there was nothing more beautiful, nothing higher than such sailing.

That night Jorg read one of his books, still wet as it was. Oberth's *Navigation in Space*. It was a great work, written by a genius. His visions were stupendous—visions of creating new planets by the hand of man, of vast networks of mirrors, circling in space about the earth, with which one would melt the polar ice and change the climate of our world. He would not have hesitated a moment, this man, to shoot himself in one of his rockets to distant stars . . .

And all at once the danger he had been through

paled in Jorg's mind. Mankind has battled with storms like this one for thousands of years, he thought. A ship like this embodies immense experience in self-preservation against storm and sea. It must take an entirely different sort of courage to push on into the absolutely unknown, into cosmic space. A courage all the greater because these space-conquerors will lack the naivete which came to the aid of the seafarers of antiquity. Not knowing is a great preservative power, fully as great as knowing. And yet one day these rockets will ascend. I am almost sure of living to see it happen.

He listened to the ringing blows of the blocks aloft, striking stays and shrouds.

Andersson judged the weather correctly. For two days the north wind held ; on the third it turned to the west : on the fifth it swung back to north-west and north. But during the whole of that time the *Notre Dame*, after the violent storm, was in an area of good weather.

With the regularity of a steamer she made her miles, eleven, twelve each hour, all sails set, even the royals. It was a magnificent feeling to know that every six hours you were tearing off another degree of latitude from the north. The cold, numbing the body, making even the heart numb and heavy, fell away hour by hour, as thin husks fall. One felt as though freed from a cocoon ; the mere prescience of warmth was quiet bliss.

Jorg remembered how he had dug his garden in the first March sun. There was a glitter on the moist earth, stiff from winter. The upturned lumps of earth were polished by the cut of the spade. Sometimes he interrupted his work, leaning on the spade to let the first warming rays sink into his skin. He himself felt like the earth, like the plants : it was a silent waiting, sure of fulfilment, an underground sprouting and germinating.

—That had been the morning when, after a warm rain, the beans came up. As if with one blow their sprouts lifted the soil. The sprouts were still white ; the little leaves still kept the shape of the bean, curled like children in the womb. The earth still rested heavily upon them, and yet they were stronger. In great excitement he had run to call Helen and the children to see the wonder.

Was it not happiness when the first blossoms of the little peach tree, the most delicate of pink, rocked in the wind ? When the young leaves rustled along the south wall of the house, shivering in the cold mountain wind which descended at night upon the valley ?

Was there not happiness in each barrow-load of manure which he trundled out on his land and spaded under ? Was it not happiness when little Jan stumbled after him with his tiny spade and his tiny red watering-pot, imitating his father in every movement as he dug and watered ?

Yes, that was happiness.

The west wind was mild and enervating ; it stirred the blood, and stimulated the nerves of the skin. One felt like throwing himself down and just letting everything go. Jorg remembered that over there in Ireland—it was invisible, fifty or sixty miles to the east, below the horizon—in all cases of violence the court inquired about the weather. West wind was a mitigating circumstance.

All around was the bright eternity of the sea, a thousand times felt, a thousand times described, and yet never exhausted. Aft, the wooden cross of the log : now it stood still, now it spun madly. While the swell was rolling past, under the ship, while the stern was climbing skyward, thirty, fifty feet up, the cross stood still ; the logline was gathering a charge. But when the stern sank ever farther into the trough of a wave, the charge discharged itself, was transmuted into motion,

and the wooden cross flew. This clock did its work irregularly : in a poetic fashion.

The gulls were for ever astern, as if tied to the ship with indiarubber bands. An empty box would fall overboard, shavings, pasteboard, and hope would awake in the gulls ; screeching, they would come down at the water, poke their beaks in the shavings : " No, no good as usual," Our human hopes are in no way different ; equally rational, equally false. In high winds the little gulls dangled their feet, using them as auxiliary rudders. When surprised by squalls they would often lose their hold on the air, tumble until they caught themselves, and with angry wing-beats regain the lost altitude.

At night Jorg would stand a long time at the bow. Sails, chalk-white, bellying above him, and higher great white clouds, and higher still the full moon—a wonderful ladder from the ship straight unto heaven. Under him the ship, that great cradle, rose and fell, and the gentle rush of the wave at the prow was the lullaby.

Two white lights appeared ahead, conspicuously bright, as if they belonged to a great liner. But it was fishing steamers, lighting their decks and the pulling in of their nets with strong floodlights. They carried their green and red sidelights at the masthead. Jorg watched them through the long, old spyglass, and the swaying of the ships changed their lights into licking flames. Then they slid past, the little steamers, pitching heavily, with, astern, a fluttering trysail that often rubbed out the lights as though with bat-wings.

The rhythm in which the swell rocked the body, this eternal rhythm had its effect even on the soul. One could feel it, but it was impossible to express in words.

One day when the wind came around to the north, at sundown there were threatening black clouds in the sky—lion heads, snakes, dragons, swordfish and sharks. They took on more and more of a fiery glow ; they

struggled, they rammed one another, and their shapes grew ever more mechanistic. Andersson had come silently up to the rail beside Jorg, and as if he could read Jorg's thoughts he pointed with his finger : " Tanks—many, many tanks—they attack,"¹ Jorg nodded : " And do you see the bombers ?—Great squadrons ; they're dropping bombs on the tanks, only the bombs fall terribly slowly,"

" In the mountains back there, there are forts. They're firing. Do you see the stream of fire coming from the mouths of the guns ? "

" On the plain the infantry is attacking, advancing in waves. The attack is flagging ; they're entangled in the barb wire, do you see ? "

" Yes. And blood is rising from the ground. More and more blood ; it's flooding the whole sky, and there are clouds of poison gas, and forests are burning ; the whole landscape is in flames."

" Why do we see blood and battles in a sunset sky ?—Because marching soldiers, tanks, armoured cars, battle planes and guns are such an everyday matter to us. We forget the impression, but we keep it in our subconscious. During a sunset it comes back into our consciousness, and turns everything into symbolic shapes."

" It's always been that way in the past. They saw battles in the clouds when battles were being fought on the ground. They saw cavalcades and mail-clad men when columns were on the march on earth. They saw lions and griffins fighting when the lions and griffins in the great kings' coats of arms raised their claws against one another. If to-day we see tanks and bombers instead, the meaning is just as clear and just as true,"

The waves, catching the light, gave off a red reflection with a shimmer of gold. Slowly the red turned to green, but still with a touch of gold poured over it.

When the wave shadows grew blacker and blacker, increasingly dark grew the green. The faintest breath of gold remained until the last reflection of day faded at the zenith, and then the mirror of the sea, too, turned black.

The four masts stood like pillars, perpendicular, with the wind almost astern. The ship was quite soundless : not a sail flapped, not a block creaked, not even the rudder moved. And yet the *Notre Dame* flew on her ghostly flight southward. As far as ever one could see, her wake stretched greenish-white across the night. Only a breath of wind could be felt on deck : warm and gentle it brushed the skin. But it got into the blood, wakening the life within.

" Strange," Jorg wrote that evening in his book, " the word * happiness ' has no plural. That seems to mean that happiness is a singular idea.

" But there arc millions of happinesses. Happiness is the most manifold and most relative thing in the world—and the most fleeting. It always escapes the grasp of consciousness. Usually we understand only afterwards that we have been happy. Often the signs get reversed, and it may happen that a condition which we consider unhappy while it continues will later be felt as happiness. One can never knowingly possess happiness. For knowledge of this possession necessarily goes with the fear of losing it. And then it is no longer happiness.

" Perhaps it is *the* characteristic sign of our time that all the yardsticks with which we formerly measured happiness are broken. Everywhere people are trying to set up new standards of happiness, but these standards have no general validity. They fetched the theory of relativity from the stars, only to discover that it rules on earth. But realization of the relativity of all happiness brings a sort of happiness too : resignation, the happiness of the tired.

" To believe that happiness is somewhere in the distance ; when far away, always to long for home ; to be unable to strike roots at home because I have seen too much of the world—that is my fate.

" Here I sit in the cabin, surrounded with brown wood, as if in a coffin. The oilskin on the wall, the sou'-wester above it, keep my shape, and dangle back and forth like gallows-birds. Being alone requires great strength, even without one's own ghosts dancing around,"

That night he had a grotesque dream : in an enormous, bare field thousands of people were at work with toy shovels, filling in little pits. They were as busy as children on the beach. It looked so droll because they were all grown up. Fashionable ladies and fat, dignified gentlemen, all deadly serious and full of importance. In answer to Jorg's question one looked up, and said impatiently, " We're burying the depths of our thought and feeling. We're in a hurry. We can't use them any more for life."

The field was smoothed over, the people ran away. A tide came in from the sea, and washed over it. Jorg knew in his dream that this tide was time. Suddenly a vast crowd of people came back in hot haste, swinging their little shovels. Hastily they began to dig. They tried to dig for their deep thoughts, their deep feelings again, but they did not find them.

One morning the first pig-fish appeared on the bows. They are the politest fish in the world ; every ship which appears in their waters they receive with a deputation which alternately dances with joy and makes deep bows : " Delighted to see you ; charmed, charmed ! " In the shape of the pig-fish the whole humour of the fat man is made clear. The pointed snout looks like the funny nose of an otherwise well-rounded gentleman. And they are always dressed for dinner: dinner-jacket and white

waistcoat : a crowd of bon-vivant gluttons at an ever-groaning table.

Really, it was scarcely friendly of the *Notre Dame* to get ready the harpoon in answer to this reception. The sailmaker, the man with the pale skin which seemed chiselled in marble, lay in the net below the bowsprit. The harpoon flew into the water a couple of times, and was pulled in on its line, but his aim was poor, and the hunt not too seriously intended. The pig-fish, in any case, remained as friendly as young dogs greeting their returning master. At last, after the steel head had whizzed close to them, they took their leave with many polite bows.

The *Notre Dame* was now in the latitudes of Spain, though she did stay far out and safe on the high seas. On the odd little radio one could hear nothing but confused, crackling noises. " They're broadcasting a sound-picture of the civil war," Jorg said when Andersson took off the headphones, despairing of his search for weather report and time-signal. He would have liked to hear reports of the civil war, but decided it was not necessary. In the cupboard which contained the chronometers were a dozen mouldy volumes of an old English navy periodical, *The United Service Magazine*. They contained reports of the Spanish Carlist War. An eye-witness described how they had buried live prisoners up to the neck in the form of a ten-pin game, and had bowled at them with the heads of other prisoners. He thought this war news was timely enough. After all, were the horrors of to-day any less than those of a hundred years back ? There had been civil war in Spain for centuries. People seemed to get a certain enjoyment from it. But a civil war with modern armaments must have been a disappointment to everyone.

One day later the *Notre Dame* was in the latitude of Gibraltar. The air was like that of a warm May day at

home, but the sky was almost constantly overcast ; Andersson stood with the sextant, alert for the first sun-beam. This sky created a tense feeling of expectation ; it was, as it were, the front yard of the Sun Kingdom. When the cloud-bank broke for a moment, the ocean shone in a southern light. Sitting way out on the jib-boom, near the shark fin, Jorg was completely happy. Forgotten were the weeks of confinement in the Kattegatt, the weeks of struggle to go west, forgotten the great storm off Scotland. For the first time he wore a linen shirt ; it felt quite strange after all the wool. Here, high as a house above the ocean and equally far from the ship, here was the mysterious point from which one could move the world. So he felt.

The thousand transformations of the sea were fascinating. Only the outermost edges of the fine ripples were touched by the slanting sunbeams. They flamed up as golden points, and the sea looked like a half-tone, too much enlarged, which breaks up into screen dots. Then again millions of little golden snakes would wriggle across the waves, and in the next instant a broad brook of flame would be rushing forth.

Where the edge of the ship-stem turned white at the hull, a battle was in progress. The fronts of foam stormed forward and yielded ground in a peculiar rhythm which had only a remote connection with the ship's movement. The first wave of foam fired broadsides of shrapnel. The second wave of the attack seemed to be heavy tanks : ponderous, bounding, rolling up, crushing by their mass of foam. And then the foamy troops were beaten, gave ground, and in the green depths the rivet-armoured stem stood out clearly, the enormous plough which made such broad furrows. And the sound of the depths intoxicated the man, who could not turn away his eyes.

But the magnificent, faithful breeze died down. It

died on the morning of the sixth day in a shower of rain. Jorg collected three buckets of rain-water, bathed and soaked his washing. The way this long, constant push of wind ended, the way the end had gradually announced itself, were really interesting. He went into the chart-room and copied an extract from the log-book : with a dying north north west wind the *Notre Dame*, reckoned in four-hour periods, had made 43—41—40—33—21 sea miles. Then the wind had turned completely to the north, and the ship had made another twenty-one sea miles in the next four hours. Finally the faint breeze jumped to east-north-east, and the *Notre Dame* in four hours had made only eight miles. And now even that was over.

With the lower sails reefed, as an old-fashioned lady raises her skirts before starting to run, the *Notre Dame* waited for a fresh breeze. Jorg, still under the spell and intoxication of the flying and rocking on the jib-boom, went into the cabin, and wrote for his little girl :

THE STORY OF THE OLD ADMIRAL

At the front end of the ship the bowsprit stretches over the water. It is as stout and as long as the biggest tree ; necessarily, for five sails are fastened to it, and it supports the great masts with heavy wire ropes.

At its far end the sailors have nailed up the tail-fin of a shark, and under the bowsprit they have spread a net, so that nobody shall fall into the water.

One night Father climbed out on the bowsprit, and lay down in the net as if it were a hammock. The bow cut through the ocean, and made it gush in great, white, foaming waves, and the cool spray floated up to the net like the water from a fine shower-bath. It was dark round about, the ship rode the long waves, and they

shone ; for in the south the sea shines as if all the stars of heaven had fallen into the water.

" It's wonderful here," Father said to himself.

" That's what *you* say," replied a voice from the darkness which sounded like the rushing of the sea. Father was startled. He thought he was quite alone. But now he saw that somebody else was there. It was a wooden figure, as big as a giant. It grew out of the ship's bow, and stretched way out along the bowsprit. It had a long spyglass in its hands, and gazed far across the sea with it. When Father's eyes had got a little used to the darkness, he saw that the figure was an admiral. He wore a three-cornered hat. A waistcoat covered his broad chest, and there were many gold chevrons on his blue jacket. On his shoulders he wore gold epaulettes as thick as layer-cakes, and his eyes were popping out of his head with constant looking through the spyglass.

" That's what *you* say," the old admiral said, and although it sounded exactly like the foaming of the waves, Father found all at once that he could understand it. " But just you lie here in a storm, when the ship dips her nose in the sea, and the waves splash the sails. Then you won't say it's wonderful here."

" I can well imagine that," said Father, very modestly, because the admiral was such a giant, and had so many chevrons on his sleeves. " A man would be sure to get drowned at once. But I don't suppose you're a man, are you ? "

" Oh no," said the giant, swelling his chest mightily, so that Father saw a medal sparkling on his bosom. " I'm an admiral before anything else ? I represent Nelson. Didn't you learn about me in school ? "

" Naturally—of course!" stammered Father. He had a guilty conscience because he had forgotten the dates of the battles, and the admiral was so severe

" Yes, those were the days ! " sighed the admiral.

" In those days they had only wooden ships, but iron seamen. To-day, unfortunately, it's the other way around."

" You must have gone through many a storm, Admiral," said Father respectfully, to distract the figurehead from its war recollections. " Your wood is all cracked and weatherbeaten, and the waves have knocked off a piece of your nose. You must have seen wonderful things through your spyglass ; won't you tell me about them ? "

¹¹ Gladly, my son. It is very seldom that a man visits me. I am very lonely. Only once a year the sailors come out to me with their paint-pots, and paint my waistcoat and jacket. Listen to me ! "

Father crept still deeper into the net, until he was right under the giant's head, and the admiral roared like a waterfall : " The first time on this ship that I looked through my spyglass, it was still on dry land. The ship had just finished building, and was about to be christened. Before me stood a girl; her hair floated in the wind, and it was as golden as my chevrons, and her eyes shone like my medals. She was lovely—almost as lovely as my Lady Hamilton. She swung a champagne bottle in the air, and smashed it on my chest : ' I christen you Admiral Nelson! ' It tickled pleasantly when the bubbling wine ran across my waistcoat, but I would have liked it even better in my mouth."

" And what happened then ? "

" We were the pride of the fleet. When we got a good wind in our sails, we went faster than the clumsy steamers. Then our captain would stand on the poop deck, and hold out a rope's end to the steamers we overtook. That meant * You can hook on behind," And at that he would laugh until the sails resounded.

" Our voyages were the fastest ; the merchants loaded us with their most precious wares, so that the

ship was deep-laden, and I could scarcely look out through the spray toward all the distant countries."

"What sort of things have you seen at sea?"

"Oh, there's nothing I haven't seen. Waves as high as houses and as long as roads. They came thundering across our ship with white manes; they smashed our lifeboats, they flooded the place where the sailors live, they tried to crush and smash us altogether. But we shook ourselves, and they rolled back into the sea, and the sailors popped up out of the water they had been buried in. 'Ugh!' they would cry, and they shook themselves, too.

"I have been in hurricanes that tore our strongest sails to rags, and the little cabin-boy cried and called for his mother, because he was so afraid."

"Have you seen any fish?"

"All the fish there are. We've been through schools of herring so big that the ocean for far around shone like silver with their shiny scales. At night the wave at my bow used to wake up the large pig-fish that slept on the water, and they would rush away from us in zig-zags, all startled. The young ones clung to their mother's backs, sucking fast with their mouths. Whales as big as islands have broken water ahead of me. But the minute they saw us they would blow a great stream of water in the air, and sound, deep, deep, so that our keel would not scratch their backs. Greedy sharks used to swim around us; the sailors caught them with big hooks, for sharks are sailors' enemies because they eat men."

"And what else have you seen?"

"Then we slowly grew old, the ship and I. We weren't as fast as the steamers any more. The merchants no longer gave us their best wares. We were glad if we could load the ship with bird dung—*guano*, the stuff is called; the farmers fertilize their fields with it.

Phew, how it smelt ! I would have liked to hold my nose, but I couldn't, because I had to hold my spyglass."

"And then ? "

" The captain who had commanded us so long grew old, and stayed ashore. Another one came ; it was the cabin-boy who had cried so—he had grown to be a big man in the meantime. But he's old now, and I'm gradually becoming rotten, and the pretty girls don't like me any more because my nose is broken off, and they say my uniform is old-fashioned. Yes, it's getting time for us to make our last trip."

" Perhaps they'll put you in a museum."

" What, in a museum ?—No, not for me. It's dusty there, and people who don't know anything about seamanship run around and gape at you. I don't wish to be stared at so stupidly."

" What *do* you wish to do ? "

At this the admiral bubbled very hollowly and mysteriously. " I'll tell you, though it's a secret : we're coming soon to the Cape of Storms. Huge icebergs sail out there from the South Pole, and fogs come up so that often you can't see them. Up there, in storm and fog, I shall run into an iceberg. It will make a great hole, bigger than a barn door, and then we shall both go down, the ship and I. That's an honourable death for an old admiral and an old ship, don't you think ? "

" Yes, but then all the people will go down, too, and be drowned," said Father, who was scared.

" That's right," said the admiral, bubbling more softly; "I didn't think of that. I don't pay much attention to people now, you know ; they don't pay much to me. Have you a better suggestion, so that you people will be saved ? "

" Yes, I have,"¹ said Father. " Beyond the Cape of Storms comes the South Sea, where there are still wonderful coral islands, with beautiful brown people

living there with flowers in their hair ; like Paradise. There, if you like, you can run into a coral reef, so that the ship will go down. But we shall all escape and swim ashore, and I will hang on to you as I swim, for I don't swim particularly well,"

" And then ? " the admiral bubbled eagerly.

" And then we'll tell the brown people that you are the great Admiral, Lord Nelson, and they'll put you in their temple, and dance before you, and bring you roast pig and palm wine."

" I'd rather have a good glass of punch," grumbled the admiral—" palm wine has such an effect on the digestion. But otherwise—not bad, not too bad at all. I'll sleep on your suggestion."

The old admiral bubbled and grumbled a while longer under his bowsprit, and at last he snored loudly, so fast asleep was he. Father went to sleep too, and when he woke up the waves were sparkling in the sun, and he thought he had only dreamt the whole story.

The *Notre Dame* had passed the latitude of Gibraltar, but now it seemed that the air had no power and no heart. Every few hours a light breeze would spring up ; the crew would be cheerful, and brace the yards, hoping for the trade winds, but within an hour all would be quiet as death again.

It was still quite cool ; Jorg cursed as he and Andersson paced off the short length of the main deck, back and forth and back and forth : " God damn it, I want sun ! I want to roast, I want to sweat Europe out of me ; I need heat. After all, we're in an African latitude ; bring on your heat ! "

He went to the poop deck, where the log turned sluggishly. He stopped the wooden cross to see how much force would gather in the line. One could hardly feel it. Bow and stern—they stood for future and past. When

one stood at the bow, his thoughts turned forward to what was to come ; when one looked into the wake, they strayed homeward. He had had to turn the page in his little sea atlas from the map of Europe to the map of the Atlantic Ocean—on it Europe was insignificant. The best thing this journey is giving me is the sense of distance, he thought : things are beginning to look quite different from the way they did at home.

The Canary Islands lay to the east, hidden in haze, but not too far away. Jorg read *The Coast Pilot* to find out something about them. This book described the coasts for the mariner, not the landlubber, who of course regards them in another light. For the landlubber the sea is the uncertain, dangerous element ; but *The Coast Pilot* said : " Consider every coast as dangerous until it is conclusively proved free of hazards." Distrust of all dry land was the basic tone, and " Seaman, stay out on the safe sea " was the slogan.

The interior country was sketchily indicated; after all, that did not concern the mariner. But currents that headed ships ashore were described exactly and in detail, such iron ore on the sea-bed as might cause dangerous compass deflection, soundings, market prices and pilot fees.

Reading the book one could well imagine the reflections of a captain, saying to himself, " I need fresh provisions; but the meat prices at the Cape Verde Islands are damn' high. We'd better sail the thousand miles north to the Canaries." It is just the same reckoning as a housewife's, whether cheap prices at the street market will make it worth while to take the tram.

The nights grew oppressive, and heavy with rain ; sometimes short, fierce cloudbursts. Then the scuppers would gush ; everywhere flashlights blinked, sailors in glittering oilskins raced with pails, wooden buckets, kegs, tins to the waterspouts. The sails, soggy with rain, grew

so heavy that the *Notre Dame* rolled more heavily with these great burdens high on the masts, like a metronome whose weight is pushed up. It was so dark that one hardly saw the reflection of the wet deck. The stickiness, the rolling of the ship, the darkness, all made one dizzy ; one lost all sense of balance.

The masts whirled among the stars, which shone faint and milky through blankets of cloud ; the peaks drew strange circles and figures, and there was something magic in the movement, like the pointing, explanatory finger of an astrologer.

The days of calm continued. They made one quite dejected ; inside, one seemed to be squashed flat. Sometimes a breeze would act just as if it were a trade wind, and then one was disappointed all the more when it lay down to sleep again, and the foaming along the sides died away. But it grew warmer. Stockings were given an honourable discharge from service, white shirts appeared ; one saw the first naked arms, bare necks and chests, still pale from the north. The skin began to thirst for water ; in the sticky heat clothes stuck fast to the body. The tar in the sail yarn got deep into the grooves which the yarn cut in the fingers during sewing ; one smelt of nothing but tar. At sundown everyone felt a little shiver of fever. At sunrise little rosy clouds broke off from the cloud-bank in the east ; they swam hurriedly toward the sun—a touching sight, like little children running to meet the great mother when she comes home.

" This is about the neighbourhood where flirtations begin on the big liners," said Jorg to Andersson. " They have sea-sickness happily behind them, it begins to get warm, and the sexes too get warm, from propinquity. There you lie in steamer chairs, side by side, admiring the stars and the wealth of feeling and of thought that you develop in the process. What a surprise !—you never knew you had it in you at all. But it looks well, and is

uncommonly decorative ; the girl looks dreamy, with moist eyes. You take her hand—does she object ?—Oh no, obviously she doesn't object ; after all, she is looking at the stars, and is blind to such earthly matters. Yes, that's how it begins."

Andersson laughed and called for the steward to bring him shaving water ; Saturday again.

The sky had squeezed out its customary little cloud sponge on the *Notre Dame*. One felt the draught of a breath of air on the wet skin, and there was a soft whispering, murmuring and smacking along the ship's sides.

The north-east trade wind came like a thief in the night, masquerading as one of the little, faithless breezes. But then it freshened, and blew itself into constancy. The morning came with brilliance, with combers, with fresh air and warmth. The sails of the *Notre Dame* were full and swelling like the breasts of young mothers.

From earliest morning the deck, the masts were full of echoing shouts. The sails were changed; the strong new sails, none more than three years old, were replaced with the older, more rotten second suit, in which many of the sails had served for ten years, and were so patched that they contained scarcely a rag of the original cloth. Yard-arms were crowded with half-naked men like telegraph wires with swallows ; knife-blades glittered, cut gaskets flew to leeward, and from the ends of the yards, down from the yard-arms, the cloth fell jerk by jerk, reefed, bundled up, a heavy, limp, lifeless body. Down from heaven came the faint, hoarse, rhythmic shouts ; the crew were working in time. On deck was the mate ; his head thrown back, always looking up, he ran to and fro like a sheep-dog, shouting himself hoarse through the megaphone of his hands. Always the boys aloft seemed to do something wrong; the young mate's hands and legs itched to go aloft, to show them how to do the whole thing. But he could not be on all the masts at

once, so he had to stay below—alas, alas ! And " Satan ! —Satan!" was the commonest word in the Swedish language, Jorg discovered ; it resounded aloft as well as from below, but it was not unkindly meant. The ratchets of the winches on deck rattled and clinked ; rigged through blocks, the new sails were hoisted by a jolly round-robin of the boys at the bars of the capstan. They sang and cleared the taut cable at a bound on each turn.

Jorg could not stay on deck ; he went aloft with the rest. His arm and shoulder did hurt abominably, and when he had climbed the overhang at the top he had to conquer an access of cowardice. But once you were up, lying with your body across the yard, you felt just as safe and just as wonderfully winged as a boy in the top of his favourite tree. A wonderful feeling of happiness shivered through him, as if he had discovered a new world. And a new world it was ! Narrow, as if shrunk by magic, the hull of the *Notre Dame* lay a hundred and fifty feet below him, suddenly transformed into a model of herself. Like a toy ship packed in shavings she lay in a bed of foam, and the horizon had grown to a vast dome, coming together above the mastheads. The royal over whose curve he looked down still seemed gigantic, gigantically heavy and strong the yard on which he lay ; the hull was quite out of proportion to these masses. It seemed a miracle that they did not simply cause the slender hull beneath to tip over. The strong, cool wind, much stronger than on deck, stroked his face with moulding hands; one was actually blown smooth, polished. His hair lashed his brow almost painfully, and almost by force his lungs were pumped full of a coolness which swelled his chest and filled him with such exuberance that he wanted to yell. His trouser legs rattled against his calves.

Very slowly, hoping they would not notice his slowness from the deck, Jorg felt his way toward the leeward

end of the yard-arm. Now he was hanging beyond the ship, even outside the strip of foam along the sides, hanging free over the blue deep. It was not at all dangerous; there were good foot- and hand-holds and, besides, the yard-arm had a strong chain into which one could wedge oneself. It was breath-taking and un-really beautiful to hang there in the glare of the sun, roaring along on the outermost edge of the *Notre Dame's* white pinions, on the outermost edge of nothing. It was an age-old happiness that rose in his breast, a happiness such as one knows as a child when he climbs his first tall tree and dreams he can live like a squirrel, forever in the trees, hastening through forests, flying from branch to branch. It comes from primitive ages this blissful feeling, a reminder that even man once lived in the trees a life whose delights still slumber deep within us.

Jorg stayed until he saw the mate looking up at him more and more often. Did the man suppose he did not dare crawl back ?

No, that was not it. The descent was almost sad, first down swaying ladders, past the song of the sailors on the lower yards, and then down the solid, safe shrouds, which got broader and broader as you went down. That was the mysterious, the beatific part of sailing: the force which drove the *Notre Dame* across the seas was invisible—wind, literally air ; one saw only the effect of this force. A steam-engine, a motor—these are man-made things ; we can understand them and the forces in coal and oil. But not this wind-power, in whose creation man had not the slightest part. That was why here, on the *Notre Dame*, one was nearer to heaven than in any other sort of vessel; only sailplane pilots, perhaps, shared this bliss.

When he was down on deck again he tasted at the bottom of the cup of blessed joy the bitter drops of a

new insight. He drank the dregs ; if he never saw them again, his wife and children, if they were all dead—he would live on. Somehow he would live on ; a new life, perhaps another wife and other children. Oh, he loved his own with all his heart ! But such was the truth ; frightful and cruel, the knowledge of it stabbed a sharp pain into his heart. He grew quite sad.

It was time to make a hammock ; soon there would be sleeping on deck. There was sailcloth enough from torn sails which were too rotten to be mended. It would be pleasant to lie in this pale, soft, weather-beaten fabric, which had already travelled so far in the world—a good bed for a traveller.

The sailmaker with the Thorwaldsen head—he spoke nothing but Swedish—silently handed Jorg the implements : the three-edged needle, the palm. With an inviting gesture he held out a hank of sail-yarn : " Please take as much as you like." Sail-yarn was something precious on shipboard, something to be hoarded. This gesture expressed true nobility and pleasure in giving.

Jorg sat on deck, sewing the strips together. If he worked slowly and exactly, he had thought, he could make as good seams as anyone else. But oh, how irregular and askew they were—regular pictures of my soul, he thought. He felt painfully the glance which each passing sailor cast on his work. The hammock would be ready soon enough ; by afternoon the long, tedious seams were finished, and only the ropes to hang it by were missing. But then came the mate, Barbarossa, catastrophe in the shape of the professional who could not watch such bungling. He shook his head at the missing symmetry of the holes for the ropes, and he got a punch, and punched new holes. To the despair of Jorg, who now had to stitch around them. And then the ropes went the length of the hammock's edges. They must be sewn in,

Barbarossa insisted. " Great God in heaven ! " cried Jorg, whereupon Barbarossa said very severely in Swedish something which sounded like : " It has to be that way, because that's the proper way to do it." Jorg yielded. Apparently he was being attacked by way of his honour, and honour is a strange thing : on its account one simply does things, even if one doesn't want to.

On the second day he had got to the point where at last he could stitch the holes with sail-yarn, but there came the accursed Barbarossa again, and said: "Oh no! First you have to put rings of cord around the holes." He made a ring as an example, and in this painstaking fashion Jorg could do but two holes an hour. Not until the third day were the ropes of old buntline fastened on.

Made in Jorg's own primitive fashion, the hammock would have been ready in a few hours, and it probably would have lasted out the trip. But this was a timeless world in which there was but one ideal—artistic perfection. Everything was intended to last for eternity. " I have created a permanent value here," sighed Jorg; " even my great-grandchildren will be able to lie in that hammock." But at bottom he was glad. The lesson he had been taught compelled respect. The world whence Jorg came, this civilization in which almost everything was manufactured for cheapness and show, no stronger and no better than was absolutely necessary, intended to be soon worn out—that world had no validity here.

It was hard to find a good place to put up the hammock, because on this southern course almost the whole ship was in the shade of the sails all day. At last Jorg found a spot way aft, on the poop-deck, where the hammock was not in the way of the rigging.

The trade wind was fresh ; really, half a gale. Meals were served on a table with ledges; Jorg became accustomed to putting his serviette-ring under the edge of his plate to keep the plate level. Spray would blow across

the decks. The water soon evaporated, but everything was salt-encrusted, sticky, slippery and moist. All around the horizon stood tall cloud-banks, solid as rock; they had been there for days. They were of the colour of fine china, and the *Notre Dame* sailed within their circumference as if in a huge soup-tureen.

In the morning the ship awoke just like a village—to wit, with the screech of the pump, an ancient sound which the city-dweller always connects with country life. One saw, instead of the girls at the well, the cabin-boy with his pails. He went barefoot, his trousers rolled up, a tiny cap stuck on the side of his head, his cheeks glowing with health. By the mizzen-mast was the inconvenient, the purposely inaccessible freshwater supply of the *Notre Dame*. First one had to roll aside a heavy lid. Then one went through a manhole down a very narrow shaft-way and found oneself among huge, riveted water-tanks. Down there, too, was the pump, although of course it would have saved work to have it on deck. But that was the very thing to be avoided. From below the water was pumped on deck, where it ran out of a spout into a pail. When one pail was full (which was calculated by the number of pump-strokes), the man had to climb up and put a new pail under the spout. This inconvenience drove it home to the men that water was something precious. The daily ration per man was about five litres. Two of these the cook used; the other three had to serve for washing, laundering and drinking. For this reason, too, the cabin-boy never carried two pails at once up the steps to the upper deck, although he could easily have done so. With two pails there was danger that a few drops might slop over, and that had to be prevented.

At night the air-shafts from the sailors' quarters to the deck stood open. As if into a cave-dwelling, one looked down from above on to the scoured table, above which dangled a small oil-lamp. There the boys sat

waiting for supper ; one looked down on strong necks, on tousled, glistening hair, on strong arms whose tattooing wriggled. The amount of tattooing among this young crew was conspicuous. Jorg had thought the custom was dying out. From the curtain-rods of the bunks dangled woollen socks, arsenic green with red tops, and shorts embroidered with antique Norse patterns. One could hear the cook in the galley poking his fire, could hear him rattling clogs and skillets, and the hissing of hot fat. The food came steaming into the fo'c'sle ; knives and spoons rattled on tin dishes, and all conversation died in the eager eating. The tin cups hung on nails in a board below the air-shaft ; now they were fetched down and filled with tea from the fat, tin teapot. It was so heavy that it was not lifted, but tipped.

Afterward came peaceful, quiet chatter, little waves of laughter. Some read the paper : according to shore ideas a touching occupation, because after all none was less than six weeks old. But, then, they were not reading for the sake of news. A paper in the evening was simply part of a man's feeling for civilization. It made no difference what was in it, but it had to be a newspaper.

Jorg finally succeeded in understanding the division of the watches. It was a Swedish system : from midnight to four a.m. was the first, and the starboard watch took it. From four to eight was the port watch's turn. These two watches were short, because the night hours are the hardest to keep watch through. Then the starboard watch worked five hours, from eight to one. The port watch followed, six hours, from one to seven. The starboard watch took the last five hours, from seven to midnight, and then the new day began with the port watch. It was expected of the mates that they should put in some of their free time as well. In every job, even the simplest and dirtiest, they furnished an example to the boys ; their working day amounted to fifteen, sixteen, some-

times eighteen hours. No wonder the young faces grew haggard ! Captain Andersson had not spent a single night below decks in the whole six weeks. He slept—when he did sleep—in the chart-room on the old leather sofa.

Now that life on the *Notre Dame* had become calmer, more of a routine affair, now that there were no more surprises in the way of weather, the captain often sat of an evening with Jorg in the cabin. He sat quite still, staring into the lamplight, deep in thought. His heavy hands lay as if lifeless on the table. He did not smoke, and since that strange night in Copenhagen, Jorg had not seen him drink a drop. The loneliness of the man was so great that one could feel it like an emanation. It was unearthly, because one could feel an inner fire in him, more unearthly than a sleeping volcano. One day he vanished into his cabin—the most desolate room on the *Notre Dame*, because never used, never occupied. Jorg heard him opening and closing drawers ; he came back with a wooden box under his arm. He put his knife on the table, and set the box on end. Jorg saw that it was a shrine, quite like a little altar-shrine. Hesitantly the captain undid the fastenings, and after a long, searching look at Jorg he lifted something out and laid it in front of him on the table. It was a wooden figure—a girl. She was of mahogany, a delicate brown with a fine golden glint in the wooden veins. She was slender, and yet perfectly womanly with her rounded hips and her round breasts, and she stood as a young woman stands before the man she loves, shy, and yet full of the wonderful courage of a person who fronts his fate : her head thrown back, her hands locked at the back of her neck. It was no gesture of shame, and yet in the knees, pressed together, one seemed to sense a trembling that rose from the slender feet: the trembling of a woman who knows that in the next moment she will feel the hands of her man : hands that

lift her featherlike from the floor, arms which carry her away, incredible hardness and violence, breath-taking, searing, inflaming, a conflagration of passion. One seemed to read this expression in the face of the carving, but the face was empty, an expressionless oval, unformed. It was the only thing which was not yet shaped.

Andersson's fingers slid caressingly over the wood. The knife looked violent beside the perfect smoothness of the figure—as if it could but injure and destroy, this finely ground blade which in Andersson's hands had created it all.

"This is Juana," said Andersson. It was like an introduction, and it was necessary, the figure was so alive ; it gave off so much of the love that had been put into it.

"She is beautiful,"

"Yes, Juana is beautiful. Or rather she was beautiful. Now I suppose she is ugly. They age early, Chilean women ; her breasts will sag, and she will have become cheap,"

"Had she no face ? "

"No ; she had no face. She had only a body that was beautiful and soulful. Eilin had a face, but Eilin is dead—and I never saw her naked. Look : for five years I have been trying to combine Eilin's face and Juana's body in one figure. But it doesn't work. This is the fifth figure. It will probably be thrown overboard, like the rest."

"Eilin was white," said Jorg, with instinctive knowledge.

"Yes ; I have tried white linden wood, too. But it did not help."

Jorg felt that another avalanche was about to come down from within the lonely man. He felt the breathlessness of the moment, the awe induced by a natural phenomenon.

"Juana—it was my first trip as a captain ; we were

in Talcahuano after a hundred and twenty-six days at sea. You don't know what a hundred and twenty-six days at sea are, with six weeks of struggle around Cape Horn at the end ; you aren't a normal person by that time. You are—it can't be described—not full of evil juices, as people ashore imagine, but just quite different from other people. I was jolly glad when I had my ship at anchor in safety. I went ashore. I had known the house and known Madame, for many years. She wished me luck ; all at once I was an important person to her, a captain. It's an old-fashioned country ; people there give us an importance that we don't really have any more.

" ' Juana, you shall have Juana ! This is her first night in my house, and this is your first night in my house as a captain. Juana ! ' "

" This is Juana, this is meant to be she ; I can't describe her. She was full of fear, of courage, of pride. It was her first night together with a man. She cried, and then she was—cold fire ; I can't describe it. Late at night I asked, ' Why are you here ? ' She smiled in a way that went through and through me : ' *Destino !* ' She was twenty-three years old. She was poor ; a poor girl can't get a husband in Chile at that age. She belonged to a large family ; she had to get dowries for younger sisters. So she had come to this house. The purchase-price was the dowry for two sisters.

" Every night as long as we were in harbour, I went to Juana. It was so that nobody else could possess her. I wanted to take her on board. I wanted to marry her, but I couldn't raise the sum Madame had paid for her.

" We sailed for the saltpetre ports.

" A year later I saw Juana again. She was in the same house. She was loaded with jewellery. She had become like the rest. She had an offer from an expensive

house in Valparaiso. She showed me her jewellery, and was proud of the trinkets.

"The third year I saw her in Valparaiso. Her breasts were sagging, her voice was hoarse, and the money-lust was around her mouth. They were about to push her off to a cheaper house. Juana ! "

It was uncanny how the man's voice rang at first like a gong, rising from hollow depths, then ringing under quicker blows ; then sinking away, choked with emotion, until speech was strangled at the last word. Juana: had he really loved her ? No. He had loved an ideal ; he loved it yet; he was trying to embody it in the figure. Juana was only the body. Eilin, who was Eilin ? If he tried to unite Eilin and Juana in one figure, he had not quite loved either with all his heart. Then it was a good thing for him that he had not got Juana, for he would not have loved her, but always his ideal of her. Perhaps he had hoped to shape her into it as he shaped the wood, this lonely man, the most unworldly Jorg had ever known.

But it was impossible to tell this to Andersson. Jorg rose quietly, and went out. Andersson did not see him at all. He turned the figure very slowly in his big hands.

The wake twisted with every rise and fall of the *Notre Dame* ; it was a living snake, a milky way set with glittering stars. The astronomers overpower us with their gigantic numbers, but the stars of heaven cannot be more numerous than the sparkling stars in a southern sea. Subterranean storms seemed to flash violent heat-lightning, illumining the path of the ships with the same greenish light that fireflies emit.

At the bow raged the night offensive of the sea ; one roll of fire after another roared up to the point of the bowsprit. Huge comets flew along the sides of the *Notre Dame*—a phosphorescent, cold, hellish glow.

For more than six weeks Jorg had lived in hermit solitude ; even the language divided him from the men

here. The sea was his prison, with the pitiless walls of stars the horizon. This was how he had wished it. The peculiar, unworldly, unearthly quality of the journey was piercing him deeper and deeper. It transformed, it extinguished everything that had tormented him at home—the pettiness, the dirt, the ugliness, the humdrum life. He began to understand Andersson, that enigma ; his life at sea in huge ghost ships like the *Notre Dame*, a life wrapped in the nameless loneliness of the ship-master. If this man trod solid ground, if he encountered women, earthly, earthy earth-bound as they were, the encounter was sure to lead to catastrophe. Was it not like a collision between planets ?

He felt how loneliness and continence can fertilize the imagination. How one did not think of women as earthly figures whom one had known and loved. One thought of " the " woman, a symbolic figure. So, too, it had been in youth, when sex awoke ; and all at once he understood the meaning of the first sexual experience—a stamp that remained for life.

Of course one knew about the things that go on between man and woman. One read Ovid's *Pyramus and Thisbe* in the upper classes, and smiled at the embarrassment of the teacher, trying to dodge explaining " *Toto corpore tegi.*" But one had not yet experienced it ; one was all anticipation, all expectation ; nothing else mattered. It is a condition that never returns.

And since there seemed to be nothing else in the world, and since one sought only the one thing, fulfilment came soon.

He had walked far—he and Bianca, the tall, lovely girl, who was older than he. It was spring : nests of cowslips, borders of hepatica along the woods, anemones in the wind, hazel catkins shaking off golden dust, sun hurling golden darts into the young forest, where birches stood like burning candles.

They had lain down to rest, united by the walk, by the spring in one pulse-beat of feeling. The girl's hair was a golden splendour ; she let it down, and spread it out for a pillow for him. He buried his face in it. It was scented; the scent was incredible, intoxicating, and he lay motionless, as if he were tired. She looked down at him. Carelessly her hand tousled his hair, gently and indifferently, as if she were stroking a big dog. But it went through him each time with a shiver. She felt his whole backbone tremble under her hand ; it flattered her, and she did it again and again, excitingly, gently, magnificently.

He would have liked to struggle with her, press her head into the grass, kiss her, kiss her to madness. But he did not stir ; he was happy, unspeakably happy.

The sun travelled a long journey above them. It was growing dark when they moved, but it was warm, quite like summer. There lay a pond, small, fringed with reeds, hidden in the woods, a disc of shining lead in the sunset.

" Come, we'll bathe," said the girl.

The highway was near ; they did not dare undress but they could wade. He felt very haughty : something entirely improper was about to happen, but what business was it of anyone's ?

They took off shoes and stockings. He rolled his trousers up to his hips, and the girl leaned heavily on his bowed neck when she got on uncertain footing—she had both hands full with her skirts. He felt the bend of her arm about his neck, hot, with pounding pulse. Stooped as he had to walk to support her, he saw her long white legs—more, unbelievably much more than any dream. She leaned over him, and her arm touched his lips ;• he kissed the skin, the soft, sweet skin, trembling with joy and agony. Deeper and deeper they waded, and darker and darker grew the world around them. The woods already were black walls. " Wait, your skirt is getting

wet,"¹ he said, and it sounded perfectly calm and natural. A shiver went over him at the contrast between the cold words and the ecstasy he felt. She did not resist him when he touched her thighs, pushing the dresses far, far up along the silky flesh—and how icy was the water into which his hands dropped afterward. How large a woman's thighs were ! They radiated ecstasy, ineffable, anticipation of the great experience that made the world and meant everything.

All at once she turned shy; she talked loud, the enchantment fled. On the way home they were untruthful and conventional.

But it did not end thus. It ended on another day, when his head was in her lap, again in the woods ; when all feeling focused on this point, and he felt with his skull, with every hair toward the soft warmth under him, and above him burned the still flames of her blue eyes. She smiled with moist mouth, and there was in her face an expression that he had never seen before. Suddenly she bent over, and kissed him. At first he kissed in short, wild rushes, like a child, until he felt her mouth open and draw his into it. Something quite overpowering ran through his body. He began to stroke her, and felt her body come toward him. His hands glided over her hips ; instinctively he found the source of the stupendous sensation. She took his head in her hands. " Not here," she whispered, " not here."

" Not here "—those were words that one never forgot. They meant everything. In refusal they meant fulfilment. " Not here " meant that it would be soon. It was a promise.

Had he merely dreamt it all ? No ; the promise was fulfilled. " Come ! " was the other word that one never forgot, that and the naked body of the first woman one saw so, the shadow of her womb, the brown moons of her breasts.

Only gradually he understood that it was all to belong to him, the great landscape of this body, of the body of a grown woman. He sent his lips wandering across the landscape, hastily, wildly, like someone who is given something immeasurably big—a kingdom. And in hot haste he tried to know it, to explore it, to become its master. "Come 1 "

It came, and there was pain in the violence with which it came, mad, enormous, something that had never happened to anyone in the world before. Yes, he believed it.

"You needn't be afraid to ask if you want to know anything," she said. It was clear and plain, and yet it was all like a dream.

That was in the last spring of the war ; the men were in the trenches. That probably explained it. In those days it was the fate of youths to be seduced by girls and women who had no men. How unbelievably lucky he had been in meeting Bianca. How much more happily he had been shaped than had Andersson. You could tell that Andersson was unhappy.

In the empty belly of the *Notre Dame* at that time they were chipping rust. On deck one heard the picking of the hammers, drumming like distant infantry fire. Some of the hatch covers were open ; Jorg went down one of the ladders.

When his eyes had grown accustomed to the darkness, he grasped the enormous extent of the space. It was the nave of a gothic church, except that the arches pointed toward the depths. As if through church windows, slanting rays of light filtered in. In the nethermost depths one saw the sand-ballast—yellow sea sand, flat dunes of it, covered over and over with planks, spread with chains and a broad-meshed net of cables to hold the heaps solid and to anchor them to the sides. The

ship would have to stand almost on her head before this ballast would start to slide. It was supposed to be fourteen hundred tons of ballast, but the mass of it almost vanished in the vast space. The 'tween-deck where Jorg now stood rose in a slight curve toward bow and stern. The eye lost itself in this dark expanse, which no bulkhead interrupted. Only at bow and stern there were small bulkheads. If subjected to a collision in between these two points, *Notre Dame* must surely sink like a plummet. It was true, however, that the ribbing and the frame seemed enormously strong, and they were closer together than in the steamers Jorg knew. Outside, above and below him, Jorg heard the sea rub gurgling along the side, a strangely metallic sound, an uncanny fumbling as if of giant hands, seeking entrance from blind depths to the ship. The empty cathedral, a single vast sounding-board, amplified the sound into a hollow, menacing rumble, a tigerish growl, which one felt might suddenly swell to a mighty roar. In the same way the whistling of a shell gives a premonition of the explosion.

It was unearthly here below. Across the slanting iron floor Jorg felt his way to the mast. It was as large as the stump of a giant oak. It was boarded over, probably as protection against the rubbing of the cargo. It and the sand-ballast in the bottom of the hold, which contained the feet of the masts, produced in one the impression that one stood in a great, dark forest. Jorg went down the last part of the iron ladder into the bottom of the hold. It was strange to feel soft sand under the feet, sand that overflowed and ran into one's shoes. Scrambling from hillock to hillock he got from one mast to the next. The bases of the masts were riveted with rings of huge rivets to a thick steel plate. The plate in turn was bolted to the very backbone of the ship, a steel beam of double T shape, gigantic in size and strength. The sides of the bed-plate, in turn, were riveted to the frame-joists, which were

particularly close together at that point. Thus the wind pressure that filled the sails was distributed over a large part of the hull.

Tween-decks were stacks of fathom-wood, lashed down with boards and ropes to the frame-joists. Knotty sticks of Chilean evergreen, full of moisture, covered with mould, smelling like wet woods in November, when the leaves are rotting on the ground. It was wonderful to smell this scent on the high seas ; the scent of home. Jorg knew he would always come down here when he was homesick. The reddish Australian oak had resisted the damp better, and so had various sections of broken woodwork, the gratings and ladders from the *Notre Dame's* own body.

Further for'ard they had spread out the sails torn in the last storm ; here too pounded the hammers of the group lost in the hold. All the way for'ard, beyond the collision bulkhead, were stored the fragments of all the things destroyed by the storms of years : ventilators, squashed flat, battered like old pans, eaten with rust ; wooden topmasts, worn through by cables, riddled with dry rot ; worn-out hawsers, wire cables, surrounded like barb wire with the rusty ends of broken wires ; stripped cog-wheels from winches, split blocks of pockwood, steel rings and bolts worn thin by never-ending friction. There was no end to what such a ship lugged around with her in the way of scars and wounds from countless battles, of memory and the scent of distant lands. Even now, when she was empty, she carried sand from the beach at Dublin, stone from her own Aaland Islands, wood from the Chilean forest, wood from Australia ; in dark corners there were still little heaps of wheat from the last trip.

While they ate, Jorg asked Andersson about various things he had seen below. The taciturn captain thawed ; he really got under way when it concerned the one thing he understood to the last detail—sailing ships. Jorg learned things which sounded fabulous, but whose truth

was not to be doubted. It had happened that sailing ships got sailed out of shape. They had been sailed too hard, the strain on the hull had been too great ; perhaps the cargo had been stiff and unsuitable ; the hull had yielded, had warped or spread. Once lost, the shape could never be regained. There were ships which had, on their maiden voyages, been crippled for life.

Andersson as a young sailor had sailed on wooden sailing ships so old, so rotten, that the weight of the cargo threatened to burst them. They had lashed and held the hulls with chains, as one holds together a broken carton with string. What must the men have felt who sailed in such coffins ! And from this very firm had grown the most modern Scandinavian freight-carriers, a fleet of wonderful, fast motor-ships. Only, one looked at these boats with a different feeling, knowing how the money for them had been made.

In Jorg's old sea atlas, his companion on many journeys, the sailing fleet of the world at the turn of the century was listed as almost three thousand ships, with a total of eight million tons. How many were there to-day ?

Andersson silently laid before him *Lloyd's Shipping Index*, the 1935 edition. The list of sailing ships took up only two pages of the fat book. It was a tragic list. A year before, that is, there were but thirty-two sailing ships of more than a thousand tons' burthen. Five were marked with the cross which indicates always a disaster and usually the end of the ship. Jorg read : "*Pestalozzi*—ran aground—30th November—scrapped. *Mozart*—damaged by storm—gth August. *Kentoa*—abandoned by her crew, sank—27th March. *John R. Mania*—overdue since 6th July. *Grace Harvar*—towed in igh July, sold for scrap to English yard."

Meanwhile the *Grossherzogin Cecilie*, too, had been wrecked on the English coast. The *Joseph Conrad* had run on a reef in the South Seas. (The man who gave this

ship her name did not have much luck in life either.) And now, in the October storm, another Peterson vessel, the *Estonia*, had been wrecked.

But half of the few that were left were training ships. Either they did not undertake any more real trips at all, or they sailed with more hands than they needed, under conditions which could no longer be compared to those under which the old trading vessels had sailed.

The eleven Peterson ships were the last ; they were all that was left of the great days of seafaring. " When will our turn come ? " Jorg asked himself. That the *Notre Dame* would not be scrapped he was certain, " Captain Peterson has lost eight of his big sailing vessels in the last five years—none was insured," This Andersson had said once.

He continued to turn the leaves. How odd—the body of the book was full of the present, of names of steamers and motor-ships. The next-to-last page was given to the dying past. But the last page led into the future : like ships, the big transoceanic planes were listed with their times of arrival and departure. They had romantic names—*Andromeda*, *Aurora*, *Hadrian*, *Horsa*, *Sylvanus* : the same names that sailing ships had borne in their great days. The young eagle of the new world traffic was stretching its pinions.

The agony of regret seized Jorg, as often, often before. Why had he missed it, not recognized it, not felt it—the conquistador age of the great flights ? This generation compressed into a dozen years ?

In 1917 it began, with the fantastic trip of the Zeppelin to Africa to take munitions and medical supplies to Lettow-Verbeck's troops. This Zeppelin's ribs were tent-poles, its envelope bandage-cloth, for it was intended to be taken apart on arrival. Its goal was near when the ship was recalled—the result of a mistake. That was the first world flight. Then came the mad ocean flights of Koehl, of

Lindbergh, the world flights of Cobham and Pinedo and all the others whose names Jorg could not remember. And this *conquistada* had ended about 1929, with the plane *Southern Cross*, which had many motors and a crowd of newspaper men on board. It flew by time-table ; it filled the air with the jazz that was played on board. In America, people danced to it, and thought it delightfully sensational.

The age of air conquistadors, this age crowded into a dozen years, had produced unheard-of documents. The pictures made on these flights were unique. They had the same freshness of impression, the same virginity of feeling as the accounts of Columbus and the great discoverers of his time. They were astonishingly alike. Columbus had only inexact maps, only a faint idea of the countries he would find. The fliers knew no more. They had good maps, but land maps, and the world shows a different face from the air. They were technicians, mechanics, specialists ; they were thinking of landing-places, of petrol stations, but not of all the other things they would find in strange countries. There were forced landings. In the desert, in South Sea coves, in some open spot in the jungle, they fell from the sky—quite literally. From mad speed, from dizzy heights they came to a sudden standstill in an utterly strange world.

From this encounter with the unknown, from this explosive collision of opposites, from this high tension came these unique photographs which wear no mask. In them the face of the savage bared his soul. In them surf, jungle, mountain cliffs regained their ancient importance. One felt as the fliers had felt in flights : "If I have to land here, the game is up ! "

This great epoch of air's conquest of space, Jorg had let escape him. When it began he had been young enough to take part in it. Now there was no part to take ! It was very sad to realize.

Jorg saw himself regretfully obliged to ration his little supply of whisky very carefully. He took the bottles from their wrappings, and stuck on labels which he found in the medicine-chest. One was called "Helen's Birthday," One was for the birthdays of the children, which were close together. One was called "Christmas," One "Mail" (against the improbable chance that they would meet a steamer in calm weather. Andersson had promised to send over a boat, and of course you had to show your gratitude somehow). One was marked "New Year's," and one "Arrival in Australia," One bottle was left, and it was christened "Bottle of Desperation"; it was to be ready for extreme emergency.

Two days later was Helen's birthday. Was she celebrating it? Was there a regular birthday-table? Had the gifts arrived which he had got last thing before leaving? Wouldn't she have just a little pleasure? He saw her before him. With the children. Strange how he never saw her in his mind's eye without the children. How big the children were already, and how little and delicate she herself. When the children threw themselves riotously upon her, she was overpowered, squeezed breathless; and that was just what the children thought was fun. She was a child herself. That was the loveliest thing about her, that she could be as happy as a child, and also could weep like a child. And now she was an abandoned child among her own children. How was she bearing it? She was brave, certainly, and in the depths of her feeling unconquerably strong. How lucky he was to have such a wife at his back! What completely undeserved luck! He felt her so near, she and the children, that he simply could not be sad, although there was reason enough. If she were to see him now, to see how different and how much better his state had become on this journey into solitude and timelessness, she

would surely understand. Perhaps he was as near to her that day as she to him.

He shaved carefully, and put on his best suit. At noon there was tomato soup, a reminder of home, and beforehand he made himself and Andersson a cocktail of whisky and lemon-juice.

Then he wrote a letter to Helen.

In the afternoon, while Jorg was in the foremast, taking pictures, the sailors on the yards were suddenly electrified. They pointed to a dot on the horizon—a steamer was in sight, heading toward the *Notre Dame*. As fast as he could, Jorg descended to the deck, hope in his heart : would it be possible to put down a boat, and send letters aboard the steamer ? Was it not a gift from fate, just on Helen's birthday ? Andersson looked hastily in the signal book ; Alf, the second mate, fetched flags from the closet of the chart-room, and both hastened aft. They were going to run up the identification signal of the *Notre Dame*, with the request to report the ship by wireless to the owner. The identification signal was a group of five letters. While Andersson picked out the flags and Alf tied them to the rope, Jorg dropped a hint about the boat. Andersson smiled ; it would be impossible in this wild wind to get the little motor-boat into the water. Jorg nodded : he had known it. It was only the burning desire which had made him ask at all. Poor little Helen, hot, impatient heart, now you will have to wait, he thought.

The flags went up, and fluttered in the wind. The steamer slid past, not a sea mile away—an Italian, a beautiful big motor-ship, and its name was *Riv*. Through the big glass one could see the captain leaning on the rail of the bridge. His uniform was brilliantly white, freshly pressed, freshly washed with plenty of fresh water. He looked good-humoured and rosy. A man with a time-

table, a man who could send his wife a telegram if he felt like it. "Sure, it's a steamer," said Alf, the mate. But Andersson pointed out how the *Riv* pitched and rolled in the heavy sea, and how much better *Notre Dame* sailed. It was a rebuke. *Riv* slid toward the sun, and was soon but a shadow, tossing on a silver sea. The dream was undreamt, and Jorg felt sadness filling him as if he had sprung a great leak.

In the evening he suddenly knew that Helen was weeping at home. The little surprise he had planned for her for the day had done no good ; the present had only made Helen unhappier. Jorg lay aft in his hammock ; the wind roared over him. The ropes touched the tackle of the mizzen-sail; it raised and lowered the hammock as if to fling the man out. The deck was so aslant that Jorg did not dare put his shoes down ; they would have slid overboard. Close beside him foamed the luminous seas.

He lay for a long, long time staring into the sky, which was quite black, with a timid star now and again. In the black masses of clouds he thought he saw the eye of God, with dark brows above.

God was right ; it was only just to see him thus. There was little good in him. Once Jorg had observed and judged other people ; now more and more he saw himself, and he shuddered at the sight. An awful indifference took possession of him ; he waited for the moment when a jerk of the mizzen-sail would fling him over the rail. It would be a good thing when he was disposed of.

But the jerk did not come. Instead he went to sleep. These nights had a heaviness of air and of darkness which simply forced the lids shut. He dreamed : there was a great city which one could see from the water, and he rowed in a little boat through the wild sea toward the distant towers. But the city never came nearer,

and he grew very tired. The little fortified island beyond Copenhagen lay between him and the city. It at least he was determined to reach, but they trained their cannon on his little boat, and when he rowed nearer despite their splashing shells it was so smooth everywhere that there was no place to land. . . .

He was awakened by heavy, warm drops beating in his face. He waited a while for the wetting to stop, but the rain fell faster and faster, soaking him through. He waited long enough for a few drops to fall on his eyes, so that he could open his heavy lids. That was the mad part of these tropical nights when one slept out-of-doors : they closed the eyelids as if with seals ; even when one had at last opened the swollen lids, one could see nothing for some time.

Then the ship's clock struck eight bells, midnight; pulling himself together, he remembered where he was. Along the gangway came the swinging lantern of the mate, who was going to read the log. Behind him stumbled Jorg, trying to make the most of the light, his shoes in his hand, his sleeping-bag over his shoulder. He was still confused. He saw the lights in the cabin as the lights of a far-distant house. He saw them as if in a deep forest, for rigging dangled in front of the lights. Was it not really a forest ? Was it not really his house, as he had so often seen it when he came home from the woods, tired, weighed down with mushrooms, berries or game ? And were they not in the house, the people he loved ?

The first home he had had with Helen—he saw it before him. It was a fisherman's house at the mouth of the Elbe. How they went there for the first time : the bricks of the narrow path resounded under their feet, and the house peered at them under the bushy brows of its reed thatch, with its red, half-timbered brick walls, which looked like the red cheeks of a vigorous, healthy old woman. From the Dutch door a strange odour

greeted them, stale, a little damp ; the house had not been lived in for a long time. An odour of granary and old birch and mahogany furniture. Shyly, holding hands, they went through the Dutch door like children called to look at their Christmas presents. It was dark behind the closed blinds, but all was light within themselves. They tore open the windows ; the house opened its eyes, and awoke to life. It was really as though it were awaking from a long sleep and as though it were examining the newcomers to see whether they could be lived with.

How their voices echoed through the empty rooms ! How strange was the echo of the walls, and yet familiar from the first ! With what curiosity they opened drawers, cupboards, rooms ! Oh yes, there were the table-linen, the dishes, the silver, the pots and pans, the bedding. Yes, but much was needed before the house could properly be put in commission. Jorg walked to the village ; with a wonderful excitement he made the acquaintance of the few little shops, knowing he would visit them often. What a friendly face the butter woman had, what splendid smoked fish were in the fish-dealer's shop. How indescribable the happiness of shopping for the first meal in this first home, of ordering the rolls, the milk. How friendly everyone was ! What excellent rum at Mr. Norden's ; Mrs. Hasenbein was all excitement at the big order for soap, for cleaning-powder, for shoe-polish and brushes, for sugar and salt. Ziervogel the tailor would certainly clean, press and mend all the suits. Loaded with bundles Jorg came home : in the meantime Helen had made the beds, aired the rooms, dusted, and cut the last dahlias in the wild garden, and put them on the table.

The first meal : never would he forget it : the taste of crabs, still warm from smoking. The fresh bread, the painful kindling of the first fire in the stove (it would not burn until they soaked an old rag in oil). The first

tea from the cosy brown pot, the pop with which the cork shot from the rum bottle, that brown sugar, honey-comb shape, which broke noisily in the cups. They ate out of the rustling paper which the packages had been wrapped in ; they kept jumping up to feed the stove with wood. The flickering flames lit the room. Nothing in the world could be compared to the taste of the first meal by their own fireside.

And then the first night in the bed, still damp, long unused. Helen shivered and snuggled close to him ; the beam of the beacon flashed across the low room, and from outside came the deep tooting of the steamers going upstream with the rising tide. Their lights were reflected in the moving stream ; the stars sparkled, the wind whistled in the thatch, and one heard the soft scratching and scrambling of the bats in the reeds of the roof. That night, probably that very night, Elke was begun.

He woke feeling sick, very sick. He had just enough strength to put his water-bucket under the rainspout.

The sun grew in violence. A fierce stream of heat flooded the air the moment it rose from the sea. By day one did not notice the strength of the rays so much, because the roaring air of the trade winds stripped the heat from the skin ; it was a complete surprise when, in the evening, long strips of skin came off arms and shoulders. Freckles grew like mushrooms ; the whole body underwent a transformation. One literally became a new person. Several boys who were in the tropics for the first time went down with fever. They had slept at night on the fo'c'sle-head, and their limbs seemed paralysed by the heavy dew. These nights were dangerous, exhausting and intoxicating, like nights spent with very beautiful, very experienced women.

The carpenter was among the invalids to whom Jorg gave quinine. Young as he was, the man had a typical

carpenter's face: dealing with wood produces great straightforwardness of character. The fever emphasized still more his true-hearted, worried expression. Joseph, the most straightforward figure in the Bible, was a carpenter too, Jorg reflected. Were there comparative statistics on occupation and crime? If there were, the carpenters must show up very well.

An odd astonishment in the invalids' faces attracted Jorg's notice: all their lives they had been healthy, these boys, and now that they were ill they did not know what was happening to them.

Jorg spent whole days in his hammock, baking and growing brown, until the skin in the bend of his elbows was almost black. Only the skull had to be protected with a knotted handkerchief; otherwise he let the sun do its work, and assault him. He *wanted* the transformation. With the endless rills of sweat which ran down the valleys of the muscles there ran out as well the rheumatism and all the other malaise which one had been accumulating. The brain, sun struck, hatched fantasies; suppose they came on a dead sea serpent? That sea serpents existed, according to many authentic reports, was impossible to doubt. Andersson would surely be sportsman enough to heave to until they could cut the monster to pieces and salt it down in hogsheads. Or were they now in the region which airships crossed on their way to South America? Suppose an airship made a forced landing now—Jorg saw the huge, glittering aluminium body drifting on the waves, passengers and crew clinging to scraps of the envelope—what an encounter between aeons that would be!

He thought out a whole novel: it was to take place during the age when sailing ships were conquering the world. The spherical shape of the earth was still an unproved theory. The theologians quarrelled with the adherents of Galilee, and the captains of the barrel-shaped

caravels listened to the dispute, deep in thought ; it was a matter of life and death to them.

Was the earth a ball or a disc ? And if it was a ball, wouldn't one go head over heels into nothingness on the other side ? But if the earth was a disc, matters were still worse : then the waters of the earth must be pouring over the edge in a fearful cataract. This was what the theologians taught. Whoever got caught in the stream was, of course, a lost man.

There were to be two captains, who hated each other. Because they were rivals in the discovery of new countries, because they were rivals in love, or for some other reason. They were to take leave of the woman as one had to take leave in those days : " If I don't come back in seven years, and there is no news of me, you are free, and can marry the other man." Thus Francis Drake had agreed with his wife, an agreement full of bitterness and full of common sense. Then they would sail off, with a crew of convicts, for " decent " seamen would not lend themselves to such fiendish journeys : the one, southward and then around Africa to the east; the other, south-westward and then holding a course ever westward, each going as far as possible in the direction opposite to the other's course. What a hell the ships would be, where the men, fearfully penned together, died like flies of scurvy or home-sickness, or tore one another to bits like wolves ; devoured by hate, misery, oppression and fear. How must they have felt when they were caught in ocean currents, believing that now they were drifting to the great cataract, to the fall into nothingness. What must the waiting woman have gone through as she listened to the arguments of the scholars at court whether the beloved one and his ship would shoot into the cataract, or whether the curvature of the earth would fling him headlong into space, or what was the nature of the leviathan, which, it was known, devoured whole ships.

And then, after seven years, the men would meet, these men who had needed the whole earth to keep their hates apart; for the earth—what irony !—was round. When they fled each other, they collided. The ships were leaky, worm-eaten, half wrecks ; the survivors stared hollow-eyed across the rails at one another, more ghosts than men. Yes, and at home, below them, right under their feet, the girl was marrying a man neither of them had thought of. It was no use for them, like Drake, to fire a cannon-ball into the depths to prevent the wedding.

" Sail ahead ! "—the cry came from the foremast, where a man was at work high up in the tops. Andersson stormed on deck. Through the big glass one could descry the sails of a four-masted barque, flickering and twitching, a tiny white flame in the glare. It could be nothing but a Peterson ship, probably the *L'Aventure*. Had she had a bit of luck in the English Channel, so as to get ahead of the *Notre Dame* ?

Perhaps they could overhaul her sufficiently to be able to signal across in Morse code with the signal light at night. Perhaps they could even send over a boat.

Toward evening they had come within about ten miles of their friends ; that it was the *L'Aventure* was by now almost certain. At sundown they thought they recognized the distinguishing forked gaff. But it was still too far to signal. By morning they were only six miles away. It was a regular race ; Andersson stood at the helm for hours, and as long as he steered, the *Notre Dame* laid down a wake as if drawn with a ruler. On the other hand, the mates noticed with delight that the *L'Aventure* showed now one quarter, now the other. Either she did not steer well by nature, or she had a bad steersman. Alf and Barbarossa were shaved and in clean khaki uniforms, although it was not Saturday ; after all, you had to create a good impression over yonder. From eight to twelve

Notre Dame ran fifty sea miles, twelve and a half per hour.

About noon *UAventure* began showing her starboard quarter more and more plainly. She was altering her course. "She's going around outside the Cape Verde Islands,"¹ cried Andersson, disappointed. *Notre Dame* was holding almost exactly to southward, the *UAventure* about to south-southwest, so that the shears opened again, more and more. By late afternoon *UAventure* sank entirely below the horizon.

These manoeuvres were strange; Jorg could not believe they were determined by necessity. It seemed that Captains Bjorklund and Andersson did not want to meet. Why not? After all, friends would say good-day when they met "on the long highway" after a couple of thousand miles. It would not have cost either ship a second of lost time. Was the contest so much in earnest? Or was Captain Bjorklund by chance still hurt because they had yanked him out of bed that drunken night—centuries back?

They were in the northerly trades; a strong current pushed *Notre Dame* to westward, thirty miles in twenty-four hours. The seas criss-crossed . . . restlessly, snapping, spattering, unruly. Often one thought one saw the fins of great fish, but it was only short, abrupt waves, which disappeared again in a second. All this noisy unrest was caused by the conflict of wind and current. The next afternoon the ship crossed a line which ran quite visibly over the ocean. Beyond it the turbulence ceased, and the sea smoothed out. That was the limit of the current. They were two hundred miles from the coast of Africa, but nevertheless there were visitors from ashore—two dragon-flies and a yellow butterfly.

The trade wind went to sleep. Softly *Notre Dame* glided into a realm of peace and dreams, into the zone of calms. She straightened up; one was quite unaccustomed

to walking once more on a level floor. She did not stir any more, and her sails, too, stood motionless, bellying gently. The ocean, of which so much evaporated, filled the air with vapour from noon onwards. Sun and sea filled the air with vapour from noon onwards. Sun and sea combined to lead man into a rare nirvana. One was tired; one slept a great deal. Softly the breeze stroked one's skin. If I were to fall asleep now, thought Jorg, and wake up in a month, nothing would be changed—the same sun, the same empty horizon, the same ship. What had become of Europe? He no longer felt as he had before that life in Europe or elsewhere in the world was running away from him while he was alone at sea. One missed nothing. If once one recognized whither the affairs of the world were drifting, a year taken away from this development could be only a gain. It was like dancing; if you missed one record, you simply put another on the gramophone.

An experience he had one night confirmed the transformation which had come over him.

Jorg had gone on the poop-deck about eleven. There he found the helmsman leaning over the great wheel, his head lolling, fast asleep. Not far away lay Alf, the mate, sleeping heavily on a rolled-up sail. Right beside him Jorg lit his pipe with a match—the sound of striking a match usually wakes people out of a light sleep. Alf did not stir. Nor did the helmsman move when Jorg began to whistle loudly. He smiled; ten years ago, as a youngster, I would probably have run for the chart-room, all horrified at such forgetfulness of duty, and waked up Andersson, who's asleep on the sofa. Five years ago I would have taken my friend Alf aside, and said to him: "Listen, this is just between ourselves, but so-and-so happened." —And now? Now I don't do anything. Only in the future I shall take a look around a little more often at night.

He gave the helm a vigorous push, so that it spun around and flung the helmsman staggering against the wall of the chart-room : there, *he* was awake. Then he went forward to the rail and took over the mate's watch until it sounded one bell. Then he sneaked below. He knew the helmsman would immediately make use of the opportunity to waken Alf, and he wanted to spare Alf the discomfort of his—Jorg's—presence.

A similar scene in the biography of old Nettelbeck occurred to him. Of course, old Nettelbeck had taken hold with a mailed fist, and put things in order. But that was not Jorg's right, he felt. He was a guest on the *Notre Dame*, the guest of a foreign nation. Nobody must say: " This German—why does he meddle in the ship's business ; what concern is it of his ? " Though, of course, it was a matter of his own neck, too, if some accident happened. The only thing that worried him was the thought that the boys must lose their respect for Alf, the mate, if they saw him so.

That he had done right became apparent next day. They were standing alone together, Alf and he, and Alf said in his broken English : " I tink I sleep a little las' night." He smiled with the embarrassment of a small boy with a very guilty conscience. " Never again, never again shall it happen to me." The affair was in order.

Almost the whole crew now slept in the open air, many in the net below the bowsprit, where the *Notre Dame* rocked them and coolness rose from the waves ; others spread their mattresses on the fo'c'sle-head, and a few had made hammocks. If one looked down the air-shafts of the fo'c'sle-head at night, one saw them at their string games. Strings of sail-yarn were stretched in fancy figures between the fingers of both hands. Entire pictures could be made so—birds, men, ships. Each sailor had something new to show and teach. Often the string was run through the handle of a tin cup, whose weight kept the

card taut. These string games were very ancient; among the primitive peoples of the South Seas, as well as in Europe, they could be traced back thousands of years. It was almost miraculous how they popped up here among very young people, who did not dream of such ancient tradition.

Four or five men were busily writing in fat journals. What was it? Letters? Poems? No; they were collecting the words of popular songs.

Now they had got to the point where one lived in a permanent bath of perspiration. One was hardly hungry at all; the butter gazed at one with a "dissolving" expression like that of washerwomen or housewives at spring cleaning. Even the anchovies seemed to thrust their heads out of the sauce, begging to be cooled. Anything in dissolution has a comic appearance of animation. People suffered very much from the water shortage; Jorg was in the habit of washing at night on deck, in the dark, so that he need not see how black the water became. Out of the three litres a day, one had to get three washings, a bath, and a pitcher of lemonade. This was the daily problem. It was never solved.

In the night of Saturday to Sunday, *Notre Dame* crossed the Equator. This was luck; there was a free day for the baptism of the line.

Line-crossings on steamers—Jorg had seen many—had deteriorated like so many public festivals. They reminded one of the Carnival at Nice, clowning to promote tourist trade, artificial, without real gaiety. On liners they were a means to get tips. Nor were the chief figures of the drama—Neptune and Thetis—original figments of the Norse seafarers' imagination. They were an addition made by philologists. The joke about "heaving the line over the tops" was a learned joke without juice or force.

But on the *Notre Dame* the older men had taught the youngsters to shiver. During the long, warm nights, when imagination runs wild, they had spoken direly and menacingly, with many mysterious hints, of the baptism, as if of the Last Judgment. There were supposed to be fearful tests to undergo, and it was a great question how one would come through them.

Early in the morning the sailors had hung up an old sail in the form of a trough on the deck. The boys had to fill it with sea-water ; all the morning one saw them hurrying with buckets across the deck, barefoot and perspiring.

After the noon meal, hollow music was heard from the bow. Everyone ran on deck. The musicians were not to be seen ; the sounds seemed to rise from the ocean. Then heads and then figures popped up from the bowsprit net. At first one could hardly tell whether they were animals or men. They seemed to be ocean ghosts, fantastic, wild. The barbaric music was severed while they clambered on board.

Along the gangway they came to the main deck. The head of the sea-god was superhumanly large ; ravelled rope lolled almost to the floor, and most of his face was covered with beard. The sea-goddess followed hard on his heels. No, that was not Thetis, it was simply the essence of everything female as the boys imagined it in their forced continence. Soup-bowls dangled as enormous breasts ; her stomach was bare. Hips and posterior, thickly stuffed with cordage, were in a sort of loin cloth. Sea-monsters followed, grotesque men with fish mouths, dripping hair and green seaweed fur. Wild, black men with bloody lips, with sticks in their noses, earrings ; the oily paint on their sweating skins shone like grease. They drummed on barrels, they stamped with belled sticks on the planking, they made uproar with pot-lids and devils' fiddles—broomsticks with a wire stretched over them.

Hopping, roaring, waving wooden swords and clubs, they came on.

The boys, all huddled together in a group, dressed only in bathing trunks, smiled embarrassed smiles, looked at the ground, and were somewhat pale. The row of monsters danced around them ; their column was like a snake closing in very gradually on its prey. The flats of the wooden swords slapped on backs, the points pricked the flesh. None of the victims resisted. To increase the tension the wild men locked them into the laundry. The little room with its red-hot iron walls, now full of rosy bodies and squeaking, had great similarity to a pigsty.

Andersson, Alf, Barbarossa and Jorg leaned on the rail of the main deck.

Now the astronomer trained his enormous sextant on the sun. He calculated, wrote figures in the air with his fingers, nodded, and then looked at the line through his glass, made of bottles tied together.

The sea-god and the goddess now sat on a throne built on one of the hatches. The boys were dragged up one at a time, each by two " policemen." The policemen wore enormous epaulettes ; they jingled with tin medals and weapons. With kicks and shoves they drove the prisoners before them. This, too, was a scene from the seaman's life ; they had all seen or experienced the way a drunken seaman is dragged to the police station.

As their necks were forcibly bowed to kiss the very dirty feet of the sea-goddess ; as the " telescope " was held to their eyes, and the sea-water which filled the bottles ran over their faces—their mouths gasped for air, they blinked blinded eyes—the meaning of the baptism became clear to Jorg. These were the steps in a celebration of arrival at manhood, an ancient ceremony which all peoples have had or still have.

Now they stood quite naked. They were painted from head to foot with red and black paint in broad stripes

They were given " medicine " to swallow, disgusting pills of rancid machine-grease and an abominable swill of pink fluid, mustard and syrup stirred together with blubber. The difference in individual characters was plainly evident ; some swallowed at once, others resisted until people squeezed their throats and forced open their teeth. But they all spat; in a great curve the stuff shot out again.

When the barber with his enormous wooden razor and his harrow of a comb had done his work—he soaped the faces with white lead, and poured red lead over their hair—the candidates for baptism looked scarcely human. They knelt before the " pastor," who had a washtub as a baptismal font, and poured charcoal water on their heads with a ladle. Finally they ran the gauntlet of the whole chain of sea-monsters and satellites, ending up by diving head first into the sail full of water. Under water they had to crawl three times around in a circle, and then they were free.

Grinning, smeared all over, one after another they squatted in the ranks of the already baptized : it was behind them. Busily they scratched off dirt and paint from one another's skins with knife-blades, and joined in the laughing, yelling chorus which accompanied the baptism. Not one lost his self-possession during the severe tests. After all, it was a matter of showing oneself a man.

Diving in sea-water, too, was an ancient symbol. Probably it went back to the punishment of keel-hauling, in which a man tied to a line was pulled under the keel of the ship ; perhaps even to primitive times, when human sacrifices were offered before one ventured upon the sea.

During the afternoon all sorts of games of strength and skill were played. There was very little equipment—a broomstick, a wooden belaying-pin, a rope. But it was unbelievable how many things could be done with it.

One grabbed the broom with inverted hand, and tried to force the end into one's mouth. It was comical to see the wide-open mouths snapping greedily at the stick. One jumped forward and backward over the stick, held between the hands. They measured an arm's length on the stick, held this end to the forehead, and leaned back until the point touched the deck. They held the belaying-pin upright against the deck with one hand, and crept under the arm with their bodies. A match was put on deck, and had to be picked up in the mouth, first from a standing posture, then from a sitting one, in which the match lay between the outspread legs. It was a matter of flexibility and suppleness, of the very qualities which must distinguish the sailor. The boys hopped on one leg, pulling the other foot as high as possible up their backs in a sling. They tumbled and laughed. Each one had some special trick, and enjoyed showing it to contribute something to the general jollity. Even Andersson suddenly leapt into the circle ; he crossed his arms behind his back, leant forward, seized a man by the leather belt with his teeth, and lifted him from the deck. The captain's strength made a great impression.

Jorg was astonished. How rare this had become in the world—real, warm-hearted sociability, sport without a stop-watch, without record-hunger, without splendid equipment. Here they invented their own games, made their playthings out of next to nothing ; here imagination was at work. " I had to go to a sailing ship, among these great children, to hear laughter like that. That is how man laughed in Eden. That is how people seldom laugh any more in Europe."

A sort of division had been reached : they were on the " other side." Jorg tried to feel that this fact was significant, but he failed. It was merely necessary to turn to a new map in the atlas ; the old one had reached only so far as the Equator. The thin, dotted line which marked

the course of the sailing ships to Australia took a huge curve to the west, almost to the coast of South America. Jorg was horrified ; this was a blow. He had no conception of this. . . .

Andersson leant over his shoulder : " Yes, without that westward curve we'd be sooner in Australia. We have to make it; the south-east trade blows from dead to south at first. It only turns eastward gradually ; we shall pass close by Fernando Noronha and close by Cape Roque, Brazil,"

Incredible—how could he have overlooked that ?

Wrathfully, streaming with sweat—only now did one notice what tremendous heat the oil-lamp gave off—Jorg made a list of things which he possessed at home and had forgotten to bring along. First came the books : he wanted Herodotus, in fact, any ancient travellers ; Goethe, Shakespeare, Stendhal. Of Conrad he had enough in his heart; for the rest of the moderns he had no desire.

A crate of apples. How wonderful it would be to have even one apple a day. Or a box of carrots from the garden ; one was starved for vitamins in every cell.

A big pot of chives.

A similar pot of parsley.

A few jars of fruit juice and tomato jelly.

An album with photographs of the children.

All his tools. It was high time to stop brooding and give his hands work.

That would do for the present. It was unimaginable that he actually possessed all these things.

Still angry, he went on deck, his flashlight in hand. It was Barbarossa's watch, and until midnight the two conducted a silent but violent conversation in Morse code. They made the beams of their flashlights jump on the sails, and abused each other with all the curses they

knew in a dozen languages. It was a great relief, and the only sound was Barbarossa's suppressed giggling.

The south-east trade wind began with regular North Sea weather. The sky was all shades of grey; one squall chased another, and each time the *Notre Dame* listed sharply, as a tired horse leans into its harness at a blow of the whip. It was hardly warm enough for the crew to go without clothes. It was only after several days that the weather cleared and the trade wind got its full strength. Twice it changed its direction, turning more and more to the east. The way this happened was that first the wind went to sleep; for half a day the *Notre Dame* pitched helplessly with slack sails; then the fine breeze sprang up again, several points more easterly than before. The wind and the ship behaved like lovers—a long, passionate whispering, a silence, breathless waiting, and then a bursting forth from a new depth of emotion, sudden and unexpected. The wind was the man, the ship the woman—for thirty-five years their *tete-d-tete* had gone on.

Jorg felt ill. Perhaps it was fever; perhaps too much exposure to the intense full moon of those nights—there were men on board who awoke after a night on deck with enormously swollen faces. Perhaps it was all part of the same thing: all day he lay almost motionless in his hammock; his limbs were numb. Above him in the masts men were chipping rust; the flakes fell on him, sharp-edged and biting like hail, but he had not the energy to go away. It was quite too ridiculous how he crawled across the decks, how he climbed stairs step by step, pulling himself up the rail by his arms in fear of falling. Like a very old man. He was disgusted with this eternal wretchedness.

He felt an idea gain power over him: the idea that the ocean was a green meadow, and he could walk freely in any direction. Ever stronger grew the temptation,

ever weaker the inner voice which called it madness. It was so simple to swing over the edge of the hammock and over the slanted rail; it was the easiest of all conceivable motions.

One day he told Andersson about it; he felt that this man understood even madness. Andersson warned him that in the old days, on very long journeys, there had been such a sickness. "Calentura," the Spanish seamen called it. When it broke out all the ports had to be closed, and at night they put watches on deck, for the men afflicted jumped overboard. Jorg realized the danger, and did battle against the disease.

Andersson was carving at the head and figure which had Juana's body and Ellin's soul. A round, open, child-like forehead arched beneath the helmet of combed-back hair. It was so finely carved that one seemed to see the veins in the temples. The brows were like the lovely curves of wind-filled sails. The eyes were deep; the eye-balls still showed the marks of careful work with delicate knife-blades, and yet they were already alive. The mouth was grandiose, full of passion and pain. She had pale lips, Eilin, thought Jorg. He himself did nothing; he looked on, the "bottle of desperation" before him.

Andersson did not drink a drop, and yet he was the one who glowed. He sat crouching in front of the carving, as if ready to leap, his vast shoulders bowed forward. With his inclined head, with shoulders, elbows, fore-arms, he enclosed the whole space around the naked brown woman, seizing, excluding all else but her and him. His fingers enclosed almost the whole knife-blade, so that only the outermost point could cut. His eyes sparkled before each stroke, and the fingers slid back and forth in his left hand before he took aim with an intensity as if for a deadly shot. Jorg screwed up his eyes to see more clearly. It was a fact! The captain now was using the fine knives from the surgical kit. He did not care

where he found the tools when it was a matter of this girl.

From time to time the strong head was lifted ; the valleys of its great landscape ran rivers of sweat. The back of his hand made a broad, shiny track across his forehead. His breath came pantingly from open mouth. Slowly his eye turned from sights within, back to the outside world ; in puzzlement he looked at Jorg : " Why was that man sitting over there ?—Oh yes——" In his half-consciousness his mouth sent out squalls of words, just rippling the surface of things, with but a hint of their depth—the hard blue of the eyes, veiling itself, would turn inward again. Then his lips would falter, often in the middle of a word. The figure stirred in the precision-vice of his fingers ; the tiny blade went on shaving the wood.

Out of Andersson and his mahogany, out of fragmentary words and abrupt gulps of whisky, Jorg got a vision of Eilin.

They were sailing in a boat across a bay with a flat shore. Andersson was at the tiller ; he had on his fine blue suit. But Eilin did not see it. She had thrown her head far back ; she watched the white sail passing through the white clouds. She was singing. What was the song ?—Jorg heard, and did not know its name ; it was longing, never satisfied and never still.

They walked through the heather, the two of them. The leaves of the whortleberries brushed Eilin's naked ankles, and gave a spring to her step. She picked berries, and Andersson's lips gathered them from Eilin's flat hand. They burst between his lips, filling his mouth with little streams of fresh, cool tartness, but much sweeter were the scent and the feeling of Eilin's hand.

Bright nights, the scent of hay, the scent of elders, dewy grass, millions of glow-worms in the forest. The earth broods in the summer madness ; the humming of

the grasshoppers is the music from the womb of earth. Side by side they walk with lagging step, with heads bowed, with hands held, unspoken words dying in their throats. An owl calls, a shivery sound that goes through bone and marrow, and then there is a little cry—the eternal cry of the girl, as old as the world. She struggles, defends herself against love ; now she is vanquished. The world knows nothing more moving than this sound. The happiness flows from the summer night, supporting, elevating—a wave, wondrous and huge ; it carries them far, far, to a startling shudder of cold : it is late autumn. Abruptly.

Icy breakers hiss across the harbour mole ; under their impact the masonry trembles. Eilin leans close against Andersson's shoulder. Her cheek is like ice ; how she shivers ! It is good that there is so much warmth in him ; how inspiring to protect the girl one loves. The girl who guesses every thought in one's own head—a wonder never to be understood ; who moves with every stirring of one's own heart. The girl who raises the man far above himself, because she is unattainable, the highest thing in the world. There is only one thing which he, Andersson, cannot understand, and it comes oftener and oftener, and there it is again : " Leave me alone a minute, my dear," She bends over the edge of the mole, her hand on the railing, and a pain piercing her body ; he feels it in himself, a sword. There she is again. She smiles—how pale she is ! She crushes her handkerchief in her hand. The black spots ? Is that blood ? The black clouds race like a mad army. One hears the wing-beats of the wild swans ; in their southern flight their cry of complaint sounds through the wind.

Eilin has to drink a great deal of sheep's milk ; it is good for the health. That winter Eilin sleeps among the cows in the hay. The air is supposed to be strengthening.

But when spring comes, Eilin is in Stockholm in the

hospital in the lung room. Her chest is fastened into a machine. She lies quite still, as if dead. Only her eyes burn and roam, roam an endless path, around and around. Her hand in Andersson's will not grow warm ; it feels like cool silk. Then : " Leave me alone a minute, my dear," And when he comes back—a thin thread of blood, bright red, flows from the great, pale mouth, which is open, with teeth glimmering bluish. And still the eyes are full of longing, never satisfied and never still. But now they are fixed.

Jorg took a last great gulp. Yes, that was Eilin. It was probably destined that she should die. Now there was only one woman left for Andersson, the *Notre Dame*. It was easy to understand that to him all others were shadows.

He lighted his storm lantern ; Barbarossa had lent it to him from the lamp closet, and Jorg had stretched a piece of yellow canvas over the glass ball. The lantern hung by a rope beside the hammock, swaying gently. Jorg loved it. The space which it filled with its light was like a house of his own, sheltering him. The walls of night were like solid walls. The yellow light transformed the infinity round about into a narrow and finite space. That was a good feeling ; man cannot always bear infinity ; it is too strong a stimulus to his imagination. The imagination abhors a vacuum ; it plunges into the emptiness to fill it with visions.

He read for the third or fourth time *The Man Who Loved Islands*, the most beautiful story that Lawrence wrote, and the truest. For there is no return from the weariness of civilization to nature, except in death. That was what he was discovering in his own body.

At midnight he turned down the wick of the lantern. Growing pale, guttering for quite a while, flickering with a blue flame, the light went out. How it struggled for its life !

The night grew until it was monstrous. Strange stars looked down, arranged in strange constellations. They were less numerous than the familiar ones ; they had the gloomy sparkle of baleful jewels, and the colour of the night was red. An extinguished black-red like that of the darkest roses.

Jorg shivered with cold and strangeness : his stars, those of the north, the old and dear, sank beyond the peak of the mizzen-sail. The masts stood like a lance—a lance which an enormous halberdier held before him, preventing him from seeing his own heaven. Only when we lose our own sky do we discover how much we have lived in it, how much it is part of home.

Eilin was a star in that sky which was sinking to the north. She was only a vision. The girls and women he, Jorg, had really encountered, did they mean more ? What was left of them ? Sinking stars glimmering like sparks, fighting for their lives. Perhaps they were dead, like Eilin.

What a desolation of memory ! One stood on the ruins of everything, everything that was shattered in the years of the war and after it, lonely, quite lonely. Did the earth cease quaking ? No : there was still the thunder of the avalanches of collapse, anguish and spiritual death. Where was the pillar that would not burst ? Why was one left over ? Why was one alone in the fearful icy breath of this cosmic loneliness ? What did God mean, what did He intend by it ? Why had one not gone down with one's comrades in the war and after the war ? Yes, one was still their comrade—even to the girls and the women who had been ruined and had gone down, one was still a comrade and close companion. For one had known them, had loved them. They were our girls. They were not " bad," as the new age calls them. They were good ; they were as good as they could be ; they had no chance in life. It was still a great question whether the rising

generation could maintain this self-possession, this last indestructible grandeur in annihilation.

It was Ellen. At the end of the war, Jorg met her ; she was twenty-one, and was studying music—singing. When she was asked to sing, she would blush. She blushed magnificently, the blood rose so easily to her clear skin, and then her voice would be strangely brittle. She was tall, almost too tall for a woman ; beautiful in her erect carriage, with her high clear forehead, with her stiff wealth of chestnut hair. Strangers found her eyes cold ; to strangers she was indifferent, reserved, almost haughty. But how her eyes could beam—to friends. And she had the loveliest, most magnificent laughter in the world.

Once she showed Jorg a photograph-album. It took in the world in which she had grown up. There were lords' houses on country estates, and ugly Potsdam villas of the 'eighties ; ladies and gentlemen on horseback, children on ponies and with St. Bernards' pictures of battues and picnics. He skimmed over the war years. There were pictures of many officers, mostly in cavalry uniform ; all of the same stamp, of Ellen's stamp, tall, handsome people, erect and free. Some smiled mischievously and impudently ; some wore monocles, and were so young that one thought they must have been doing it as a joke. They stood in front of airplanes, they sat on horseback, they squatted on the steps of a chateau in France, they lay in shell craters, the collars of their uniforms open. Almost all wore decorations.

But after many of the pictures Ellen had drawn a cross. Her voice ranged oddly between gaiety and mourning as she explained the pictures : " That is my cousin So-and-so—he fell on the Chemin des Dames. Oh, that's X—you ought to know him, *him* you'd like ; what a splendid fellow ! he's frightfully tall, over six feet six. Once at the cinema there was a bad film, and he got up

and simply put his hand over the hole in the wall where the pictures come out, and yelled : ' I say, Mr. Cinema, do let's stop ! '—In the trenches they always have to dig an extra deep hole for him,"

She was so gay over the pictures, and her gaiety made one so uncomfortable. One could feel her thinking in her heart : perhaps he too is dead now. She was a wonderful comrade, Ellen, ready for any adventure, for any madcap trick. In the lieutenant's uniform belonging to her brother she walked around the little town with Jorg. She could afford to, with her magnificent figure. They made soldiers salute, together they accosted girls—and left them standing. They stood the whole town on its head, and yet there was never even a trace of flirtation between them.

When Jorg himself went to the trenches he lost sight of Ellen. Years after the war he was once strolling through the dead streets of Potsdam, and saw Ellen's name on the garden gate. The house was one of those which he had seen in the photograph-album. He sent in his name to her. The old colonel, her father, received him first ; he was still wearing the field-grey mess-jacket, but a pair of garden shears and old leather gloves told of his present occupation. His face was grey, petrified, his eyes without life.

Ellen came. Her blush when she saw Jorg was more wonderful than ever ; that was because she was so pale. And she wore mourning.

They drank tea ; when Jorg had told about himself, he questioned Ellen. For a moment she put her hand to her temple ; her brittle voice came like a cracked bell : " Oh, there is nothing to tell about me. Things just dribble along." She saw Jorg looking at her black dress : " Yes, my brother, the last one, he's dead now too. He died in the hospital, a year and a half after the war. The other three had fallen before. And, you know, my

tall cousin, the one with the extra deep hole in the trench, he fell too. He was just too tall," She tried to smile, a sad shadow of her old smile: " Funny, I don't know what's wrong with people nowadays—you can't enjoy yourself any more the way you used to."

She said it like a surprised child, this tall, handsome girl who had lost everything, and did not yet realize it.

Jorg did not see her again for many years. But he did not forget her; in a certain way Ellen had become his standard of aristocracy, good breeding, and self-command. He compared with her the young people who were in the forefront of events now. They seemed to him smaller than the generation he had known—physically smaller, not particularly well bred, noisy, mediocre, provincial. These boys—were they husbands for a girl like Ellen?—No. Where were the men who would have " belonged " ? They had fallen.

It would have been better if he had never seen her again ; that, he knew. But when after years he heard in a little old town that she was living there, he could not resist the temptation ; he called up. The old lady with whom she lived informed him that Fraulein von G. was mentally ill—yes, melancholiac. He wished himself far away when the door opened and Ellen came in. It was frightful. She had grown old, and she did not know it. She wore a summer dress with large flower patterns which would have suited a very young girl. Her hair was coquettishly twisted in curls, which hung down rather limply. Her high, beautiful forehead was seared with wrinkles ; her whole face was torn with thin wrinkles in all directions, as if she had been whipped. But the worst thing was the way she smiled, a mad smile, and she greeted him as if not a day had passed, as if nothing had changed. She did not notice at all how stupidly he stared at her : " Father ? He died. No, I don't sing any more. I have to earn money now. Jorg, you

know such a lot of people, can't you get me into pictures ? "

" My God ! " For her to say *that*, to suggest *that*, now, now that it was quite impossible ! And with what wonderful, sovereign contempt she used to speak of " the movies " !

So this was what had become of Ellen, the girl whose potential husbands lay buried on the battlefields of the Great War.

Then there was Gisela, the little nurse, Gisela. She had taken care of Jorg in the war hospital at home. How delicate she was, how fine-limbed, how slender, how kind. Her skin was quite transparent ; one saw the little blue veins at the temples and the wrists. She was scarcely twenty-two . . . but often already there was a tremendously tired expression about her sweet mouth. She had been nursing for three years ; she had seen too many sad things in her young life, and she had watched through too many nights. All the soldiers were in love with her ; they bore their sufferings more manfully before Sister Gisela ; she was a little saint to them all. There was, about her, something which seemed to come from heaven, too. As long as Jorg was in the hospital he saw her growing ever more tired, ever sadder ; and the sadder she grew, the more the men loved and watched over her. Why was Sister Gisela so sad ?

Jorg had got rid of the striped hospital uniform, the war was over, and he was studying medicine. But every evening he fetched Sister Gisela from the hospital. He jumped up when she came into the reception-room at last after a long wait. He held her blue coat for her, ready to catch her, for she was so tired, so frightfully tired in the evening. Then she would lean with her back against his chest as he helped her into her coat. She did it to get a little strength from him, and he could really feel a current of strength running from him to her, and galvanizing her.

They went. The wounded men with their crutches, who always stood on the steps before the door of an evening, with their ugly striped suits and their clumsy, fat, paper bandages, moved aside, and said good evening to Sister Gisela. Full of longing, full of envy, they looked after Jorg, who was allowed to accompany her, and Jorg blushed each time that he passed among them.

It was a long way home through the big park. When the shadows of the trees closed behind them, he put his arm around Gisela's shoulders, and she leant firmly against him as they walked with slow steps. Often she was too tired to say a word. But how odd—often she grew wide awake, lively ; her delicate cheeks would glow, and her little white teeth would sparkle in a smile from the darkness.

Why was it so impossible to remember what they talked about on those evenings ?

Because to-day that age has vanished. We have forgotten the conversations of those days out of instinctive intelligence ; to-day they would seem ridiculous. He remembered that Gisela had once given him Heine's *Book of Songs*, bound in soft white leather. " How laughable, how sentimental," one would say to-day. Yes, but that was the way it was in those days.

Jorg stroked her hand, which was so kind, which had done so much good, and which yet was soft as silk. Often they stood still and kissed each other. It was so beautiful to love her, and so agonizing. Agonizing because one could feel the secret suffering in her, and could not puzzle it out. " Why are you so unhappy, so tired of life ; Gisela, what is it ; can't I help you ? "

She closed his mouth with her lips : " Don't ask, dear boy ; I simply can't be like other people."

It struck Jorg that some of the young doctors in the hospital looked at Gisela with strange eyes, even with pity ; but he did not guess the real reason.

There came a night when a perfectly supernatural moon shone down on the dewy meadows. The scent of jasmine was overpowering, the thrushes sobbed in the bushes ; the little river murmured.. Ever more slowly, ever more hesitantly came their steps. It was not the first time that they had lain down, hidden under the low-hanging branches of the weeping ashes, and yet this night it was different. Until now there had been no sexual element ; for him she was a little saint. One might love her, even kiss her, but not possess her. Now she lay with her head thrown back, and Jorg saw her white throat moving like the throat of a little bird, and when he kissed her hands he felt them pulling him down to her, felt her breasts pushing toward him—and yet it was more like desperation than love ; it seemed as if she did not mean him at all.

No, he could not do it ; he kissed her in sudden, wild pain, and knew all at once why she wanted it—because she was so profoundly unhappy that perhaps she thought sex was a means of dulling the unhappiness.

The next moment she hid her face in his arm, and wept heart-breakingly : " Did you know that I am sick, dear boy ? Do you know that I need something to go on living, and that you must give it to me ? "

He saw her wet eyes, and nodded : " Anything, anything, Gisela."

" Darling, I shan't need it much longer, I promise you—it's morphine."

So *that* was it; that was what the looks of the young doctors meant.

The next evening Jorg brought her morphine. As a medical student he had the opportunity.

He did it two or three times, rent by love and anguish. Then he realized that her promise was false, as the promises of these unfortunates always are. He left the city, and did not see Gisela again. But he heard later

that others were giving her what she could no longer live without.

Yes, that was Gisela, the little madonna, who in her youth saw nothing but suffering, and assuaged pain until her strength failed.

Then there was Loh : she was flame, fire, a furnace, consuming men and herself, her own life, unrestrainedly and completely, until all was ashes and destruction.

She had ripened very early—not without fault on the part of her parents. Very early she had married, a man from one of those newly and disreputably rich families whose decay usually begins at the very moment of their brand-new promotion to the nobility. It was a miserable marriage, typical of the miserable voluptuousness of the period before the war ; it rested on sexuality, exploited to the limit of possibility, and on nothing else.

When the war came, her degenerate coward of a husband got out of the way. Loh quickly learnt to despise him. The good in her, her great, hot heart, was strangely bound up with the exaggerated sensuality which life had taught her. She loved love. She loved the young men who went to the trenches with the sign of death on their brows. She loved those who came home wounded, whose eyes spoke awe and horror, and at the same time a mad lust for life. These men gave reality to her life, and allowed the magnificence, the wild flame, to break through in her.

She deceived her husband, and told him so openly. But he wanted no divorce, quite the contrary : " Now you begin to interest me ; how was it with this one and this one and this one ? " She struck him in the face, the wretched fellow, and ran away. In the divorce she lost the child, the little boy, whom she loved, and with him her last hold on respectability.

She was not wise, but full of life, full of greed, of thirst, of hunger for life. She had the hungriest eyes. In

them there was sometimes a tigerish sparkling, a longing for death, a desire for the unearthly, and for love—an infinity of love. Even in sleep one still seemed to see these eyes under the bluish eyelids, under the long lashes, hungry, never still. Her mouth, too, was hungry ; her lips swelled toward wine, toward kisses, toward life ; they opened easily. Her cheeks too were hungry, a little hollow under the cheek-bones. Her whole face seemed to suck in life. Her skin was very white ; she did not grow brown in the sun, but was always cool and exceedingly soft. She had hardly any muscles, and was no good at work, and yet she had an incredibly stubborn life-force. Ever and again she stood up, a hundred times when she had been given up for lost. They all loved her passionately. And yet she was not even beautiful ; her face was irregular, her figure childishly imperfect, her breasts almost boyish, her long legs unshaped like those of a colt. But it is among the mysteries of love that imperfection attracts, whether it is physical, intellectual or spiritual. That is what makes women of her sort dangerous—all the beginnings of perfection are there, but they seem merely to be undeveloped. And since there is a God, a creator in every man, he tries to form her, to complete the woman, to bring out whatever is in her. It makes no difference how many men such a woman has had ; each new man will call all the others bunglers, and will think that he alone can complete the work, and she will confirm him in his belief. She may grow old and fat and ugly, and yet never lose this strange fascination, and up to the end through all her sins men will see in her a childlike purity. It sounds incredible, but it is true.

Many men possessed her, and she loved those most who went from her to battle and death. She lived on the edge of the war, and if her lover did not come back she wept for him wildly and hotly—and that night she would sleep with the first comer. The great courtesans of all

ages must have been like her. This, too, is the way men act ; if they have lost one love, and are deserted, they sleep with the first woman who comes to hand.

Jorg was among the men who met her on the edge of the wharf. He had loved her to the edge of utter destruction, and when he had thought he was already dead a new life had begun, purified and refined. Out of a fire like this a young man comes purified and armed for evermore—if he survives.

Some experiences grow, others shrink in memory. Some shrink first, and grow later, and are important in quite another direction. What this experience had lost in violence of feeling through forcible release, it gained after many years in a more intellectual fashion.

One evening ten years after the war, in a big city, Jorg flung his coat across the check-room table of a night club. He looked carelessly at the face of the woman who handed him his check, and felt a sudden dagger in his heart. Loh !

Had she come so far down in the world ? Why had she not made an end of it before ? This aged, starved woman in the tattered woollen jacket, she was too much like the heroine of a cheap novel.

He fetched her when she was through work at night. He fed her in a little night place with curtained booths ; there were no others left open. What a bitter mockery was this scenery, almost the same as ten years before. She fainted ; she had starved too much, and could not stand the food. Then he heard the long, bitter tale of her decline. And then all at once a deep warmth came over him, a profound feeling from the heart: " Comrade, my comrade of the war," They had been together in love and in hate, had gone asunder, had drifted away, each in his own path.

And yet it was not over ; they had not forgotten, were not finished, not disposed of. It was perfectly simple, this

comradeship. The woman was guiltless ; no matter how many men she might have ruined, there was simply none who had loved her enough.

That was how they had been, the woman of the generation in which the old way of thinking collapsed and the new way was not yet born. The generation which had to wade deepest through sad filth and through degradation. The generation upon which everything collapsed and collapsed again. The generation which despaired of man, and cried for God without finding him.

In constant new visions Jorg saw his fate and the fates of people of his kind. They tumbled over one another ; it was too much. " Damnation ! What I have gone through is mad, to think of it is fearful. The burden is too heavy ; one can tell nothing from it, make nothing of it, get rid of nothing. We are *condemned* to life. If the *Notre Dame* were to go down, how magnificent ! To die in battle, a decent man's end, what an undeserved blessing ! "

Staring into the sky he saw the divided Milky Way sink down from the zenith, pearly white and strangely like a woman's thighs. The belly of a huge black cloud thrust itself in the way. Menacing and heavy it hung over the ship ; heat lightning flickered in the east. The air was heavily electrified. The clouds stood over the ship as if held by suction. The wind died down, the sails slapped ; Jorg saw the canvas rippling in front of the blackness of the cloud. Puffs of wind came down, but they were only from the pitching of the *Notre Dame* in the heavy swell. The helm swung back and forth, groaning hollowly. The sea breathed with difficulty, and so did one's lungs. The tension was almost unbearable. Jorg sat up in his hammock, streaming with sweat, yearning for water in every pore.

Then it came. The first heavy drops fell like lead. One heard the shrill whistle of the mate, piping the watch

to take in the mizzen-sail, and heard the dull sounds of many bare feet. Then a roaring and at the same time a monstrous burden falling from the sky, a heavy black curtain ; and air was suddenly water. One gasped for air, got a mouthful of water, one was blind, bathed in water, with strands of hair before one's eyes. Shirts were glued to bodies. Men staggered and raised their hands, and brooks ran along their arms. The taste of the water was sweet and warm ; the skin seemed to blossom, all its pores opened jubilantly to the rain, and sucked in greedily. One felt one's entire skin covered with a sweet itch, and a yell, a cry of triumph ran across the deck from a dozen throats at once. A bellowing broke out, a stampede as if of young cattle turned out to pasture in the spring. Naked figures leaped over cables and timber heads ; the water-ports were screwed tight, all outlets plugged, with anything that could be torn loose in haste from the body. This was done without a single command being given. And as the heavy waterfalls shot down from the sails, the whole after deck was transformed into a water-tight basin. In the light of the lightning flashes, one saw the sailors skid across the wet, slippery planks as if on ice. *Notre Dame* staggered drunkenly; the winds seemed to come from all sides ; a broad, oily surface of water appeared on her starboard ; she drifted. The watch braced the yards ; the light of the flashlights was obscured in the silver veils of rain. No grinding of the winches, no squeaking of blocks—the accustomed sounds were drowned in the roar. Already one waded ankle-deep. As the ship pitched, whole torrents came down from the main deck to the after deck with a hollow thunder. As the ship rolled, the floods tumbled foaming from one side of the ship to the other. Cooler than the air, they flung themselves against resisting naked bodies, snatched their legs from under them, squeezed their stomachs, their diaphragms. It pounded the breath out of the mouth, and tore a yell of triumph

from the throat ; fresh water, wealth, abundance! Higher rose the flood, already one waded knee deep, already one flung oneself forward, diving under bodily, paddling, bellowing with delight like a thirsty steer at a water-hole. One let oneself go in the roaring torrent, kicking like a big fish in shallow water. They swam ! They were actually swimming on the after deck.

Jorg raced into his cabin, and came back with soap in his hands and his toothbrush in his mouth. He soaped and scrubbed, and felt whole layers of skin coming off, making way for a fresh young skin underneath. He felt himself reborn. People ashore, who always have fresh water in plenty, can hardly understand that.

Meanwhile the other watch had come on deck, too. The tropical storm had stopped as suddenly as it had come, but now empty casks rumbled hollowly across the decks. They floated in the torrent until they filled up and sank heavily. Then they were bailed full with buckets. People opened the caps of the water-tank ; stream after stream came from the pails, the buckets, the tin cans, the coffee-pots—wealth, abundance, a superfluity as great as the grand prize in the lottery. In a few minutes they had filled all the reserve tanks, five thousand litres. Water-soaked, cooled through and through, recharged with force and a rage for work, the boys now flung their whole laundry into the flood. It was absolutely incredible how many things they washed. From the fo'c'sle they dragged out the benches, and let them swim like drift-wood ; the steward took up the carpet from the cabin and drowned it. There were sheets and mattresses, blankets, encrusted saucepans. Everything floated, and soaked itself full, and got the dirt and sweat washed out. Fresh-water madness had visited the *Notre Dame*.

At daybreak there was another downpour. Jorg could not resist ; he soaped and scoured himself a second time, hoarding cleanliness. Exhausted, chilled to the bone,

trembling with cold, he crept into his berth. How quickly over-abundance sobered one up ! One had longed for rain for months ; now already one was fleeing it. Suddenly this wealth was meaningless, because there was wealth everywhere.

He fell into a heavy, uneasy sleep. A dull thundering waked him. Beyond the porthole was a grey morning like a North Sea winter ; the foghorn sounded through the roar with which new, incredible masses of rain were coming down. He started up, confused, disappointed—was not this really the North Sea ? He shuddered ; the roar of the flood tumbling from the main deck was so loud ; so hollow, so menacing, the drumming of the down-pour—were not these masses of water bursting *into* the ship ? Was there a leak ? Did not the sound come from below, was *Notre Dame* sinking ? No ; it was imagination, the echo of a bad dream. Or was it prescience ? Fear gripped him, deathly fear ; in dreams he had gone down with the *Notre Dame*. When it really comes to dying, I think I'll be able to take care of it in decent fashion, he thought. I shan't be losing so much of life as the young fellows. *Notre Dame* will *not* be scrapped. *Notre Dame* will go down ; I can feel it. Now or when we're no longer on board.

He wrapped himself tighter in the blankets, and went to sleep again.

" I think we've made a mistake in our navigation," Jorg said to Andersson at supper. " We can't possibly be at fifteen degrees of south latitude ; this is the North Sea."

The whole forepart of the ship was criss-crossed with clothes-lines, hung with washing. But the stuff did not dry. The rain continued, the sky remained grey, threatening, gloomy. It was so cool that towards evening people had to put on woollens.

Andersson admitted that the weather was unusual.

All the captains of sailing ships were agreed that the trade winds no longer had the constancy and fixed direction of earlier days. But *Notre Dame* was not in the North Sea, nevertheless; he had taken an observation at noon, and the *Notre Dame* was at the exact latitude of St. Helena.

Jorg had finished reading *The Man Who Loved Islands*, and laid the book on the table. Andersson saw the title, and asked about it. He nodded at what Jorg told him of the story. That was his own world; there were more islands than people in Aaland—there were six thousand five hundred islands, most of them small, hardly bigger than a farm.

"I'd like to have an island. I believe I should be quite a different person if I had an island that belonged to me."

"You can get one where I come from; they're cheap enough—maybe four hundred marks. There's some heather and woods on it, and stone enough to build a house. But you couldn't stand living there, any more than the man in the book."

Jorg started to contradict; the old longing for Crusoe's isle, first felt in childhood, and never extinguished, stirred again. Then he felt bitterly that the captain was speaking the truth; he was silent. He had spent lonely winters by the sea. He saw it before him, the coast, rammed by blocks of ice. The jumbled walls of dirty yellow ice which he had climbed over, the crunching waves of the blocks out in the surf, the black mane of seaweed rising from the foam like drowned bodies. He heard the hollow thunder of the surf in subterranean caverns, the plaint of the peewits, walking thin-legged, feathers ruffled in the storm, across flooded meadows. He had wandered far out on the sands, where the skeletons of wrecked ships, covered with seaweed, encrusted with shells or bleached like bones, reached up from the ground. The loneliness was so immense, death so near, that one observed one's

heart-beat to convince oneself of one's own life. Nights by the fire in the whitewashed, draughty fishing-hut: bluish flames, the sour blue smoke of wet peat-blocks, the digging, the scratching, the enraged diving of the storms in the chimney-flue : loneliness, a heavy mantle under which he huddled, rocking like a bear. With the terror of a prisoner awaiting sentence he had looked for hours and hours at the door, which shook and rattled on its hinges. But nobody came ; only the snow drifted through the cracks, lay sparking in the firelight, sent thin tongues licking across the stone floor. When the glow of the peat-blocks died, when the black shadows sank down from the ceiling like heavy beams, when the cold crept up to him from the walls, piercing him through and through, he had written many tales in the ashes of the fireplace with the poker ; the wind blew them away.

Wonderful, fruitful loneliness—superhuman, awful loneliness. Infinite longing for the smoke pennants of distant ships. He had stood one winter on the island, but the second had undone him. To love loneliness and to be unable to bear it—this division in his soul filled him with burning rage.

And the house, his own house, the house of his dreams ; twenty years ago he had drawn a plan of it, had even built a model. The plan was unchanged, but the house had remained a dream.

It was supposed to be earth-bound as never house was before. It was to stand beyond the waves of the dunes like a round hillock, with a roof of living sods, in summer a meadow. The upper storey was to be surrounded by terraces of earth ; flowers and herbs were to grow there, berry bushes, tomatoes along the warm wall between the windows. One was to climb from terrace to terrace by steps, from the garden to the roof, from the roof to the garden. The terraces were to be worlds ; concentrated, dwarf worlds with the flora of the five

continents, in which one could get lost. Every day one would live in a new continent, then there would be no more need to travel.

Once he had described his plan to an architect, who had shaken his head—an impossible house. Perhaps. And why argue ? It would never be more than a dream anyway.

Juan Fernandez, Robinson Crusoe's island—Andersson had been there. Now fishermen lived there ; tourist steamers from America often called at the island. Two pauper islanders made a business of receiving the visitors. Dressed as Robinson and Man Friday. With sheepskin cap, parrot and umbrella they would row out on a raft to the big ships, begging for small coins. Around the cave, where Selkirk the sailor had lived, were now strewn the empty tins and waxed paper of countless picnics.

So even this scene of adventure and romance was desolated. Robinson Crusoe, our Crusoe, the Crusoe of all childhoods for two centuries, was put to work for the tourist trade. It was a prophetic parrot that had called out long ago, " Robinson, poor Robinson ! "

Would he, Andersson, have wanted to be a seaman a hundred or two hundred years ago ?

Thoughtfully, like a bear, Andersson rocked his great head : " Yes, and no. Sailing with wooden sailing ships was magnificent, but the ships themselves must have been hell. Just imagine an East Indiaman of a hundred years back. The ship wasn't even of a thousand tons—a bare third of the *Notre Dame*. But they would have about a hundred and fifty in the crew. They often transported a whole regiment of soldiers—eight or nine hundred men. The officers often took their families along. There would be fifty or sixty horses on board, cows for the children's milk, pigs and up to a thousand poultry for fresh provisions. And the journey lasted six to eight months,"

Jorg shook himself ; life on such a Noah's Ark must have been frightful.

" The passengers' tiny cabins were without any furniture ; the passengers even had to furnish their own beds. In London there was a whole quarter, Chatham, of evil repute, full of Jews and prostitutes, which lived by equipping people for the Indies. There you could buy wash-stands, arms, medicine-chests, cooking-stoves, trunks—specially suited to shipping by camel or on buffalo back—uniforms, linen. The quantities were enormous ; they took an average of three dozen of the various kinds of shirts and other linen on the long journey ; you see there was no chance to do any washing on board. Rich gentlemen would bring whole wine cellars on board and complete banquets, ready cooked and preserved in kegs of tallow.

" Lots of things that we think are quite modern were known at that time ; for instance, Mr. MTntosh had invented the inflated mattress.

" England's shipping at that time was so tremendous that there was a constant lack of seamen, even though sailors of all nations served on English ships. The system of press-gangs for the navy was terrible. Slightly less than a century ago it was still in full swing. As the navy naturally wanted trained sailors, it preferred to press the crews of merchant ships—right in England itself as well as overseas. In front of the harbour entrance the press-gangs would lie in wait. How he must have felt, the poor merchant seaman ! He would be coming home from a long voyage after a year or more. He saw the coast of home ; he thought in a few hours he would be with wife and child, with his parents, with his sweetheart. And then the boat from the warship came alongside. In vain he would try to hide. They would find him anyway ; this tracking down, after all, was the press-gang's business. They would drag him to the warship, which per-

haps had only been waiting for a crew to put to sea for some distant colony for a stretch of years. But even if the ship stayed in England, a pressed man got no shore leave ; he did not see the people he had longed for, and did not set foot on the soil of home,"

Andersson grew dark red as he talked ; the whole proud freedom of the Scandinavian in him revolted against such conditions.

" And then the frightful floggings! They weren't only a punishment for real crimes like theft, but for breaches of discipline like sleeping on watch or for drunkenness, which was an almost universal vice. I've read the reports of ships' doctors of those days. They were perfectly objective, and all the more horrible. The ship's doctor had to supervise the carrying out of the sentence, but chiefly to see that it was not too gentle. The doctor had no right to ease or shorten the punishment.

" The terrible thing was that the punishments, given according to rule, had very different effects on different people. There were fellows hardened by floggings who could stand two hundred stripes of the cat-o'-nine-tails, and almost laugh at it. There were others who died of it. A doctor described his examination of a ' large, strong man with sound organs ' after two hundred lashes : ' Parts of the backbone and parts of the shoulder blades were laid bare.' It took seven months to heal. A stiffness of the muscles remained, and the man had to be discharged from His Majesty's service.

" The shattered backs after the punishment were a bloody, swelling, festering mass. The general inflammation was the cause of most of the deaths. One doctor wrote : ' The stink of these wounds was so dreadful that I could not entrust the cleaning and care of these patients to the hospital staff. I had to take it over myself,"

" If a man's life was endangered during the execution

of the sentence the punishment was interrupted, and resumed after the wounds had healed. Usually the newly formed skin broke open again at the first few blows and the new wounds were more fearful than the old ones. It is beyond question that hundreds were flogged to death, and many more into cripples. It is beyond doubt that floggings were continued to complete the number of stripes even if the offender had already died.

" No, they must have been a regular hell, the warships of those days, and it was not much better on the merchant ships. And at that all the severity did no good. What was the use of forced, corpse-like obedience when the American ships in the War of Independence were manned by English sailors to fight against England ? The best men were the very ones to rebel.

" There were forty thousand English seamen serving on American ships in 1840. In the military penal colonies of West Africa, England let her soldiers die like flies of swamp fever, while she sent civilian criminals to healthy districts like Australia. You know that we captains and mates under Finnish law aren't allowed to use corporal punishment on our men. And we manage, we manage very well,"

Jorg nodded : " There is a great deal of arrogance in the attitude of England and other highly civilized nations to-day when they are publicly indignant about the atrocities in Russia, in Spain and elsewhere in the world. They forget entirely what things were like in their own country not so long ago. They overlook the atrocities that they used to commit themselves—and still commit, even now. Nobody has any right to be proud on account of the little advance represented by a few generations' development,"

" It's the same way with steamers and sailing ships. You see the distance that separates the *Notre Dame* from a modern motor ship, but you forget the almost equal

distance that separates *Notre Dame* from the sailing ships of a hundred years ago. Let's carry ourselves backward. It's the end of 1836, and we run into one of the harbours with *Notre Dame*. How the engineers of the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich would rush in ! How amazed they would be—a ship of steel ! A ship twice as big as their largest ships of the line. What perfect rigging, how easy to operate, with how few men ! What wonderful seaworthiness, what speed, what cargo-space. Believe me, they would have given up building the steamers they had already begun."

Andersson's most secret longing seemed to be speaking for him: " Are the accomplishments of our sailing ships not great ? Can't they be compared to modern vessels ? It's fifteen thousand sea miles from England to Australia. We make that run in an average of ninety days. Fifteen thousand miles in ninety days ; show me the automobile that will do that without a breakdown, without a tank station."

" And the road is anything but a smooth highway," Jorg added. " Sailing ships lack only one thing—the charm of novelty. If they had that, they would go through a new flowering. Just suppose the *Notre Dame* were to be launched to-day as the world's first sailing ship, and were to come back from her trial voyage. Every newspaper in the world would use its largest and fattest type to describe this marvellous new invention. I can just see it: ' Ship moves without motor ! '—' Shipping costs cut'—' As safe as steamers, and almost as fast.' Fashionable doctors would set up floating sanatoriums for nervous diseases on sailing ships, and lay claim to fantastic cures. Dieticians would discover that certain delicate wares survived transportation best on engine-less ships; merchants would rush for the cheaper freight rates. Young honeymoon-couples would ..."

Andersson smiled, a silent, sad smile. " We shan't

get this charm of novelty any more. What we shall have is the charm of the historical. And we won't have that until we are finally extinct,"*

Jorg was squatting on deck with Barbarossa ; they were doing their washing. The abundance of fresh water had brought washing as an irresistible urge to the crew. They sat on low stools, with the canvas pail between their knees. The suds foamed up ; the clothes came out of the black brew as if out of a hot mud bath ; sweat dripped from above. The one washboard passed from hand to hand ; they scrubbed furiously until the skin was off their knuckles and their hands were white and bloated. They slammed the heavy work-clothes on to the deck, and went over them with the scrub brush, scouring out tar, oil and paint. The threads stood out white from the fabric ; it was a wonder they held together. They would rinse, and again the water was black ; the case seemed quite hopeless. They would wring things out, two men helping each other, the veins and muscles in their arms would stand out, and the cloth would twist in torment, writhing like earthworms on a fish-hook. Its last water would drip from it, and it would be almost dry when it was hung on the line. It slapped in the wind, and when it was taken down after an hour one could see that something had been accomplished after all. The wash smelled fresh and clean, like Marseilles soap and linen warm in the sun. Ironing, of course, was a luxury. They yanked the handkerchiefs open with a snap by their corners, and folded the shirts as smoothly as they could. To sew on buttons, Jorg, who had no sewing things, had to borrow a needle and thread from the surgical kit. The needle was crooked and three-edged ; it went through the holes in the buttons with difficulty, and had the corresponding advantage of not breaking.

The urge for cleanliness and beauty was quite insatiable. Alf and Barbarossa, those two big children, whose

blond beards grew on chin and cheeks as if pasted on for a joke, extended it to the W.C. They took it entirely apart, making it useless for weeks, without consideration of losses. It was scraped, lacquered, varnished, waxed and polished. Glowing with cleanliness it stood there. A very jewel case ; but not for use—good heavens, no ! Dreamily the two would stand before their work on quiet evenings, arm in arm. " We shall never desecrate it again," sighed Alf. " Perhaps sometimes on Sundays we will retire there, smoke a quiet cigarette, and think about life," said Barbarossa.

Jorg read them out an advertisement from an American magazine : "At last the scientific saddle toilet!" yelled the paper, which was embellished with illustrations. " The very form of the seat alone speaks for the thorough study which the factory has devoted to this subject. The comfort of this saddle seat leads to a natural sitting posture, and aids the muscles of the internal organs to a more natural and thorough functioning. But this is not all: Our scientific saddle toilet is also outstanding through its silence. Gone is the noisy gurgling and rushing which is so disagreeable, especially when there are guests in the house. . . ."

They laughed : " What a thing to tell *us*, on the *Notre Dame* ! "

Notre Dame made splendid progress in the brisk trade wind—ten, eleven, twelve sea miles an hour. Two hundred and forty-eight, two hundred and seventy-six, two hundred and eighty-one sea miles a day. " Lovely," said Andersson ; " lovely, as the girl said to the sailor," That was his highest praise.

Jorg made full use of the sun ; he knew it would soon be gone. Now he wore a green eyeshade, fastened on with a band. All at once this gave the world the green which one misses so much on a long sea voyage. The Dutchmen had a lot of green on their ships, even

on the sides. Perhaps the yearning for the green of their native marshes was the unconscious reason for it. The Dutchmen always did have a lot of flower-pots on board, and even boxes with tiny vegetable gardens.

Jorg had a few sweet-pea seeds in his pocket from the garden at home. Would it still be worth while to plant them?

Enormous clouds sailed with great speed along the sky. At night in the moonlight they looked like glittering snow. In our day everything is matter for a record ; why don't they measure the great cloud flights ? thought Jorg. He loved to gaze into the wake. Where the water in the lee of the wake was smooth, the sunbeams pierced deep, deep down in great wedges. It looked as if a gigantic green-glass lemon-squeezer were pushed into the sea. The flying fishes rushed in swarms from the depths into the glare ; it was as if whole sacks of silver coins were skipped across the sea. Dancing and splashing they plunged in.

Ever stronger grew the desire to withdraw into worlds of dream.

In the old English nautical magazines he read in the volume for 1841 :

" Notes on steam navigation.

" A new method of propulsion is attracting considerable attention in naval circles. It consists of a circular movement on a longitudinal axis. There are two distinct means of attaining this end. One consists of a screw or circular plane running spirally on an axis. It is the patent of a certain Mr. Schmidt: he calls it an Archimedean screw. The second method is a wheel exactly like a paddle-wheel, but with the difference that the individual blades are not perpendicular but diagonally set. This method is the patent of Mr. Ericsson, who enjoys considerable reputation in this country. Both methods of

propulsion are attached to the stern of the vessel, below the waterline."

Good heavens, when one read something like this from a hundred years back, here on the *Notre Dame* where everything was as it had been a hundred years ago, it seemed so damned modern. Cars, planes—*were* there such things ? Might one just have dreamt them ? These things had been out of sight less than a quarter of a year, and already they seemed unreal. It was simply crazy that it should be so.

He sank into timelessness ; even meals seemed to him too much of a fixed programme. He no longer needed to ask what day of the week it was : the menu told him exactly with its implacable regularity.

Forward on the bowsprit sat the boys in their free time, above the flying spray, enveloped in the sound of the water and bathed in sunshine. Always in the vanguard, always a nose ahead of the '*Notre Dame*, no matter how fast she sailed—that is the way of youth. Probably a dozen fishing-lines plunged into the depths ; weighted with lead, the wooden bait, deceptively spiked with fish-hooks, danced over the waves. The end of the lines the boys kept wrapped around their forefingers ; with twitching forearms they kept the wooden minnows leaping from wave-crest to wave-crest. Through the veined veil of the roaring masses of water one saw the bodies of bonito fish, greenish-white, twisting, wriggling in mad speed.

They bit easily, apparently snapping at anything which had even a faint resemblance of a flying-fish. Struggling wildly, spinning around and around on the line, they were pulled in. As they came nearer they grew tremendously, and could scarcely be held until the knife was in their necks. Splendid creatures, smooth as enamel, round as torpedoes, steel-blue on the back, oyster-white on the belly. As long as they were alive, and for a while

after, their skin was covered with shimmering rainbows. Their tails were the most perfect propellers one could imagine. Beyond the thin root of the tail were two fine horizontal fins ; back and side fins were translucent, almost like glass, and one could see the supporting bones within.

During cleaning, the skin resisted with incredible stubbornness. The whole inside was muscle, compact bunches of it, without an ounce of fat, but plentifully veined, full of blood, charged with strength and vitality. They quivered under the knife. The tube of the intestines was tiny by comparison. Its relation to the bulk of the muscles was like that of the car of an airship to the balloon. How different from a herring, for instance, which at spawning-time is almost nothing but intestines. Almost the entire weight of a bonito could go into the pot; their hands dripping with blood, the boys stood bent over their catch.

It tasted magnificent, like the finest and most delicate meat; there was no comparison with other fish. It was an elevating feeling to know that at a moment like this nobody on shore could eat fresher food. One seemed actually to feel one's own body greedily drawing in this freshness, and being galvanized.

The most skilful fisherman was the boy whom they called " Australia," He had popped up the preceding year, after *Notre Dame* had left Spencer's Gulf—a runaway from home, of course. He had read the books of Walter Scott, and had drawn from them a burning desire to see England and Europe in general. He was the only Australian on board, but his English was so frightful in accent that Jorg hardly understood him. He was clumsily built, dark, hairy all over, almost animal, a primitive type. It was plain enough that he was of convict blood, but he would not have hurt a fly ; his blue eyes twinkled good-naturedly.

Andersson had hired him ; of course, there was always a shortage of hands on the voyage home, and after a hundred and twenty-three days, sure enough, the boy arrived in Newcastle. Before him was England, his dreams and his goal. A dirty dock, a wall around it, a gate with a policeman in front of it.

The police came on board. " So the man is a stowaway ? Stowaways are not allowed to land in England."

" But I'm an Australian, a British subject; of course, I'm allowed to land ! "

" Show us that you are an Australian. Where's your passport, where are your papers ? "

The young Australian had no passport, and no papers of any kind. He had not thought of that when he ran away from home.

" Well, then, you'll just have to stay on board,"

For two months the *Notre Dame* lay in Newcastle, and the whole time " Australia " stayed on board ; the dock was watched like a prison. On his sheep ranch in the dry interior of Australia, he had dreamt of the Tower of London, of all its wonders, of Scottish moors and loch and castles. For a hundred and twenty-three days he had sailed around the whole world to make his dream come true. The dock, the wall, the guarded gate, the grey sky that rained soot—this was all that came to fulfilment.

The *Notre Dame* sailed from Newcastle to Mariehamn : again she lay six weeks at anchor, and again " Australia " never set foot on shore. What was a fellow without papers ? Nothing.

And now he was just sailing back to Australia. There was no cheaper transportation home, his consul had said. He still wore the things he had come on board in a year before : short black trousers, and fluttering loose above them a blackish shirt, which, however, had once been white. He looked like a fiend in angel's clothing ; with

all this he wore sharp-toed, elegant dancing shoes with white inlay. During cold weather the others lent him some of their things.

Once the *Notre Dame* had even had a girl on board. Disguised as a man she had stolen on board the night before they set sail. There was much quarrelling and bad blood on her account during the voyage, as can well be imagined, and betrothal was solemnly celebrated more than once. When they arrived in Cardiff the reporters made a sensation of it. The quay by the *Notre Dame* was closed off by the police, so great was the crowd. In America the girl would surely have got a film contract ; in England she got nothing but a job as a lift-girl in a shop. Did she still think of her ocean voyage as she rose and sank between the household furnishings department and the ladies' underwear ?

Their end was often sadness and disappointment, these romantic journeys which were made in youth. Once in Genoa, where his ship stayed only six hours, people had told Jorg that he absolutely must see the Campo Santo—it was the loveliest thing in Genoa. For three hours he had walked around looking for the loveliness among marble gentlemen in top hat and tails who were trying to float heavenward, painfully raised by fluttering cherubs, without being able to manage it. Another time, after a long sea voyage, he had come from Le Havre to Paris, for the first time in his life. But he was so horrified, so intimidated by the traffic at the Gare du Nord that he immediately said " No " to all Paris. For two hours he crouched in a cellar pub. with a glass of thin beer, drawing curlicues on the wet floor and the dirty table, until the next train went back to Le Havre.

" Were you ever in Paris, Captain Andersson ? "

" Yes ; twice. But I didn't see Paris."

" How did that happen ? "

" Twice the shipping company had to send the whole

crew from Mariehamn to St. Nazaire. That was the time we bought the *Notre Dame* from the Frenchmen, and later the *L'Aventure*. He's a saving man, Captain Peterson ; he has to be, and, besides, I imagine he was afraid of the ' dangers of Paris ' for us. The trip was so arranged that we arrived from Sasznitz very early in the morning at Cologne. In Cologne we had to kill a whole day until the night train left for Paris. In this way we saved spending the night in an hotel,"

" Did you see the Cologne Cathedral ? "

" No ; I am still sorry that I didn't. It was open, but we didn't dare go in. We were afraid it might cost something. We had only a very little money for expenses. Tired, hungry and jarred to the bone by our long night trip we went into a little pub. Each of us drank a cup of coffee, and one of us went to the nearest bakery and bought rolls for everybody. Then we walked the streets until evening."

" And in Paris ? "

" The agent of the travel bureau met us at the station. Like a flock of sheep he herded us to the underground, which took us to the other station. Those were the only two times in my life that I ever travelled underground. It was marvellous ; we were almost afraid. We were all young, greenfellows."

There was a grotesque fruitlessness, almost a tragic quality about the land journeys of these seamen. Had they not gone to sea to see the world ?

" But one of our boys knows Paris well ; he was born there, Mohammed was. Eh, Mohammed ? "

Mohammed was standing at the helm. He made a slight, easy bow, quite the man of the world, all politeness. He really did look like a Turk with his olive skin, his dark eyes, his black hair. A red neckerchief and a small cap, like a fez, gave him the appearance of a corsair in a book of pirates.

No, Mohammed was born in Brussels. He had grown up in the Belgian Congo ; his father was a subaltern in the colonial army. But now he was pensioned, and they had a shop in Paris, a perfumery shop.

Jorg's French was celebrated for its badness ; he was in the habit of giving comic performances with it at home. But Mohammed's pleasure was unbounded that anyone should talk to him in his mother tongue. Steering, his face tipped upward to the sails, to the weathervane and to the moon, he talked with enthusiasm of Paris, grasping at every leading sentence that Jorg tossed him. Together they went in spirit upon the boulevards and into the cafes, along the banks of the Seine, to Montmartre, to the girls. They described to each other the road from the city to the flying-field. So Jorg had landed at Le Bourget ? Mohammed knew the time-table of all the air-lines absolutely by heart : " You arrived at eighteen forty o'clock, Monsieur." He spoke with a soft, cultivated voice. " Notre Dame ? " Yes, Jorg had been in the Cathedral of Notre Dame. But it had not made the expected impression on him. The stream of tourists with their silly murmurs of admiration and their dragging steps had drowned out the soft notes of the organ. An intrusive peddler had spread a fan of indecent post cards before Jorg ; all at once the whole huge nave was degraded and defiled.

Mohammed smiled ; his smile was forgiving, polite, sophisticated. This German ! he was probably thinking. Astonished, almost admiring, Jorg looked at Mohammed : a Parisian in the middle of the ocean—in the moonshine on a sailing ship—what a phenomenon ! Jorg gave his imagination rein as he walked up and down, eight steps forward and eight steps back ; and over on the starboard side Andersson was doing the same trot. They were in Paris to-night, Helen and he. They had run around all day ; then they had bathed, changed clothes, made

themselves beautiful. Now they were going out, with a tremendous appetite after a breakfast much too small.

There was a restaurant, a very old one. It had only a few tables, and on the tables were candles. The fire in the fireplace glowed, crackled, and gave off a scent; it exuded heat; and copper, round, warm-toned and bright, sent back reflections from the wall.

How pretty Helen looked, her little face reddened with cold. How her eyes shone! How she felt her hair and her impudent hat with her flat hands—that well-known and indescribably feminine gesture.

First, no doubt, they would drink a vodka. The waiter would swish pieces of ice in the glasses. From the fogged crystal it would run down their throats, icy, almost tasteless; a little shiver—and then a kind of fire, waking every nerve in the stomach.

Oysters, smelling of the sea, raw and strong, the food of primitive ages. Their grey shells, bedded in ice, rested on green lacquered trays. How refreshing! One grew quite gay, lively and daring.

Yes, and then perhaps they would take a *petite marmite*, that little queen of the soups, which warms us all through, and makes our insides gentle and kindly, as if we had just heard a pretty and touching fairy tale.

The critical moment would come when the waiter asked the guest to choose the wine. If it depended on him, Jorg would pick a white Bordeaux, something light, sharp, anything but sweet.

Of course, Helen would say it was too much, but Jorg would insist on sole, which melts on your tongue, with a delicate, luxurious sauce hollandaise.

Champagne—indeed, why not drink champagne when one met again after such a long voyage? Were not little sparks shooting from Helen's eyes, was there not every reason for a celebration?

Now that they were almost satisfied, they could

bring on the partridges or the grouse. Game birds take a long time to eat when you are hungry. They would be stuffed with many herbs, these creatures, and juniper berries would not be lacking. The sauce, made of their own juice, of cream and of a great secret, the waiter would reheat before their eyes, stir, twirl it over the spirit flame. Were they not lovely enough to make you weep? Was it not mournful at last to look down on the little heap of delicate bones?

Could Helen be induced to try the candied fruits? She blushed like a young girl, but she nodded, if a little shamefacedly. Jorg, however, felt that he would yet eat English celery filled with butter and roquefort cheese, and would eat it quite shamelessly and with relish.

The coffee would come in one of those glass chemical retorts which are boiled at table. One sees the boiling water rise, mysteriously flood a great quantity of coffee, and sink down, inky black, thick and aromatic. Along with it they would drink a glass of magical raspberry liqueur, a breath of summer.

The steward called for the evening meal: "Supper, please," There was lobscouse with thin slices of pickle. The lemon-juice which they drank in the vile tea to prevent scurvy tasted sharp and scorching, chemical. But Jorg felt that it was not a question of how one lived in reality; it was all a matter of having the ability to imagine the other as well. Almost any kind of life can be endured—with imagination.

The unusual southerly trade wind had brought *Notre Dame* close under the Brazilian coast. At eighteen degrees south latitude the trade wind began to die; they did keep on moving, but only at four or five knots. The sky was marvellously clear and wide—it was really no trade-wind sky any longer. They were on the steamer lane to Rio and to the harbours of La Plata, but they

saw no ships. Only once, about noon—the watch off duty were just eating, and the other watch was working in the hold—they heard the deep growl of a steamer's syren, near, very near. They started like a lonely traveller who hears the growl of a bear in the deep woods. Everybody rushed on deck. Not two hundred yards away a big liner moved past in the opposite direction. The passengers waved laughingly when the crew of the sailing ship popped up so suddenly. Had they all been asleep? One saw cameras pointed at the *Notre Dame*; from the arched windows of the dining-saloon music sounded. Like a dream it passed before they had time to wake up. They looked after it, in their hands the tools with which they had been working when interrupted, and they felt bitterness in their hearts—there it went, the great world, at twenty knots' speed.

Abrahamson, the cabin-boy, had been at the helm. He had seen the steamer coming all right, but he had been too bashful to sing out. What for, anyway? It was the steamer's duty to get out of a sailing vessel's way, that much Abrahamson knew.

During these nights Jorg and Andersson were struggling with the damned radio. "Pippin the Short Model," Jorg had christened it, because of its laughable range. Full of hope, Andersson put the chronometers in front of him on the table to check them with the time-signal; full of hope, Jorg waited for news of Europe. They were near the Brazilian stations. But the storage battery was so exhausted and so decayed inside that it furnished only five minutes' current—for jumbled sounds.

Jorg wanted to reinforce the current, and fetched the dry cell from his flashlight, as well as all the spare batteries he had. Andersson stopped him—no, no, that was a different kind of current; it would damage the apparatus. Jorg fetched his old physics text-book to prove his theory, and Andersson brought in a Swedish physics book in

rebut. For two hours they argued the matter, which neither of them understood. They pointed violently to the printed word, and showed each other the text; the only trouble was that one could read no German, the other no Swedish. They tried to translate the technical terms into English, but that was totally impossible.

The second night, about on a level with Rio, they agreed : the attempt was to be made. There was much racking of brains as to whether the dry cells should be connected in parallel or in series. The drawing in the physics book made it all look so simple. With tin cans and wires Jorg built a mad apparatus in which the batteries were held together by rubber bands. Several times it all collapsed again. The motor mechanic had to come with his soldering torch, and solder the contacts. Oddly enough, none of the boys knew anything about radio.

The third night they got to the point of trying it out. The loud-speaker, which was usually kept turned off as a matter of economy, was plugged in so that they could both hear. It worked ! Every sound was painfully distorted and disfigured by noise, and yet it was like a miracle to hear voices, strange, unknown voices, a new world ! Five South American stations were heard from. Jorg, who knew a little Spanish, hoped to make out time-signals and reports. His face reddened with excitement and intense listening.

It was maddening; the Spanish and Portuguese speakers quacked like ducks on a pond, with terrible rapidity. They poured out a torrent of words ; but what did they say ? They told Jorg precisely what cognac to drink ; what tinned milk he should use ; which chocolate was the best. Music was mixed in, bad dance music, not even new. A soprano trilled high notes.

" Damn woman ! " growled Andersson. Every time the speaker began again Jorg had hopes, and then after

all it would be only advice to shave with this or that shaving-cream or to buy at Alfonso Levysen's Departmental Store.

They hunted, shifted and tuned, but there was nothing except jazz and gentlemen giving political speeches in resounding phrases. "No decent person *could* be a politician," Andersson thought.

The captain would have given a month's pay for a time-signal; it was a vital matter to determine the speed of the chronometers, and thus the ship's position. Jorg would certainly have given all the cash he had, even if it was not much, for the news that Europe was still at peace.

They tinkered and went on hoping during the fourth night. It was bad luck that the dry cells wore out so soon. Alf and Barbarossa lent new batteries, and Jorg built up sheer electrical mountains, inaccessible structures full of barbed-wire entanglements; and still the current never lasted more than half an hour. Sweat ran down in streams, tickling in the earphones as the two listened with almost ridiculous intensity. And there was nothing, nothing, nothing that they could use.

Like a very precious treasure, Andersson brought out his last reserve—a sixty-volt radio dry cell. He had meant to keep it for the Australian coast. It could be variously set from a low up to the full voltage. The right current for the radio was four volts, but then the battery would be exhausted in ten minutes. Dared they move it higher? They moved it up to eight volts, and the jumbled voices in the distance took a new lease on life; the world seemed to rush like a wave at the *Notre Dame*. It sank, it died away. The voice of the world seemed to be strangled; it writhed as if on its death-bed, and seemed to have something very important to say. The bulbs in the little mahogany box turned dark yellow, and were on the verge of going out. No, it was too much

to bear ; Andersson's heavy hand reached for the plug. Like a dagger he plunged it into the hole in the battery marked " 32 volts." It looked like murder, and it was murder. An explosion, a flash—all the lights were out, and the instrument was dumb.

With a sigh Jorg pulled the headphones off. He did not know whether to be sad or delighted. Now at least they were sure that it was over, that the thing was completely finished.

Andersson got up. He grabbed " Pippin the Short " by its mane of wires. He raised it on high with one hand—that is the way one grabs a puppy by the neck when he has dirtied the room ; and the radio at that moment looked just as unhappy as such a puppy. He shut it in the closet, stuffed the wires after it, and locked it in. There was something final in the movement. Captain Andersson had made an end of the one piece of modern equipment on his ship.

" How the big cities do fill even the air above the sea with their noise," said Andersson. " I've never lived in a big city. I'd like to know what it is really like."

Jorg leaned back in his chair, gazing into the lamp. " Just imagine, Captain, that now we are going up the Hudson River to New York. The pilot is on board, and the tug is pulling the *Notre Dame*. We have nothing to do but make fast to the dock and go ashore. The fountains of electric lights splash up to the tops of the skyscrapers. High in the sky the domes shine, red, blue, green and golden. The beacons circle overhead to warn the fliers ; the sky is red, the moon and stars are pale. The peaks of the *Notre Dame* reach only to the twelfth storey ; all at once our world has become tiny and insignificant.

" We go ashore, you and I. The coral reefs of houses spew out people. A dusty wind blows through the gorges of the street. We are enveloped in a peculiar

atmosphere of cigarettes, perfume, powder, dusty clothes and sweat. Everybody seems to run. It seems to be a torrent running through mountain gorges. Imagine the fjords in Norway, inundation and surf. It's as great and as impressive as that. The masses rush, jostle past one another in opposite directions. The electric signs strike the roaring herd like hand-grenades and bombs. At the street intersections the human torrents pile up. They are illuminated by coloured lights ; close before the people's feet the steel swarms of cars glide by. Their enamel glares in the floodlights ; the limousines are lit up, and the radios wail inside. The taxi chauffeurs dangle their cigarettes carelessly in their mouths, their arms flung over the steering-wheels. They despise the slowness which is forced upon them.

" The film theatres spray the pictures of their sensational films into the streets with rustling music, with warm air from the central heating. The shining snakes of the elevated trains twist from caves of buildings into the sky high above the pavement, their eyes glowing. The lights from the train windows fall through the bare sleepers of the tracks, and before them rush the shadows, a giant comb which roars through the streets.

" Processions of people climb iron stairs to glass stations, which shine like giant lanterns. Other streams of people plunge into the earth, into the electric caves of the subway.

" A strange stupefaction possesses the crowds. A man is no longer an entity in the mass. He is part of the mass. Nobody looks at anybody; their eyes stare at the distance. Nor does anyone pay attention to where he is going, for he has no choice of paths. He is a drop in the stream, and the stream sweeps him on. The shoulders and hips of the people around him determine his own direction. The movements are mechanical, the thoughts too, even the sex instinct. We see the shiny silken legs of

the girls, and have no time to see the rest. They sweep past, thousands upon thousands, and all alike ; the same mouths, painted in heart shape, the same plucked eye-brows, the same coiffure, the same blond hair, the same frozen smile and shining, absent eyes."

" Is that really true ? "

" Yes, it's true. Now that it's night the light-fountains of the tall buildings collapse. Only the drops of light from single windows and floors still cling to the sky, and indicate the outlines of the gloomy giants which throw their shadows across the whole world. Perhaps even we are still sailing in the shadow of the bank palaces of Manhattan.

" But let's eat in one of the huge mass-feeding places. Everything is artificial marble, neat and cold. We push our way along shiny chromium counters as long as the ship. We have chromium trays in our hands, and whole regiments of girls in snow-white dresses and tall chefs' caps serve food to us. Whatever we want—huge beef-steaks, pounded soft by machine, inflated with compressed air. Heaps of French fried potatoes, peas, beans and stewed Indian corn, gaudily coloured fat wedges of pie in all the hues of the rainbow. It is like a factory. Knives and forks are disinfected, and wrapped in paper serviettes. We have only to point at some dish, and immediately they give it to us, and punch a hole in the printed ticket which we hold in our hands. We have a mountain of food before us. We hunt out a table, and as we eat we try at the same time to read a paper, like all the other people around us; but we catch only the screaming headlines. We have not even finished when Negroes hurry past our tables and grab the plates. They are pushing wheeled tanks of stainless steel; they throw the plates into the steaming soapy water, and wipe the artificial stone with wet cloths. We have to go almost before we have rinsed our teeth with the last gulp

of coffee. We grub in our pockets for money for the cashier.

" Now we are sliding on the roaring wheel of the entertainment factory where one spends the dollars earned in the production factory of the day's work. We go to a dance hall, and are instantly stupefied by the music, which plays continually, with orchestras taking turns like the watches on board. We dance with taxi dance girls, and pay them twenty-five cents a dance. With their frozen smiles they stare right through us, but for three dollars we can kiss these painted lips, and for five dollars we can taste their mechanical, automatic love. No, that's not our idea of fun. Instead let's take a taxi, and ride around New York, into the enormous suburbs, the dormitories of the crowds. We see into tiny cave-dwellings where the gas stoves hum, where the women stand by the stoves whistling and singing to the music of the radio. The streets are covered with orange-peel, with paper, dust and ashes ; the lorries wallow through it like pigs in the mud. At night the huge city takes in supplies and disposes of rubbish. Boxes and barrels roll, streams of coal rush into cellars, garbage is shovelled, paper is piled high and burned on the streets in a stinking *auto AaJ6*. The tired children bawl in the doorways. The mothers, squatting on the threshold, sing them to sleep in all the tongues of the earth, with ancient songs.

" And anyone that has no money sneaks around in the shadow of the buildings, looking for cigarette butts. The unemployed push out of the foul air of the soup-kitchens, their bellies heavy with soup, with sticky porridge, with white bread that gives the teeth nothing to bite on. They drag their feet; they are tired of the pavement. This world is stone, nothing but stone. The lice itch, the dry sweat burns the skin. They have their coat collars turned up, for the night wind is whistling. Age comes early, and hopelessness comes early too in

America. Wrapped in newspapers they sleep on park benches, in tunnels, on vacant lots, in the gutter, in empty goods vans by the harbour, these people whom the world has no more use *for*."

"A city like that must be hell itself," murmured Andersson.

"Yes, it is hell."

The trade wind died as if of a stroke. Instead of the south-east wind a wind suddenly blew up from the North, so that there was a regular turmoil in the ocean. They were already hoping to get through the transition zone without being becalmed, when this wind went to sleep at dark. The *Notre Dame* tossed in the swell, a lifeless body, mountainously heavy, with slack sails and creaking blocks. No life in the ship, no life in the men ; that is how it is in a calm.

In these latitudes between twenty and thirty degrees south, which the *Notre Dame* was painfully fighting her way through, calms alternated with sudden violent squalls. Out of a gay, glassy sky would come assaults which threw the *Notre Dame* upon her side. In a matter of minutes she would be enveloped in roaring spray ; thunder would crash in the masts when sails went into shreds and flew off crackling before they could be taken in. Again it would happen that the topsails would be full, swelling under heavy wind pressure, while on deck there was not a breath to be felt, and the lower sails hung slack. "The horse latitudes," Andersson called this region with a gesture of loathing, and Jorg read the explanation of the name in the English coast pilot in the chart-room. In the old days great shipments of horses had sailed from the harbours of La Plata, mostly as deck cargo. When the raging storms rushed out upon the sea, and suddenly flung over the ships, many horses were washed overboard or thrown overboard to lighten ship. Jorg could see

them in his mind, battling the waves ; in the screech of torn sails he thought he heard their cry of terror, the most awful sound in the world. So this part of the ocean was named after the drowned horses.

He started to make himself a chair ; the usefulness of the hammock was bound to come to an end soon now. He was making it with the staves of old herring casks which he found in the hold. They did not smell good, but they were oak ; the outer layer of the inner side was quite blue, soft and rotten. It was a lot of work to scrape this all down to solid wood, and to shave off the paint and the hard, ingrown rust of the hoops outside with nothing but a pocket-knife. Several times a day he had to turn to the grindstone ; the steel did not keep its edge well. But it was a good feeling to have one's hands productive again. It freed one from the torment of constant brooding. Often Barbarossa squatted beside him with his English grammar. He was studying in his free time, but discovered that his book did not contain the expressions used in nautical conversation. He learned these from Jorg, and then laughed at the genteel grammar—Ha, ha ! They saw through its whitewashed politeness.

Jorg asked for screws, and Barbarossa scratched around in the lower drawers of his berth. In the midst of a tangle of seamen's outfit were Edgar Wallace novels and a torn *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Barbarossa had used the missing pages of the Dickens novel to pull off the slippery skin of the bonitos. He had thought it too bad to waste the detective stories in this way. He succeeded in finding a handful of one-inch brass screws.

By way of experiment Jorg began by putting the sides of his chair together. The width of the seat was best determined by the living model ; after all, it was a tailor-made chair. Like a tower of tóy blocks he put the cask staves loosely in the shape he had in mind. It

repeatedly fell apart when he sat down, but finally the structure held together by Jorg's own weight. Now he could mark the boards around him with a pencil in the lengths he wanted. When the carpenter approached, he jumped up quickly, and let the thing fall apart ; he was ashamed of his unprofessional methods.

He drove the knife-blade through the boards with a block of wood. The carpenter himself had only the most essential tools ; Jorg had neither chisel nor hammer. He bored holes for the screws with nails which he heated red-hot over the spirit-stove. The screws alone were not enough for impregnable solidity—the staves had to be mortised into one another. He worked furiously. The call for lunch and the call for supper seemed to come one directly after the other. Every time the chair seemed ready, it proved on trial to be not yet solid and seaworthy enough. New cross-pieces and braces were built in. The whole thing became so round and so solid that Jorg decided to use it as a lifebuoy in case of shipwreck. Alf donated a sheet of sandpaper—a treasure—for the final polish. Barbarossa, who was in charge of the paints, proposed a coat of enamel, but Jorg asked only for a pot of linseed-oil. The dry staves sucked the oil in greedily; it disappeared almost the moment it was spread on. When it had drunk a litre of oil the wood became hard as rock, darkened, and took on a dull glint which emphasized the wavy grain. It was a good chair to sit in. Jorg stretched out his legs contentedly ; it was the first finished piece of work he had done for a long time.

He must have been fast asleep ; when he awoke he thought he was dreaming. On the rail, right in front of him, sat a gull. It was an enchanting bird with black, silky wings. They were so long that they crossed behind the body, sharp-pointed like daggers.

The plumage of the body was grey, a fine colour such

as elegant old ladies often wear. Head and forehead were silver grey, and below the forehead were a pair of fearless black eyes. The beak, too, was black, pointed and longitudinally ribbed ; and black the feet, which were small and as soft as bats' wings.

The little creature preened itself busily, obviously delighted to have solid ground under its feet for once. Every time it sank its beak above the eyes in its downy feathers, Jorg moved closer, until at last he was only an arm's length from the wonder. The wonder looked somewhat surprised, but was not at all timid; it must have come straight from paradise. It knew the sea and the rocks of the sea, but men it did not know. Jorg named the bird Parsifal.

When at last it flew away, Jorg supposed he would never see it again. An hour later, Alf, the mate, came up holding Parsifal in his hands. The bird had let itself be caught. When Jorg took it, Parsifal bit his hand furiously. There was not much strength in it, so it did not hurt, but Parsifal hung on, and squinted with exertion. Jorg hypnotized it. This is very easy with most birds. One simply takes them in one's hand, and suddenly puts them on their backs by turning the hand over. In a short time they become hypnotized ; one can open one's hand, and they have a fixed stare, and do not move. Parsifal's head sank down limply, and Jorg could stroke its soft feathers without frightening it.

He awakened it, and let it fly. A wonder happened ; Parsifal did not fly away. It perched on the next life-boat, allowed Jorg to approach, and seemed willing to continue the acquaintance.

Jorg put his arms on the gunwale of the boat, thrust his head up close to Parsifal, and talked to it. He talked to the gull as he would have talked to his children at that moment. How this little bird aroused his yearning

for the children—it was so delicate, so small, so weak and so trusting. If he could but have had them with him, if only for an hour ! Parsifal listened very attentively to everything he said, and it turned out to be a story :

THE STORY OF THE FOLDING FATHER

Once there was a father who sailed far, far away in a ship to the other end of the world. When he finally arrived he went ashore, and looked at the country, which was called Australia, but he did not think it nice at all.

Oh, he thought, if I were only back home with my children ! How can I manage to get back to them soon ?

He could not go by car, for there was nothing but water between the ends of the earth. The ships took many weeks, and this was much too long for the father, for he was very impatient.

Then he saw a flying-field. A mail-plane was just being run out of its hangar to carry a great bag of mail to Europe. The father went to the pilot, and said : " I want to go home to my children ; couldn't you take me along ? "

" Out of the question," said the pilot. " You are much too heavy and could not fly with the plane." Just then he saw on the street a Chinese, ironing laundry in an open shop. The houses in Australia are open and airy because it is so hot there, and many Chinese live there who wash and iron the laundry for people just as our washerwomen do.

" Sir," cried the Chinese, " your shirt is badly ironed. Is that the reason you are making such a sad face ? Just come in, and I'll iron you out all right,"

" No," said the father, " that's not it."

And then he told the Chinese how much he wanted to

fly to his children, but that the plane could carry only one more letter.

At this the Chinese laughed: "A mere trifle ! " he cried, waving his heavy flat-iron. " I will simply iron you flat and smooth ; then we will fold you up, put you in an envelope, and write *Air Mail* on you : away you will fly home,"¹

" Yes, but if I'm ironed flat like that, my children won't recognize me at all. What can they do with a father that's ironed flat ? At most they could scrawl on me or use me for a handkerchief."

" My dear sir, your objections are simply preposterous. Our business methods have been tried and proved a thousand times. We Chinese to-day ship our countrymen exclusively by air mail throughout the world—quick, reliable, cheap. And then the white people are astonished that suddenly out of a clear sky there are Chinese everywhere. I will let you into a business secret: we do it as we do with our paper flowers. When you are ironed we will write directions on your stomach, and then your children at home need only put you in water, and you will swell up again, all round and fresh."

" Done," said the father. " But be quick ; the plane is just about to leave."

So he lay down on the ironing-board, and the Chinese took a whole mouthful of water, and sprayed the father, wetting him from head to foot.

" Bah ! " cried the father.

" Don't twist your face ! " said the Chinese severely. " Otherwise it will get ironed crooked, and will never smooth out again. And you had better take your pocket-knife and your money out of your trouser pocket, or it will get mashed in."

After that the father did not make any more faces, although it hurt a lot when the hot flat-iron went over his stomach and his face, with and against the grain.

He grew thinner and thinner, and so limp that he could not stir a finger. His coat buttons were pressed in so that they seemed to come out at the back.

Finally the father was as thin as a sheet of paper, and the Chinese took him, folded his hands over his stomach like an ironed shirt, folded his legs upward, and ironed the creases smooth.

When the father was folded all up tight, the Chinese put him in an envelope. " Oh, I'm all broken up," groaned the father.

" Anything worth having is worth suffering for," said the Chinese unsympathetically. " You'd better keep completely silent ; if you talk your mouth will swell, and then you won't fit into the envelope,"

So the father did not make another sound, although everything grew dark around him, for the Chinese sealed the envelope. When the stamps were stuck on, the Chinese ran to the flying-field, where the pilot was already sitting in the plane behind the whirling propeller. " Here's one more letter for two children in Europe ! " panted the Chinese.

" It's really too late," said the pilot. " Well, seeing it's a letter for children, I'll take it along anyway." And he put the ironed father with the other letters in the big sack.

At home one evening the two children were sitting in the bath-tub when the postman came running into the house very late to say to Mother, " Here's an air-mail letter from Australia."

Quickly she tore open the letter, and found the ironed father inside. He hung from her hands like a jumping-jack. But, of course, she didn't recognize him. She could see that something was written on the stomach, but it was Chinese, and she could not read it.

" Let's see ! " cried the children from the bath-tub, for the ironed father looked very funny.

" I think it's an empty balloon Father is sending us,"¹ cried Jan, the little boy.

" Give it here ; I'll blow it up," cried the girl, Elke ;
" where's the valve ? "

" Oh, nonsense," said Mother, disappointed because there was nothing written in the letter. " Father just played a stupid joke by sending us that old rag. It's dreadful—I'll put it right in the stove."

At this both children yelled : " No, oh please, don't! We want to play with it." They quarrelled over it, and almost tore off arms and legs, and bump ! the ironed father was in the bath-tub !

" For Heaven's sake ! " cried all three with one voice.
" What's this ? "

The thing swelled and bulged in the bath-tub, and began to move, and grew bigger and bigger, and when the three leant over the edge of the bath-tub—the children were so startled they had jumped out—they heard a squeezed voice groan : " Here I am—good evening ! "

" Father, Father ! " cried the children, clapping their hands and dancing round the bathroom. They recognized the voice.

" Hold up his head, or he'll drown ! " cried Mother, and now they cautiously squeezed out their sponge over Father's head, and he grew round and full like a tyre that one pumps up. Finally he climbed out of the bath-tub, hugged and kissed all three, and cried : " Thank goodness I am home with you again ! "

Jorg looked in his book box, disappointed, bored, almost repelled. He had thought that with a well-chosen library one could endure any degree of loneliness. This was not true. Besides, his books were ill-chosen. He had taken along what he had just been wanting to read before the voyage—too many modern books, and not

enough great ones. The sea puts not only the ship and its men to sharp tests, but books as well. Of the moderns almost none stood the test.

Death in the Afternoon—that Hemingway! Once he had loved him ; now he seemed actually horrifying. A man with a defect: an impotent heart. He only pretended to be alive. He seemed to write to stupefy himself, to fool himself into forgetting he was dead. That was why he was so exact and so endless. He wanted to describe an object exhaustively with a wealth of details, and he left exhausted readers behind him. Talent without any genius. He did not stir feelings, but a tormenting insensibility; the man was very depressing.

Huxley. A type of the new English school—intellectual and flat. He suffered from that snobbery of tact which is common in England to-day. His tact was ostentatious ; he was a snob—*sine nobilitate*, without nobility. Nevertheless, *This Brave New World* was a grand, a far-reaching book ; it had vision.

There seemed to be a tacit agreement among modern writers—an agreement for mutual advertising. One wove praise and criticism of other people's books into one's own. Thus they gave one another importance. They were creating a professional myth. Before the structure of modern literature the reader stood as before a lodge of Freemasons : " Admittance to Initiates only."

The one name which the moderns never mentioned in their mutual benefit society was that of James Joyce, the man from whom fundamentally they were all copying what they wrote.

The world empire of literature was like that of late Rome—an enormous degree of development and decay at the same time. After all, decay always does begin long before the highest point of development.

Like almost all highly bred professions, that of the author was specialized. They no longer created for the sake of creation, and scarcely even from an inner urge. They aimed their work at the book market, at political currents, at the competition ; they analysed the reading public and themselves. They acted just like other industrialists : they transformed the world into substance. From their natural talent they developed the one special tone that struck an answering chord and promised success, and they exploited it like a mine. People who were lucky had a gold mine, and simply kept on improving the technique of mining it. Just as in all other fields technique in writing led to great performances.

The style grew ever more personal. There was not a single good modern book which did not put its author on show.

Once people had been poorer in experience, but richer in imagination ; they invented events and figures. To-day they camouflaged realities.

This was a reading age, and an almost universal flight from reality was its characteristic symbol. More and more people got their experiences from the printed word. But what was written was accommodated to the readers' wishes. It pretended to be an image of reality ; but in truth it was a false reality, factory-made dreams, just like the films.

It was very strange : the higher civilization grows, the less people can stand it. Human instincts defended themselves ; what had been a virtue in the nineteenth century became a vice in the twentieth. The same technical means which had served to build civilization were now working for its destruction. A general flight into dream worlds had begun, and the magnificent technique of lying succeeded in transforming the reality into a dream. The successful film, the newspapers, the magazines circumscribed the instincts of the crowd as

exactly as a mould circumscribes a casting. And the mould formed the crowd in the image that the dream manufacturers made of it.

Jorg hunted for the old writers wherever he could find them on board the *Notre Dame*. He found Goethe in an English translation : *The Cannonade of Valmy*. It seemed strange to read Goethe in a foreign language, but it was delightful nevertheless—as if one came from the metropolis into a forest. Calm, silence, ozone—one's very breathing was different. It pleased Jorg to know that Goethe had ridden in this battle, and had been under fire.

When one measured the moderns by such a yardstick, naked trash seemed more bearable than pretentious false art. Jorg read Edgar Wallace stories with the same feeling with which one yields to a vice. They were just like whisky ; they swept a man out of reality, and finally washed him ashore on the coast of an intellectual lowland. Like any intoxication, they left behind a definite depression.

Their excitement depended on incredible confusion ; they were alive with contradiction. The human figures fascinated by their absolute lack of character. The absence of character was necessary to preserve the tension, for each of these human ghosts had to be a possible criminal. The boundless munificence with which the author furnished his ghosts with money was a further charm. All of Wallace was in a sentence like : " They reached the Cafe de Paris, which was crowded at that hour with the afternoon-tea people. They found a quiet corner. . . ."

Jorg recognized that he was infected with reading sickness, like most of us. But this knowledge did him no good. He could not apportion his reading any more than his whisky—until one day both narcotics were exhausted.

The sea turned grey; vanished was the blue depth. It took on a skin like aluminium, mingled with mossy green. Peculiar brown stripes appeared; they were not cloud reflections from the sky. The ship sailed through several of these stripes, which looked greasy, and were several sea miles long and only about a hundred yards wide. The last Portuguese men-of-war passed out of sight—jelly-fish which floated on the waves like pink blossoms, unbelievably delicate and fragile. They looked as improbable on the sea as violets in the Sahara. The second suit of sail was changed to the suit used for heavy weather. Gone was the time of ease and safety; there were battles ahead of the *Notre Dame*. Heavy squalls of rain on the first of December turned into a storm which chased the *Notre Dame* south-eastward as if on wings for two days. With constancy, almost without stirring, but listing sharply, she ran thirteen sea miles per hour; all the rigging was so taut that it rang. Often it made you ill, the eternal bubbling and roaring, the wide boiling along the sides, the never-ending furrow of the wake. It turned cold, down to eighteen degrees centigrade. Jorg put on stockings; he had to. Everywhere on board woollens reappeared. Her south-easterly course was taking the *Notre Dame* over to the southern tip of Africa.

Andersson would have liked to sight one of the islands on this course, Tristan da Cunha or Gough, so that at last he could determine the ship's exact position. But it happened that *Notre Dame* had to pass Tristan da Cunha at night. To keep out of danger, Andersson stayed far out to southward, out of sight. That night Jorg thought of a long, sad poem by Chamisso: *Salas y Gomez*. He had learned it by heart at school. *Salas y Gomez*, the epitome of dreariness and loneliness, was Tristan da Cunha. According to *The Coast Pilot* there were three hundred people living there now. Jorg loved Chamisso, a man

who combined in one person the aristocrat, the poet, and the world traveller—what a rarity ! A man who struggled to be a German, and finally the father of Peter Schlemihl. But best of all was his childlike, poetic imagination. From him came the fantastic proposal to domesticate the whale. Steamboats at that time were just going through the illnesses of childhood ; there was a constant succession of boiler explosions. No, the poet had no use for them. But had they not tamed elephants ? Ought it not to be possible to harness the elephant of the sea ? Bladders full of air would prevent the whale from sounding, and as a driver he imagined a sort of mahout with a goad.

Jorg told Andersson of this idea, and with wild enthusiasm they added details to the plan. According to the latest measurements a big whale could develop about a thousand horse-power. A ship the size of the *Notre Dame* as a steamer would need about three thousand horse-power for a speed of twelve knots.

" Then we will need three whales," said Andersson.

" Let's take four. A four-in-hand is fashionable, more evenly balanced in harness, and the whales wouldn't have to go under full steam all the time,"

" But how would you steer them ? "

" With a goad, as Chamisso suggested."

Andersson objected that the fatty layer of a whale was a foot thick, and probably no goad could pierce it.

" Perhaps it would work with revolver shots. They would probably feel a little bullet like that the way a horse does a bit."

No, Andersson was for kindly guidance ; they would hold a herring in front of the whale's nose on a long stick, and of course the whales would swim after it in the desired direction.

" But even four whales can't pull the *Notre Dame* to Australia without resting ; they will get tired."

" Then we will have to change them."

" Just like old coaching days—you have floating relay stations on the ocean. Harnessed whales will be kept ready day and night in great basins."

The first albatross circled the *Notre Dame*. It was long years since Jorg had seen one. *That* is a skill at flying which man will never reach, he thought; compared to the albatross's, even the eagle's flight is painful and clumsy.

By evening the first albatross had a companion. How did they find one another, these lonely birds, in infinity? Next morning there were six, and by that evening a dozen. They grew familiar, they flew close over the ship; one could never grow tired of watching them, so wonderful was their flight. In storms they flew very slowly; the force of the wind allowed them almost to stand still in the air, their pinions motionless. When they wanted to move forward against the wind they glided down steeply, set their wings against the wind, rose like released balloons, and then advanced again by diving. Their feet, stretched out horizontally and folded under their tails, they sometimes used as elevators. Their wings did not have a pure arch; seen directly from the front their flat curves distinctly showed the joints of the bones, as do bats' wings. They seemed to hate calm; they would rise in the air only reluctantly, because then they could not sail, but had to row. Their whole body would quiver like a pudding at every wing-beat, so tremendous were the muscles under their plumage.

They circled the ship in a strange elliptical track. They crossed the wake like a needle over a seam; they flew along the weather side of the *Notre Dame*, only a little faster than the ship, and close, quite close. From the shrouds one could have reached for them.

Their yellow eyes gazed boldly and calmly at the

people on deck. They made use of the up-draughts of the ship's side, floating scarcely six feet above the deck. Before the bow they would dive swiftly to leeward, and then they would need two or three wing-beats to fall astern. Soon they knew the exact hours after meals when the garbage was thrown overboard. Jorg never saw them fishing or hunting anything living. From time to time they would come down if something was floating on the water, perhaps a dead fish. One was obliged to consider them as carrion-eaters, the buzzards of the sea.

Jorg studied their plumage. The plumages were all different in pattern and in colours. He wanted to know whether it was always the same birds that stayed with the ship. It was, but how was this possible? They did not fly at night. Did they pursue the ship after a night's rest on the sea, and catch it up? How did they find it again? It must have been far out of sight, even for the sharpest bird's eye. Besides the black and white spotted ones, there were black albatrosses. Their feathers shimmered in the sun like weathered shingles, and there was a silken glint in them.

Albatrosses made record flights, Andersson said. They had caught one on the Australian coast which had been marked six days before in South Africa. This meant an average speed of thirty miles an hour for the enormous distance, and nobody could tell whether the bird might not have arrived days before. There were scientists who maintained that albatrosses could fly two hundred and fifty miles an hour.

In the calm, while *Notre Dame* was lying at rest, Barbarossa got ready the albatross hook. It was peculiar, this hook for the only bird in the world that can be caught on a hook. It consisted of a triangle of metal strips. The inner edge of the metal was sharpened like a blade, and the base of the triangle was anchored in a big piece of

cork. A line, almost two hundred yards long, was attached to the cork.

The albatrosses were swimming in the wake. For the first time Jorg saw them close up while they were swimming. They looked very ugly in the water, their tails higher than their heads, like the caravels of Columbus with their high poops. But they must be marvellous swimmers ; they floated like down on the water, rising over the swell as if superior to the laws of gravity.

The hook was cast, the sharp metal covered with pork and tightly wrapped with sail-yarn. At once a couple of birds rose into the air. They circled the hook, and landed close behind it, spreading their feet as a rider spreads his legs when he springs into the saddle. As the hook moved slowly through the water they approached it, flapping their wings, and walking on the water. Barbarossa let out more line so that the hook would stay in one spot. The head of the nearest bird shot forward, its beak closed over the pork, and just at that moment Barbarossa yanked the string. The sharp metal edge cut into the bird's crooked beak, and stuck. One heard angry, harsh squawking ; the creature beat its wings violently, and set its feet against the pull, whipping up the water like an old side-wheeler. It was no use ; the hook caught all the more firmly, and Barbarossa drew in the line hand over hand in long pulls. Now the bird hung below the stern, and as a lifeless bundle it rose from the depths, growing gigantic as it came. Cook and steward, who had run up, reached over the rail, seized the bird by the wings and flung it on deck. It dragged its wings across the hard wood and slowly folded them. Its legs were too weak to carry it ; it crawled and dragged its body across the deck—a wretched sight. The hook fell from its beak, and it slowly turned its head higher and higher. It was a wonderful creature, and still seemed tremendous among men, almost preternaturally

large. Its eyes were surprised, but quite fearless. The long, translucent beak, pale pink, wonderfully curved, hacked at everyone who approached. They seized it from behind by the wings, which it could not reach with its beak. Jorg was deeply moved; it pierced his heart to see this creature of storm and sea among men, wrecked, innocently wretched. Its wings, which they now spread out on both sides, were incredibly long and narrow, with the most beautiful structure he had ever seen on an animal. They were indescribably elegant, with a splendid machinery of bones and joints. Strangely enough the bird made no resistance whatever with its wings. Its bright pink nostrils, wide open, reminded one of an Arab stallion. Barbarossa reached into its body feathers, and the mate's whole great hand sank into the deep, warm down; he could not reach bottom, Barbarossa said. They measured the bird. Its wings spread to almost nine feet. They lifted it, and estimated its weight at about fifteen pounds. Judging by its soft feet it was a young bird.

Jorg had been afraid that they would torment it or kill it, but the boys only admired and played with it, big, good-natured children that they were. In them there still lingered some of the old belief that the souls of drowned seamen were embodied in these birds.

With a gesture which said, "That's enough," Barbarossa lifted the albatross and flung it over the rail. It spread its wings as it fell, but could not get wind under them in time, and fell heavily into the sea. The bird looked very comical and very undignified as it splashed in, its feet stretched upward. Coming up, it shook itself like a wet dog, and swam over without excitement to its companions. They surrounded it, and a great squawking and cackling began, as if they were asking it questions: "What about it, anyway?—Unheard-of; who would

have thought it!—Do tell. . . ." It must have had a great story to tell.

It was sundown, and Jorg noticed the peculiar fact that albatrosses as well as men were blinded by the sun. Flying toward the sun, one of them bumped into the log line. It got its wings tangled, tumbled over forward, got free of the line, and fell feet forward into the water.

In mighty mountains of liquid silver the swell ran behind the *Notre Dame* ; as thin black sickles the albatrosses flew with the speed of arrows across the silver mask.

" To-night the children hang up their stockings for Santa Claus," said Jorg. It was the first day of Advent.

That day the *Notre Dame* stood quite upright, scarcely listing with the northerly wind from almost dead astern. So motionless, so great were her masts that Jorg was reminded of a forest of beautiful firs on a still winter day, their branches bowed down by the weight of the snow. The boys that day went around in a strange absorption ; in their faces one could see that they were thinking of home. It was not so long ago that they themselves had hung up their stockings. Every sound on board was subdued. Jorg saw other Advents before him with incredible clarity. There was one morning when the sun hung over the moor, uncannily large, as if enchanted. It would not rise. The first hoar frost in the dwarf forest of evergreens and birches had an unearthly glitter ; there were millions of shining ice needles. All the branches were wrapped in glass cloaks. Withered leaves of copper and gold sank frozen through the still air to the ground, dead butterflies. On the leafless fruit trees in the garden there were still a few apples, which seemed as if they were hung up on a Christmas tree. With deep satisfaction one saw the straw mat over the cold frame, the protecting wall of fir twigs over the bent

rose-bushes, where a few last withered flowers dangled. The cabbage seemed to curl more luxuriantly ; its leaves dangled proudly and carelessly.

The frozen turf resounded dully. In the ruts the thin ice ground under foot; it was veined, over white air bubbles. Little birds flew up from withered tufts of winter grass with whirring wings, loud in the great silence. A hare sprang from his bed, and pelted off into the distance, his ears flat along his back. He broke through the thin ice of frozen puddles, splashing water, raced on, doubling his speed in horror at such ill-luck. The man stood still, looking after him with a quiet smile. How far the landscape stretched ! He rubbed pine pitch in his hands, and tasted scaly, bitter-sweet birch-bark.

He fetched fir twigs, and Helen made Christmas wreaths. The floor of the living-room was covered with tiny twigs. " Clip—clip—clip," went the scissors ; the children gathered up the twigs. Jorg made a hoop of willow twigs, and the bunches of evergreen, one after another, were fastened to the string to make a circle. What a quantity of twigs one needed—whole armfuls ! The frost was in the needles ; pitch flowed, and the sweet scent of Christmas. Nails were bored into the red candles from below.

At dusk the village children marched across the moor, each with his little paper lantern before his face, his eyes fixed on the warm, wavering little light. They sang the lantern song. At the very end of the procession stumbled little Jan—three years old—tiny, proud. And a little afraid of the nasty dark where the fogs moved across the moor.

In the evening the wreath was hung up, and its first candle burned, it alone, the one light beside the glow of the stove. Outside the blue, misty-clear winter night—the silent night, the holy night. The children sang with their shy little voices, and the light of the candle fell into

their open mouths, and shone through their cheeks, so delicate, so red.

Had they made a wreath again this year ? He seemed to hear the rustling of childish hands in the straw basket among nuts and hard, bitter little ginger cakes looking as if they were sprinkled with snow. Good God ! Could it ever be made good again, ever caught up with, this loss of life with the children ? His ears rang, sounding just like the humming of the telegraph poles in the frost. They were thinking of him at home, oh, surely they were thinking of him. Perhaps the children prayed for him when they went to bed—children's prayers can do so much. How could he be badly off when his children loved him ?

That day the moon rose quite bloody and distorted. Helen, too, would see this moon. She has put the children to bed, and has put a jacket around her shoulders, and now she goes out. She shrinks together, she is freezing. She is so lonely in the far, cold night. On the mountains the first snow glitters icily. Winter has come, and she is alone. She thinks I am in danger, she is afraid that I shall not come back. She weeps. She is a child, an abandoned child.

—Thus ran Jorg's thoughts. That night he started up from his sleep, confused, wild, soaked with tears after an evil dream.

As they had not sighted Tristan da Cunha, Andersson decided if possible to steer for Gough Island, two hundred and thirty miles south-east of Tristan. The north wind brewed fog in the constricting cold of the fortieth parallel. The sails dripped. All day a look out stood on the fo'c'sle-head. The mate who had the watch on duty stood by the bulwark, with drops of fog in his beard and drops of fog in his eyebrows, listening for the sound of breakers. He was a statue.

Jorg was full of a superstitious worry: it was not

pleasant to know that Gough was so near, for there was a special connection between him and Gough.

A year before, in a desperate frame of mind, ready for anything, he had received a letter from an unknown man ; Europe was threatened with destruction. Whether there was a new world war or not, in its fearful constriction, in its suppression of personality, the nordic race was bound to be perverted and destroyed. High time to leave it all behind. But there was no sense in emigrating to some damned happy isle in the South Seas ; no, a rougher, harsher climate was necessary ; the nordic race thrived on opposition. All the fertile land covered by the network of world traffic was either already exploited or condemned to exploitation by capitalism and civilization. There was but one spot in the world which was too inaccessible and too poor to be devastated by civilization—Gough Island. There was room for a few chosen spirits to build a new life, to found a new and better race of men.

A description of the island according to the *Africa Pilot* of 1922 was enclosed ; eight miles long, four miles wide, Gough rose from the sea in the tenth degree of longitude with abrupt rocky reefs. The mountains of the interior were forty-nine hundred feet high. In the East a roaring brook emptied into the ocean. Its valley was green; grass, ferns, moss and little stunted trees grew there. There were sea birds in abundance.

" Potatoes, oats, rye and a few hardy vegetables ought to grow all right," wrote Steffen, the unknown. He wrote that he was a settler in the lowlands of the Elbe ; he had built his farm out of nothing, and the house as well. He was sure that he could wrest his living even from this island. The best thing about it was that it belonged to no one. No nation's flag waved over it, and nobody lived there. They would have to take along seed, clothing and tools, and some provisions for the first

years : and of course the woman. The *right* woman, with whom one could beget a superior race.

It was a stirring letter. It moved Jorg by its daring, by its manliness. Steffen was no dreamer; he was a pioneer who could already point to achievement, he was a man of ability, ready to gamble all he possessed. He was no pauper seeking help, but only a lonely man struggling for companionship. He must be a real man to be willing to burden himself with the weight of loneliness and the enmity of the wild, arctic country.

Jorg answered Steffen. He wanted to know the man better. Why not Gough ? Was not anything better than Europe ? But he described to Steffen the antarctic climate as he knew it. Forty degrees of latitude in the Southern Hemisphere was about the same as sixty degrees of latitude in the Northern. Gough had no proper harbour. How were cattle and provisions to be landed there ? Even the trip out would be enormously costly. What would happen when the children grew up ? Were they to be left without the educational opportunities of civilization ? Dared one assume this responsibility ?

Steffen's answer was all fire : all the climatic descriptions of Gough were malicious misrepresentation by the discoverers, who wanted to keep the island for themselves. One would have to sail for Gough with one's own ship ; the settlers would have to be the crew. He wrote pages and pages about hardy seed, about fertilizers, drainage, house construction. For five years he had worked and dreamed on his plan. The central question and the greatest difficulty—he was quite right about that—was the woman.

Did Steffen possess this woman ?

No, he did not have her, that was the tragedy.

How strange ! Jorg had seen his picture ; Steffen was a fine-looking, almost gigantic fellow, twenty-eight

years old. He must surely be able to have as many girls as he pleased.

He had a dream girl, primitive woman, and he dreamt of her so intensely that no real girl seemed possible to him as the mother of his children. He hunted for years, and he was hunting still, but he had never found this dream woman. His quest was so simple, so unbelievably straightforward that it was bound to frighten any girl.

To break the ring of his loneliness he wrote down his plan of emigration, and added to it a proposal of marriage : " To whom it may concern,"

He sent copies of this manuscript to places which he thought suitable. " There are colonial schools in Germany," he had thought, " and in these schools there are girl students of the sort that would fit my island. Among these girls perhaps is my wife."

But since he did not know so much as the name of one of the girls, he could do nothing but send the marriage proposal to the management of the school. He asked them kindly to distribute it.

Steffen got his package back by return. He was horribly disappointed—he had been in such deadly earnest.

" At last we are off! I am selling my place. I have found a whole family with seven children, who want to emigrate with me. They have some capital; we shall buy an old fishing steamer. ..." Thus ran Steffen's next enthusiastic letter.

And a fortnight later : "I have suffered a fearful blow—I have seen them. Here they are. . . ," He sent a group photograph. Father sat at the wheel of the little car, his Sunday cigar in his mouth, and behind him in a puzzling mass rose the whole family, as if in a rolling theatre balcony. Their faces, too, were mashed together—a mongrel race, hopelessly pettybourgeois, who had been pensioned, and then had stumbled upon

Fenimore Cooper. They had already quarrelled with Steffen. On account of their number the family laid claim to sole possession of the fertile valley at Gough ; to Steffen there remained just enough bare cliff to serve as a place from which he could throw himself into the sea.

Jorg, coming up from the depths of an acute crisis, had written to Steffen, declining. This was when he was planning on going aboard the *Notre Dame*.

Was it not strange what tricks fate played ? Steffen, the man who was born a thousand years too late, the man whose heart yearned five years for Gough, had stayed at home in the Elbe lowland, shut in on his farm. And Jorg, who had *not* wanted to go to Gough, was standing now, staring into the fog, listening with pounding heart for the breakers around Gough, the loneliest island in the world. Good God, he thought, fate has a damnably dramatic talent ! If the *Notre Dame* were to be wrecked here—not impossible in the fog, with our uncertain position—that would be an irony such as fate loves : the man who wants to get to this lonely island cannot come to it; the other, who does not want to, is cast away there. He imagined what it would be like if Steffen were standing beside him now, behind them the women, the seed, the cattle, the tools—everything ready for landing on this rock in the cold, foggy sea. Could they bear the life there ? Would they be able to build something new and good ?

His sou'wester dripped ; his feet were clammy in his sea-boots. He shook himself until the drops spattered from his oilskin.

Andersson came out of the chart-room. He went over to Barbarossa, and ordered him to change the course more to southward. " In this fog there is no sense in sighting Gough. We can't observe anything, neither sun nor stars, and, without that, we can't check the

chronometers anyway. As long as the north wind holds, the fog will hold too,"

Late at night, when Gough had almost certainly fallen away astern, Jorg breathed freely again. "One might have written a good short story out of it," he murmured. "But one could not have sent it off."

In the hold, Jorg searched for materials. The light of his electric-torch went dancing ahead of him over rusty, brown steel plates, clinging to heaps of wood, diving into the cracks of rubbish ; a fumbling, sniffing elephant-trunk of light.

It was time to start making things for Christmas. He would not be able to send them, and yet Christmas-time seemed to urge him to give things. Could one think of the children without doing something for them ? What he would do for them, he did not know ; he would have to be guided by the material.

He found something wonderful—an old mast top from the *Notre Dame*. The masts themselves were steel, of course, but the topmost peak was wood ; it finished off the top like a cork in a bottle. Even this was still a stately tree, which gave a man something to strain over. It was of finest resinous spruce ; only, at the spot where the steel tube had enclosed it, it was falling apart with dry rot, blue-grey and cracked like slate. For thirty years it had sailed the heavens above the *Notre Dame*, until a Cape Horn storm broke it at its weak spot.

Jorg dragged it into the glimmering shaft of daylight under the hatchway. He knew at once that there was a ship in that piece of wood, a model of a ship like *Notre Dame*. Not a museum piece—a broad, safe thing for children, solid and strong for swimming and sailing. From the carpenter he borrowed a saw, and began to cut out the central part of the tree. The many layers of old paint were as hard as iron ; he knocked them off with

a hatchet, but then the wood yielded wonderfully to the teeth of the saw. The grain exactly followed the shaft with its concentric rings. How carefully the shipbuilders had once chosen this wood ! What vast experience did it have of storm, hail, thunder and lightning, cries of gulls and the tropical sun ? How thoroughly of heaven its life had been ; into what distances it had looked ! Something of the soul of the old ship must be in it. It was good to give this to the children, to unite it with the work and the feeling which one had to contribute oneself. The children would feel it, of that he was certain.

Still down below in the hold, he hewed the rough form with a hatchet ; the strokes resounded through the vast, gloomy cathedral.

The cut of the saw had suddenly given the remaining stump expression. It seemed to look at Jorg, wonderfully alive, and as he turned his hand, he felt the urge of this block, too, to take shape. There was no question that in it there was a form desirous of escape. Davy Jones ?

The flashlight wandered among the crowded jumble of sticks, stopping at fir trunks, yellow-barked, knotty, crooked. Those were the arms for Davy Jones—no doubt of it. The split block of pockwood, worn down and polished by cables, would make the legs. More : the leathern covering from the bottom of a mainsail, tattered, but still as strong as a drive belt, would make joints, shoes, hat and clothing for Davy Jones.

How wonderfully one thing was added to the next ; these plans warmed the heart. How much there was to do all of a sudden !

Jorg wrapped up the block for the ship and the sticks for Davy Jones in scraps of old sail, cast a line around it, and hoisted the bundle up to the hatch. He felt as if he had dug up a buried treasure. But the treasure hunt was not over : a second time he clambered

down into the hold. It was necessary to make use of the opportunity as long as the good weather held. In heavy weather, the hatches were closed, caulked, and lashed down.

There were mats of split bamboo at the bottom of the hold. They were woven with rotang fibres ; the single pieces of bamboo were as tall as a man. One could bend them almost into semicircles without breaking them. Under the knife they split smoothly and easily, almost like magic. What was in these canes ? From the depths of childhood a memory rose up : once he had wished for such sticks with a longing he had seldom had for anything since. This was when he built his first airplane. He seemed to see it, the clumsy thing of string and flower-sticks, which broke like tinder. He nodded to himself : " We will build an airplane, my boy, a great big airplane that a little boy could almost fly with." In his loneliness he had grown accustomed to soliloquy. He tied together a bundle of bamboo and hauled it up : Forward !

He crept over the sandhills of the ballast, the electric-torch in his teeth, a roaring round about him, rushing, black, dull darkness. This Robinson Crusoe must have wandered about in the wreck of his ship ; he too had an uncanny feeling as he broke open the sea-chests of his drowned shipmates.

In the corners of the joists Jorg found little heaps of wheat, leaked from split sacks during the last voyage from Australia. He tasted the grains. They were hard as rock, but they had a pleasant flavour, earthy and refreshing. He filled his pockets. A heap of perhaps ten pounds he tied up in burlap. The corners in his teeth, the sack thrown over his shoulder, he climbed the iron ladder. The wheat had given him an idea—he would brew beer.

How often in the tropics he had planned out a

Bavarian beer-cellar! Cool vaulting, cellar air, the clean, sour smell of a brewery. Steins, massive, heavy in the hand, almost bottomless, brimming full of dark, creamy, gentle, strong beer. Full of this elemental, heavy liquid, out of which the Lord could have created a whole world, and possibly a better one. The people in those cellars, as they—rolling their eyeballs in a circle—sank their noses in their steins, these people had no idea how well off they were.

Brewing—how was it done? The book an anthropology described various processes of primitive races. Most of them were distinguished by scholarly incomprehensibility; the formula by which the Circassians made their mead was the plainest. Even so, the hops were lacking. But the cook had laurel leaves; possibly they might take the place of the hops. Jorg hoped for a miracle. He was compelled to begin brewing at once. He put the wheat with water in two wooden buckets, so that it would swell and sprout for two days.

During these two days he carved the hull of the ship, with nothing but his pocket-knife. He squatted on a little stool below the main deck. The wind whirled away the shavings that sprang from the blade; they caught in the thick wool of the Iceland sweater, and Jorg looked as if he himself were carved of wood. The horn handle of the knife rubbed blisters in the skin between thumb and forefinger. At intervals Jorg spat on the whetstone between his feet, and ground the blade. It was getting loose in the handle; the hard, weathered wood was almost too much for it. He shaped the hull to be broad, chunky and solid, yet it was not clumsy; bow and stern were sharp-pointed. The curves and the delicate concavities were the most difficult to work out. It could be managed only with the gentlest of cutting. The grain of the block was so even that one could tell by it whether both sides were alike; it was as useful as a

blue-print. The ship was deep in the waist, bow and stern were high ; after all, it must be thoroughly seaworthy. Barbarossa often dropped beside Jorg, and then Jorg would assert that the whole business of the ship was only a joke. But Barbarossa was not to be fooled. In deadly earnest he would take the hull in his big hands, and sight over it like a gun. With perfect certainty he would put his St. Bernard paw on any spot where the lines were wrong. Barbarossa was always right; that was what hurt.

The second day, the carpenter brought Jorg a finely sharpened chisel and a hammer. He did not need them after working hours, he declared. Jorg was overjoyed. The new tool went softly and silkily into the wood, leaving smooth, polished surfaces. With it one could bring out any concavity, any sort of groove. Now it was possible to hollow out the hull. Time, which had been such a burden, began to fly like the wind. How soon night fell in this region !

It was a crying shame that he had to hurt Jensen, the carpenter, so much—poor thanks for his kindness. Jensen had a toothache, had been going around for weeks with a woollen cloth on his cheek, and looked with his tousled hair like a sad poodle. The " tooth drops " which were dropped on the ailing tooth with a glass tube did no good, nor did even the sugar soaked in whisky which Jorg put in the man's cheek. They had to take up seriously the matter of pulling the tooth. There were no forceps on board for the purpose. When the decision was made, Jorg and Andersson roamed the ship, getting together all the pincers there were. Barbarossa and Alf, the sail-maker, the motor mechanic and the carpenter himself surrendered their weapons. It was a rather frightful arsenal that lay spread out on the cabin table—about twenty pairs of tongs and pliers all told. Most of them were so big that they could not be got into Jensen's

mouth at all. With a pair of pipe tongs belonging to the motor mechanic they did succeed in gripping a corner of the ailing tooth, but the grip was poor. With a file the motor mechanic roughened the jaws of the tongs. Jensen sat by, rather pale. "I'm afraid," he said, as simply and openly as a child. Jorg nodded: he was afraid too. Of doing the pulling.

With comical and exaggerated politeness, Jorg and Andersson tried to give each other precedence in the pulling. They made the most inviting gestures of the hands—two gentlemen both trying to go through an unpleasant door at once. Eventually it was Jorg who fumbled around the inflamed gum with the clumsy tool. The tongs were so big one could not see which tooth they gripped; Jorg was guided by Jensen's groaning and babbling. Where it hurt most must be the right place. Andersson pressed the boy down hard in the swivel chair with his vicelike hands; Jorg cast a despairing look to the skylight, and when no help came from heaven he fell to work. The tooth gave a little jerk, but then stuck fast, and Jensen groaned. Threads of blood ran over his swollen lips. There was no help for it; it had to be done again. This time the tooth broke with a crack; Jorg stood nonplussed with the tongs in his hands. Jensen, whimpering, spat out pieces of tooth mixed with old fillings. The tooth had broken off down to the gum, beyond the reach of further treatment. Andersson proposed a corkscrew. Jensen had enough English to understand this; at the word "corkscrew" he collapsed, limp and green. Jorg, too, was visibly affected. They decided to let nature take its course. Jensen was sent to his berth with a morphine-powder. That evening he appeared, beaming, in the cabin. He said he had not a trace of toothache any more, but only a headache. And, in fact, he was released. The broken tooth had given an outlet to the inflammation. The man

had lost a great deal of weight during the weeks of torture.

The wheat swelled, absorbed all the water, and filled the wooden buckets to the brim. On the third day, Jorg spread it out on an old sail to dry. Starch flowed white from the grains ; there were no signs of germination. According to the Circassian scheme it now had to be pounded. Jorg put it in an empty whisky case, and fetched a handspike. With a hollow sound the heavy pestle went into the soft mass. Mashed grains of wheat clung to the wood, damped the force with which it came down, and made it heavier and heavier, just as wet clay clings thick and sticky to shoes. Again and again he had to scrape off the mash and stir up the wheat again. Sweat dripped into the case, but Jorg did not care ; perhaps that was part of the secret of brewing. He pounded and raged during a whole morning. Barbarossa, leaning with careless elegance over the rail of the main deck, looked genteelly on from above, in an attitude like that of a yacht captain on a fashion plate. Jorg got splinters in his hands, cursed, and swore that Barbarossa should not drink any of the beer at Christmas. But this did not seem to trouble him at all.

That evening the cook was requested to stir up a good fire. The pounded wheat went into the big soup-kettle, which was filled with water and left to boil. Several times during the night, Jorg rose, poked up a fire and stirred the kettle. A lot of chaff floated on the surface ; it smelt strong and pleasant, rather like oatmeal.

In the morning, with a heavy sea, Jorg with great difficulty ran the brew through a hair sieve, spilling a lot of it. It looked just like water-gruel. It was annoying every minute to have another of the boys stand beside Jiim and say : " Oh, so that's the beer ? How interesting.

I never saw any beer like that," The rest, a thick mush, which Jorg kept scooping out in handfuls on the sieve, still contained too much of the good juice. Jorg wrapped the stuff in a cloth, and by pounding forced a thick flour soup through the pores of the cloth ; this increased the beer. He filled two wooden buckets again, only half full, so that they should not slop over in the heavy sea. Now came the most important part, the fermentation. He threw a handful of yeast into each bucket (barm, which he had with him as a preventive of scurvy), and into each a bundle of straw. This was the way the Circassians did it. Now the buckets were covered with several layers of sailcloth, which was tied down. Then Jorg carried them up on the roof of the chart-room, where the fire-buckets stood. There they were safe from spray, resting securely in wooden rings.

" What shall the ship's name be ? " asked Alf, when Jorg begged some tar from him. Jorg had often thought about this question. Together they considered the names of old and famous sailing ships. *Cutty Sark* had been the fastest clipper of all times ; the *Cutty Sark* had once sailed four hundred sea miles in a day's reckoning, seventeen sea miles an hour. The *Flying Cloud* and the *Ariel*—what wonderful names !—had vied with the *Taeping* in the great days of the tea-clippers. But the hull in Jorg's hands was not the hull of a clipper ship ; it was not so sharp ; nor did Jorg wish such an overwhelming cloud of sail as the clippers had carried. No ; a *Flying Cloud* was not suited to childish hands. Names from the days of the Hanseatic League fitted much better—*Great Harry*, *Brindled Cow*, or comfortable, good-natured names such as the Dutchmen had once given their ships : *Godemann* and *Godefrouw*.

" But none of that fits," said Jorg. " This ship will be a giant among toy ships. It's made from wood that

has circumnavigated the globe thirty times. If I build it, it will probably turn out rather clumsy and stupid. Where is a name with all that in it ? "

" Refanut! " said Alf. He had a dreamy look, as if he were remembering a story from his childhood. All at once Jorg saw a new Alf. A little boy crouching at his grandmother's feet by the fire. It smelt of peat, of smoked fish, of wet nets in the kitchen, and the flickering light from the hole in the fire-door was reflected in Alf's eyes. In reality they were crouching forward below the fo'c'sle-head as if in a cave ; in long, swinging leaps the *Notre Dame* was galloping across the waves of the South Atlantic. Winds stabbed icily through the anchor hawse-hole, to the hollow, mighty roar of the eternal battle. The fo'c'sle-head smelt of tar, and stuffily of the rotting potatoes which were stored there. Yes, but they were still the same dreaming child eyes :

" Once, a long, long time ago, the Swedes built the ship *Refanut*. It was called *Refanut* because it was a giant ship. It was so big that its building devoured all the forests in the country ; Sweden has been bare ever since. It was so big that it covered half the country, and as long as they were building it no rain could fall on the ground. When it was launched, the whole Baltic overflowed its shores, and there was an inundation.

" On her masts there were inns built in the tops, for the way up was so long that the sailors had to refresh themselves. When they had to set the skysails, they were greybeards when they came down—that was how huge the *Refanut* was.

" When she sailed into the English Channel her port side scraped France, and her starboard side England. Her bulwarks scraped off all the chalk-cliffs near Dover ; you can still see it plainly."

Refanut—once the wood had a name, it seemed in

even greater haste to be shaped into a ship. Jorg left the fo'c'sle-head, poop and main deck standing, and hollowed out the hull underneath them. Without the fine chisel he could never have got in deep enough. He left the walls rather thick. By knocking, one could tell from the sound whether the inner shape corresponded exactly to the outer shape. The grain of the deck looked exactly like good planking. The outer surface was given a coat of Swedish vegetable tar, which sank in, and smelt like a pine forest.

For the masts and yards he found a piece of teakwood. It was as hard as iron ; oak was soft by comparison. Jorg was glad that at noon he could screw it into Jensen's joiner's bench, to give the sticks their first rough mast-like shape with a plane. The *Refanut* was to be a three-masted, full-rigged ship—an antique type now extinct. A Scottish sailing vessel, the *Loch Lynnhe*, was the last of its kind. The mast and bowsprit were not completely carved within two days.

Andersson was asked to pick the right spots for the stepping of the masts. He did it thoughtfully, gravely ; to him everything connected with sail was important. The *Refanut's* centre and her centre of gravity were measured and weighed. The mainmast was to go two millimetres in front of the centre of gravity. Then the spots for foremast and mizzen-mast, at equal intervals, were determined with compasses. Andersson determined the exact relation of the mast-lengths to one another and to the ship. The rake of the masts was to be three degrees.

Never had Jorg bored holes with such a feeling of responsibility in his heart. Masts and bowsprit sat deep, as if set in stone. Jorg looked at them, taking observations from all sides. To him the *Refanut* really became a giant ship as it stood close before his eyes, tremendously large. One day it would sail. There was many a voyage

still in the old wood—dream voyages, perhaps even real ones.

On the thirteenth of December, at twelve noon, the *Notre Dame* was exactly at the southern point of Africa, even if a thousand miles away. At that moment she slipped from the Atlantic into the Indian Ocean, without the sea's making this human boundary visible in any way. Four of the great stages of the voyage were behind her. The first had been the battle with the eternal west wind, tacking out of the straits of the Kattegatt, and then on to the west of Scotland. At that time, with the Faroe Islands, they had sighted the last land. Captains considered the second stage the voyage from the mouth of the English Channel to the Equator. The third was the great curve in the south-east trades as far as the South American coast. The fourth was the second huge curve, from South America to the southern tip of Africa.

Now began the fifth, the greatest of all these stages, twice as far as the distance from Western Europe to New York. It was a semicircle above the South Pole, and that as close as possible, for the flatter the curve the shorter the distance—this tremendous lonely stretch of more than one hundred and twenty degrees of longitude.

Andersson brought a bottle of *aqua mice* into the chart-room and unwrapped the tissue-paper with a paternal air. The steward was carrying little glasses on a tray with great solemnity. They touched glasses ; it was like a betrothal. They reminded each other of the old bets on the length of the voyage, and Jorg proposed new bets. He cared nothing for the bet, but he wanted to know what the others thought, and particularly what Andersson thought, without asking him directly. Barbarossa, the incorrigible optimist, maintained that the *Archibald, Rmsel* had once taken but nineteen days for this turn. He, Barbarossa, would dance in Port Lincoln at the New

Year's Eve ball. Alf declared that to do this Barbarossa would have to swim about a thousand miles ahead of the *Notre Dame*. Andersson said hesitantly, with obvious reluctance : " About the ninth of January,"

" On the *nineteenth* of January," said Jorg. He believed in Andersson's estimate, and deliberately put on ten days because he usually lost bets. This time he *wanted* to lose.

" On New Year's Eve I am going dancing in Port Lincoln ! " This rang in Jorg's ears like a joyous fanfare. All day he thought he could feel the nearness of land, nonsensical as it was. In less than a month the voyage was to be over. Dry land—letters—news—flowers—trees—animals—mad, intoxicating thoughts. At a blow his consciousness of civilization awoke ; it was astonishing how much of it one preserved. All at once he had had enough of making his own tea, doing the laundry, sewing on buttons.

That evening came the reaction : " It's crazy the way I am living ! " My expectation of being ashore in four weeks is much too confident. This ship is no railroad. We are not at the end yet, by a long way. The voyage has gone so smoothly so far. It's impossible for it to keep up. I don't believe that my strong presentiment of danger is deceiving me. Something will happen—what ?

The new moon brought unrest to the world. Storm and fog burst from the dark nights ; the violent squalls always came from the north ; they howled, spat and raged in the masts like a huge troop of apes fleeing from a forest fire. The great battle of the ghosts was in full swing again. Jorg sat on the topgallant yard as if in the gondola of a balloon. Here, for'ard, one hardly noticed the wind from astern. Rooted to the spot, completely enchanted, he stared down into the sea. The

crowns of foam, those pale flames, those huge, ghostly snakes, pursued the ship, twisting and bounding. How they attacked with their mad hissing, and were flung back roaring by the wild, white mane which lashed from the sides of the *Notre Dame* \ The flapping staysails made stays and masts tremble. The mighty jingle, as the rings of the staysails struck against the stays, sounded like giant horses straining against their harness.

Clammy, completely frozen, and with his spirit in uproar, Jorg came down from the masts hours later. The jump from the mast to the deck shook him ; it was the jump from the unearthly back into reality. " You will never feel anything like this again,"¹ he whispered. " Steamers battle the ocean too with their pounding engines, with their whirling screws, but there is no magic in it."

The *Notre Dame* sailed magnificently, flying over the sea, a witches' broom that swept the miles like withered leaves. She covered sixty-one miles in the morning hours from four to eight; two hundred and ninety-eight miles in twenty-four hours. Andersson and the mates seemed to grow : they walked with a prouder stride. The boys looked broader of shoulder ; their chests were thrown out. They sang on the yards, or let the wind sing in their open mouths. One could whoop with joy—this was sailing, an intoxicating, intoxicated flight.

Toward morning the night storm swung to north-west ; the thick, rainy air turned to fog. Forward on the fo'c'sle-head, where one seemed to feel oneself on the boiler of a racing express locomotive, a look out stood beside the black harmonium-case of the foghorn. When the man bent over and turned the crank—a movement familiar from all the hand-organ men of childhood—there sounded out instead of the expected melody the last sigh of a dying sea-cow. It had the effect of a fool-scene in Shakespeare.

From noon on, a south-west wind from the pole went icy cold through flesh and bone. With the *Notre Dame's* south-easterly course the mizzen-masts alone took up the whole force of the wind, and it was strange to see its sails full to bursting, while those of the other masts hung slack. Then the *Notre Dame* made only ten knots ; if all the sails had been pulling, she would have run fourteen.

In the evening, rain rattled on the oilskins—rain so violent and abundant that the deck thudded like a drum beaten with padded sticks. All the woodwork, all the sailcloth was waterlogged ; the teakwood of the chart-room was absolutely lilac-coloured. There was water in Jorg's cabin, penetrating the broken rubber rings around the portholes, water running glittering from the walls, water splashing in dark corners, water in the tobacco, water in the bunk, water even in the clothes closet. Ice-cold and clammy fingers—he could scarcely manage to light the lamp, the consoling, gentle, warm lamp. And it would scarcely burn ; vapour, thick fog, rose from all the wet. It was troublesome while shaving to have to keep wiping the mirror.

For three days this went on : at night a storm from the north, *dying* down towards morning, shifting to north-westward and westward and south-westward, finally going to sleep in a bloody sunset. Then came the relief—the new storm. They had moved on almost a thousand miles.

The fourth day brought a north-easterly wind, and as close to the wind as she could the *Notre Dame* sailed southward. She could not keep to her south-easterly course, so she sailed straight for the South Pole—into nothingness. Into a white wall, into nothingness—at a speed which felt like flying a hundred and fifty miles an hour close to the ground. The foghorn had yelled itself hoarse ; now with each dying sigh it fetched out an over-

tone which sounded like the distant answer of another ship.

It struck Jorg that there was a second look out in the foremast. He noticed that Andersson paced up and down unceasingly on the main deck with his wildest caged stride. At the same time he had a strange smile on his lips, and his eyes were big and staring. He looked like a sick child. He did not come to meals.

At two in the afternoon Jorg saw Barbarossa hauling up sea-water in a canvas bucket on a rope. He stuck in the thermometer, and carefully measured the temperature of the water. Ordinarily he did this only at noon.

Jorg went into the cabin to take a look at the chart. Was there land ahead? Were they so uncertain of the ship's position? After all, Andersson had been able to measure the elevation of the sun at noon the day before. ...

It turned out that the chart most useful at the moment was the circle around the South Pole. This sheet Jorg had not yet seen. The sea around the pole was divided into zones of various colours; they went over gradually from white to deep blue. The white stood for the eternal ice of the polar region. A greyish-white zone of irregular limits extended in this neighbourhood as far as the fiftieth parallel: "Limit of ice-pack" was written along the edge. The *Notre Dame* was at about latitude forty-six, still a long way off. Even this region was not sea-blue; it was printed in a milky blue-white which reached down to the thirty-eighth parallel. Jorg leaned over the tiny letters: "Limit of icebergs."

Gay, happy over the splendid speed of the voyage, with only the most fleeting shadow of wonderment, Jorg had gone below to look at the map of the Antarctic Ocean. Now he lit a cigarette mechanically, and sat quite still, frowning—transformed. Everything was transformed. All at once he understood: *icebergs in the fog*. The *Notre Dame* was four full degrees nearer to the South Pole

than the limit of the icebergs. Hence the double look-out. Hence the temperature-taking. Hence Andersson's restless stride. Listing sharply, at a wonderful racing gallop, the *Notre Dame* was sailing into nothing, into a white, blind wall, into nothing, into nothing, and somewhere in that wall, in that white nothingness, there sailed the others. The icebergs. The foghorn bellowed, and all at once the sound ran icily down his back : why the foghorn ? There were no other ships here. And the white fleet of death would not make way for *Notre Dame*.

When Jorg came on deck again he could feel strongly the atmosphere about the men there, and could feel that he was part of it. It was so still—everyone was alone, alone with his distorted reflection on the wet deck, alone with the secret fear in his heart. The eyes stared oddly into vast distances. Only Andersson was not alone ; he was transformed. Before, he had done battle with himself ; now an inner certainty radiated from him. As he walked back and forth his eyes roamed over the masts, over the deck, embracing the whole ship with a father's love. The wall of fog got nothing but an angry sidelong glance of contempt.

Now one saw the difference between a born seaman and a made one. The man who was born to the sea came alive in the battle, grew and became strong ; for him there was no chasm between death and life. He was close to both of them, like a brother. In the other man the consciousness of danger was always alive ; in danger he hated and feared the sea. Even Joseph Conrad was a seaman against his will, Jorg reflected.

Many people were like that, in fact most people. One went to sea in a stage of youthful romanticism. One grew out of it, and discovered that one was a seaman against one's will. Usually by that time there was no escaping from the job.

Oddly enough, this class of seamen was the best for

modern shipping. Because the consciousness of danger was so strong in them, because they loved the land, hated death, and clung fast to their lives, they were proper, bourgeois seafarers ; they made sure of safety, and took no chances.

Jorg stepped up to Andersson : "If you had been asleep for three months, Captain, and were to wake up now, this moment—no log-book on the *Notre Dame*, no sign of where she was—would you know what part of the world you were in ? "

Andersson smiled, " I think I would. North wind and fog would be highly unlikely in the North Atlantic. This weather, this kind of swell, the albatrosses, big turquoise-green spots in the ocean, the two polar swallows that are following us—they appear only south of the forty-eighth parallel—yes, I'd know about where we are. Perhaps within two or three degrees. I'd have a feeling for the region in my bones, a memory, a scent—I can't explain,"

Toward evening the blanket of fog would lift at times in a more westerly wind. For fifteen minutes at a time the visibility would be three miles : the ocean was grey and empty. People heaved deep sighs, but pretended to be quite indifferent. Had anyone expected anything else, then ? The look out came down from aloft, slapping his hands against the sides of his oilskins, and then gnawed his numb, prickling fingers.

As if freed from a spell, people grew lively, jolly, and felt an urge for conversation. Many stories were told about how hard this south polar sea was to survey on account of its fogs. There was the story of the Bouvet Islands. Barbarossa read it indignantly aloud from *The Coast Pilot*. Captain Bouvet had discovered them in 1739, but could not find their exact position on account of the fog. Two other captains visited them afterward, Furneaux and Cook. Both gave contradictory positions,

because no observation was possible in the fog. Then for a century the very existence of these islands was called in question ; Bouvet had been deceived by icebergs, people said, although whalers and sealers kept reporting that they had seen the islands. Not until 1898 did the German deep-sea expedition in the *Valdivia* definitely determine the islands and their position.

There, as on the other infinitesimal groups of islands in the polar sea, the Edward Islands, Crozet and the Kerguelens, there were supply depots. There were many shipwrecks beyond the yellow line on the map marked " Limit of world traffic,"

Still in memory was the sinking of the *Kopenhagen*. She was one of the loveliest sailing ships ; she had bulkheads, a wireless station, even an auxiliary motor. She vanished without a trace in this region, with seventy Danish cadets on board. " Ice," said Andersson ; " if the hold gets torn open, the bulkheads can't resist the water pressure anyway. Probably she sank fast. So much the better for the boys. Better than starving and slowly freezing to death if they had escaped to the iceberg."

Barbarossa told of the sinking of the *Melbourne* five years before. It was his first voyage ; sixteen, he was then. He was at the helm on a clear night with a faint west wind, when a steamer came up from starboard on the same course. It overtook them, and came ever nearer to the *Melbourne*. The *Melbourne* had the right of way, but the steamer grew and grew, a fat black wedge, its nose pointed for the *Melbourne*. There they gave fog-signals to attract the steamer's attention, and it looked as if everything would come out all right. The steamer passed, and crossed the *Melbourne's* bows. Then came the incredible part: the steamer put over hard a-port, describing almost a semicircle, and rammed the *Melbourne* on the port bow. The steamer's stem cut the

sailing vessel as far as the foremast. The foremast fell, and the main top followed it; the *Melbourne* sank bow first, with great speed. "Jump on the steamer!" cried the captain. The steamer went into reverse to get free of the sinking ship, and it was too late to jump. The boys rushed for the boats, but the mate yelled to them, "Jump! Jump for your lives!"

They jumped. Eleven out of twenty-six drowned in the icy sea. *Barbarossa* floated for almost an hour before the steamer's boat fished him up.

The explanation they gave for the collision was that the helmsman of the steamer had lost his head when he saw the big sailing ship passing so unexpectedly close. Yes, the last sailing ships seemed as ghostly as that to the crew of a modern steamer.

Andersson and *Barbarossa* figured out the losses of the past few years. In five years Captain Peterson had lost not less than eight of his ships.

During the night Jorg was awakened by a sound as of heavy rams hammering the ship's sides. The plates trembled. He started up, and felt hastily behind his pillow for the flashlight. As he did so he perceived the sweat running down his forehead, cold as ice; the air in the cabin, too, was ice-cold and wet. The sweat of terror. In two streams it ran over his face; his hands fumbled madly for the flashlight, which would not be found. His whole body was suddenly charged with electricity. His lame shoulder was just as full of strength and alertness as the other one; every movement was incredibly swift. From below new hammer-blows shook the ship.

Now the flashlight shone; for several seconds the beam rested on the tangled bedclothes, on the naked legs, already drawn up for a leap. "On sailing ships everything happens at night," Andersson had said. Should he jump up, and run on deck? The position of the *Notre*

Dame seemed unchanged; the hammering came from the same side, no more, no less. She had way on. From the deck there was not a sound.

Jorg tore open the porthole, and jammed his head and arm through it. The touch of the brass ring on his neck was like the tightening of a wire noose around his throat. The beam of light stabbed into the depths. Something white moved, flew across the circle of light, racing and turning, cloudy, nebulous. The ice, the drift ice had come. And *Notre Dame* was sailing, sailing at racing speed, her starboard side curved out like a protecting shell against the ice. Tumbling like great mill-stones, grinding and battling with a mad, enormous devouring noise, the ice-fields pushed past her.

He stared, and was choked in the process. It was like looking into Hell. His heart beat now with cold regularity. There was no more reason for excitement; the danger was there.

He was glad now that he had not rushed on deck half-clothed the first minute. How ridiculous that would have been !

As he dressed he thought of the possibility of the boats, and of the great cold—two pairs of woollen socks. Heavy underwear. Iceland sweater and jacket. The two overcoats he fastened together with a belt, and hung them on the door. He put several packets of cigarettes in his pockets.

The night was so black that he fumbled his way on deck as though he were blind. He did not want to use his electric-torch for fear of blinding the men on deck; they needed their eyes, now more than ever. He breathed more easily when he stepped through the door into the open; one felt trapped down below.

Andersson and Alf were walking up and down, side by side, with rapid strides ; their breath steamed. They were talking, apparently, of perfectly indifferent matters.

Alf was laughing, and nothing particular seemed to be happening. The clock in the chart-room showed half-past three in the morning. When Jorg came out he noticed that the eyes of the two rested critically upon him. So he acted as if he had just come up for the pleasure of a morning stroll.

"The ice? How long?—Oh, for the past two hours or so," said Andersson carelessly. "Did it wake you up?—Yes, the chunks are getting heavier; at first the ice was pretty light." His tone was strangely chatty, artificial, unlike him. Of course Jorg reciprocated unreservedly.

And yet a light was burning in the quarters of the watch off duty. And yet the boys of the watch off duty were sitting completely dressed around the fo'c'sle-head. Through the glass discs of the air-shafts one could see them, wrapped in their Iceland sweaters as if in armour, with thick rings of wool around their necks. The woollen fibres glinted in the lamplight. A few were conversing softly; others, drunk with sleep, had laid their heads on the table, burying their faces in the bed of their arm muscles—like birds sticking their beaks into their feathers.

The royal yards were lowered; ordinarily that would not have been done in this wind. When Jorg looked up, he saw, where the yard crossed the mast, the silhouette of a man leaning against the mast. He looked at the mizzen-top: a second shadow there; and for'ard on the foremast a third. They were keeping a look out from every mast of the *Notre Dame*.

At daybreak the lifeboats were got ready. People acted as if it were only a routine overhauling. Neither Andersson nor the mates wasted a word on the real purpose. The youngest of the boys asked questions, and whispered with big, anxious eyes. They got a nudge in

the ribs from their comrades, and fell silent. People crowded to their work, and still tried not to make their eagerness conspicuous. The tarpaulins were unlashed, and the braces tumbled on the deck. The inside of the boats lay open like a birthday-table with the covering pulled off.

Into each of the four boats jumped three men ; they began to clear out and clean up. The oars, the thole-pins, the masts were laid out on deck. Slowly day broke. Each time that the men straightened up after stooping they saw the ice-field beyond the gunwales of the boats. It reached as far as one could see. It looked as if they were sailing in a narrow groove across flat, solid land. There were rivers and canals in it which changed their courses strangely, splitting open and closing. The whole thing seemed to glide slowly, more like lava than like solid ground. *Notre Dame*, now sailing eastward, even a little to northward, followed the open rivers and canals so far as she could. The visibility was bad, and the air icy and thick. But the men's eyes did not fasten on the rounded chunks which filled the ocean as if with plates. All eyes travelled slowly over the grey horizon ahead and to windward. Were there no sharp white zigzags standing out ? Was there nowhere a blue glitter rising out of the grey, a cold glow, a glimmer, the facet of a diamond ? No cry came from the look outs in the tops. The white fleet of death had sent its scouts ahead ; grinding, striking, gurgling, cracking, devouring they crowded around the *Notre Dame*. Now the ship seemed bigger and bigger, touching in the pride with which her broad bosom thrust apart the messengers of death. Never had one recognized so well her boldness, her nobility, her battle-might. Never before had one loved her thus.

Forward, forward ! They flung themselves into their work. They did not look up any longer, and they wanted to see nothing more. They stood in boats, in a ship on

a ship, doubly safe, and, even then, the whole thing was nothing but precaution. They spread out the sails of the boats. The sails were as stiff as tin, and the canvas stuck together, showing big green spots of mildew ; the mates cursed. They lifted out the water-casks and smelt at the bungholes ; the contents stank. Filthy water ran across the decks ; they rinsed, shook up the casks, and filled them to capacity with fresh water. The pump squeaked without interruption. The little boat's compasses were in their boxes covered with green, and the compass dials stuck at the edges. They were loosened by cautious pounding, and the motor mechanic oiled the bearings of the ring mountings. The boys polished copper. The hardtack in the metal drums crumbled like stones when they hit it with an axe by way of trial. Barbarossa chewed some, spat, and shrugged his shoulders—after all, a lifeboat was not a first-class hotel. In watertight boxes there were matches sewn in greased sailcloth—old-fashioned match-boxes from the year the *Notre Dame* was built, but still perfectly good. Jorg lit a cigarette with one, and felt considerable respect for a little splinter of wood that had lived to such an age. There were bottles of petrol sewn in sailcloth, rockets, axes in a thick coat of grease, their blades sewn up, galvanized iron air-tanks under the thwarts, driving-anchors, boat-hooks—all in all an astonishing collection of tools and equipment. But the boats had not been in the water for a long time. The iron fittings, once galvanized, had almost rusted through ; the gunwales, eaten with dry rot, broke apart. Maybe they would float; and maybe they would fill up like sieves when they were put in the water, or fall apart at the first bump against the ship's side. Barbarossa, asked for his opinion, shrugged his shoulders. The carpenter's saw went whinnying through new wood for repairs ; he had a great deal to do here.

The boat that looked worst was the little gig which was used in harbour for communication with shore. It was a long, narrow boat, lightly built, fitted with an excessively large sail. All the ribs on both sides were broken. Between each pair of ribs the carpenter had indeed screwed splints as reinforcement, but the boat did not look as if much should be expected of it. Barbarossa tapped it with a hammer, very cautiously, like a doctor tapping a patient's chest. "I suppose you're afraid the hammer will go right through the sheathing?" said Jorg slyly.

Oh no; the boat was flawless. A good boat; would sail eleven knots. You just had to look out because it was so narrow in the beam and capsized easily. That little damage there was only from Barbarossa's last engagement. He said this rather shamefacedly.

Jorg forgot the ice, and heard no more of the pounding of the hammers in the other boats. He was glad to see no more and to hear nothing more beyond the crazy story of Barbarossa's engagement. Together they squatted in the old gig.

It seems there was some girl named Mary in Port Victoria, South Australia, and Barbarossa had got engaged to her offhand in the si? weeks the *Notre Dame* lay at anchor in the roadstead. She was the daughter of the only hotel-keeper in the place, so the engagement was an important event, and was to be splendidly celebrated. Barbarossa was allowed to invite anyone he wanted—all the captains and all the mates from the *Lawhill*, the *Pommern*, the *Viking*, the *Mozart* and the *Hoguemont*; half of the grain fleet was at Port Victoria. On the morning of the great day Barbarossa, armed with a glass, a lantern and the key, went down into the cellar of the hotel to choose the wines for the evening.

Noon came, and he did not reappear. Mary called down cellar, but only an unintelligible bellow echoed

back: he wasn't through by a long shot, it was very hard to decide. In the afternoon, shortly before the first guests arrived, four men dragged the completely intoxicated Barbarossa into the daylight. Mary was beside herself, and the family went wild. The engagement was broken off at once.

They dropped the young giant in the garden, and turned the stream of the garden hose on him until he lay in a great puddle. And then they forgot him. There was so much to do in sending away the invited guests. When Barbarossa woke up, it was night. He saw the lit windows of the hotel, and realized his condition and his loneliness.

The dream was over.

It was a good thing that nobody saw him as he slunk down to the harbour. There was the gig with which he had arrived so proudly in the morning. A norther was blowing, half a gale, as was quite common in Spencer's Gulf. At a mad clip Barbarossa sailed out into the night, toward the distant anchor-light of the ships. He was not sober ; he sailed the slender craft too hard, and capsized. It was a great piece of luck that he did not get under the sail. He crawled on to the keel, and lay there, clinging fast the livelong night. The icy waves washed over him. His only consolation was that he drifted toward shore, toward the other end of the bay, out of sight of Port Victoria and the ships.

When Captain Andersson noticed Barbarossa's absence next morning, he was not worried. After the disaster of the broken engagement many things might be understood. Perhaps the mate had landed on another sailing vessel.

At noon Andersson went ashore to the ship-chandler, as the other captains also did at this time of day. They did their errands, and then went to the hotel for an eye-opener. Did anybody happen to have seen Barbarossa ?

Not a soul in the last twenty-four hours. But where was the boat, the gig ? The gig was gone. Was Barbarossa sober when he set sail ? No, one could hardly say that.

" He's tipped over the boat and drowned; Satan, Satan ! " cursed Captain de Kloot of the *Hoguemont*.

Andersson was deeply concerned ; that this was true was now more than probable.

" Too bad about the boy ; he was a real sailor, even if he did stay too long in the cellar," said old Captain Hagestrand of the *Viking*.

" Yes, that's liquor for you. You can understand a young man's kicking over the traces after a hundred and twenty-three days at sea, but that's the end of a young life," Captain Morn of the *Lawhill* was something of a philosopher. " Well, let's have a drink to his prosperity in the next world."

At this moment somebody sneezed in the doorway who did not belong to the circle; he sneezed with explosive violence. Everyone looked up : there was Barbarossa, with some seaweed still in his hair. He had taken six hours to walk along the beach to town.

By evening the boats were as seaworthy as they could be made. Andersson, Barbarossa and Alf went from one boat to the next, inspecting everything, and each man claimed " his " boat was the best. " In case of emergency you belong to my boat," said Andersson. Jorg opened his mouth, but said nothing. He had agreed with Barbarossa to go in his boat. Andersson was the best seaman on board, there was no doubt of that. But he had no luck. In his eyes was death on the sea ; in Barbarossa's laughing eyes was life.

They left the boats open. Rain was drumming on the deck, and it was to be hoped that the dried-out planking of the boats would soak up the water. The

wind fell asleep; at long intervals one heard the heavy sighs with which *Notre Dame* leaned against the swell. Otherwise all was silence. They were sailing in open water; the ice-field had opened a wide channel which held exactly to the eastward course. It was like a miracle.

Alone in his cabin, Jorg made the few preparations he could for the chance that they might take to the boats. The situation of his cabin worried him, it was so far from the deck. First you had to go through the little vestibule where the medicine-chest and the chronometers were, then through the saloon, then along a piece of corridor; then either left to the main deck, or right to the little companionway to the chart-room. Around four corners, through four doors—one could scarcely make it in under a minute. But if the *Notre Dame* sank so fast as all that, the boats could not be put down, either. It was really all the same where one drowned. But still better in the open sea than in a trap. If it had been possible without attracting attention, Jorg would have spent the nights on deck.

He put into an old leather case the things he wanted with him in the boat. Tobacco and pipe. The journals, wrapped in sailcloth. Sly as a thief, he opened the medicine chest, and fetched the vial of morphine powders. If there was definitely no hope left, this would be kinder than the death that the sea of ice held in store. He closed the case, and put it on the shelf of the little corner cupboard by the cabin door. It could be grabbed with one movement in running out. The flashlight he put in the bunk in such fashion that he was bound to find it with his first movement. More one could not do. Perhaps even that was ridiculous. How wonderful it must be to be quite stupid, to know nothing of the sea, and to trust the captain blindly, like God. Ignorance was a great preservative power—fully as great as knowledge.

After supper, Andersson stayed in the cabin for the first time in a week.

He was reading a tract from the Seamen's Mission which had been thrust into his hand in Dublin. It was produced like a cheap magazine—many pictures, imitation advertisements, glaring headlines. It contained forms with printed vows ready to be signed, legal obligations of heaven.

Shaking his head like a man who no longer understands the world, he handed the pamphlet to Jorg.

" You believe in God ? "

" God is," said Jorg.

From the fo'c'sle-head came the long-drawn plaint of the foghorn. Andersson leapt up. For a matter of seconds he stood motionless, his legs in their white rubber boots like stone pillars. Only his nostrils went in, out, in, out, slowly—they *smelt* through the fog. Suddenly he was out of the door with his long strides, uncannily soundless with their rubber soles.

Jorg stayed at the table. Andersson could act; he had the power to battle with the fog and the ice. How he was to be envied ! It was harder to sit still and to go below that night.

He went to his cabin, if only to get out of his clammy sea-boots; but he did not intend to sleep. He did not wish to be surprised in his sleep, if *it* happened. Damned fear—there was no way of lying out of it; it was there. " I just have too much imagination," said one Jorg. " That's merely an excuse," said the other; " what do you want to bet that the boys on the watch off duty are sleeping like tops ? "

To keep awake he made strong tea. It was good Chinese tea, packed in square tin boxes with a red-and-black dragon design. The leaves were small and delicate, with a scent and a flavour of which one could never grow

tired. While Jorg was tying up a large handful of leaves in a piece of surgical gauze, he thought of the Imperial tea gardens. He saw them before his eyes in the blue, singing flame of the spirit-lamp which he was just lighting ; they were situated like vineyards on a mountain slope, high up, so that the tea bushes remained small, with few, but very tender, leaves. The tea mountain was surrounded with a wall and moat ; sentries stood at the gates, and let in only the Imperial gardeners. In March they picked the little leaves, barely opened, with gloved hands, and put them leaf by leaf in little containers of rice paper. During the picking-time they were allowed to eat only those plants which kept their breath pure. They bathed three times a day.

The water boiled. Jorg dangled the tea-bag in it ; the extra air-pressure hissed out of the petrol tank, the flame went out, and the round copper lid glowed an ever-deeper red.

He emptied the kettle into the thermos bottle. It was good to be doing something, good to immerse oneself in other worlds. He put a pile of books beside his pillow.

The rain came drumming down ; the hasty steps of the sailors rushed past above Jorg's head. Some manoeuvre was on foot. One heard the hoarse yells as the men hauled at the ropes. Each of the big blocks had its own, almost human and articulate tone. They were like children with their screeching, moaning, crying, whimpering, sobbing, growling. Jorg knew every one. What was going on ? Was there an iceberg in sight ? Were they manoeuvring to dodge it ? Damned fear, wretched fear. Each time that the leap of a sea shook the ship, one thought of the single thin skin of steel, now polished bright by the ice—the one thing that separated them from destruction.

He put the books away. Up from the fog of steam

and cigarette smoke rose the figure of his mother. The figure remained misty ; only the eyes were clear. He saw them in the drops of water that clung to the ceiling—brown eyes with a greenish glint, shy and wild, ancient eyes full of suffering and sadness.

How unworldly she was ! Even as a very small boy he had sometimes understood more of the real relations of life than she. Once at sunset she had rowed him across the mill-pond. Very slowly the flat-bottomed boat slipped out from under the shadow of the forest on the bank. The closed cups of the water-lilies shone like great stars ; the water gurgled under the flat bottom of the skiff. The skiff was half-filled with rushes, which hung over into the water. He lay on the rustling stems, his arms behind his head, gazing spellbound into the sunset ; his mother stood upright in the stern, dipping the oar slowly, noiselessly. She was singing ; with her soft, shy voice she was singing him a song. Then suddenly she screamed in fright. A broad tongue of water was licking out from under the rushes, spreading over the bottom of the skiff. She thought the skiff was leaking and about to sink ; she rowed with all her might, fear in her eyes, her mouth compressed, panting. In her confusion she lost her sense of direction. The skiff moved into a thick tangle of floating rush-roots, water-lilies and weeds ; it stuck fast. The oar fell clattering into the skiff, which pitched as his mother tried with erratic movements, in mad haste, to release the clinging plants. But he, little as he was—six or seven years old—knew there was no danger. The skiff was not leaking at all. It was the dangling rushes, trailing in the water and sucking up water through their stems. " You needn't be afraid, needn't be afraid at all," he cried again and again soothingly, as if to a skittish horse. He bundled the rushes out of the water ; the skiff did not fill up further. Her terror faded, and she rowed back, but he did not succeed in explaining to his

mother how the rushes sucked up water as if with a thousand little pumps.

How touching she was in her helplessness—always in danger, always threatened by the pitfalls of practical life, which she did not understand, and with which she struggled. She maintained herself by escaping life as a wild thing does the hunter. She always dodged brutal reality with incredible feminine instinct. Often, as a little boy, he had heard the loud, angry voice of his father scolding his mother. Then he would always begin to tremble with fear that Father might strike Mother. He would creep into his hiding-place behind the big, heavy, carved sideboard in the dining-room. There he would put his hands over his ears, and stare at the tea-canister. It was Russian tea ; there was a troika painted on the canister, a sleigh in the winter woods, pursued by wolves. The man in the sleigh was standing up, swinging his whip wildly. The woman looked back in terror at the pack, whose breath steamed hotly, whose eyes sparkled murderous fire. With gaping jaws a big wolf was leaping at the throat of the wheel-horse. In a moment they would be torn limb from limb, men and horses ; in a moment Father would strike Mother. All the fear, all the terror of the picture combined with his own fear. When he could not stand it any longer, when he thought he would burst from holding his breath, he would take his fingers out of his ears. Was Father's booming voice stilled ?

If it was, he ran quickly to his mother. Pale and tearful she would be sitting in her chair. He embraced her legs, and buried his head in her lap.

Afterward, when Father had left her, she lived a lonely life, alone with him in a small city.

She lived on her music. When he was a little older, he often called for her at the theatre at night. Mostly he came much too early. The square in front of the

theatre would be dark and empty. He went up to the portico, and peered into the lobby. Stuffy air, full of the perfume of the women inside. Very faintly one could hear the music of the last act through the thick double doors, and a buzzing would come from the building as if from a beehive. The check-room girls with their white aprons would be sitting asleep or knitting beside the green curtains of the check-rooms ; decrepit ushers limped around with creaking shoes.

Outside in front of the theatre the arc-lights would flame up, flickering, hissing, pink-blue—a sign that the performance would soon be over. A few coaches would drive up, with bright, rectangular lantern eyes. Maids with shawls over their arms waited for their mistresses, and young men for their girls. Schiller and Goethe, on a tall base in the middle of the square, glimmered cold and metallic. Schiller, sharp-nosed, was gazing upward with a look of painful ecstasy. There was no telling whether he was looking at heaven or at the thick laurel wreath on his head. Goethe, with his heavy, wrinkled forehead, gazed into nothingness. He seemed to want to run away ; only with difficulty did Schiller hold him back by the arm. A policeman with a blue uniform, brass buttons, brass helmet and white gloves took up his post. Then came the crowd, in drops, in dribbles, in a broad stream. Their faces were still full of stunned emotion ; the experience of the play divided them from the people of the street.

When the time had come he would go around the theatre to the stage entrance. It was a dark walk through a back garden with tall trees. Out of the bright doorway came, first of all, the firemen. Their axes jingled from hooks on their broad belts. Each one would stop in the doorway, and light his dead cigar. In the glass case below the stairs sat the doorman, a black-haired man who got constant instructions from those who went out, and

received many packages—flowers as well—from those who waited outside. Then came the musicians of the orchestra. Strange—they came like workmen after a day's work, tired, released, commonplace, talkative. They, the performers, were sober, while the citizens who had been held breathless by their art came out of the theatre ecstatic. Everywhere in the dark garden matches flamed up ; cupped hands were illuminated, faces shone. The singers came, still trilling on the steps. They were like birds let out of a cage. They joked and postured at one another as if they were still on the stage. To Jorg they were mysterious ; their whole existence seemed to take place on a stage. At last Mother, her violin-case under her arm, would appear, still excited, chatting with acquaintances.

Outside, behind the theatre, the last tram went squeaking around the curve, a square box of glass and mahogany, laughably squat and sawed-off. It was overcrowded in a moment. The motorman stamped angrily on the bell and rode off. The coins rattled in the fare-box ; it was a one-man tram. There were two lines in the little city, a red one and a green one ; at night they had red and green lanterns at the front. Jorg and his mother used the red line, and the green line seemed to them a useless, nay a contemptible object. Of course, the green one always came, and the red one had just left. Then they had to go home on foot.

Their steps resounded in the deserted streets. The shop-signs glittered in the green gaslight. Then came the long avenue of old linden trees along the park. Jorg carried the violin, and his mother took his arm. The shadows of the trees rested on the gravel path ; it was like walking on a long ladder. The lawns in the park steamed, and the jasmine gave off its perfume. Mother was so tired that her steps would begin to drag ; often, to cheer her up, he would tell her stories. Then she would

wake up, and describe imaginary events to him. Together they were on a voyage in a big ship. The ship went down. Would they get into the lifeboats with the others? No, there was no depending on lifeboats. They would ask for a bath-tub; Jorg would hold the plug in tight, and Mother would row.—How would it be if they lived in a big factory chimney instead of a house? All the rooms would be round. There would have to be trap-doors from one room to another. Of course it *would* be rather tiring at night after the theatre to climb up the long ladder, the violin-case under your arm.

How close they had been! How was it possible that later they had grown apart?

Once, when he was a big boy, bigger than she, she had tried to chastise him. He had simply held her hands. She never forgot that, nor would he ever forget the fire in her eyes at that moment.

Our dear mothers! So long as we are small children they want to be nothing but mothers, proud and happy. When we grow up, they want to be our friends and sisters. How false is that ambition! We resist instinctively. A mother cannot be a sister, cannot be a friend. If we let it be felt—and how can we do otherwise?—our mothers are disappointed and hurt to the core. The attempt to stay close to growing children almost always ends tragically; it widens the chasm between age and youth. What bitterness, what despair, what madness in the mother love that tries to hold fast what is growing away from it! And that was the mad, the almost insane part of this struggle for a son's love: mothers often believed that there was defeat, permanent estrangement, and gave up their sons at the moment when the sons were ready to return. The mothers did not understand that one had first to break loose from a love that chained one—that one had to be free in order to renew the bond between son and mother. Primitive women, severing

with their own hands the umbilical cord of the new life which their body had borne, felt more truly than those of to-day the law of women : to create life and give it freedom ; to wait and outlast and grow old in God's good time.

Before he had left Europe his mother had been ill, very ill—for a time even near death. He had visited her in the little white room- in the clinic. Her withered, freckled hands gripped his so hotly, so convulsively ! She was still so weak that she could scarcely raise her head from the steep, hard pillow. And she had said—blushing a little, like a very young girl anticipating holidays : " Do you know what ? When I get better I'm going to buy a flat boat. With it I'm going down the Danube, all the way down the Danube to the south, to the Black Sea. It will be easy ; I should think I'll hardly have to paddle—the current will carry me down of itself. At night I'll put up a little tent. And I'll make tea over the spirit-lamp. ... "

And yet she was so weak that Jorg had to feed her. And never again would she be a well woman, never again walk for more than half an hour at a time. Oh, for her wonderful imagination ! Oh, for her immortal hope ! Oh, for the victorious spirit that rose above the fragility of the body ! The buried springs of deepest love, of pain, regret, of breath-taking awe for the superhuman—these buried springs opened again.

The oil-lamp burned dimly ; the chimney was grey with soot.

" These nights put me to a supreme test. The result is dismal. Now I know I am full of cowardice, falsehood, weakness and vice from head to foot. I overestimated abominably my capacity for being alone. If this voyage is once behind me, I believe I shall have a horror of captivity that will last for ever. I'm like a madman, concealing his madness from the world—for the moment, still

successfully. If only I can manage the one thing that's left—to keep my poise in the face of what is to come ! "

Weaker and weaker grew the lamplight. It died for want of sustenance, gave up a bluish ghost, and went out. Slowly, slowly, the sky grew grey beyond the closed port-hole : the new day.

Released, relieved because it was day, he went to sleep. He dreamt so vividly of gardens and harvest-time that when he awoke he mistook a sou'wester for a big straw hat.

On the sixteenth of December, in fog, north wind, and heavy sea from the south-west, there came almost simultaneously from foremast, mizzenmast, and mainmast one cry, piercing, long-drawn-out : " Iceberg ! " One saw the tiny shapes of the look outs stretching their arms; like compass-needles they pointed all in one direction, to windward. The next moment the trampling of many feet was heard going up the iron stairs to the main deck—the sudden gallop of a startled herd. Andersson had bounded with a single leap to the windward bulwark, and went up the shrouds with incredible rapidity.

They did not see the iceberg for more than a minute. The sun was like a little, wan flower in the wall of fog ; it swelled and sank in a slow pulse-beat with the peculiar swell of the foggy sea. Just when the aura around the sun spread out, one recognized the pale, glacier-like flickering, high, formidably high up in the sky. A shadow sailed past, something monstrous, scarcely distinguishable from the grey wall. It was formless, but with its uncanny flickering so fearfully high, so fearfully near ; and this awful ghost breathed—a breath of ice blew across *Notre Dame*, and the hearts of her crew shivered in the frost of death. For long seconds they all stood rigid, grey-faced, and all the young faces had turned old, quite old and sick. Andersson's mighty voice resounded

across the deck out of the shrouds, as full and clear as a great bell; its echo died in the trampling of feet. Andersson had broken the spell.

The whistles of the mates shrilled ; the men swarmed over the deck.

Was it only a matter of twenty-nine men fighting for their lives ? The winches began their mad pace, shaking from drum to the foundation under the weight of the sinking yards, which now slid down the masts, inch by inch. Cables slapped on the decks ; the clusters of men flung on their weight, sinking over backward, their teeth bared, their eyes staring fixedly at the ropes that went up and vanished in the wall of fog. Foresail and main-sails were guyed up to make the *Notre Dame* as easy as possible to manoeuvre. The mizzen-sails were taken in. The bubbling along the sides grew fainter ; the ship had less way on. Hoarsely, wildly, the almost inhuman sounds with which the groups spurred one another on and kept in time resounded across the decks. It sounded like the growling, choking, tugging of great beasts of prey over a catch. The men were streaming with sweat ; their heavy woollen clothing was soaked. The boiling heat of work burned the fear out of the men ; they were healed in the very hour that the disease had come upon them. Within an hour the deck was empty and deserted except for the silent, eternal shape of the helmsman. Both watches had gone aloft into the foggy sky. As if through thick smoke one saw them reefing the sails. *Notre Dame* sailed on. Towards Australia or into eternity.

His legs stiff and aching, his breath still whistling hoarsely from his lungs, Jorg went slowly across the deck. Painfully he crawled over the rail of the little motor-boat, and squatted beside his ship, the *Refanut*. He had been sitting there, the ship under his arm, his tools spread on the bottom of the motor-boat, when the alarm came.

The motor-boat was a good, sheltered place in which to tinker. He took his knife in his hand, which was scratched and painful. His left had twisted a piece of mahogany, looking for the place where the knife had last bitten in. Go on, he thought, for God's sake go on. Don't look into the fog, don't listen. Go on.

He carved the third of the three half-moon-shaped tops for the *Refanut*. It was a pleasure to work with mahogany after all the hard teak and Oregon pine. It cut with a delicate grinding sound, and it could be bored without splitting. With a red-hot needle, heated over the spirit-lamp, he bored the tiny holes in tops, masts, yards, and in the bulwark of the hull. As soon as the needle glowed in the flame, one had to bring it quickly to the spot with the pliers, before it cooled off. A tiny thread of smoke whirled up when the needle went into the wood ; a tiny ring of charred wood grew around the needle, and a fine, pungent scent rose from the newly-burnt hole.

Only when the needle bent or broke did he look up. There was the white bell set over the *Notre Dame*, a gas, a deadly gas. Moisture dripped ; drops ran in shining strings along the stays ; drops clung to the woolly fleece of the Iceland sweater. How high had the iceberg been ? Higher than the masts—perhaps three hundred feet. And it went eight times as deep below water, an undersea mountain-range which showed only its peak. An errant mountain-range was uncanny enough in itself. But the most fearful thing was the perfect soundlessness with which it sailed. Icebergs seldom came alone, but usually travelled in squadrons. Where were they, the others ? Was not a new breath of ice coming across the ocean ? Go on with your work ! A new needle-point glowed in the singing flame. A fine copper wire, a remnant of the old wireless station, came in splendidly. It bent easily ; it could be hammered, bored, filed, whatever one pleased.

From it Jorg made the dead-eyes and the blocks for the *Refanut*. A ship like the *Notre Dame* needed more than twelve hundred of these ; the *Refanut* went up to about three hundred. Empty cartridges with the caps as eyes made wonderful portholes. Two more furnished lantern towers. The motor mechanic with a cold chisel cut a piece from his big lump of lead ; Jorg hammered it flat, and cut the anchors out of it. With all her copper and brass the *Refanut* looked as neat and shiny as an old-fashioned kitchen. " Your kid will have to polish brass," said Barbarossa. He was right. Jorg began to love the little ship. " *Refanut*, my child, you are saving me from too much imagination," he said to it.

The *Refanut* was furnished with four tiny lifeboats of mahogany, which hung in copper davits ; a mahogany chart-room, a rail of brass wire, and a double steering-wheel like that of the *Notre Dame*, carved of mahogany, with copper spokes. The *Refanut* was made of the best materials only.

A braided waxed fishline provided the " standing rigging," the shrouds and stays. Not until he began to rig her did Jorg see how little he knew of sailing ships. Barbarossa corrected many mistakes. To copy a mast properly in its essentials took a lot of thought, even when one had the original before one's eyes.

The sailmaker furnished a hank of tarred sail-yarn. The *Refanut* simply devoured it ; it was incredible how much rigging its little masts ate up. Jorg used fifty strings (close to a hundred yards) of sail-yarn, just for the most important braces and halyards. The carpenter scratched with his knife one of the three blocks of glue which he possessed, and put the chips in Jorg's hand. It was a great gift ; no one was allowed to know of it, so impoverished was the ship. Jorg soaked the glue in water ; and with a pipe-cleaner for a brush he painted all the knots and joints. Sail-yarn, run through the glue-

pot and thus stiffened, made the ratlines for the shrouds. Such little inventions afforded pleasure, and so did the constant finding of material just as it became necessary, against all hope and expectation.

The *Refanut* was launched in a washtub. She floated on a perfectly even keel; she seemed heavy, massive, and she handled like a big ship. But she was not yet finished.

Jorg marked the waterline with a pencil. The *Refanut* received a bottom of red lead; the wood soaked up paint. The dull, coppery red that remained was handsome against the strong vegetable-tar brown of the upper hull. With the same red lead Jorg painted the name on both sides of the bow. The raw sail-yarn, the natural wood of the masts and yards, and the glitter of copper and brass were the other colours.

Was she finished now? Jorg turned her in his hands. There was one last thing missing; although the *Refanut* was by no means a perfect model ship, she should have one thing that no other toy-ship in the world possessed.

The big sailing ships had a shark fin for'ard on the bowsprit. *Refanut*, too, should have a shark fin. Jorg scrambled for'ard, cut a tiny piece off the *Notre Dame's* shark fin, and fastened it on the *Refanut* with a hot needle, like a medal. This was the twentieth of December, the last day of Advent.

With a weak south-west wind the *Notre Dame* glided across a sunny sea. It was empty. No ice as far as the eye could see. Pale, exhausted for want of sleep, and full of an unspeakable bliss, one stood on deck, blinking at such unaccustomed light. One smiled quietly to oneself, almost like a woman who has given birth to a child. Andersson came down from the main deck with his sextant, his long, blond beard like a luminous aura around his haggard face. In the chart-room Alf and Barbarossa

were stooped over the logarithms ; they were calculating the position of the ship. Andersson seemed to bring the sun with him into the chart-room, he beamed so.

" I'm going to sleep now," he said; " I'm going to sleep *below*. In my cabin." With heavy steps he went down the creaking stair.

" Did he sleep at all in your watch ? " asked Alf.

" No ; in yours ? "

" No."

" Then to-day is the ninth day since he had any sleep."

" And the first day he's slept in his cabin since we put to sea," said Jorg.

All at once life seemed quite secure again. One was a new man ; the consciousness of civilization awoke, and was indignant. It was like a relapse into the period before the voyage.

To go down in a fog-caused collision now seemed to Jorg as senseless as being hit by a bullet on the day of the Armistice. At supper he described to Andersson all the defences that science possessed against fog. In the travelled waters of Europe, in the English Channel they already had wireless ships ; their signals guided vessels that had a wireless station. In the thickest fog they were steered as if by the voices of invisible ghosts. From Sandy Hook to New York there were cables on the ocean floor; in thick weather the ships were guided along them as if on streets, with separate lanes. They could not get lost, and could not meet a large ship on a contrary course. That was shipping that seemed to go on rails.

There were infra-red rays; with them you could photograph through fog, and could make visible whatever was on your course. There were electric processes, electric waves that went out from the ship, and precipi-

tated the fog. In a few years every large ship would be able to cut a tunnel of visibility through the walls of fog.

Andersson smiled : " What is there left for a captain to do, then ? "

Jorg looked puzzled : " Not much nowadays ; he depends on his radio man."

Andersson nodded. " Yes, that's what he does. He depends on his operator and on all the mechanical devices. The responsibility of the captain in the last hundred years has grown constantly less. A modern shipping line could perfectly well discharge all its captains ; the ships would run just as well. Real seamanship is needed only in extreme emergency, when all the devices fail; and then the great catastrophes happen, because the old seamanship is dying out. Do you suppose, for instance, that a modern steamer's crew could put down the lifeboats in heavy weather ? Even when the *Titanic* went down they made a bad job of it, and the burning of the *Mono Castle*, that senseless mass-murder in putting the passengers into the boats, is a badge of shame for the seamanship of our time. In harbour I've sometimes seen the crews of liners practising with their lifeboats. A dreadful sight. Any fisher-boy with us knows more about handling a boat."

This was true, Jorg knew. It was only one of the warnings of the inconceivable catastrophe that was bound to fall upon mankind if the mechanics failed. He was ashamed of his cheap attempts to escape the fear he had felt by boasting of the weapons of invention which he had not invented. He had no right to put himself on an even footing with the technique of his age. Andersson went on deck, and Jorg opened the sea atlas. A few hundred sea miles ahead lay the Crocet Islands, difficult waters ; and behind them, between the fiftieth and sixty-fifth degrees of longitude, the white tongue of the drift-

ice zone licked far to northward, twelve degrees farther north than the position of the *Notre Dame*. Almost a hundred degrees of longitude still lay between her and Spencer's Gulf.

No, the voyage was far from over. It was silly and presumptuous to calculate the day of arrival.

He went up on the poop-deck, which he considered as his property. He began his furious pacing : seven steps forward, seven steps back, with a short, furious turn at the rail: this raging behind the bars with which prisoners try to drive out stored-up thoughts and feelings. The albatrosses sailed across mountains of liquid silver; they almost brushed them with their quivering, groping wing-tips. The cloud-bank in the west grew towards the zenith, and it seemed to Jorg that it was taking on the shape of the mountains at home. It was strange how strongly one felt the Christmas spirit.

Now they would be making packages at home—rustling tissue-paper with golden stars, red and green ribbons, a little fir-twigg stuck into the knot.

Had they got their tree ? Had they fetched it themselves from the woods ? How would it look, how would they decorate it ?

In the great cities of Europe the streets now would be enchanted and luminous caverns, subterranean palaces of night, filled with black, shadowy swarms of people. How they hurried and rushed, and yet how obviously each one was alone with his thoughts of the people to whom he wanted to give pleasure. At no other time did one see so many people unconsciously talking to themselves, staring into the distance with big, shining eyes. How the packages dangled from their hands, a noiseless Christmas carillon ! There was no end to what they carried in their arms, treasures painfully won and dug up, torn from the hard struggle of existence ; and now they were fleeing with them to the little nests of their private

lives—a touching sight, like little birds bringing food to their young.

The edges of the sidewalks were hemmed with peddlers. With outstretched arms they offered their mimosas, their evergreens, dyed straw-flowers and angels' hair to the crowd, and on the cold, wet sidewalks danced clockwork toys. The splendour of the show-windows was confusing, stupefying ; they glittered like jewels, and the human shadows crowded around them like insects around a light, irresistibly attracted. Where was one to look ? What was one to choose among so much splendour, and, oh, how bitterly one felt the shortage of money ! Christmas trees stood on every square. It seemed as though the forest itself had come to the city. The trees were tied together with straw ropes ; one pitied these chained prisoners, and wanted to free them from their bonds. How fresh they smelt ! The dealers in their heavy felt boots stamped around, spread out trees, straightened branches ; their breath rose in white pillars. Snow fell from a black, lowering sky, and the flakes sparkled down through the beams of lamplight. The roofs of the automobiles wore white caps ; the tall buses skidded in to their stops through the yellowish slush on the pavement. This falling snow damped every sound ; the roar of traffic merely grumbled like an underground river, but from invisible heights came the church bells, louder and more solemn than usual.

The cloud-bank in the west had risen so high that even with the best of intentions one could no longer take it for Hay Mountain at home. Jorg awoke from his dream. Half the life on the *Notre Dame* was a dream. One lived more in dream than in reality ; probably everyone felt that way.

On Monday the scouring of the decks began ; it had long been prepared for, with sand and stone. The stones had been made aboard out of cement and sifted ballast

sand. The carpenter had cast them, using old boxes as forms. The trick of the mixture was to have the cement barely hold the sand together, so that, in scouring, the sharp grains would keep crumbling off.

In a pouring rain, wet from the sky and sweating under their oilskins, the boys were kneeling. They pressed the whole weight of their bodies on the stones, and shoved them back and forth across the weathered planks of the deck, which were covered with tar and oil and dirt. It was a long time before the white grain of the wood appeared in a narrow stripe. The young mates worked at the head of their watches, setting the pace, very fast, grimly, furiously ; it was hard to turn this most monotonous of all sailor's work into a sport. The only relief for the long kneeling was low benches, blocks with sailcloth stretched between, so that the knees rested on something slightly elastic. The rain made the work easier ; it washed the layers of dirt, mingled with scouring-sand, into the scuppers ; hose and broom helped it along. For the first time Jorg understood the bitter irony of the name " holy-stones," so named because you knelt to them. There was also a machine to scour the deck. It consisted of an iron frame enclosing a stone weighing hundreds of pounds. Movable levers were fastened to the frame. Two men pushed the stone by the handles ; they did not have to kneel. The machine had been invented by an English ship's doctor to prevent the constant knee injuries. But with the big stones there was no getting into the nooks and corners of the deck.

Where the planks shone white and clean, the *Notre Dame* looked like a new ship ; people crossed these spots cautiously, on tiptoe, like a farmer across a marble floor.

In the afternoon Barbarossa yanked open the cabin door : " Porpoises ! "

A great school of splendid fish was playing beyond the bow. They seemed bigger and stronger than those

one sees in the Northern Hemisphere. Their blue and white markings ran in ripples along their flanks. A few females were carrying their young on their backs. Jorg noticed how the young ones, clinging to their mother's skins by suction, changed their position each time that the mother leapt into sight. As she flew they would slide forward along the skin, and suck themselves fast again ; it was incredible that they did not skid off the slippery, eel-like surface. For the first time Jorg himself took the harpoon, carried away by the spirit of the hunt, with a greed for fresh meat such as he had never felt before. Handling the harpoon requires great exertion. It was scarcely possible with both hands to hold one's aim against the enormous pressure of the wind. The game in the depths, the raging of the waves at the prow, from whose foam the big fish leapt, the encouraging shouts of the sailors, all made the heart go wild. At the second attempt the harpoon struck home. The fish vanished in the foam, and the line was yanked aft. Four men pulled it in, hand over hand. When it was hoisted tail first to the deck, it was still full of life. For a moment it lay still, drawing in air in snorts ; like a valve the breathing-hole at the top of the head opened and closed. Then it began to rage, beating wildly with its tail, drumming hollowly on the planks. The sailmaker was beside it at a bound, his teeth bared, his knife in hand. The handsome man suddenly looked like a savage. He jammed the knife into the fish's side below the thoracic fin, and turned it several times like a gimlet. A hot stream of blood poured out, and flowed over the fo'c'sle-head. A wild tremor went through the fish's body. The deck rang under the mad convulsions, and the men holding the line let go, unable to hold on. In a stream of its own blood the fish skidded across the planks ; the blood splashed from the strokes of the tail. Laughing and yelling the sailors made off. Then it was dead. They tied a rope's end around the tail,

and hoisted the creature with a block and tackle. It was much taller than a man, and twice as heavy. Barbarossa cut through the skin in a circle below the tail, and then slid his knife crunching down to the head, once along the back, once along the belly. A lot of blood flowed over the deck. Then he reached up, gripped the edge of the loosened skin with both hands, and began to pull it down. His fingers slipped on the slippery fat; he punched holes in the edge of the skin, and ran rope-yarn through. Several men took hold of the end, and pulled sharply. The skin and its inch-thick layer of fat parted from the flesh with a ripping sound like the tearing of raw silk. It looked as if a heavy overcoat were being taken off. The black-and-red meat, striped with white sinews, steamed in the cold, and twitched as if the fish were still alive. When they started to cut off the fish's head with axes, the heavy body started to swing, and the blows fell clumsily. When the great arteries were cut, they spurted like fountains. It was almost breath-taking to see what an abundance of hot, vital life was in the creature.

The skin was enormously heavy; they dragged it across the deck, fat side up, and instantly the boys fell upon it with their knives, and began to cut off the fat. Right across the white belly ran two curved, toothed scars, the imprint of a shark's teeth; but the bite had slipped. The skin was incredibly smooth, and felt like resistant, elastic rubber. The fat was translucent, gelatinous, and so full of oil that the drops spattered under the pressure of a finger.

The motor mechanic started a fire in his forge, and a big iron kettle was set up. The fat, cut into cubes, was thrown in. It blubbed and hissed, and a strong aromatic odour went up, by no means unpleasant. Barbarossa cut off huge bunches of muscle, and handed them to the cook, who threw them into a barrel of brine. It was like

a community butchering, where everyone has his share ; the sailors brought out their sea boots to soak them in fat. The cabin-boy, Abrahamson, brought out a pair of sea-boots which he had inherited from his grandfather. So far he had not been able to use them because they were as hard as cast-iron. Everyone laughed, for they reached to his hips. They were stuffed with newspapers. But when the men, hungry for news, bent over the yellow pages, they found that they were dated 1894. The motor mechanic stirred the pot with a stick; the fat turned dark, almost black. They dipped bunches of oakum in the pot, and rubbed and kneaded the leather of the sea-boots, which drank hungrily, almost insatiably. Walking was quite a different matter in oiled boots ; the leather was like velvet, and one no longer abraded one's ankles.

Jorg had asked for half the skin as his share ; there was enough fat for everyone. He stretched the heavy hide with nails on a couple of hatch-covers, and began to cut away the fat. One had to make little, delicate strokes of the knife so as not to injure the skin. Where the adipose ducts connected fat and skin it was easy to slash the bluish leather. The pure oil dripped, forming little puddles on the skin ; in the long-run the smell was unpleasant after all. He scratched off the lowest layer of fat with a rust-chipper, which he had given a sharp edge at the grindstone. The work took a whole day. Nobody wanted the inch-thick layer of fat any more; it may have weighed twenty pounds. Jorg threw it overboard. At once the albatrosses dived for it, screaming, and Jorg saw with astonishment that the first albatross lifted the heavy thing out of the water with its beak, without sinking in to any extent.

He begged salt from the cook, rubbed the skin with it, and tied it up in scraps of old sailcloth. The fat could be rung from the sleeves of the Iceland sweater like water.

He would bring this skin home, and it would be a Christmas present for Helen. They would tan it, a wonderful soft leather, half blue, half white. What could they make of it ? A jacket, shoes, a belt ? It really was odd that one felt the urge at Christmas to make presents, even though one knew they would not get there.

So far Jorg had hardly known what to make with his bundle of bamboo splints. At the moment when he found himself envying the albatrosses the freedom of their flight he suddenly perceived that he must build a plane, a thing that could free itself from captivity, a thing-one could send into the skies, to give wings of imagination, and send home.

He split the bamboo sticks into thin strips. They sprang apart under slight pressure of the knife ; each time that the steel went through a bamboo joint, the tube popped like a shot. The surface of the bamboo was as hard as glass ; the edges were toothed like a fine saw. Wounds that they made in the hands festered easily, and healed with difficulty. Surrounded by hundreds of thin splints, he squatted like a stork in its nest. Alf and Barbarossa asked what it all meant, but Jorg acted very mysteriously ; he himself did not yet know how to go about the job. He had observed the form of the albatross wings for a long time ; they were his model, and it was almost constantly before his eyes in the air. But it was impossible to copy such long narrow wings, so thin in cross-section, in bamboo. They would have had no solidity. He had to make the cross-section thicker.

Out of infinitely thin strips of bamboo he bent the wing-ribs ; many broke. It worked better when the wood was soaked in hot water, and best of all in steam. He put the tea kettle over the spirit-lamp, and drew the strips slowly through the billowing steam. The wood

turned darker; one could feel it sticking up heat and warmth, growing soft in the fingers. Now it could, without breaking, be bent into very small rings and into the streamline shape of the ribs. Wave-shaped strips of bamboo gave the cross-wise stiffening of the ribs. The rib shape was drawn on a board, nails were driven along the line, and the rib was inserted into this form. The joints were glued, whipped with sail-yarn, and the knots soaked in glue. A rib like this weighed only an ounce or two, but had astonishing solidity. When he had twenty-six pairs of ribs done in the various sizes, he put the wings together. Strips eight feet long, but less than a quarter-inch thick, were bent in the shape of an albatross wing, and then the ribs were slipped over. His fingers were sticky with glue; the sail-yarn cut deep into the skin when it was being tautened. The wing grew, and assumed a considerable solidity. Alf and Barbarossa when off watch would squat for hours beside Jorg in the motor-boat; gradually they realized what was being created. They admired, and were full of respect, for they knew nothing of airplanes; for the first time they could not interfere, and could not do better than Jorg. They weighed the wing in their big hands, and laughed because they could hardly feel the weight. They tried its strength; Barbarossa often made an elaborate pretence of sitting on the wing. Jorg did not worry for a moment; he simply put his half-opened pocket-knife on the deck beside the plane, its point aimed threateningly at Barbarossa's seat. (Alf ground Jorg's knife every day; the blade was already worn thin.) The body of the plane was made of broad strips of bamboo over oval ribs.

What was it to be covered with? Sail-cloth was much too thick. Barbarossa offered his sheet, but even that was too coarse. Jorg had two white silk shirts; he turned them about, and tried drawing them over the ends of the wings. They would serve the purpose. It would have

been pleasant, of course, to go ashore in Australia with them, but the plane was more important. The ribs were quickly smeared with very hot glue, and covered before it could cool. The cloth wrinkled, and the mates doubted that it could ever be got smooth. Jorg begged a tin can full of varnish ; when the silk was soaked with it, it grew taut and translucent, like a drumhead.

The plane was so big that one could carry it across the deck only very cautiously, edge to the wind. Often the wind gripped the wings with such force that one could scarcely hold on to the plane. When it was finished, it was hard to find a place for it; it almost filled the cabin, and was always in the way. Andersson allowed Jorg to hang the plane on strings close to the ceiling of the saloon. It swung and rocked gently, as if alive ; as if, freed of its bonds, it would fly away.

That was on the eve of 24th December—a day when one saw the shrouds as the bars of a gaol, and the wall of the horizon like a prison battlement.

A stormy north wind rose, and toward sundown increased in strength until it blew two of the *Notre Dame's* royals to tatters. In the pale sunlight the seas rolled up like gushes of molten metal; even the sound was metallic. Sprayed with a wet breath of brine, the masts and yards glimmered as though covered with luminous paint. Earth could hardly afford a more beautiful sight.

With the motion of a huge snake the ship's hull wriggled through the silver mountains. The bowsprit swung from one side to the other like an inquisitive elephant's trunk. When the seas rolled slantwise under the keel, the ship yawed ; it was not possible to hold her to her course. The bowsprit shot into the troughs of the seas like a spear ; the sensation was like that of falling from an airplane. When the bowsprit rose into the sky, one felt like a stone in a catapult, shooting into nothing. The wave at the stem raged like a volcano, and a dream-

like night flight began across the darkling sea. Dripping wet and chattering with cold, Jorg finally went below deck. The plane in the cabin now was quite transparent in the lamplight, an X-ray picture. Its swinging and shaking indicated like a seismograph the assault of the waves outside.

On the twenty-fourth of December, at twelve noon, the *Notre Dame* gave her crew her first Christmas present. She had run 309 sea miles in the last twenty-four hours. They had south wind and sun, and it was very cold.

After lunch, greatly excited, Jorg went to look at his brewery in the fire-buckets on top of the chart-room. The liquid actually bore some resemblance to beer ; it was a cloudy yellow. On the edges and bottom of the wooden buckets a whitish precipitate had appeared, and the straw was covered with white mould. He tried the " beer " ; it tasted about like buttermilk. And it did contain alcohol, which, after all, was the main thing. But it was not the beer of his dreams. He carried the buckets into the mates' mess ; he had to be very careful in pouring, for the substance on the bottom broke loose. Alf and Barbarossa sniffed, bravely took a gulp—and spat it out : " Satan, Satan !" Cook and steward shook themselves. It was mostly monosyllables that they uttered ; one could not reproduce them. The " beer " remained at Jorg's sole disposal. He found the sour, cleanly taste refreshing, and decided to use it as medicine.

Between this part of the world and home there was a difference in time of nine hours, but Jorg did not want to think* of it. Perhaps thoughts of home would take nine hours in their flight anyway. His presents were ready, and he felt the exhaustion of long work, and went to sleep.

When the steward wakened him, it was five o'clock, almost twilight. He was to come for the distribution of

presents. He rubbed his eyes. What was this ? What did he have to do with Christmas presents ? It was impossible that there could be a package on board for him. Very hesitantly he went up to the fore deck.

The boys stood there, all freshly washed, shaved, in their best clothes, the collars of their shirts spread over their coat-collars. Their hair was combed, and their cheeks, scoured with towels, were shining. Some of them one hardly recognized. Beside Number Two Hatch stood Andersson in his leather jacket, with a heap of packages piled up beside him. The carpenter had just trimmed his hair and beard. His neck rubbed uneasily in a stiff collar, tossing impatiently like a horse with ill-fitting hames. As he called out name after name, his voice had its usual tone of command, but there was a peculiar, gentle light in his hard blue eyes. He seemed like a strict father, inwardly immensely kind to them all. The boys stepped up as they were called, and each one took his package. Incredulously, Jorg heard his own name called last. He too got a package. It was wrapped in green tissue-paper, and under the ribbon was a tag "*God Jul!*" The boys had waited for the last man to get his bundle, and now they all unpacked. The subdued cries of delight in the soft Swedish tongue were like the morning song of birds awakening in the woods. The empty paper fluttered in the wind. With little, happy sounds people showed one another the contents. One found a shirt, and had to put it on at once to see whether it fitted. A chequered pillow-cover—it was put on the head like a big cap. An Iceland sweater ; it was tried on at once. In each package was some article of clothing, and with it writing-paper, a bar of chocolate, a toilet article—a comb, a toothbrush or a cake of soap. Packets of Finnish cigarettes with black tobacco and dark paper—they were called "*Finnish Abdullahs*," and generally went out if one did not constantly puff at them. The

things were packed in newspapers, last year's numbers of illustrated papers, but for the *Notre Dame* they were still new. How young the crew was—children, big children ; and like children they were delighted.

In a corner with the steward and the beaming Barbarossa, Jorg opened his package. He had a pair of woollen gloves and a little comb in a marbled celluloid case, besides the cigarettes and the chocolate bar. Right inside was a little slip : "A glad Yule and a happy New Year to the unknown seamen from Gudrun Appelgreen."

Gudrun Appelgreen ! What a name, what a touching gift. All these packages were made up by the girls of the Aaland Islands for the " unknown seaman." They had sewn the shirts, the pillow-covers themselves, had knitted the sweaters, embroidered pictures on the bunk-curtains. The boys read the tags from the unknown girls in secret, and kept them in their pockets. That was the beginning of many a romance.

" Yes, that's the way lots of us get married," said Barbarossa. " You receive a package from an unknown girl. When you return home, you have to thank her—anyone can see that. You go to a dance with her—if she's pretty. Yes, and then if she wants to wait until you can get married, you celebrate your engagement."

" Are they so faithful, your girls at home ? "

" Oh yes, they wait, all right. Only, not those from Mariehamn; too many strangers come there in the summer."

Ashamed that he had not put on his best clothes like the others, Jorg went to his cabin, prepared a *de luxe* bath of two litres of hot and two litres of cold water, and then put on his blue suit with tie and collar ; he felt disguised.

There was an early supper. This time the mates and the steward had a table set for them in the cabin. The

carpenter had made a wooden candelabrum for five candles, and put it on the table. Jorg fetched two more candles from his own supply, and stuck them on the mantel to right and left of the *Refanut*. The *Refanut* must have Christmas too. The raw threads of the sail-yarn had a peculiar glitter in the candlelight ; there was an aura about the little ship. The airplane on the ceiling was all lit up. In the candle-flames Jorg saw the Christmas tree at home ; the light of a candle was the same the whole world over. A wave of happiness and sadness rose up in him ; he was glad when the others came in.

It was quite a solemn event—the table with its clean white tablecloth, the unusually large number of plates, the numerous dishes. The eyes of Captain Peterson in the picture on the wall looked quite alive. It was as if the man had joined the circle of seamen who now stood waiting behind their chairs. The stairs coming down from the chart-room creaked. With his long strides Andersson went to the head of the table. He folded his hands on the back of the chair where so many captains before him had sat. The heavy, powerful hands on the dark mahogany were the hands of a priest on the altar. The great head bowed, and with it the other heads bowed also. Andersson prayed. For the first time Jorg saw a religious act on board the *Notre Dame*. He did not understand the words ; they were very few, rising gently and slowly from the depths of the broad chest. When they were over, one heard the loud roaring of the wind, the rushing of the sea.

The men cleared their throats, and shoes scraped. People sat down, smiling at one another, a little embarrassed at the solemnity they felt. The little glasses, so delicate and unaccustomed, jingled faintly as Andersson poured out the first *aqua vita*. Everyone held his glass in his hand so as not to spill anything, and waited until the captain started to drink. They looked around, seem-

ing to feel what good friends they all were. Only the third mate was missing ; he was keeping the watch on deck, and they thought of him.

The steward shifted uneasily in his chair ; he could not get over the impulse to wait at table. But this was not allowed, and he had to keep his seat ; in fact, the dishes were passed to him first. The man had done wonderfully ; he had created a Swedish buffet out of nothing. There was a meat salad, a fish salad, even a vegetable salad. The second course was dried cod and potatoes. In the storeroom the cook had discovered and opened a forgotten keg of sauerkraut, a dish unfamiliar to Swedes. When everyone thought the end of the banquet had come, there was still rice in milk, and for dessert slices of pineapple, and finally coffee. With whisky and cocoa the steward had made a sweet liqueur, which tasted dreadful, but everyone drank it so as not to hurt his feelings. When everything was cleared away, they drank Swedish punch, Andersson distributed cigars and Jorg put on the table the whisky bottle with the label, " Christmas."

They spoke Swedish and English—English so that Jorg would understand some of what was going on. When they drank the health of the people at home, Alf said with a disdainful geature, " Oh, perhaps they think we're dead by now, like the boys on the *Parma* that time."

The *Parma* a few years before, as always in late autumn, had weighed anchor for Australia. Six weeks later the body of a sailor with a life-preserver from the *Parma* washed ashore on the Scottish coast. The papers reported that the *Parma* had probably sunk in a November storm. The wives, the mothers, the sweethearts of the *Parma's* crew wept ; nothing more was heard of the ship, and after five months all hope was abandoned. Then after 165 days a telegram came from Australia : " *Parma* arrived safe." She had sighted a steamer now and again,

but reporting to the shipper through the steamer's wireless would have cost money. So they had travelled like ghosts for half a year.

Barbarossa raised his glass towards the picture of the owner on the wall: " To Captain Peterson's buying us a steamer soon ! "

No one answered. Alf and the steward looked down. Andersson leaned back, pushing both fists against the edge of the table as if he wanted to push away the whole table with everyone that sat there. Painful silence ; the picture of Peterson, the owner, looked severe. One could feel the division of spirit. Alf, Barbarossa and the steward were on the side of the steamers. For'ard in the fo'c'sle, and amidships the cook, sailmaker, the motor mechanic, they were all on the side of the steamers. Andersson, pushing away from the table, suddenly looked distant, isolated, alone. The walls of the cabin seemed to radiate cold, as if the ship were freeing itself from the people in it. But the figure of Andersson was so much a part of the *Notre Dame* that it seemed like the stump of a mast in the cabin.

To bridge the chasm between the men, Jorg asked each one how many Christmases he had spent at sea. Andersson had spent twelve, Barbarossa five—and Barbarossa was only twenty-two ; Alf three, the steward six ; and for Jorg it was the third Christmas at sea.

They recalled earlier celebrations. Jorg as a very young man had once met the most wretched of all men on this day. It was an old stoker. The man looked as if he had been hammered together out of corrugated iron and wire, had been thrown into the fire, and had come out again bent and distorted. His body was like a prolongation of his stoker's shovel; it was nothing but a function, and scarcely had anything human left about it. The man's brain, too, was dried out by the heat of the boilers ; he had no human thoughts left. His leathern

face was lifeless ; his eyes "seemed blind and bleached like those of an old dog. But somewhere in the innermost being of this crushed man there boiled a mad, animal rage. Sometimes it broke out, and then he smashed everything around him to kindling. The wisdom of his old age consisted in knowing that this rage broke out volcanically when he saw other people gay and happy. So he would not hear of joy and happiness in the world any longer. Two hours before the distribution of Christmas presents he would go to the quartermaster and ask for a case of beer. The quartermaster knew his man, and gave him the beer. When noise and jollity began, the old man was already blind drunk in his bunk. He did this in every harbour as well. " I've seen the whole world ; I don't want to see any more of the world," he said.

Andersson had not seen any real snow for twelve years—snowstorms off Cape Horn, yes, but not the blanket of snow ashore, where the sleighs moved with jingling bells.

In a squall the *Notre Dame* suddenly listed more than she had been doing. The glasses slid across the tablecloth, and people reached hastily for them. The celebration was over. The flames of the candles stood at a strange angle, as if the candles had been broken. Andersson blew them out carefully. Everyone went on deck.

Like a mountain-climber on a cliff, Jorg went walking with the third mate, each time passing the faintly glowing eye of the compass. The Third had a handful of hazel-nuts in his pockets, and Jorg had the whisky bottle ; they shared. The nuts were small, but had a very sweet kernel—the whole sweetness of the scant earth of the Aalands. With his few scraps of English the mate managed to tell about the great hazel-bush in front of his house so that one seemed to see it.

Jorg went into the fo'c'sle to join the boys. On the

fo'c'sle-head stood the bottles of port which he had wheedled from Andersson for them. It was cheap port, an imitation, and horribly sweet, but a great success with these half-children, for whom until recently candy had been the ideal. The cook had fanned up a roaring fire in the galley; pleasant heat streamed out. All the gramophones were going, and one heard insane sounds, never known before. For God's sake, what was this? After all, Jorg knew all the records on board by heart. The boys had simply grown tired of the old melodies. They had made another hole besides the hole at the centre of the record. Now the records no longer ran evenly; the needle swerved, and centrifugal force brought out fantastic distortions. Vienna waltzes became the wildest of jazz.

The first holiday was quite strangely sober and depressing. There had happened something that was hard to convey in words: the boundary-line had been passed, and the end of the journey was in sight. The feeling of the endlessness of the voyage evaporated. The *Notre Dame* had now put half of the way from South Africa to Australia behind her. In twelve to fourteen days they would arrive. If to-day I were to take off by the air-mail route from Europe to Australia, I would get there at the same time with the *Notre Dame*, Jorg reflected. What an odd thought! It is just as though the seventy-five days' voyage behind us did not count at all. They are time lost, according to the standard with which Progress measures. Those seventy-five days are now superfluous, and we are superfluous people. To sail sixteen thousand miles, from one end of the earth to the other, with an empty ship, without transporting goods, without productive performance, is ridiculous to the philosophy of our age.

The ideal of our age is anything that has fundamental similarity to a clock. Anything that runs regularly,

reliably, independently of accidents. This age is deliberately breeding clock-people, deliberately crowding out all elemental feeling, everything that might disturb the even running of the life-clocks. That is why they demand sexual freedom—they want no irregular blockage of feelings. This clock ideal is flat and large, enormously flat and enormously large ; it's like a desert.

People praise orderliness, and appeal to heaven itself—the course of the stars, the order of the cosmos.

The cosmos that they appeal to, this standard of all order, is without doubt a tremendous affair. But there is one great irony in it—people are admiring an order which according to human notions is the epitome of disorder. Are not the solar systems flying apart ? Are they not like the splinters of a bursting shell ? Is not every star trying to free itself from every other ? " The stars of heaven are fleeing one another like bits of exploded shrapnel," many scholars to-day maintain.

We have discovered the relativity of all things—and oh, how unhappy this knowledge makes us ! We see the world with faceted eyes ; and simultaneously from the most various angles. The greatest men now living see with eyes that are like wonderfully ground prisms.

On the foredeck individual sailors walked up and down. Each one hung his head ; each was alone with himself. Yesterday none of the boys had shown homesickness ; they were together then, and even the fifteen-year-olds had enough manhood to suppress their feelings. Now that not even work held them together, they looked quite ill with yearning.

On a steamer one feels neither that bliss nor that torment of life which exist on the sailing ships. A steamer runs like clockwork ; it is almost insensible to wind and weather. Its machinery levels off the feelings of its men. Once almost all men were " sail-ors." Wind and wave of feeling were their motive forces. To-day there are very

few sailor-men left. Almost the entire human tonnage has machines in its hold. Machinery has killed our gods. The telephone has destroyed the fine nerve of our inner ear. People on the wire no longer call one another with heart, with longing, with the inner voice.

We travel too fast; external connections are too easy. Our most secret talent is atrophying: our talent for conjuring, that is, letting the world appear before us by the simple power of imagination.

On the tarred ribbons of our roads we roar across the countryside. But where are the spirits of childhood, where do the elves of tree and brook still live? Who goes out into the night without an electric light? Who sees the hordes of the Wild Huntsman? Who still meets ghosts?

Where is the man left who will undertake great deeds, risks and perils because he had a message in a dream, because he saw a vision, because a star fell from the sky or a cloud took on a significant shape? We all seem condemned to rationalism. The great intoxications of the spirit are ours no longer. As a substitute we have games, alcohol and drugs.

Yes, the end of the voyage was in sight, but the fact of primitive existence was still extremely potent. Often Jorg felt that dry land as a whole was unreal, that there was nothing in the world except the ocean and this one ship.

Dull days followed on which the *Notre Dame* ran only a hundred and seventy or eighty miles, and this in a region where one would have expected rather too much wind than too little. They alternated with wild nights, stormy north-westers which jumped around in a squall of rain to south-west with a suddenness that Jorg had never known. The crew never finished with bracing the yards. People grew surly over the wiles of the wind, and

almost burst with impatience. In the cross seas the *Notre Dame* rolled as if to shake the masts from her hull. "Typical Australian weather," said Andersson.

All sorts of little accidents happened to Jorg to embitter him. The drinking-glass broke in its holder. The tank of the spirit-lamp was not properly closed, and in rolling about it poured out its contents ; everything stank. Flung back and forth in his bunk, Jorg often started up with a cry out of bad dreams. The shadow of an albatross would glide like a flash across the dark sea. He yanked open the porthole, and stared, still full of the horror of his dreams, into the flying foam, into the roaring of the sea along the weather-beaten sides.

No doubt it was because of the long continence that one dreamt again and again of women whom in waking hours one had entirely forgotten. One saw them again as one had in the days of dawning sex, when one imagined women rather than knew them. One imagined them as quite wonderful, overpowering great bodies, embracing, naked and soft. The reality, on the contrary, was always a miserable disappointment. The women who had crossed the path of a man of thirty-odd years were all present again in these nights. They were a burden ; after all, there were some whom one had "on one's conscience." What a man had done pursued him. There was no escape. One loads oneself down with more than one can really carry, thought Jorg. That is the reason why one should develop a conscience in children. We must spare them this burden, this torment.

Most of the people of Jorg's generation had missed this in their youth. He remembered a conversation he had had a few years before with his father, who had been a hard, inflexible man all his life, and a follower of Darwin. "Why do you struggle so hard for your child ?" his father had said. "Even the fox, shrewd creature, never bothers about its young," That was

in Berlin, just about this time, after Christmas. On the buffet in the dining-room still stood the Christmas tree, one of those to be had in fashionable florists', ready decorated with big silvered pine-cones, powdered with artificial snow, wound with red silk ribbons. A dozen champagne bottles, their silver necks glittering, stood before it as the only Christmas present. An unspeakable loneliness surrounded the old man, who had had many women, and now was deserted by them all and even by his children. He had wished it so. In a glass cabinet stood the hunting rifles which he could no longer use with his tired eyes ; their burnished barrels shone blue. On the walls hung the bleached skulls of shot animals; there were dates on the foreheads. That was the booty, the final result of a long life—dead bones round about, and dead love in a frozen heart, and between man and wall the invisible cobwebs of memory.

A man born of such a race was bound to go on that desperate search for God which was so characteristic of Jorg's generation. Where is the pillar that will not tremble ? One was weak ; all the people one knew were weak. One sought strength ; one needed something to cling to.

And this was the fearful thing that this generation of war and revolutions underwent : everything it tried to cling to collapsed on it. All the people in which it believed, whom it thought great and strong, turned out to be small and weak.

This generation could cling neither to a political faith nor to any traditional form of religion. If at all, one escaped only direct to God, and that only after absolute shipwreck. Anyone who succeeded in this lived on the island of God like Robinson Crusoe on his island, alone. God was not the daily conversation, not the household utensil that religions tried to make Him. One met Him only at rare and tremendous moments.

For this reason belief in God could never help to overcome the troubles of everyday life. One debased God by misusing Him as an escape from one's own petty troubles.

When day broke at last after the long torture of the night, Jorg discovered that a great transformation had taken place in him after all. He had grown familiar with the sea, with the greatest thing that existed in nature. At first it had seemed strange to him, even fearful. Now he could look across the waves as at a fate which one has to bear, with equanimity, with perfect composure.

What would it matter if the ocean swallowed the *Notre Dame* and him? He had faith that there was another life; that he would have the privilege sometimes of being near to the people he loved. At bottom there was little more that could happen to him. All he asked was not to die in despondency and baseness.

The tired old year went quietly toward its end. A gentle breeze blew, and the sea was almost smooth. The *Notre Dame* did not stir, but slid forward noiselessly except for the faint ripple of the water and the soft crying of the wind in the masts. The last splendour of day glimmered blue on the rainy deck. Ahead was a pink-grey cloud-bank, heavy as a mountain, but in the west the sky was clear. Light behind the *Notre Dame*; and before her, darkness.

By noon the ship had passed the sixth degree of longitude, on a level with Cape Leeuwin, the western tip of Australia. Even though she was still 800 sea miles from the coast, *Notre Dame* had reached the longitude of Australia.

At home the New Year's bells were ringing now. People were opening the windows of warm rooms, letting the old year escape into the cold freshness of the winter night. Hissing and crackling, rockets climbed above the roofs; glasses touched; there was a smell of hot

doughnuts filled with plum sauce. In the streets the fire-crackers of the street urchins crackled. The seaport towns were full of the deep bass roar of the ships' sirens ; people ran out of the houses on to the street. Toy balloons bobbed in the glow of the street lights. Papier-maché clubs thudded on backs ; in opposing streams the masses of humanity pushed along the house-fronts. In their drunkenness they were trying to forget—to forget that life had grown shorter again, that after a long series of humdrum days the same thing was beginning all over again, but with a different number before it.

At sea there was no New Year's celebration. The sea is eternal; years mean nothing to it.

With great pains and difficulty, exhausting the last supply in the wine-closet opposite the compass-chest, Jorg acquired two bottles of *aqua vitæ* and a bottle of port. He sent the *aqua vitæ* to the boys, for it was a cold night, and the port to the cook and the steward. He walked the main deck with Barbarossa. Barbarossa told of the old *Pampa* and of Captain Madsen. " Oh, he was a bad one. He sold his crew as much whisky as ever the boys wanted—at a hundred per cent, profit. And he profited double on it. If a boy couldn't work because of drunkenness, Madsen deducted a week's pay from his wages. He was allowed to do that by Finnish maritime law. First he tempted his crew, and then he punished them for it. New Year's Eve they were all so drunk that I—the youngest on board—had to stand all night alone at the helm with a drawn pistol, because the boys wanted to raid the whisky closet. No, that was not a nice New Year's Eve,"

Jorg thought of the old captain in Joseph Conrad's novel who had sold his ship's quinine supply to go to some evil woman. Captain Madsen's dealings were equally base—the most infamous thing that a captain can do to his men.

" On soap, Madsen added on five times the price. Finally we refused to wash ; then he came down to three times the right price. From Captain Andersson we get tobacco for half of what we had to pay Captain Madsen. And he whored away all that money with the woman that came on board the *Pampa* in Australia. He was wearing his wedding-ring, the wedding-ring of his rightful wife at home, and he insisted that the crew should call the Australian ' Madam Captain,' even though they all knew his wife at home. Oh, he was rotten ! Once after washing down the decks somebody dropped a match on deck. Captain Madsen piped both watches ; he had them run up the heavy tackle from the main yard—several hours' hard work, and it takes both watches to do it. Then he had a heavy strop brought, and the match was made fast in full form, hove up and swung overboard with the yard. That was Captain Madsen's way."

At midnight a dead calm set in ; the stars glittered. There was one particularly bright, large star in the west among black clouds. Jorg could feel this star staring at him with its white fire ; he shuddered at it. He seemed to see the snow crystals glittering around the still, lonely house at home. He felt a wave of love radiating thence, and surrounding him as a strange warmth. He did not deserve this love ; he shuddered at the abysses of his own heart.

Andersson came on deck. " It begins badly, the new year," said Andersson. He looked up at the black towers of sail, which flapped and beat like the last tired wing-beats of great birds before they settle down to the night's rest. " I was hoping for a record voyage, but I have no luck. I suppose I shall never have luck. This evening I was reading in *The Nautical Magazine* that an English admiral petitioned for his discharge, and gave as a reason that he was unlucky. He gave his whole career,

with the battles he fought in, as proof. I can well understand it. But there are two reasons why people are unlucky. It may be that fate pursues them without any reasons in their own personalities, and it may be that they are awkward, hampered by their peculiarities. Am I so peculiar and awkward? Or why do I have no luck? I think these long voyages have made me strange; I don't fit into the ordinary world any more. I don't suppose there is anything that can be done about it."

Jorg said nothing; it was true. Andersson was a man who had got into the wrong century; he was born at least a hundred years too late. What could one say to such a man? The less he was conscious of himself, the better for him.

A soft, delicate whistle came from the black, night sea, quite close to the ship. "Did you hear? Penguins!—A sign that we're not far from the coast. You hear them before you see them."

The air was so incredibly still that one was surprised to see a wake, a sign that the ship still had way on.

"Captain, how will it be when we anchor at Port Lincoln in Spencer's Gulf? How do you get ashore?"

Andersson laughed. "First, it may happen with the prevailing south-west wind that we have to tack for days, perhaps for weeks, in sight of land, and still can't get in to Spencer's Gulf. If all goes well, we'll lie at anchor seven miles outside Port Lincoln. The anchorage is badly situated, so that an island hides the city from us. They can't see us from shore, but we aren't allowed to put down a boat and go ashore until we've been passed by the authorities. The doctor and the harbour-master have to come on board first. Well, there's one house in Port Lincoln so far outside the town that they can sight our anchorage. Everything else is a matter of luck. If one of the inhabitants of this house happens to see the *Notre Dame*, and happens to feel kind and good-natured,

he'll notify the harbour-master. Then the harbour-master comes out with the doctor in his motor-boat. If the weather allows it; there's mostly a heavy swell going up the Gulf. And if he has time, and feels like it."

" Couldn't we fire off a cannon to attract attention ? "

"No, that's a signal of distress ; people ashore would think we were crippled,"

" Will our letters be waiting for us in Port Lincoln ? "

" No, our letters are all addressed to Captain Peterson's agent in Adelaide. The agent doesn't send the letters until he hears that the ship has arrived ; we shall have to wait three or four days for the post."

For days Jorg had been thinking of nothing but the letters which he hoped would be waiting for him in Port Lincoln. The sea teaches patience.

At two o'clock at night, as he lay in his bunk with the light out, he looked once more across the ocean. There he saw a luminous bird. A mistake was almost impossible ; his eyes were used to the darkness, the sea was quiet, and it could hardly be phosphorescence. Nor could it be a flying spark from the chimney of the galley, for the fire was out long since. Nor was it a flying cigarette butt, for the thing or creature flew horizontally across the sea for some time, and it gave a greenish light. It must be a big bird ; the wing shadows stood out plainly against the dusky sky. After a few seconds it sank into a trough of the swell, and vanished from view.

He was afraid of sleep, for his dreams were dreadful. Basically it was always the same dream : mankind had realized that human life in the mass was quite worthless. Machines had first created the mass man, the *Massen-mensch*, and then they had made him unnecessary. The machines had grown so perfect that they no longer needed men to serve them. But the mass man had lost so much of his humanity, his soul and his mind that he could no longer maintain a human status. In perform-

ance he was inferior to the machine, in status to the man ; he Was superfluous, and people began to destroy him. Wars began without the name of war. They were neither expressly declared nor expressly waged, and very few people were even conscious of them. Machines had always destroyed human life, after all: the automobile, for example, killed on a large scale, several hundred a day, without the world's getting particularly excited. Now—in Jorg's dreams—it had reached the point where the independent life of the machines grew out of hand, where they, as if driven by a dull urge, began to exterminate the men who had once been their masters.

Often, in his dream, he would ride in an electric train, jammed full of people, through a countryside mechanized to the last degree. As they roared along he saw black masses of workers going on their shift in the factories. He knew that these workers were superfluous ; their labour was unnecessary, for the machines did the work alone. Airplanes flew low under a grey sky, and plunged into clouds. One heard nothing but a soft hum. A thin, fine mist came down on the marching columns, and suddenly Jorg saw one of the black ranks halt its motion and sink down, just like a swathe of grass under a scythe. Each man threw his arms up for a moment, and fell as if his legs had been cut off. As he fell he carried the next with him, and the fall propagated itself throughout the column. Clinging to a strap, Jorg stood in the aisle of the roaring, rattling car. He heard the voice of his neighbour ; the man spoke with a slight regret such as one feels when a football-player misses a shot: " Oh, what a pity, now the planes have spread the liquid insect-poison in the wrong direction. Probably the wind changed. Too bad ; there must have been at least a couple of thousand people who suffered by it."

They went past a city. It lay by a river, glittering glass and cement in the morning light. Across the plain

beyond the stream a monstrous machine rolled up. It was many times as high as the tallest building in the city ; it moved on caterpillar treads, and was like a monstrous, many-jointed worm. Blindly groping, it moved forward ; it fell into the river, which foamed over its banks. Half under water it crawled forward undeterred. It climbed the far bank, and rolled across the city. Walls burst, houses collapsed. Swarms of people raced through the streets in mad haste, much as if a heavy foot had stepped on an ant-hill. The machine rolled forward and back, hither and thither across the city, systematically, like a plough covering a field. It crushed the houses and the people. " Oh, what a shame," came the voice of his neighbour again. " They *were* going to raze the city. They must have forgotten to notify the inhabitants."

The train went around a curve. Here it appeared that the train was built on a new principle : the walls of the cars were made accordion-fashion, like the vestibule connections of the old express trains. At the curves in the track they bent. The seats were arranged in the folds of the accordion-walls, and the people who sat there were squeezed to death in the curves. It was as simple as mashing a caterpillar. One heard a faint whimpering, almost drowned by the screech of the wheels on the rails ; intestines came out like toothpaste when one squeezes the tube. Then the limp bodies collapsed. But no panic started in the train ; no outcry was made. " Too bad," said the voice. " Hard luck ! "

Jorg raced—in his dream—across wet fields in late autumn, in an industrial countryside. He ran with the awkwardness and the desperation of a man accustomed to walking only on asphalt. He was fleeing from the uncanny animal machines that crawled like huge caterpillars across the countryside, shadowy on the horizon,

crushing and destroying everything. Helen was with him, and the children. He carried Elke on his arm. She had thrown her arms around his neck, and was crying softly, her head pressed to his breast. Helen was carrying Jan, who was a dead weight, fast asleep in her arms. As he ran he saw Helen's eyes filled with an insane terror ; he himself was terrified almost to the point of losing his senses. One could not tell whether the planes might not already have sprinkled their poison. Perhaps the water through which they waded and splashed was poisoned. Perhaps the next moment it would gnaw apart the leather of their shoes, and eat off their feet. They would sink, and the children would sink into the poison. Perhaps the air they were breathing was poisoned, and would eat out their lungs. They ran, panting, and hid trembling in a drainage canal, and one of the mechanical monsters slid over them with dull thunderings, crushing the soil, crumbling stones to powder. They reached the ruins of a classical temple, which oddly enough was standing in the midst of the industrial countryside. They fled up the marble steps, seeking cover behind pillars. Machine-gun fire raked the air ; one saw the steel helmets of soldiers rising above trenches full of water. But the bullets did not reach the temple. Beyond its pillars, beyond its steps they faded away like streams of water in intense heat. Helen had lost her shoes as she fled, and her silk stockings were worn through. With slow movements she drew off the black fabric. Her feet were bleeding. The machines ground to a pulp the trenches in which the soldiers lay. At last every living thing in the landscape was dead ; the roar of the machines departed, their shadows sank below the horizon. Grass grew with inconceivable speed ; trees shot up from the crushed soil, and ran riot in the ruined cities. A flock of little birds descended on the pillars of the temple, and began to sing. The sky turned clear, cleansed of the

whirring shadows of the airplanes. A hot southern sun scorched and healed the tortured earth. Elke stopped crying, freed herself from Jorg's arms, and began to pick flowers, which grew rank in the cracks of the stone temple. Jan woke up, and groped for Helen's breast. Jorg looked into Helen's eyes, which were smiling behind their tears. They were the only human beings, the last and the first people in the world.

On the morning of January first the crew caught a penguin. This most human of all birds was swimming inquisitively beside and behind the *Notre Dame*, which was still doing a good four or five knots. It swam now in, now under the water, using its stumps of wings as oars. Every time it came up, it peered inquisitively at the men on board. Finally, half as a joke, the motor mechanic threw the harpoon. He had the luck or the misfortune to pierce one of the penguin's wings. He hoisted the creature aboard, almost uninjured. Like a fat little man the penguin stood on deck, astonished and furious. It struck and snapped at anything that came near it. Jorg caught a blow of a wing against his leg, and felt it quite painfully through the thick sea-boot.

The crew discussed what was to be done with the penguin. There had been nothing but salt meat for a long time ; they decided to kill it. Jorg went below decks. He did not want to see them murdering this little man, this comic dwarf.

It afforded an astonishing amount of meat : the whole bird was nothing but muscle. There was enough for everyone, and it tasted good, not like fish.

On the following days the motor-boat, the gig and the gangway were painted. On the fo'c'sle-head the crane was rigged up for hoisting the anchor; all the preparations for port were made.

Jorg helped with the painting, but he did not like

these early preparations for port. He was superstitious ; too many things might intervene. Soon there was no place where one could go on the whole ship. All the cabins were being scoured, scrubbed, waxed, polished and painted. Everywhere was the smell of floor-wax, of soap and fresh paint. All the clothes-lines were full of wash ; it was not necessary to hoard water so much any longer. All the hatch-covers were spread with mattresses, pillows and blankets put out to air. Suits dangled in the sun, turned round and round by the wind. People examined them critically, brushed and rubbed them. The one flat-iron passed from man to man ; it never had a chance to cool. Hats suddenly appeared. They were pressed, and hat-bands were washed. The mildew was rubbed off shoes ; new soles were sewn on.

There was something very touching about all these preparations. They were like scenes from the unforgettable *The Gold Rush*, with Charlie Chaplin—when he prepared his little log cabin for the visit of the girl he loved. When he cut lace d'oyleys out of paper, and put them under the plates. Yes, and then the girl laughed at him, poor fellow.

It was much the same with the boys of the *Notre Dame*. They worked at their things in order to look their very best ; they were so proud that everything was fine and neat. And to them, there would happen that which happens to every seaman : he goes ashore, and is thunderstruck to see how poor, how old-fashioned his grand clothes are. The whole way of life of people ashore is quite different. But that never prevents the seaman from trying again ; he lives in a dream.

Barbarossa shaved off his big beard. His own mother would not have known him. The untanned skin came out white and rosy from under the beard. More than ever he looked like a six-year-old boy : he who, in his beard, had been as dignified and splendid as an admiral.

He himself was much embarrassed. His bashful grin made him even more childlike, if possible.

Jorg was infected by the general stir. He washed his Iceland sweaters ; pounds of dirt and sheep-grease came out. It is a crime to wash such a sweater ; it loses half its warmth if the animal oil is removed from the raw wool. But it had to be. Without thought of the water ration he pumped himself four buckets of water for the grand washing. He still had a few shirts and handkerchiefs which had been washed and ironed according to civilized rules at home ; thus outfitted he could face Australia with confidence.

The weather grew fine—too fine. At the laughable pace of a pedestrian the *Notre Dame* moved on toward Australia. On the sixth of January she needed only a hundred sea miles to reach Kangaroo Island, at the mouth of Spencer's Gulf. With a little spirit in the breeze, they must have sighted the Kangaroo Island light that night, but in the evening the wind went to sleep. *Notre Dame* drifted, and it looked as if she would never get to Australia. The weather was warm and summery. Probably many citizens of Adelaide now were going to the seaside, bathing and wishing for a breath of fresh air. But not half so much as the men on the *Notre Dame*.

The night was so still that one spoke involuntarily in hushed tones. The rigging cried softly, as children cry in their sleep. Andersson walked the deck barefoot, noiselessly but swingingly, in a rage as if to drag the ship forward with him. Forward, in heaven's name forward ! This lying motionless, so close to the goal, was an agony. He told of ships that had drifted for weeks in sight of the harbour they could not reach. Tugs had come to offer their help in towing the last dozen miles : " Only fifteen quid, Captain ! "—But even that was too dear. Andersson told of the eternal west winds at the Straits of

Gibraltar, and of their wiles. Once an English convoy had gathered in the harbour of Gibraltar to sail to England in a body. The captains were ashore, sitting over their punch. A favouring north wind sprang up, the signal to weigh anchor was given, and the captains hastened aboard. Only old O'Groat kept his seat : " You sail ahead ; I'll finish my punch in peace. Somebody has to be last, after all." When O'Groat's ship trailed the others into the straits, the wind swung back to the west. The other ships had just managed to get through, but O'Groat was caught in the Mediterranean. The convoy sailed for England ; the ships discharged and loaded and sailed back to the Mediterranean. When they came roaring before the west wind through the Straits of Gibraltar seven weeks later, old O'Groat was still tacking back and forth beyond the strait.

Jorg was much too excited to sleep. He felt the impatience of the Continental city-dweller in the country when he discovers that there is no post on Sunday.

The day after the morrow, if all went well, they could send a telegram ; the day after that they might even have mail. The impatience was ridiculous, but he could no longer hold it in check. He seemed to feel the city of Adelaide across a hundred miles of ocean ; the lights, the cars, the roar of traffic.

He read about Australia. What a strange contradictory country! An animal world which in other continents had died out millions of years before. Marsupials and cavern animals, the " Tasmanian devil "—the very names were horrid and repulsive, the creatures themselves unattractive. They caused a shudder, a breath from that subterranean of primitive ages from which even man had once ascended. Without Australia we should have no living picture of the fauna of the tertiary era. Without Australia no living representation of the life of Stone-Age man.

And Australian water! It was the most contradictory water in the world. Australian rivers were vigorous at the source, but unlike ours most of them did not wax large, but rather became weaker and weaker, finally trickling away in the sand. There was no depending on this water ; in droughts even the best springs dried up, and the deepest water-holes failed. The whole continent seemed in process of drying up—an uncanny proceeding.

The animals had adapted themselves : frogs, snails, fish buried themselves in the mud when the drought came, and survived. They survived in a mysterious fashion in their burial chambers, for months, years—until finally in a single day, after endless downpour, the desert turned green, and every living thing awoke briefly and intensely. Hardly were the water-holes full before the creatures grew like a flash ; they begot, gave birth, and died, all in a space of weeks.

Spiders peopled the dry steppes. They spread their webs from bush to bush, so many and so strong that a horse could hardly force its way through. There were honey ants which collected the honey in living containers. The worker ants fed their compatriots in the ant-hill until their abdomens swelled up grotesquely with stored honey and finally their head and thorax were but tiny excrescences on the living honeycomb.

The Australian aborigines were probably the oldest type among the surviving men of the earth. A desert race, a starved race ; but hunger had not led to bodily degeneration. Their bones were uncommonly delicate, hands and feet very small, spine smaller than in other races ; this made the spine flexible like that of a snake. The bodies were long-limbed, well formed, the limbs of an animal elegance. But their faces were revoltingly ugly, completely distorted—probably as a result of the blinding sun. There were primitive characteristics ; the

women had a fold of skin between their breasts, an animal feature. The men, with their heavy beards, looked like ugly old prophets, religious fanatics, hermits of the desert.

There were pictures of a whole tribe squatting around a dying man, crowded tightly together, all their limbs interlocked, a mound of bodies. This was a tribal feeling which in itself was half-way to the animals. They clung together in fear and pain because they had the same body temperature, the same smell. They held tight to the dying man, trying literally to keep him alive. They crept together into a knot, seeking protection, consolation, warmth.

The religion of these roaming hordes was a sort of animism. To them everything in nature had a soul, magical, mystical. Probably life in the hungry desert, in the stony wilderness, in the enormous solitude, was not otherwise to be borne.

The desert was peopled by an ancestor cult which went back to the very beginnings of the race. The ancestors had wandered ; the old men of the tribe knew exactly where they had gone and what they had done. Here a great-great-great-great-grandfather had killed a kangaroo ; at that water-hole a huge snake had crawled up to him, on this mountain he had fought enemies. The ancestors peopled the desert with human spirits. The savage was always surrounded by the spirits of his ancestors ; he was never alone. The legion of ancestors was numberless, for in every tree, in every hill, at every water-hole they had left " spirit children " behind.

The Australian aborigines alone among living people did not know the connection between impregnation and conception. They believed that the impregnation merely prepared for conception, and that the ancestors were the real fathers of all children.

How were the first men created ? In distant " dream

ages " men were not yet completed ; they were only pre-shaped. The earth was covered with salt water, which was gradually pushed back to northward. On the shores of this water lived the " Inapertwa," the imperfect first men. They lay rolled up so that one could just recognize the outlines of their bodies. Some grew from lizards, others from rats, from dwarf parrots, from trees. They grew from those creatures which are still the totems of the towns to-day.

In this state of affairs two beings appeared, " Ungambikula," which means " those created from nothing." They went around to the half-shaped men. With their stone knives they freed arms and legs ; with four cuts each they made fingers and toes. With their fingers they bored nostrils. A cut on each side opened the eyelids ; a long cut made the mouth. Then they opened and shut the lower jaw a couple of times to make it movable. The first men were completed.

All the traditions were passed from mouth to mouth, along with sacred objects handed down from the ancestors. The ceremonies were exceedingly varied and complicated. They took up a good part of life, especially at times when there was enough food. Dances and pantomimes lasted for weeks and months. Certain dances, certain pantomimes were the personal property of individuals. People disposed of them as of physical property, giving ceremonies as gifts. Such a gift was more prized than any other possession.

The women, of course, were excluded from the supernatural things which the men did secretly, hidden in a dry river-bed or in the bush. The women heard only the hum of the boomerangs, the voices of the spirits. They felt very shivery indeed. When boys grew to maturity, and had stood their initiation, the old men, the magicians, handed them the boomerangs : a confidential grin passed from man to man. As children the

boys had trembled in the women's quarters when they heard the ghostly voices whizzing at a distance ; now they held the spell in their own hands. At a single stroke one gained one's vast superiority over the mere women.

They had a few wise laws : for instance, a man had to avoid his mother-in-law, and she him.

The man could give his wife a command of silence, and he often did so—sometimes for a whole year at once. There was nothing tragic about it ; the women chatted on gaily, but they did it in a sign language. Howling and yelling were allowed in any case. This chorus was needed as accompaniment for ceremonies, and, after all, the woman had to be allowed some valve for her pent-up feelings.

A white man once took an Australian negro to the cinema. The savage saw a Mickey Mouse film, brought it in spirit to his tribe, and transformed it into a ceremonial dance which became the chief dance of the tribe.

Science had arrived just in time to see the last men of the Stone Age on our globe. In the few years since the explorers Spencer and Gillen described and pictured the life of the Australian negroes, these people have gone over at a bound into the Iron Age; they are dying of it as of a plague.

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Midnight had struck—a new day, perhaps the last. Jorg sat up in his bunk. On the beam which ran along below the cabin ceiling was the little gallery of pictures of home. Since Christmas he had made a little cross under a picture every night, as a sign that another day of the voyage was past. He had made eleven crosses. Only one picture in the bottom row was not crossed. He listened long to see whether the hardly audible breath of the sea would not grow stronger, whether the faint

bubbling would not grow louder along the sides of the *Notre Dame*. In the midst of his intense listening he fell asleep.

He was awakened by the glaring beam of a flashlight on his face. He opened his eyes and blinked blindly. The beam dropped, shadows leapt toward the ceiling, and the sideboard of the bunk bent in the grip of a strong hand.

Barbarossa was standing there. Jorg saw the big childlike face reddishly illuminated from below. It beamed, it had an aura of blond down around it, the white teeth shone, and Jorg heard the voice, choked with joy : " Light in sight ! "

" No ! it's not true ! " Jorg's heart began to pound like a starting motor. With a jerk he flung back the blanket. " Is it true ? No lie ? "

Barbarossa only laughed. He took off the chimney of Jorg's lamp, and held a match to the wick. Then Jorg saw that it was really so. He called after Barbarossa. " What light ? How far ? " But Barbarossa was long since on his way. Stunned and confused, Jorg slipped into his clothes automatically ; one shoelace was knotted, would not be untied, and Jorg broke it with a furious jerk. Was he still dreaming ? He thought it quite likely as he stumbled across the dark cabin. Not until he was on deck in the cold, fresh, night air, not until he saw the stars twinkling in the sky, did he know that he was awake.

With three bounds he was on the main deck. He saw Andersson and Barbarossa bent over charts in the chart-room. *Notre Dame* was running dead before the wind; her masts were as solid as rock. She ran as easily, as airily as a long-legged child, a thirteen-year-old girl running vociferously across a meadow with her hands full of flowers. And there, straight ahead, right in front of the bowsprit, a tiny beam of light was switching across

the horizon. It was a pale, a tiny fire, very lonely, almost lost in the infinity of night, a wretched spark, in no way to be compared with the flaming swords that combat the night beyond the coasts of Europe. Jorg clung to the rail. It was a solemn feeling. A feeling of soft, endless happiness ran through his veins : adoration, thankfulness, tenderness for this pulsing blue spark, the heart-beat of civilization. There is no clearer expression of men's readiness to help one another, of mankind's solidarity, of its humanity, than a beacon like this on a distant coast.

Andersson came from the chart-room, the night-glass in his hand. He passed it to Jorg. " The light of Thistle Island, eighteen miles westward of Kangaroo Island ; it came in sight at half-past two,"

For the first time Jorg heard the captain's voice drenched with joy ; it came from the bottom of his chest, as blissful the voice of a man who at last has been accepted by his beloved.

Although half the crew was asleep, a festive feeling spread through the whole ship. They had awakened the cook ; the galley chimney began to smoke, and the odour of fresh coffee came out on deck. At four in the morning, at the change of watches, the watch going off duty stayed on deck. One heard the clear voices of the boys like the twittering of birds awakening in the early grey dawn. They brought their gramophone on deck ; the sweet voice of Ulla Lundquist sounded out for the thousandth time, but it was quite fresh, quite new. And, for a fact, the boys were dancing ! A wild *joie de vivre* burst out in them, and had to be released. They embraced one another and glided across the planks in couples, at mad speed, pliant, elegant, running over with muscular energy and suppleness—dancing panthers. They could not contain their enthusiasm, nor their delight ; they walked on their hands, they played leapfrog, they swung

into the shrouds, and leapt down on deck with great bounds. They hopped like frogs, and raced as if in the Krakowiak dance ; they went up ropes hand over hand, and slid down like lightning. They were as frolicsome as colts in pasture. The cook pounded a crazy accompaniment with his pots and pans. Now that the parting drew near, Jorg really discovered for the first time how fond he was of them all.

He congratulated Andersson on his navigation. Was it not a splendid achievement to guide the old *Notre Dame* across seventeen thousand miles of sea with a crew of children, with compasses that were not compensated, with inexact chronometers, without sight of land, without radio, without exchange of positions with other ships—and after eighty-nine days to arrive at the exact point of the goal ?

But all the joy was gone from Andersson's voice. The old, haughty, measureless bitterness was there. He pointed with a contemptuous gesture to the dancing, leaping, singing boys : " You see, my crew is delighted. They are happy to have the sea voyage behind them. The boys can hardly wait to get ashore. Neither can you—can you, Mr. Borcke ? "

Jorg read the captain's thoughts. The man was alone. His crew had, in their minds, already left the *Notre Dame*. At this moment they were no longer on board in their thoughts and feelings—these boys, these children. The voyage was breaking up, and the ship's society was breaking up. *Notre Dame* had become a ghost, and at the break of the new day this ghost lost its power. Only Andersson, this loneliest of men, remained true to the ship. Was not he himself a ghost of the sea ?

It was just light enough so that they could look into each other's eyes. " All I want is news, Captain. I just want to know that the people at home are well ;

nothing more. Then I shall be glad to sail on with the *Notre Dame* to the end of the world."

Andersson's eyes burned. They burned their way into Jorg's heart, and he stood erect like a soldier before his general. Very faintly came the captain's voice : " I may perhaps remind you of those words, Mr. Borcke." His voice sounded just like the rushing of the sea.

At sunrise Jorg fell asleep on the sofa in the chart-room. When the steward waked him at half-past eight for breakfast, Kangaroo Island was in plain view in the sunlight. It was perhaps twelve sea miles distant—a gently bulging shield over the sea, with a lighthouse as the boss on the shield. The country was of that colour which, as a child, one had imagined Africa to be—yellowish brown, the colour used to mark deserts on maps. Through the glass one could see sparse grey-black bushes. The land looked unfriendly and inhospitable; the lighthouse was like a phantom, and it seemed impossible that people were living there. All around the shore was a tremendous surf, although the sea was quiet. Pillars of spray rose up, staying long in the air like geysers, shining in the mist. At the north end of the island one of these pillars stood so long, and was so tall, that Jorg thought it was a factory chimney until it suddenly collapsed. The eternal enmity between land and sea stood revealed, and the overflowing joy with which he had greeted the land now turned to amazement at this battle of natural forces. It was easy to understand that coasts are nothing but dangers to a ship like *Notre Dame*.

With a gentle south-west wind the *Notre Dame* by noon had worked her way as far as the sound between Gambier Island and Kangaroo Island. There was also a Calm. One heard the thunder of the surf, a distant battle ; one saw the breakers rear at the brown cliffs, stand motionless, finally sink as if under a scythe. The air flickered, and the flat shield of the island had grown

to a mountain. With the naked eye Jorg could see a signal mast now with a cross-arm, a white, pointed cross near the western tip of the island. In vain he looked for a sign of life, of even a horse or a sheep; the cross was like a gravestone, the island like a tomb.

Notre Dame pitched heavily in the uneasy seas between the islands. The big sails were guyed up in case it was necessary to manoeuvre rapidly ; the whole ship was full of restlessness and tension. From the fo'c'sle-head came the clear voices of Alf and Barbarossa, and the harsh sing-song of the watch, which was running around a capstan. The anchor crane, which had been lying on deck for twelve weeks, stood upright. The anchors were being hove up and hoisted outboard, ready to drop. Suddenly there was a commotion for'ard ; Barbarossa sang out a few words in Swedish, and came bounding across the gangway to midships. Andersson rushed out of the chart-room, glass in hand. Flags were going up the signal mast on the island. One saw the little rolled-up bundles of flags rising like beads on a rosary ; in jerks they unfolded to flutter in the wind. News ! A message from the world to the *Notre Dame*.

Jorg realized that it was an entirely unexpected and unusual occurrence. Not a soul on board seemed prepared for it, although the *Notre Dame* had often sailed past Kangaroo Island before. It must be something extraordinary that the island had to impart. He gazed spellbound at the tiny coloured rags that twitched in the wind on the tugging cord. A feverish urge to decipher them took hold of him. He raced aft, following Barbarossa, who had a bundle of flags rolled up under his arm. Andersson was already at the foot of the flag-line ; he had put the heavy signal-book on a timberhead, and was leafing through it with flying hands. He did not need to look up the topmost flags ; they were the identification signal of the *Notre Dame*.

Andersson's heavy forefinger slid along the rows of coloured flags ; his lips mumbled letters. As the letters joined together into words, it happened that Jorg understood more quickly than the captain. The message was in English : " Call Port Adelaide."

Andersson repeated the letters with a vacant expression, as if he could not put them together : " Call Port Adelaide.⁰ Jorg said the words aloud. Andersson stared at him. " Yes, but why ? What does it mean ? "

Barbarossa tied a flag to the line, and ran it up, hand over hand in quick jerks. It unfolded; it was the answering pennant. Over on the island the flag-line came down, and a new chain of flags went up, and unfolded. Jorg ran back amidships to fetch paper and pencil so as to take down the message which, plainly, was vital. The captain's finger shook as it moved along the symbols of the international flag-signal code. A fearful excitement stirred the man ; Jorg had never seen him like this before. His breath came pantingly as he spelt out letter after letter : " Await instructions from Messrs. Wilson, Marx, Marcus & Co,"

Jorg wrote the words down, and Andersson stared at them, great drops of sweat dripping from his brow. Jorg nodded to Barbarossa, and Barbarossa pulled down the flag-line, and again hoisted the answering pennant.

Yonder on the island the third chain of flags went up, longer than the first two : " *Notre Dame* sold for scrap. Peterson."

Jorg wrote down letter after letter in block capitals, as if he could not trust to the legibility of his handwriting. He felt as if he were signing his death-warrant. Andersson stood tall and erect, his fists clenched, his eyes gazing rigid and incredulous at the flagpole.

Barbarossa had bent over the paper. His pink shaven face turned quite pale ; he looked broken-down like an old man. Andersson made an impatient gesture,

and for the third time the answering pennant went up aboard the *Notre Dame*.

Yonder the flags came down, and nothing more followed. Andersson stood on the poop-deck, his clothes fluttering in the wind. He looked like a tree whose trunk woodsmen have almost sawn through, and which may fall at any moment. The lion's head moved from side to side as the crown of the cut tree sways before it falls, or as a wounded animal moves its head in the pain of its injury. Vacantly, as if from a terrible dream, his eye turned back to reality. His eyes seemed much more deep-sunk under the menacing arches of the brows; they burned feverishly, flashing back and forth between the two men. At the distance demanded by respect and discipline, the crew crowded along the gangway; the boldest had climbed the steps to the poop-deck, and were staring over the rail. All eyes tried to read the faces of the three men. Andersson took a step toward; his enormous paws gripped Jorg's and the mate's shoulders heavily; his voice sounded like the dull roar of the surf: "Not a word for'ard! Do you understand? Not a word!"—(to the mate) "You will take the ship through the sound."

The crew gave way; the boys squeezed back against the rail of the gangway to let the captain pass. A whisper ran in the wake of his long, rapid strides. He vanished in the cabin.

Barbarossa looked at Jorg: "That's the end of him. He can never run a steamer."

"He has a pistol; do you think . . . should we go after him?"

"No. He won't do that. And if he wanted to, we couldn't stop him. He wants to be alone now."

Barbarossa turned away, the signal-book and the flags under his arm. Cook and steward, the delegates of the crew, approached him with eager questions. He

laughed right in their faces, his open, care-free boyish laugh. Jorg would never have credited him with such ability to dissemble. He pushed them aside like inquisitive younger brothers who are supposed not to know too much.

The sounds of work were audible again. The motor mechanic unscrewed the petrol tanks and the heating torches on the motors. A cluster of men took hold of the crank ; their backs swayed, and the motor went blub—blub—blub—pfft—pfft—blub—blub—blub. The heating flame roared ; the motor mechanic screwed at the jet, and shook burnt fingers ; the backs swayed. Finally the puffing blub-blub turned to a steady puttering. Motor after motor took hold. Jorg remembered with what disdain he had looked at these clumsy, primitive machines ninety days before, when they functioned for the first time, in the harbour of Copenhagen. He had laughed at them—he, who had just stepped out of a new car. Now the dull explosions sounded to him like fanfares, fanfares of approaching death. Antiquated as they were, they still belonged to this century, which marches in engine time.

He was deeply moved, profoundly shaken ; he felt like laughing or weeping. He looked up at the masts, his head thrown back so far and so long that he grew dizzy. Dead, condemned to death, the masts, the yards, the topmasts, the sails, the rigging. They that had offered defiance for more than thirty years, they that had given the power for sixty voyages around the globe. Were they not dead already ? Were they not standing lifeless like the corpses of great trees after a forest fire, charred, hollow, eaten to the heart ?

He looked over the bulwark, down on the curved, battered, rusty, salt-encrusted hull of the *Notre Dame*, and it was as though he saw the pointed trunks of the oxy-acetylene torches gliding across the plates, and the white-hot trough, the threadlike flow that cut the steel.

Presciently he gazed at the *Notre Dame* standing in a dirty, smoke-blackened scrap-yard in England, her rigging in tatters, her hull naked, bared of its element, like the body of a ravished woman. A crane was hoisting the chart-room ashore ; it was to be a hut for a week-end garden. He had a strange feeling as he walked the planks : why had they scoured them so clean, why had they made the old ship so beautiful, so stately, with such love ?

Why ? For an ignominious end, crunched in the greedy maw of some blast furnace. For a couple of stock-jobbers ; for a boom in scrap.

Alf motioned Jorg into his cabin. The mates had opened the bottle of Swedish punch with which they had intended to celebrate their arrival in Australia. They were drinking. They were talking in a whisper—what could have brought the owner to this petty horse-trade ? They were deeply moved, very unhappy, but Jorg could feel how little the unhappiness of these boys meant. Were they not secretly hoping already for a quick journey home, perhaps even on a steamer ? Were they not hoping that Captain Peterson would use the money he got for the *Notre Dame* to buy a steamer ? Were they not hoping for this steamer ?

Barbarossa rushed noisily on deck, which he was not really supposed to have left. The wind had swung around in irregular puffs to the north ; the *Notre Dame* had almost passed the channel between Kangaroo Island and Gambier Island, and now she had to tack.

The crew, bubbling with vigour and anticipation, flung itself upon the ropes, and *Notre Dame* answered her helm like a thoroughbred to the spur. It seemed as if she was trying to show for the last time how wonderfully she could sail, the big old ship. Now the surf was to starboard, now to port ; the sea breathed heavily ; the spray flew up as if mines were bursting. The thunder

echoed hollowly from the caves which the sea had dug by thousands of years¹ beating on the cliffs. The albatrosses were gone ; in their stead gulls swarmed around the ship—little, neat, screeching gulls with red feet, like Russian dancers with red leather boots. Their wings shone like mother-of-pearl, and were shaped like dove wings. In dozens they perched on the rail and on the yards ; they scarcely fluttered up when the sailors came. The land seemed to be greeting these seafarers from afar with a ballet that danced in the air.

In the afternoon Jorg went to his cabin and started to pack his bags. He had forgotten how to pack ; nothing would fit or go in. Very carefully, with his knife, he removed the pictures pasted over his berth, and put them in his pocket-book. There were white spots on the wall where the pictures had been stuck ; yes, he had lived there as long as that. It was hard to take leave. With a very strange sensation he arranged the contents of his pocket-book—his passport, his money. So it was all going to be needed again ! For the first time in three months he wound his watch, and tried putting his ring on his finger. Good heavens, what trimmings civilization did surround a man with !

There were several boxes to be nailed up. In the midst of his hammering he stopped ; it occurred to him that Andersson, next door, would be bound to hear and interpret the noise. He stopped packing. It was tactless to show Andersson that he was preparing to leave the *Notre Dame*.

When the steward called for supper, *Notre Dame* was a good five sea miles inside Spencer's Gulf. Although Jorg did not look out, he could feel in his flesh the nearness of land on all sides ; it produced a peculiar tingling excitement. The re-encountering of many forgotten things, of hotel labels on trunks, of cravats, of gloves and perfumed soap, had put Jorg in a strange frame of

mind. Odd. When you ran a striped silk tie through your fingers, the *Notre Dame* was a dream ; when the familiar smell of hot codfish blew into the cabin, she was reality again.

He was astonished to see Andersson sitting at his place in the cabin as if nothing had happened. The captain seemed perfectly composed. He ate with his usual complete indifference to his food. The steward cleared away the stained tablecloth. Jorg filled his pipe elaborately in his embarrassment. Through the port-holes came the light of a magnificent sunset, but Jorg did not dare to get up. He felt that the captain wanted to say something. If everything had been just as usual, Andersson would have got up and lit the oil-lamp, shielding the match in his cupped hand.

He did not do so. The dusk darkened his face ; an unbearable tension spread over the cabin. Jorg could not look at Andersson ; he gazed after the blue clouds that billowed from his pipe toward the skylight of the cabin. At last came the voice of the captain :

" You knew that King George of England had died ? "

" Yes." Jorg's inner eye saw King George of England as he had last seen him in a news-reel. The king sat on horseback, stooped, an old, tired man. The heavy bearskin helmet seemed almost to crush him ; only the chin-strap seemed to hold his upper and lower jaws together. Troops marched past—flying legs, mathematically precise, their eyes fixed woodenly on the king, electrified puppets. And the king raised his hand again and again, tired as death, a body that held together only by force of will.

" King George had a sailing yacht, the *Britannia* . "

" Yes, I know, a famous yacht. She won cups at a great many regattas."

" Do you know what happened to her ? "

" No."

" She was sailed out on the ocean and sunk. What do you think of that ? "

Jorg considered this in amazement. " I think it is wonderful. It is wonderful in these days to find a romantic feeling, an act of genuine respect for one who is dead. Nobody shall sail the *Britannia*, now that the king is dead. I can well understand. She was a big, old ship ; she looked on at the making of history. To sink her was an act of greatness. It reminds me of Viking days, when the dead hero in his dragon ship, wrapped in flames, sailed out into eternity."

Andersson seized Jorg's hand, and it was like living rock, and he said, " Now, Mr. Borcke, now we are sailing into eternity."¹¹

The strange, the wonderful intoxication of a dream came over Jorg, and he repeated, " Yes, Captain, I know ; now we are sailing into eternity."

" To-night, Mr. Borcke, you will take over the trick at the helm."

A strange tingling ran down Jorg's backbone, and spread over his whole skin like millions of tiny ice-needles. It was the presentiment of the great adventure, not uncommon in youth ; it had been there before he fired at his first buck. Before his first night with a woman. The first time he went under fire. Then with the years it had grown ever rarer, and was as good as forgotten. All at once he had his youth back again, his mad youth, reckless, ready for anything. At a blow he was put back twenty years, a young sub-lieutenant receiving an honourable and difficult order from a distinguished officer. As he had felt then, so now he felt that the most important thing was to preserve a sophisticated and nonchalant attitude. He bowed slightly—the first time he had ever bowed to Andersson—and said, " Gladly, Captain ; it will be an honour." These words, actually high-flown, seemed at that moment perfectly natural.

It was plain that the captain had some perfectly insane intention ; probably to sink the *Notre Dame*. The man radiated such complete certainty, such greatness and final determination, that one simply could not ask questions. The captain had a finished plan in his head; that much was sure. Was the *Notre Dame* to go down with all hands, or by herself ? Even that did not concern Jorg at this moment.

Without another word they went on deck. Even in the cabin the evening light had been strangely fiery. Now Jorg saw the most stupendous sunset of his life. The western sky was like a monstrous Chinese dragon. Rising from the sea, it reached for the *Notre Dame* with claws and tongues of flame. The clouds were the scales of its armour, unbelievably plastic in the slanting light. They hung low ; the sky had a depth such as Jorg had never seen. The dragon was completely inflamed, and where the red of its talons turned pale, it went over into tones of grey, wonderfully soft, heron feathers on a gigantic scale. The shape persisted for a long time, while the fire withdrew to ever greater distances. The dragon bled to death ; its armour was torn open, and the clear sky behind appeared as an intense green. In the extreme west, where the sky touched the sea, yawned the burning yellow wound, the sword-stroke which had shed the dragon's blood. With a gentle breath of north wind the *Notre Dame* moved eastward. The beacon of Kangaroo Island flashed in the south. " At home on the North Sea I would say there was going to be a storm," Jorg remarked.

Andersson blinked, blinded from staring into the flame. " It's not very different here from at home." He gave orders to lower the royal yards and the top-gallant yards. The winches squeaked, and the shadows of the wire ropes went up quivering into the sky, which was still light. The top yards came dragging down with a sighing sound. The yellow flickers from the exhausted

batteries of the flashlights glowed up, slid across coiled cordage and pulling hands. Then the sounds of bare feet on deck died away, and so did the clatter of the capstan, the sing-song of work. The shadows of the sailors danced up the shrouds, and vanished in the darkness. The roar of the increasing wind swallowed up the human voices. The northwester turned to the west, to the southwest, and finally to southward, all within an hour. The night had become very black, very threatening. Andersson had them box-haul, and set the *Notre Dame's* course to westward. Alf's clear voice sounded astonished as he repeated the order ; Port Adelaide lay to the east, about eighty sea miles away. With this wind they could have been in the roadstead by dawn. But the channel was full of dangerous currents. Perhaps the captain did not think it a good idea to venture into these straits by night.

About eleven of the evening, when the manoeuvres of navigation were finished, Jorg went below decks. He did not know when his task would begin, and he thought it was time to make the final preparations. Listing hard to starboard, the *Notre Dame* pounded through a wild sea, a sea that was stirred up, that went across a flat bottom with short, panting breath, broken by the proximity of the coast, which it hammered in its never-ending attack.

Jorg skidded into his cabin. The packed trunks stared at him unfamiliarly ; they had slid together, a little flock, domestic animals of civilization. He laughed out loud : " You'll have to wait a long time before a porter fetches you, you hotel-dwellers, you railway travellers ! " He talked loudly, quite without restraint, like a man drunk. But he was not drunk.

He pulled on his sea-boots, and tried shaking them off his feet. Good sea-boots have to be roomy enough so that in emergency one can get them off one's feet while swimming. His seemed to him suspiciously tight. He

put on the jacket of his good blue suit, and stowed in the pockets the pocket-book, the knife, the journal, the letters he had written home on the voyage. He even put his seal-ring on his finger. " Even a drowned body is better off with its papers than without," he murmured.

He put on his oilskins ; stowed pipe, tobacco, matches and flashlight in the pocket ; and went up the companionway to the cabin. The lyre-shaped oil-lamp hung as much aslant as he had ever seen it, and smoked. Jorg turned down the wick. In the greyish yellow smoke he recognized a book behind the bars of the little cupboard : it was the only one he had not yet read—Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

Many years before, he had seen the play on the stage, and it had made an indelible impression on him, but he had been afraid to read it again, for fear of losing the illusions of his youth. Expecting at any moment that the window of the skylight would be opened from the deck, and that Andersson's voice would call him, he sat down in his swivel chair, and began to skim the pages. What language ! How bold, how free, how perfectly in harmony with the moment ! . . .

CYRANO:

" What would you have me do ?
Seek for the patronage of some great man,
And like a creeping vine on a tall tree
Crawl upward, where I cannot stand alone ?
No, thank you ! Dedicate, as others do.
Poems to pawnbrokers ? Be a buffoon
In the vile hope of teasing out a smile
On some cold face ? No, thank you ! Eat a toad
For breakfast every morning ? Make my knees
Callous, and cultivate a supple spine—
Wear out my belly grovelling in the dust ?
No, thank you ! Scratch the back of any swine
That roots up gold for me ? Tickle the horns
Of Mammon with my left hand, while my right,
Too proud to know his partner's business,

Takes in the fee ? No, thank you ! Use the fire
God gave me to burn incense all day long
Under the nose of wood and stone ? No, thank you I
Shall I go leaping into ladies' laps
And licking fingers ?—or—to change the form—
Navigating with madrigals for oars,
My sails full of the sighs of dowagers ?
No, thank you ! Publish verses at my own
Expense ? No, thank you ! Be the patron saint
Of a small group of literary souls
Who dine together every Tuesday ? No,
I thank you ! Shall I labour night and day
To build a reputation on one song,
And never write another ? Shall I find
True genius only among Geniuses,
Palpitate over little paragraphs,
And struggle to insinuate my name
Into the columns of *The Mercury* ?
No, thank you ! Calculate, scheme, be afraid,
Love more to make a visit than a poem,
Seek introductions, favours, influences ?—
No, thank you ! No, I thank you ! And again
I thank you ! " *

There was a sharp tap at the ceiling, a blast of wind whipped through the cabin, and the lamp almost flickered out. " Mr. Borcke ! " : Andersson's voice. The window fell shut.

It struck eight bells, midnight, as Jorg came on deck. Blasts of wind caught under the sou'wester, and yanked at the chin-strap. It was a wild night, black as pitch, without stars. The *Notre Dame* galloped in the short, choppy seas, shaking herself like a skittish horse in harness ; sails flapped and tightened with angry jerks, blocks hammered, yards waved, groaning and squeaking* in the joints. It was the horde of the Wild Huntsman.

Alf, relieved of his watch, tramped uphill to the windward rail, his black oilskins fluttering like bat

¹ Brian Hooker's translation (Henry Holt & Co.).

wings. " Good watch to you ! " he bellowed at Jorg, a cry which for a matter of seconds sounded above the great roar. The next moment his shadow was gliding down the steps.

Jorg slid over to the compass, and stared through the foggy glass of the binnacle, which was beaded with drops of condensed moisture. The course was west. He wanted the light to fall on him so that Andersson would know he had come on deck. He looked at the helm, and recognized Mohammed, the Frenchman, who stood motionless, his head thrown back, staring up into the wild sky. He did not see the sails, but the sound of their flapping edges told him that the *Notre Dame* was close to the wind.

" Comment Ça va ? " asked Jorg. The boy never took his eyes from the sky, but a smile passed over his tense face. " Ça marche, monsieur, Ça marche ! "

Andersson's shadow cut the light of the binnacle lamp. The helmsman, Mohammed, vanished in the blackness of the night. Jorg stepped upon the helm grating. The spokes of the wheel, warmed by the hands of Mohammed, slid into his hands. He felt the man brush past him, and heard in the roar of the wind the flying words, " *Bi de wind* " ; the shadow vanished, and with it the feeling of human nearness.

Jorg fell heavily against the mountings of the wheel, and grasped the spokes. The wild seas flung themselves against the rudder, and the lines carried the blows over to the wheel. It jerked and tried to thrash around like a mighty fish ; to tame it took all one's strength. There were moments when it actually lifted Jorg from the grating, when it tried to fling him over the steering-post; and Jorg jammed his feet in the holes of the grating. By the friction of his body against the steering-post he braked this force. He pricked up his ears for the sounds of the sails and tried to descry their shadows ; the edges must

flap only to leeward. It was confusing because a hundred and fifty feet above him, in the impenetrable depths of the night, there might be blowing another wind than that which shook the edge of the barely visible mainsail.

This struggle captivated him completely. He had indeed steered *Notre Dame* often enough, in the trade winds, by day in fine weather, but not by night and wholly by feeling.

Soon he had the *Notre Dame* in hand. Her sails were so perfectly trimmed that fundamentally there was nothing to do but hold the wheel; she stayed close to the wind of her own accord. It was enough to turn a spoke or two to hold her to her course.

The wild pounding of his heart and the concentration of all his energy on one thing subsided. There was room again for thoughts, and time to look around.

To leeward was the white wall of spray. To windward, heat lightning flickered. On the bows, a little to port, a tiny star of a beacon peeped over the horizon. Jorg had the feeling that the rage of the wind was abating somewhat. The whole thing was probably rather a succession of squalls than a storm.

Barbarossa had stepped up beside him. Jorg gave a fleeting glance at the dark figure. The face of the young mate looked quite transformed, very pale in the faint light from the binnacle, very thin, concentrated in its expression. It was no longer a round childlike face; these were the features of a young knight going out to battle. Barbarossa bent close to Jorg's ear: "I go for'ard. . . . Relieve look-out. No good if boys on deck now₄ Good luck to you,"

"How much longer will it be?"

"Don't know. Half an hour; maybe an hour."

"What beacon is that?"

"Cape Catastrophe,"

" Cape Catastrophe.—Good luck, Barbarossa ! "

The arm of the mate was around Jorg's shoulder for a moment, and the man at the helm felt the kind, heavy hand through oilskins and jacket. Then the shadow of his comrade vanished for'ard.

All this time Andersson had been stooping over the table in the chart-room. Now the leeward door crashed shut. Andersson's shadow leant forward against the sloping wall of the deck, climbed to the windward rail, and stayed there a long time, peering at the beacon of Cape Catastrophe. The light had grown, and had shifted more to port; its rays, pointed seaward, were like a pale comet's tail. Jorg gathered all his forces to steer and to watch wind and sails. The sky seemed to descend. It hung black and unspeakably menacing over the *Notre Dame*. The oxygen seemed to be gone from the air ; one could hardly breathe. Jorg knew this was a delusion ; it was the tension that took one's breath away, and probably fear as well.

" Faced with danger, elderly men often say they have to think of their wives and children. Lies, excuses ! The truth is that with increasing age one loses physical courage." Jorg felt a boundless urge for truth, for truth at last ! How full of lies his life had been ! Lies, nothing but lies ! He wasn't thinking for a moment of wife and child ; they were on solid land in a solid home, high and dry, out of danger. No ; he was thinking of his own peril, and with rage he felt his cowardice in the face of death, the unconquerable tendency of his ear to listen for the sound of surf. He would have liked to stop his ears. " When, when shall we be wrecked ? " He felt like a bad actor who, called late on to the stage, is muddled, does not know his lines, and has no idea what play is being given.

Suddenly Andersson was beside him. The captain had buckled a belt over his oilskins, and in the belt was

an axe. What was he going to do with that ? His golden beard shone in the light of the binnacle lamp, his great eyes gleamed, and there was a wonderful other-worldliness in his face. A magnetic force radiated from it : deep, inner calm; deep certainty. That is the way the saint looks when he has a vision—or a madman. Where was the dividing line ? But that was immaterial. Andersson was a force, a power that soothed the billows of Jorg's heart. He felt better the moment the captain stood beside him, before a word was said.

" In about a quarter of an hour, Mr. Borcke. You can ease her off a little. When the shock comes, let go of the helm. Throw yourself down flat between helm and chart-room. All sorts of things will come down from above. That's why I sent the watch below decks ; they're sheltered there. If you lie flat beside the wheel, the wheel will ward off whatever comes down from the main mast. Don't run into the chart-room ; it will probably collapse. I want no lives lost. You, I and the first mate will remain alone on deck. One thing more, Mr. Borcke : if you should talk afterward to the owner, Captain Peterson—tell him the truth. The truth about me and . . . about the *Notre Dame*. No special considerations, do you understand ? Absolutely none ! "

Each sentence was an order. Jorg took it in, word for word and with the most profound respect. The words were impressed on him as are the very few that one never forgets. The helm seemed to lie steadier and firmer in his hand. His whole body was flooded with a kindly warmth, and filled with strength. He felt elevated. Not in an earthly sense ; but a man must feel something like *his* who is assured of heaven before he dies. Whether he lived or died was without significance.

He looked at Andersson, met his eye, and saw a smile on the captain's face, a smile of great kindness. The lion's head nodded once more to Jorg, and plunged into

the shadows. Jorg saw the man's silhouette sliding for'ard along the windward side; he leant over the rail at the for'ard edge of the main deck, probably to make sure that the steel doors of the fo'c'sle were closed. Then he straightened up, and stood like a rock on the main deck by the windward bulwark, at the spot where the up-draught from the side made a calm spot. Not even his oilskin moved. He was like a sentry who intends to hold his post.

Jorg flung a quick glance behind him through the window of the chart-room. The clock inside said one. He struck two bells, and from the fo'c'sle-head came the answering strokes of the look-out; Barbarossa, then, was still up on the fo'c'sle-head. Jorg had thought the mate would go below the head, where it was safer. At this, the ship's dying moment, it really did not matter whether the bells were struck. Jorg did it only so that none of the watch in the fo'c'sle would grow uneasy at missing the bells. In his mind's eye he saw the boys of the starboard watch squatting in the fo'c'sle, dozing, sleeping, their arms flung over the locker, their heads of tangled hair swaying in the swell. A few would be awake, smoking, gazing into the dim light of the little lamp. If they talked at all, it would be about port. Soon they would be going ashore now, buying fruit, seeing girls, visiting a pub. The letters from home would be distributed, and perhaps a few more Christmas packages. How pleasant for them, not to have to be on deck this rough night! The port watch were lying in their bunks. The lamp was turned down; the coloured bedclothes, blue-and-white and red-and-white checked, wrapped the curled forms in the narrow berths. From the curtain-cords dangled shirts and socks; from the wooden sheathing the pictures of mothers, sisters, sweethearts looked down at the boys. A few moaned in their dreams, and tossed about; long white limbs dangled over the sides of the

bunks, here an arm, there a leg. The air was warm and heavy with the smell of healthy young bodies—a smell that reminded one of a stable, strong, but not unpleasant. How clean the boys all were, clean-cut in body and soul. This cleanly clarity was the first and only stamp of life they had got from the sea ; there was none better for a young man. It was to be hoped that none of them would be injured.

He peered at the clock again : one-five. Perhaps five minutes more, perhaps ten. If Andersson's calculation was correct. So far it had always been correct. But the wind died down a little. The *Notre Dame* was still running a good twelve knots, but the ship righted herself a bit. The wind fell more astern, the course was still west—half a point north of west. The black cloud blanket sank lower and lower; soon it would rain. " First the rain and then the blow, seaman come up from below ; first the wind and then the rain, seaman go below again,"

Jorg felt the hair at the nape of his neck standing on end, and yet he felt strangely light, as though he could fly. In his hands he felt such strength as never before ; steering the *Notre Dame* was like taking a gallop on a thoroughbred. Hard luck that Andersson did not see how straight the wake was. *Notre Dame*, great old *Notre Dame* of the waves, you are sailing with us into eternity. Never had the creaking of the yards, the squeak of the blocks, the fluttering of the sails' edges sounded so • ghostly. The soul of the old ship was walking, and only three living people saw it—Andersson, Barbarossa, Jorg. Aha ! They were chosen from among the rest of mankind ; they, had seen the ghost of a ship ; nobody would believe them when they told about it later.

Jorg began to sing loudly. A new Jorg, a primitive man had awakened in him, who wanted to yell—and he yelled, and the old Jorg let him go ahead and yell; it

made no difference now. Free way for the feelings !
After all, they were sailing into eternity !

" We boys in the war became men young, too young.
We saw frightful things while we were still soft as wax.
That was the greatest thing in our lives ; there was not
much afterward.
We loved women, too many women, and they sated us.
Everything collapsed on us which we thought was firm.
We tried to build a new world for ourselves, and it collapsed
on us like an emergency bridge, again and again.

We begot children ; that was a sin. Our generation should
not propagate itself.

We are accursed because we did not fall in the war, and we
know it.

The young people have faith again, no matter in what.
Our faith is shattered, and so we are lost, useless to the world.
One thing we have learnt, and that we will not forget: how
to die like gentlemen.

Perhaps there is a God in heaven after all. If there is, we ask
for one thing :

Lord, we have begotten children—children who are guiltless
of our guilt.

Make men of them, like the first men which Thou madest
And to us give death, the decent, the warrior's death.
Give it to us, a good death in battle for a lost cause."

The roar of the sea seemed to have grown louder.
Jorg felt it completely surrounding him, shutting him in,
stunning him. It was so overpowering that he wondered
why none of the people below deck felt it and rushed
out.

Andersson's voice came through the black night,
through the white spray, like a shot: " Look out ! "

Instinctively Jorg gripped the spokes of the yheel
with all his might. From the very vitals of the *Notre
Dame* came a sound, weird, as if she were a violin-bow
stroking a tremendous bass viol. The hull began to
sway and tremble like a sawn tree before it falls. The

tremendous impetus was blocked with a suddenness that flung Jorg forward. He never thought of letting go of the spokes. There was a moment when the ship seemed to be sailing free, with less way on. Then suddenly the bow bounded with a jerk, as a frightened horse rears and throws its rider. He felt a fearful twitch that hurled him on his face. As he fell he saw Andersson's figure, freed of its rigidity. The captain had torn the axe from his belt, and was swinging it high against the throat of the mainsail. 'A fearful thunderstorm crashed out in the heavens. Jorg had instinctively flung out his hands as he fell. They gripped the wood of the grating. His mouth touched the wood, and his teeth bit in. A street fight of post-war days suddenly came to him ; Jorg was *lying* in the gutter of an alley, under fire. Tracer bullets struck flames from the pavement. Communists were firing from the roofs ; in the gutter lay the soldiers, sprayed with a deadly rain of flame. All around him comrades were hit ; from the jugular of the wounded sergeant blood leapt out in jets, a fountain, flooding the pavement. " Mother, mother ! " cried the man.

The air was full of insane uproar. The anguished screams of bursting steel shrilled out. Enormous weights hit the deck like bombs, shattering planks and steel plates. Jorg's body hurtled like a rat shaken in a dog's teeth.

He bit into the wood, and shook, and as if in a dream saw the main topgallant mast come down. He was itossed up by the fearful rebound, and a yard fell on deck like a guillotine, and steel cables burst with screeches and whirrings ; they let go with the roar of hell.

Then it was quite still. The thunder of the sails letting go raged over the ship, a cosmic phenomenon which had nothing to do with the *Notre Dame*. The ship stood firm, it stood firm as a rock ; it reached up out of a flying plain of white spray. Jorg felt the ship sitting

solidly on the bottom, rising high and safe above the rage of the surf. Men's yells rang out, wild, excited, yet unspeakably reassuring, for they meant life. The explosions of falling weights were silenced. Jorg sat up, surprised—he was alive ! A chaos of strange shadows was around and above him. Close by his side the planks of the deck were splintered as if by shells. The ruins of fallen yards, tangled in cordage, formed a huge thicket.

Flashlights flamed out. They flitted through the world of ruins, wandering about within it. Finally several stopped at one point on the main deck. There the mainyard of the mainmast lay broken, the torrent of the mainsail overflowing the deck. At one tiny spot a black shadow flowed over the deck. Three or four flashlight beams held it fast. It grew and grew, steaming hotly in the cold night ; clouds went up from it. White bunches of muscles twitched, the fingers of a hand tightened convulsively, and blood ran across the deck, blood, more blood than one would ever have thought could be in one man's body. The quavering, high, child-like voice of Barbarossa announced, " It's Captain Andersson. Over here, all hands ! Heave on the yard ! "

But Andersson was dead. And Jorg laughed, laughed like a madman to think that they were trying to raise the mainyard, a hundred hundredweight of steel hurled from heaven upon the captain, who did not want to live, who would not live longer. The last Viking was dead. Dead was the *Notre Dame*, which no power on earth could free from this coast. They had died a great a magnificent death.

Barbarossa mustered the crew. They were all[^]there—the boys, both watches, mechanic and cook, sailmaker and steward. They were shivering with cold and excitement in their shirts, in their nightclothes.

The *Notre Dame* stood on the beach as if on a ship-

yard slip, a total wreck with her bottom plates stove in. In her rent hull the surf gurgled.

They covered the spot where Andersson lay with sailcloth. The squalls died away. Rain fell, lovely, cleansing rain. One smelt the scent of nearby earth ; it was as if one had been hurled out of the ether with an enormous impact upon a strange planet.

In torrents the rain rushed perpendicularly down on the deck, extinguishing the flames which had sprung up in the hearts of the men that night. In the hull of the *Notre Dame* the rent steel groaned now dully, now with a clear ringing, an after-echo of the catastrophe. The crew staggered around as if they were dreaming. Flares burned on the main deck, and soon also on the mizzen-mast, which had remained standing. In the first grey of dawn the crew began to release the turn-buckles of the shrouds, so that the pounding ruins came free of the ship. One heard the first curses and the first axe-strokes that released fragments and cut rigging. The catastrophe had turned into a job of work.

In the light of the flashlights the mates, Barbarossa and Alf, entered the last notation in the log-book. In low voices they argued in their native tongue : an accident. No doubt of its being an accident, the wrecking of the *Notre Dame* on the Australian coast in thick, stormy weather, some miles north of Cape Catastrophe. The chart-room was still intact. That was the only thing that had happened differently from what Captain Andersson had predicted.

" "A great piece of seamanship!" whispered Barbarossa. " Look! "

In a sharp, clean line the coast stood out now. On both sides, to port and to starboard, low, arched tongues of cliff licked far out into the ocean. *Notre Dame* lay in the middle of a little cove. The gently rising sandy beach began to shine.

" He often sailed here with the gig when we were loading wheat in Port Lincoln," whispered Alf shyly, as if Andersson could hear him. And Jorg seemed to see the little, sharp, triangular sail of a gig floating across the sea at dawn, vanishing in the fiery stripe of the sunrise ; it seemed as if Andersson's soul were sailing forth to heaven.

When it was broad daylight, they put down the only boat that was not shattered. Jorg was among those who went ashore. Barbarossa gave him the log-book, telling him to send it as soon as possible to the Admiralty Office at Port Adelaide. Barbarossa hastily blotted the last words : " And we abandoned our ship *Notre Dame*"

Jorg thrust the book under his jacket. When the boat grounded, he waded through seaweed and sand, running faster and faster, toward a noise that approached beyond the dunes. Over the ridge of the hills a motor-car appeared; with madly pounding motor it struggled through the sand. It was full of men excitedly waving their arms. Hampered by the big book under his jacket, Jorg fell forward, got his mouth full of sand, and tasted in ecstasy the flavour of the earth.

