

(Original working typescript. Never published - J.H.R.)

The sea was very still. The weight of fog and darkness seemed to have pressed the life out of it, and the eighteen-foot dory sat on the black water almost without movement, like a child's boat on a pond. She was a yellow-painted thing of pine boards, with a flat bottom and sides rising at a steep angle, so that in cross section she was like a wedge. Somewhere not far away in the cold mist were eleven others exactly like her, nested one within another on the deck of the Elmira B. MacCleave. The two men in the dory were not alarmed in their loneliness. They had found their lost trawl at sunset the previous day, and a sudden shutting down of the fog had compelled them to spend the night in the dory. The Schooner could not be far. There had been no breath of wind over the face of the sea since the northerly gale set their trawl adrift and drove the Elmira B. off the Grand Bank with it. There was field ice about, rather scattered by the past gale; they had seen several floes and one or two small bergs in the dusk as they picked up their trawl, and the clinging fog was like the breath of ice itself --- not the edged cold of winter, that cut and thrust in the same stroke, but the dank grave-vault cold of a spring night on the Banks. The men were warmly clad. Under their dripping yellow oilskins were thick sweaters and flannel shirts and frieze trousers and heavy fleece-lined underwear, and within their rubber boots were felt in-soles and two pairs of thick woollen socks. Their hands were warm and dry in heavy white wool mittens. The oars were shipped, the looms tucked inboard under the thwarts, the blades resting between wooden thole-pins. Newfie Sam had whittled these pins himself, from a stick of wire birch cut on the road from Sydney Mines; the bark was still on the upper parts, except where the oars chafed.

"Comin' light," observed Newfie Sam, out of a night's silence. "I can make out d' bark on me t'ole pins."

"Yeah," Davis said. "Must be gettin' on fer five o'clock."

"Where you reckon d'scunner lays?"

"Over there to the westward a bit. Reckon when the fog shet MacCleave jest took in all sail an' waited fer mornin', same as us. Ain't bin a morsel o' wind, an' I don't reckon we drifted a mite. Come daylight an' we'll start a-blwin' the horn. 'Slikely we'll hear the Elmira blowin' afore they hear us. Compressed air."

"I could do wid some brekfuss," Newfie Sam said.

"We was lucky to find our trawl," murmured Davis. "After gittin' blowed off o' the Bank an' all. Jest luck, that's all."

"Yeah, luck," said Newfie Sam.

Daylight came very slowly, and scant light about it. In fact the fog seemed an embodiment of night, paling reluctantly from black to grey, but they could make out objects in the dory distinctly, even to the moisture beaded on their stubbled faces. Newfie's face was long and thin, running down to a point at the chin, where a bead of water slowly gathered, hung trembling a moment, dropped on the breast of his oil-skin jacket, and began to grow anew. His eyes were deep-set and shadowed under the brim of a black sou'-wester, his nose very long and thin and pointed, in keeping with the rest of his face. Thirty summers and winters in the Bank fishery had seamed his skin like ~~an old boot~~ an old boot; there were fans of deep wrinkles spreading from the eye-corners, and two strong folds ran past his mouth like arris-gutters from the bridge of his nose, giving his mouth corners a downward droop in the passing, and the tale of all his sea-summers and sea-winters was written in those seams and folds. He was an out-port Newfoundlander who had drifted, like a good many of his people, into the Nova Scotia fleet, where shares ran a little better. He could read and write, slowly and with great pains, and that was the extent of his book-learning, so he had never risen to be more than bow-man in a dory, though he had all the wisdom of the sea. He had no complaint about that or anything. His mouth, sunken against his tobacco-stained snags of teeth, was set in one uncomplaining all-enduring line.

Davis on the other hand had the round hard head and square jaw of the Nova Scotia-man. His hair was quite grey, and his moustache and the stubbled glistening beard, but his eye-brows were black as night, and his blue eyes small and steady under them. He was mate of the Elmira B. MacCleave, for he had learning, and could shoot the sun and figure the per-centages on the catch, almost as good as Captain Bob MacCleave.

His years were fifty-two, and he had a wife and two grown daughters in the small white wooden house at North Sydney; a devout man and pleasant enough, but a man best not roused. In the Bank fleet they knew him as Bully Dan, an echo of his younger days and not quite ~~just~~ at fifty-two. Newfoundland Sam -- Newfie for short -- had no kith or kin. For ten years they had been dory-mates.

" Listen ! " demanded Newfie Sam, " I hears music."

" Music ! "

" Yiss ! Some o' ~~that~~ jazz stuff. 'Twere ~~that~~ plain."

They strained their ears in the fog. With the wet weight of the salvaged trawl, its kegs, buoys and anchors, the dory was down by the stern, and the ~~smooth~~ black sea chuckled a little under the exposed inches of ~~flat~~ bottom at the bow. But now Davis heard the music too. A long way off.

" There ! " said Newfie Sam with triumph. Davis nodded.

" Schooner over there somewheres with a radio a-goin', " he said positively. " The Dora M. Kenzie an' that new boat o' Rigby's -- lots of 'em now -- carry radios an' listen fer weather warnin's an' all that, an' pick up the boardcastin' from the States atween whiles. Bank-fishin' ain't what it used to be."

" Listen, Dan. There's a hymn they're playin' now -- jist as plain ! "

" Right. Tum Tum tum-tum tum-tum. I know that ~~toon~~. They sing it sometimes in the church down home."

" What they doin' hereabouts, Dan ? "

" Blowed off the Bank, same as the Elmira B., s'likely."

" Lets us go over dere, eh ? "

Davis considered a moment. " Naw. Sounds is ~~awful~~ awful deceivin', thick-o'-fog like this, Newfie. We ain't stirred a stroke sence the fog shet down last night, an' I ain't gonna stir a stroke now. I got a hunch the fog'll lift a bit when it comes full daylight -- a stir o' wind comin' up wi' the sun, mebbe -- an' like as not we'll see the ol' Elmira B. jist about where we left her. Music ! I tell you, Newfie, the on'y music I wanta hear s'mornin' is the ol' ~~Elmira's~~ ^{Schooner's} fog-horn."

The distant orchestra took up another hymn, but abandoned it abruptly in the middle of a bar; and for a time there was nothing but the fog-drip and the chuckle of water under the bow-post. Then, faintly but drawing nearer, another sound came to them out of the fog, a sound felt rather than heard. The two men stared eastward.

" Cars ! " Newfie Sam blurted. He could always ~~hear~~ ^{name} a sound before anybody else. There was nobody like Newfie Sam ~~then~~ with a thick night and a schooner running blind ~~and~~ for home with a ~~full~~ full fare, and a bell-buoy to be picked up somewhere in the windy dark under the very smell of the land. The cars had a ragged beat, as if the rowers were very tired, or unskilled, but they drew nearer, and there were voices.

" Women ! " Newfie Sam whispered. Davis looked at him in scorn. But in a minute Davis heard a voice ~~unmistakably~~ ^{women's} female. Newfie Sam was never wrong. It was uncanny to have ears like that. ~~And now~~ ^{name} ~~something~~ ^{the} ~~into~~ ^{accused} ~~the~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~sound~~ ^{the} took form and substance, a rather fragile substance, for in the half-light and the wet drift all things seemed rather out of focus, but they recognised first in part and then in whole a ship's life-boat, beamy and unhandy to their fishermen's eyes and deeply laden, moving painfully under three cars rowed all-anyhow. A man stood at the stern, clasping the rudder lines, an officer of some sort; they could see his brass buttons and the braid on his sleeve. He had no cap, and he was either very blond or very grey, and might have been any age short of sixty. He looked care-worn but infinitely calm, as if ~~the very~~ ^{the} weight of long anxiety had smoothed his mind as fog smoothed the sea.

A woman sat with her back against his knees, a Polack woman, Davis thought; She had a heavy-boned passive face and long black hair hanging in ~~strings~~ damp strings. She clutched a child against the breast of her flannel night-dress, with a ship's blanket draped about both, and a black shawl arranged in a loose cowl over her head, the sort of thing Polack immigrants wore. Upon a thwart facing her sat a man of forty or so looking very odd in evening dress and a large white life-~~belt~~ ^{vest} belt and a small grey cloth cap. He had a large brown walrus moustache and a prominent nose, and there

was a stump of dead cigar firmly clutched ~~between~~ ^{was} between his right back teeth. He ~~had~~ ^{held} one of the three oars, though his hands were apparently sore and bound with strips of handkerchief. ~~On~~ ^{was} On the next thwart, also facing aft, was a young woman with a blanket drawn in a hood about head and shoulders. The woman beside her was much older, a fleshy person in an evening dress ~~covered~~ ^{was} covered with sequins and a collar of jewels at her throat; an expensive-looking fur coat was draped about her shoulders and over all she wore a white life-belt, and ~~she~~ ^{was} looked enormous. There was a black leather satchel of some sort ^{was} tucked under her arm. The sole occupant of the next thwart was a bare-headed man of twenty or thirty in a soiled white jacket, a steward's jacket, with an oar in his hands. He had a small shrewd cockney face, and the fog-beads clinging to ~~the~~ ^{was} tips of his stiff close-cropped hair gave it the appearance of a steel casque. The third oar was pulled by a man in the bow, naked to the waist except for the white bulk of a life-belt soiled with his finger-marks. His eye-sockets and ears were little sooty caverns, and the fog-drip ~~had~~ ^{was} made little clean runnels in the grime of his shoulders and hairy chest. There was a sweat-rag knotted about his throat. He was ~~bald~~ ^{was} bald, with a fringe of wet black curls above his ears.

In all the boat's company these seemd to be the only people awake. Davis, ~~counting and guessing,~~ ^{was} ~~thought~~ ^{was} estimated twenty or thirty others huddled in the boat's bottom, as if for warmth, a ~~human~~ ^{was} mass. They ~~were~~ ^{was} extremely vague. The frosty breath of the sea drifted about the ~~life boat~~ ^{was} in thin wisps, yet it seemed to ~~draw~~ ^{was} suck light from the ~~grey fog,~~ ^{was} a blurred halo in which the seven figures on the thwarts were curiously distinct. The officer gave an order in a hushed voice, the three rowers backed water clumsily, and in a ~~queer~~ ^{was} automatic way, as if their hands alone received the word of command. There was no emotion in their faces. They seemed ~~profoundly~~ ^{was} absorbed in thoughts that had nothing to do with oars and boats. The boat lost what little way it had and lay rocking gently ~~in the half-light~~ ^{was} three fathoms'-length from the staring men in the dory.

" Ahoy, " ~~said~~ ^{was} the officer, regarding them intently.

" Ahoy ! " Davis cried in his hailing voice. The plump woman turned on the thwart, as if seeing him for the first time.

" Not so loud ! " she said severely. The younger woman threw back her blanket.

" Sssssh ! " she warned the woman, and put a slender finger to her lips. Her shoulders were bare and smooth and very white. There was a little knot of blue silk flowers at the breast of her ~~dress.~~ ^{was} A necklace glittered dully. Her hair was the colour of the dory in which Newfie Sam and Davis sat gaping.

" Well, " the plump woman complained, " the man was yelling fit to wake the dead --- "

" Please ! " the girl begged. She turned ~~that~~ ^{was} pale fair face towards the dory.

" You needn't shout, men, " she said clearly. " We can hear you perfectly. These poor people will feel so terribly cold if they wake. We must let them sleep as long as possible. "

" Sorry ma'am, " Davis murmured, awed. He had never seen a woman so beautiful or so sad.

" What day is this ? " the officer said.

" It's -- uh -- the sixteenth of April, " Davis said.

" And the time ? "

Newfie Sam fumbled under his oil-skins and pulled out ~~the~~ ^{was} old silver watch, his ~~dearest~~ ^{was} possession. He ~~was~~ ^{was} always eager to tell people the time, partly because he was very proud of the big key-winder and because the mere ability to tell time seemed to him a mark of ~~erudition.~~ ^{was}

" Jist twenny to five, " he announced ~~importantly.~~ ^{was}

" Ah ! " acknowledged the officer. He turned to ~~that~~ ^{was} oddly assorted crew.

" The ship went down about 2.20 A.M. on the fifteenth. Roughly, ~~that,~~ ^{was} we've been twenty six hours in the boat. "

" More like twenty six years, " the fat woman said drearily. She pulled the fur coat about her throat again and shivered.

" What happened ? " Davis ~~said.~~ ^{was}

" It all seemed so strange, " the fair girl said. " I was sitting in the reading room

~~and~~ ^{was}

with my husband " --- ~~here~~ her voice trembled a little, but she went on --- " and there was a bump, a jar -- not enough to throw anybody off their feet, you understand. It couldn't have been much after eleven. Just that, you know, a little dull sound, a little tremble of the ship, as if she'd struck a log or something like that. Then the engines stopped, and my husband said, " We must've dropped a propeller. I'll go on deck and find out." You've no idea how quiet everything was then. The sea was perfectly smooth, not even a ripple -- well, just the way it is now -- and that big ship sat there like a rock. A few feet away from me a woman sat embroidering. I watched her thread another needle, and she found the eye with the first stab. The ship was as steady -- yes, and we all were as steady as that. In a few minutes my husband ~~was~~ back, laughing, and said we'd struck something, not very big, a bit of ice probably."

" Bah ! " snapped the fireman at the bow oar. " It was a ice-berg, lidy, 'igh as Nelson's monniment. Bit o' ice indeed ! "

" Blather ! " said the fireman at the bow oar.
 " Well, wot d'you know abaht it ? " demanded the steward, " you Liverpool-Irish --/--"

" Hush ! " commanded the plump woman.
 " Where was 'e when we 'it ? " demanded the steward. " Dahn in the stoke-'old with a slice-bar. Don't tell me there ain't ice-bergs big as Nelson's ---"

" It was a small berg -- what you fishermen'd call a growler, " the officer said. " It didn't show up white the way you'd expect; ~~\$\$\$\$\$~~ a dark lump, not very high. The ship seemed to barely touch it with the starboard bow."

" Berg nothing ! " exclaimed the man in evening dress suddenly. " I tell you I looked over the side a minute after we struck, and there wasn't ~~anything~~ but pittle cakes of ice like that stuff we saw a few minutes ago. I guess I've got eyes as good as anybody's. It was a clear night."

" Stars, " the fair girl said. " I never saw a night so beautiful."

" Well, go on with your version ~~of the affair~~, " said the plump woman. " The ship must have had a hull like paper, for she certainly didn't hit anything very hard; I was just walking along to my cabin when it happened and it didn't even make me stumble. But let's have no more of this ice business. These men have been arguing half a lifetime about it, or so it seems to me."

" It was a small berg, " officer repeated coldly. " The ship was well past it ~~when~~ before any of you got on deck. If the look-out couldn't see the thing till it was right on the starboard bow, how could anybody rushing up from a brightly lighted cabin see it half a cable's length astern ? The ship was going twenty knots and better. The ice ripped her side plates under water like a ~~can~~ tin-opener."

" Well, it don't matter very much now, " the fireman said. " Go on, ma'am."

" It matters a lot ! " said the officer fiercely. " There'll be an investigation of some sort, there always is, and they'll want the truth; and here we are, forty people or ~~thereabouts~~, and forty different stories."

The fair girl said patiently, " Well, we struck it, whatever it was, but not very hard, and nobody was alarmed, not even when the officers and stewards began to go through the passage-ways knocking on doors and telling everybody to dress and put on life-belts. We all thought it rather a joke, especially the life-belts -- everyone looking so fat and queer. On deck there was a fearful din, all the steam sirens blowing, you had to scream to be heard -- but there wasn't much excitement, even when they began to lower the boats. The deck had a bit of a tilt towards the front of the ship, not much, you know; but the air was so calm and the sea so smooth, it seemed absurd that anything serious could be the matter. The ship seemed huge and solid, all the deck lights blazing, and it looked an awful distance down to the water."

" Seventy feet when we got the first boat down, " the officer said precisely, as if he were ~~already~~ testifying before a board of investigation. " As the ship settled it got less. We cut this one clear, you might say, as the ship sank under it. It must have been three hours from first to last."

" I remember thinking, " the fair girl said with a queer little smile, " we'd probably spend a chilly half-hour in the boats, and then they'd decide the ship was all right and we'd be hoisted up again, feeling very cold and foolish, and all the men laughing

at us. We were all on the top deck at first, where the boats were, but after they started lowering the boats all women were ordered down to the deck below ---"

" That was B deck, " the officer said. " They could get into the boats easier there. "

" My husband made me go down there, " she said, " but when I saw the boats ~~being~~ filled with women and children, ~~and the men~~ one boat after another, and the men left behind -- I -- I -- it came to me then what it meant if things really were serious. I couldn't -- wouldn't -- go. My husband begged me, but I wouldn't. The thought of separation was horrible. So we went back to the top deck. "

" You were a fool, my dear, " the fat woman declared. " I'd like to see my self passing up a place in a boat, for any man. I just got on the top deck in time to jump into this one -- I'd ~~stopped~~ ^{ONE LAST} to pick up my jewels and money -- ~~and this looked like the last chance.~~ "

" It was the last ~~last~~, ^{back} all right, " the officer said. " Jammed when they first tried to lower it, so they left it hanging forty feet from the water. After the ship began to plunge we got in and cut the falls clear -- a near thing, I tell you. "

" Things happened very quickly at the last, " the fair girl said. " My husband fairly threw me in, and stepped back to help another woman. The ship's lights ~~were going out~~ ^{WENT} then, and everything ~~seemed~~ ^{was} very dark. We could see the reflection of the stars in the water, and suddenly the water ~~seemed to rise~~ ^{was} right up to the boat. Yes, that was the way it ~~seemed~~, ^{was} The ship went very quietly. I don't know what time that was --- "

" Must have been about half-past one, " the officer said. " She ~~plunged~~ ^{went} to a terrific angle and ~~then~~ hung for a time on end, with the stern ~~high~~ ^{up} in air. "

" People jumpin' off the stern, " the fireman said. " Hear 'em splashin' an' cryin' out, you could, all in the dark. "

" Don't! " the fair girl cried.

" It was hard to see, " the officer said, " but you could make out the stern against the stars. It hung there a long time, half an hour, three-quarters maybe, hard to say. It spun slowly ~~as it went down~~ at the last -- went under with the deck facing east, I ~~should think~~. We pulled over and picked up as many as the boat could hold //+---- "

" The other boats had all pulled away ~~out of sight~~, " declared the man in dress clothes angrily. " Cowards ! "

" Suction, " the steward said. " 'Fraid o' suction, they was -- big ship like that, y'know -- you can't blame 'em, you can't reely. "

" I don't think there was much, " the officer said. " Seemed to be more of a splash than anything else, ^{CAVE} the ship giving three or four big sighs ^{as the water closed over her} and deck chairs and that sort of thing ^{BEAN} popping up everywhere. We pulled clear then. "

" We thought we saw a light, " the fair girl said, " ^{AND} so the men rowed over that way, hours and hours. But we never saw the other boats again. So we've come back. It's ^{BEEN} ~~seemed~~ such a long time. "

" They can't be far ", the officer said stoutly.

The Polack woman looked at Davis suddenly. She pointed at the dory and then beyond it vaguely. " Milwaukee ? " she ~~said~~ ^{asked} eagerly. " Milwaukee ? "

A strange word. Davis and Newfie Sam wondered what she meant.

" We belong to the schooner Elmira B. MacCleave, " Davis explained politely, " outa North Sydney, Nova Scotia. Got drove off the Grand Bank in a norther, an' come by chance on some of our gear down this way. Me an' Newfie put off a dory an' picked it up -- 'twas our trawl, see ? -- Number One -- it's painted ~~right~~ ^{right} on the keg-buoy. We got it here in the dory now. "

" Where's your vessel ? " asked the officer.

Davis jerked a mittened thumb towards the west. " That way a bit. She ain't far, but we sat here sensible-like, waitin' fer mornin'. Bob MacCleave'll start his fog-horn a-goin' -- com-pressed air off o' the engine, see ? -- soon as it comes broad daylight. You folks better hang alongside us an' come aboard the Elmira B. Some o' them ladies must be awful cold. "

" Might be a good idea, " said the officer diffidently. " Still, the Carpathia should be here by this time. And there's the Frankfurt and the Olympic and the Californian and some others probably. Sparks was in touch with half a dozen. They'd come very slowly, I fancy, on account of the ice field, ~~BUT THEY'RE HERE NOW, for a cert.~~ "

The man in dress clothes said firmly, " We're not going aboard any fishing schooner ! Get that ! These other liners'll be on the look-out for us. ~~They'll count the boats, won't they?~~ We'll be all right as soon as this everlasting fog lifts."

" It would be nice to get warm for a minute or two, " the fair girl said wistfully.

" Warm ! " The fat woman gave another hitch to her seal coat. " My dear, you've stuck it this long like a brave girl, surely you're not going to weaken now ? A nasty smelly fishing-boat ! ~~No, No for me !~~ I want a comfortable berth on the Carpathia, a warm bath and a hot ~~breakfast~~ breakfast -- all that or nothing ! "

" I'm thinking of all these poor people in night-clothes, " the girl said, nodding at the vague humanity about her knees.

" There's other people ter think abaht, lidy, " the steward protested. " Look 'ere, s'pose we go aboard ~~some~~ some bloomin' little fishin' 'ooker ? They don't carry food, water -- nothink enough fer a crowd like us, considerin' we're 'undreds o' miles from the nearest port. They'd 'ave to start fer 'ome at once -- an' we'd be a week gettin' anywhere -- two weeks, 'oo knows ? I tell you, lidy, I got to get 'ome an' look up another berth quick as I bloomin' well can. ~~I tell yer,~~ I got a wife an' four kids ter think abaht."

" Hear, hear, " agreed the Liverpool- Irish fireman. ~~The whites of his eyes~~ ^{eye white} glistened in the sooty face. " Look at me ! " he urged. " It's half-naked I am, an' half frozen wid sittin' here listenin' to idle conversation. Am I complainin' ? Not I ! But niver mind the Elmira What's-her-name -- let's move along the way we were headin' when we met these fellas. It's the tuggin' on the oar warms me blood. Ah, for a bunk in the Carpathia's firemen's quarters -- that an' a hot plate o' burgoo -- an' you could have the baths an' the rest, lady ! "

" You better do the same as we, b'ys, " Newfie Sam spoke up, " an' set quiet till ~~the~~ de fawg lifts. 'Taint no good wanderin' about in fawg, b'ys. You on'y gits lost worse. "

" Lost ! " snapped the officer. " Look here, what sort of ass d'you think I am ? I know where we are. The ship went down in 41-46 north latitude, longitude fifty and a few minutes west. We thought we saw a light ~~off~~ to the sou'-west and rowed off that way amongst the ice floes -- sou'-west-by-south it was, to be exact -- and kept that course for several hours. The fog shut down and we saw no more of the light, and after a ~~time~~ ^{while} we turned back -- reversed the course -- I figure we're now about where the ship went down."

" Ain't seen no wreckage, " the steward said, with some disapproval.

" Of course not, " the officer retorted. " There's a ~~bit of a~~ north-easterly drift hereabouts, even in flat calm like this. ~~You've got to remember that.~~ I'm reckoning by rowing time and compass. Crude, ~~of course~~. Best I could do. The ship'll come to the position Sparks ~~sent~~ ^{sent} out and look for wreckage afterwards. If only we'd get a slant of wind to take off this ~~curse~~ ^{curse} everlasting fog ---"

" There you go, " the plump lady said sharply, " swearing, now ! I still think if we'd kept on going the way we were going we'd have caught up with the other boats. There's land over that way somewhere, ⁱⁿ quite likely."

" Land ? " the officer said. " Ma'am, we ~~must be all of~~ five or six hundred miles south-east of Halifax if we're an inch."

" I don't believe you know what you're talking about, " the lady said severely. " We've been an age rowing up and down in this fog, and it's all your doing. If you ask me the Carpathia's been here and gone again, long long ago."

" I still think, " the fair girl said meekly, " we'd better ^{stay} wait with these fishermen and go on board their vessel when the fog lifts. These poor people from the steerage must be ~~stiff~~ ^{half dead} with cold. It's been ever so long since any of them moved."

" No - no ! " declared the man in dress clothes vigorously. " They're asleep, and a good thing, too. ~~We mustn't~~ ^{Don't} wake them till we see the Carpathia or one of the others. I'd ^{like} ~~want~~ the fastest boat bound for New York, myself. I tell you I must get to Wall Street as quickly as possible. D'you know what's going on in Europe ? There's a war brewing. I tell you within a year or two you're going to see the world turned upside down."

" Faith, " chuckled the fireman grimly, " we've seen sometin' o' the sort already, eh, mate ? " He nudged the stewards back with the butt of his oar.

" Blimey, yes. Looked like 'arf the bloomin' world, didn't she -- tied up at Southampton quay ? "

" Besides, my dear, " said the fat lady shrewdly, " it's likely your husband's been picked up already, and there he'll be, aboard one of the steamers, worrying about you." The fair girl smiled a little at that, but her smile was strangely sad.

" D'you think so ? It seems such a long time since I saw him. ~~Last~~. We were married only last summer, you know, " she said across the water to Davis and Sam --- the people in the boat looked bored, as if they had heard all this before --- " His father gave us a year's travel abroad for a wedding present -- a twelve-months' honeymoon, he said. We were married in Baltimore in June, and went right over to see the Coronation."

" Ah ! " said Newfie Sam. " I seen the pithers o' that."

" Beautiful, wasn't it ? " she said eagerly. " King George looked so handsome -- and -- and steadfast, and the Queen was lovely. It wouldn't do in the States, of course; but ~~after seeing~~ it I could understand what it meant to the British people. I remember seeing some of your Canadian mounted police in the procession. The London people gave them a special cheer. We went all over the continent after that, and spent the winter in Naples. Ah, how happy we were ! It all seems so very long ago." ^{and how} ~~it seems.~~

" Yeh, " Newfie Sam said vaguely. " Time ~~flies~~ ^{flies} wunnerful, lady, that's a fact."

The Polack woman caught Davis' attention again.

" Milwaukee ? " she said with that anxious smile. " Milwaukee ? "

He shook his head. It must be a Polack word. But now the fireman spoke again, urgently.

" Let's be off, for it's freezin' I am ! "

The officer hesitated and looked at the fair girl respectfully, as if hers was the sole judgement he could trust in that boat over-laden with ~~humans~~ ^{humans} and ~~human~~ ^{human} opinions.

She turned reluctantly ~~from the dory where Davis and Newfie Sam were watching,~~ in her face that brooding sadness and something else, resignation perhaps.

" Very well, " she sighed. The ~~three~~ ^{three} oars dipped and struggled. It took half a dozen ragged strokes to get the boat into motion at all, and to the dory-men there was something ~~acutely~~ ^{acutely} pitiful about the deep clumsy life-boat and the three lone oars languidly rising and falling. The officer, intent on his steering, never once turned his head. The rowers stared sightlessly at a point over his head, lost once more in their own thoughts. Only the fair girl on the after thwart looked back at the men in the dory. Her mournful eyes seemed to hold them by an invisible thread until the life-boat was ~~swallowed at~~ ^{swallowed at} last in the mist and the beat of those painful oars died in the direction of the morning.

There was a long silence in the dory. Then Newfie Sam said, " Something queer about ~~them~~ ^{them} people. Had a kind o' fuzzy look."

" 'Twas the fog, " Davis said abruptly. " Fog an' the dawn light. ~~I~~ ^I reckon we looked ~~just~~ ^{just} as queer to them. Yes, man."

" Voices queer, too, " persisted Newfie Sam. " Like cold nights in ~~winter~~ ^{winter} back 'ome, when you can 'ear people talkin' ~~\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$~~ ^{\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$} 'udder side o' Porposie Cove ~~that~~ ^{that} plain -- make out every word, y'can -- but like a voice ~~comin' to ye~~ ^{comin' to ye} over a tellyfome."

" Bah ! " ~~Like~~ ^{Like} an echo of the disgusted Davis came a faint " Ah ! " from the westward.

" Listen ~~again~~, now, " Davis said, fumbling for the boat compass, " an' we'll take a bearin' on it. That's the ol' Elmira B., ~~all~~ ^{all} right." In half a minute they heard it again, the unmistakable ~~trumpet~~ ^{trumpet}-blast of the schooner's fog-horn. Davis put the compass-box between his feet and they began to row confidently, Newfie Sam holding the rusty tin dory-horn between his broken teeth and sounding a ~~calg~~ ^{calg}-blat ~~\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$~~ ^{\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$} every minute in answer to the schooner. At last he let it drop.

" You goin' to tell Cap'n Bob o' ~~dem~~ ^{dem} people in d'boat ? "

" Sure ! Why not ? He'll want to shift outa this, I reckon. 'Taint healthy fer a li'l ol' fishin'-schooner hereabouts, thick-o'-fog, an' half a dozen big steamers prowlin' about lookin' fer people off a wreck."

Newfie Sam rowed a few strokes in silence, regarding the back of Davis's sou'-wester.

" Dat music we heared, Dan -- I dunno what ~~drag~~ ^{drag}-time piece was, but dere was a hymn come next I know right good. 'Twas ' Nearer My Gawd 'o Thee '. "

" Don't signify nothin', " Davis said, ~~uneasily~~.
 " No ? Den come anudder hymn -- choked off quick in d'middle ---"
 " Radio ! " said Davis. " Someone switched it off, ~~that's all~~."
 " ~~It~~ -- Choked off in d' part ~~goes~~,

' Hold me up in mighty waters,
 ' Keep my eyes on t'ings above '.

Dat's a hymn called Autumn. I know dem chunes, Davis, man. "
 " It don't signify, I tell you, " Davis said, and his voice was sharp.
 " An' den everyt'ing about dat boat was new -- you notice dat ? D'paint on d' strakes,
 d' rope in dem cut boat-falls still hangin' from d' forrard eye, d' life-jackets on d'
 people, yiss -- even dat orf'cer's goold braid an' buttons -- all bran' new."

" What of it ? "
 " Dat fat leddy, she said about 'em bein' in dat boat half a lifetime."
 " Aw ! That's a hysterical woman for you ! You heard what the off'cer said, didn't
 you ? Twenny-six hours since their ship went down, he says."

" Years, d' woman said. "
 " Tell you she was hysterical ! ~~You superstitious Noo-fun-land half-wit ! That young~~
~~gel had her senses about her, didn't she ? More sense in her li'l finger than the fat~~
~~dame's got from bow to stern. Been to the coronation, says she. King George an' all that.~~
 This is nineteen-thirty-eight, ain't it ? Coronation was last year, wasn't it ? Eh ?
 Where's your brains, Newfie ? My God, Newfie, don't look at me like that ! "
 Newfie said slowly, " You see d' name on dat life-boat, Dan ? "
 " No name on it, " Davis said hurriedly, and ~~for all his fifty-odd years~~ his voice was
 the voice of a frightened boy.

" I seen it, Dan. Seen it plain. Ain't got much learnin' but I can read names when dey're
 printed, like . It begun wid a T. "

" Stop ! " Davis cried. " Lots o' names begin with T. "
 " An' there was a I an' another T, an' a A, an' then a N ---"
 " Ah, stop it ! Stop it, Newfie, man ! You ain't got a right to say ~~things~~ like this.
 I tell you she hadn't got no name ! "

" 'Sposin' I told ye d' next letter was a I ? "
 " 'Tell you it don't signify, none of it don't signify ! "
 Newfie Sam rested his oars and turned to look ahead, where they heuld hear the stained
 sails of the Elmira B. MacCleave flapping slowly in the mist, and the trumpet-note of
 her fog horn rang over the dark water. Davis looked too, and then Newfie Sam swung his
 sea-haunted eyes full on Davis' own.

" Know what dat last letter was, Dan ? "
 " A ! " Davis caught at a letter as at a straw. " That's it, Newfie, " he said feverishly.
 " There's boats called Titania, like that schooner Ronnie McCuish launched last summer.
 Remember ? He's a daughter to college, an' she got the name somewheres, in a mid-summer
 dream, she said, this Titania bein' a sort o' fairy ~~queen~~ ---"

" Fairies ? " Newfie Sam murmured, ~~absently~~ absently. " But 'tweren't a A, Dan.
 Runs in my mind 'twas ---"

" No ! Such things can't be, I tell you ! Listen, Newfie, A fishin' dory's the
 loneliest thing in the world, like a li'l yella coffin o' pine on the bread face o'
 the sea, with fog ~~just~~ like this, one day in every three -- sky gone, vessel gone,
 other dories gone -- mebbe even your own trawl buoys clean outa sight -- nothin' there
 but you an' your mate an' the ~~inch o' pine~~ ^{your own} under you -- an inch o' pine atween you an'
 the ~~deep~~ ^{SEA} water that hies a thousand things, a man ain't meant to look upon -- no, nor
 think about, an' him right-minded. You got to keep your thinkin' on the edge o'
 soundin's, Newfie. There's things a man's got to b'lieve an' hold by, if he's to make
 his livin' on the Banks an' keep his mind from broachin'-to. You got to fasten your
 thoughts on somethin' canny, like the Elmira B., an' the ~~best~~ price o' fish -- things
 you can get a-hold of an' see an' feel. The rest you got to forget. I tell you such
 things can't be ! "

" 'Twere a C, Dan. I can't help it. I seen it. Very plain, it were -- ~~the~~ d' paint new

an' all. I'm sorry, Dan."

But Davis -- Bully Dan Davis of the Elmira B. MacCleave -- had dropped his oars and thrust his face into his mittened hands, weeping like a child.
