

The background of the entire image is a night sky filled with stars, with the Milky Way galaxy clearly visible. In the lower portion, a silhouette of a person stands on a mountain peak, shining a flashlight that creates a bright beam of light extending upwards into the starry sky. The overall scene is dark and atmospheric, with a warm glow from the flashlight and distant lights on the horizon.

A. Belyaev

*Island of the dead of
the ships*

Lord of the world

"Classics fantasy" 10

A. Belyaev

Classics fantasy – 10

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Аннотация

LORD OF THE WORLDThe young inventor Shtirner studies activity of a brain of living beings and transfer of a thought on distance. For support of the scientific projects Shtirner addresses the large banker Karl Gottlieb. Numerous experiences over animals and people yield amazing results. But Shtirner does not accept the relations with the banker, to be a simple hired servant not for him.

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Classics fantasy – 10

A. Belyaev

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ISLAND OF THE DEAD OF THE SHIPS

Part one

Chapter 1 ON THE DECK

The big transatlantic steamship “Veniamin Franklin” stood in the Genoa harbor, ready to departure. Ashore there was a usual vanity, shouts of multilingual, motley crowd were heard, and by steamship already there came the moment of that intense, nervous silence which involuntarily covers people before a long trip. Only on the deck of the third class passengers fussy “divided narrowness”, accommodating and stacking belongings. The public of the first class from height of the deck silently observed this human ant hill.

Shaking air, the steamship cried last time. Sailors hastily began to lift a ladder.

At this moment to a ladder quickly there ascended two persons. That which followed behind made to sailors some sign a hand, and they lowered a ladder.

The late passengers entered on the deck. Well dressed, slender and broad-shouldered young man, having stuffed up hands in pockets of a wide coat, quickly walked towards cabins. His smoothly shaved face was absolutely quiet. However the

observant person on the shifted eyebrows of the stranger and a faint ironical smile could notice that this tranquility forced. After it, without lagging behind on a step, there was a tolstenky person of average years. Its kettle was shifted on a nape. The sweaty, rumpled person expressed it at the same time fatigue, pleasure and breathless attention, as at a cat who drags a mouse in teeth. He for a second kept the eyes glued from the satellite.

On the deck of the steamship, near a ladder, there was a young girl in a white dress. For a moment of her eye met eyes of the late passenger who went ahead.

When there passed this strange couple, the girl in a white dress, Ms. Kingman, heard as the sailor removing a ladder told the companion, having nodded towards the left passengers:

– Saw? The old acquaintance Jim Simpkins, the New York detective, caught some swell.

– СИМПКИНС? – other sailor answered. – This on a small game does not hunt.

– Yes, look as it is dressed. Some specialist in a part of bank safes, if it is not worse than that.

Ms. Kingman it became terrible. By one steamship with it all way to New York the criminal, perhaps, the murderer will go. Still she saw portraits of these mysterious and terrible people only in newspapers.

Ms. Kingman hasty ascended to the main deck. Here, among people of the circle, in this place inaccessible ordinary mortal, she felt in relative safety. Having leaned back on

a convenient wicker chair, Ms. Kingman plunged into inactive contemplation – the best gift of voyages for the nerves tired with city bustle. The awning covered her head from hot beams of the sun. Over it leaves of the palm trees standing in wide tubs between chairs quietly rocked. From where sideways the aromatic smell of expensive tobacco reached.

– Criminal. Who could think? – Ms. Kingman whispered, still remembering a meeting at a ladder. And finally to get off unpleasant impression, she took out a small graceful cigarette case from ivory, the Japanese work, with the flowers which are cut out on a cover, and lit the Egyptian cigarette. The blue stream of smoke stretched to palm leaves up.

The steamship departed, carefully getting out of the harbor. It seemed as if the steamship stands still, and surrounding scenery by means of the rotating scene move. Here all Genoa turned to a steamship board, as if wishing to seem driving off last time. White houses ran from mountains and were restricted at a coastal strip as herd of sheep at a watering place. And over them yellowy-brown tops with green spots of gardens and stone pines rose. But here someone turned scenery. The gulf corner – a blue smooth surface with crystal transparency of water opened. White yachts, appear, were shipped in the piece of the blue sky falling to the ground all lines of the vessel through transparent water were so clearly visible. Infinite packs of fishes darted about between yellowish stones and short seaweed at a white sandy bottom. Gradually water became all blue, did not hide a bottom yet...

– How it was pleasant to you, Ms., your cabin?

Ms. Kingman looked back. It was faced by the captain who included in a circle of the duties to pay kind attention to the “dearest” passengers.

– I thank you, Mr...

– Brown.

– Mr. Brown, perfectly. We will come into Marseille?

– New York – the first stop. However, maybe, we will be late at several o'clock in Gibraltar. You wanted to visit Marseille?

– About is not present – hasty and even with a fright Ms. Kingman spoke. – I was fatally bothered by Europe. – And, having kept silent, she asked: – Tell, the captain, by steamship... is available for us the criminal?

– What criminal?

– Some arrested...

– It is possible that them even a little. Usual thing. This public is in the habit to get away from the European justice to America, and from American – to Europe. But detectives track down them and deliver home these stray sheep. At their presence by steamship there is nothing dangerous – you can be absolutely quiet. They are given without shackles only not to draw the attention of public. But in a cabin to them immediately put on manual shackles and arrest to beds.

– But it is awful! – Ms. Kingman spoke.

The captain shrugged shoulders.

Neither the captain, nor even Ms. Kingman understood that

vague feeling which caused this exclamation. It is awful that people as wild animals, arrest on a chain. So the captain thought, though found it a reasonable precautionary measure.

It is awful that this young man so poorly similar to the criminal and not different from people of its circle, all road will sit held down in a stuffy cabin. There is that vague subconscious thought which excited Ms. Kingman.

And, having strongly dragged on a cigarette, it plunged into silence.

The captain imperceptibly departed from Ms. Kingman. Fresh sea wind played the end of a white silk scarf and her chestnut ringlets.

Even here, for several miles from the harbor, aroma of the blossoming magnolias as the last hi the Genoa coast reached. The huge steamship tirelessly cut a blue surface, reserving a far wavy trace. And waves stitches hurried to darn the hem formed on a silk sea smooth surface.

Chapter 2

STORMY NIGHT

– Check to the king. Checkmate.

– Oh, that you the shark swallowed! You skillfully play, Mr.

Gatling – the famous New York detective Jim Simpkins told and annoyancely scratched behind the right ear. – Yes, you play perfectly – it continued. – And I nevertheless play better you. You beat me in chess, but what magnificent checkmate I arranged you, Gatling, there, in Genoa when you as the chess king, sat out in the most distant cage of the destroyed house! You wanted to take cover from me? In vain! Jim Simpkins will find at the bottom of the sea. Here to you a checkmate – and, fatly having leaned back, he began to smoke a cigar.

Redzhinald Gatling shrugged shoulders:

– You had too many pawns. You lifted up all Genoa police and conducted the correct siege. Any chess player will not win party, holding one figure of the king against all figures of the opponent. And, besides, Mr. Jim Simpkins, our party still... is not graduated.

– You believe? This chain did not convince you yet? – and the detective touched an easy, but strong chain by which Gatling was chained by the left hand to a metal core of a bed.

– You are naive as many ingenious people. Unless chains – the logical proof? However, we will not press in philosophy.

– Also we will resume a game. I demand a revenge – finished

Simpkins.

– Hardly we will manage it. Rolling amplifies and can mix figures before we terminate a game.

– As you will order to understand it, too figuratively? – asked Simpkins, placing figures.

– As you wish.

– Yes, swings thoroughly – and he made the course.

In a cabin it was stuffy and hot. It was located below a waterline, near the engine room which as powerful heart, shook walls of near cabins and filled them with rhythmic noise. Players plunged into silence, trying to keep balance of a chessboard.

Rolling amplified. The storm was played outright. The steamship laid down on the left side, slowly rose. Again... Still... As drunk...

Chess departed. СИМПКИНС fell to a floor. The Gatling held a chain, but it painfully jerked his hand at a brush where there was “bracelet”.

СИМПКИНС swore and took seat on a floor.

– Here is steadier. You know, Gatling, me is bad... that... seasickness. Never I transferred such devil rolling yet. I will lay down. But... you will not run away if to me it becomes thin?

– By all means – Gatling answered, keeping within on a bed. – I will tear a chain and I will run away... I will rush to waves. I prefer society of sharks...

– You joke, Gatling. – СИМПКИНС on all fours reached a bed and, sighing, settled.

He did not manage to be extended as again it was dumped from a bed by the terrible push which shook all steamship. Somewhere cracked, ringed, rustled, hooted. From above shouts and footfall of legs reached, and, muffling all this discordant noise, is suddenly disturbing the siren hooted, giving a signal. "All upward!"

Overcoming fatigue and weakness, clinging to walls, Симпкинс went to a door. He was fatally frightened, but tried to hide it from the satellite.

– Gatling! There something happened. I go to look. Forgive, but I have to lock you! – cried out Simpkins.

The Gatling contemptuously looked at the detective and answered nothing.

Rolling continued, but even at this rolling it was possible to notice that the steamship slowly plunges a nasal part.

In a few minutes in the doorway Simpkins appeared. From his rain raincoat water flows flew down. The face of the detective was distorted by horror which he did not try to hide any more.

– Accident... We sink... The steamship received a hole... Though plainly nobody knows anything... Prepare boats... the order is given to put on saving belts... But yet let to get nobody into boats. They say, the ship has some there partitions, maybe, also will not drown if there something is made, the devil them knows that... And passengers fight with sailors who drive away them from boats... But me, me what you will order to do? – he cried, snatching to Gatlinga with such look as if that was

responsible for all his misadventures. – To me what you will order to do? To escape most or to watch you? We can appear in different boats, and you, perhaps, will run away.

– And it unless does not calm you? – with a sneer asked Gatling, showing a chain by which it was chained.

– I cannot remain with you, oh, damn.

– In a word, you want to save yourself, me and those ten thousand dollars which promised you for my capture? Very I sympathize with your difficult situation, but I can help nothing.

– You can, you can... Listen, smart guy – and Simpkins's voice became fawning, Simpkins all shrank as the beggar begging for a handout – pledge the word... pledge only the word that you will not run away from me ashore, and I will unlock now and I will remove a chain from your hand... pledge only the word. I trust you.

– I thank for trust. But I will not pledge any word. However, is not present: I will run away as soon as possible. I can pledge this word to you.

– About!. You saw such?. And if I leave you here, the pighead? – And, without expecting the answer, Simpkins rushed to a door. Clinging, clambering and falling, he got out on an abrupt ladder to the deck which, despite night, was brightly lit with arc lamps. At once lashed it a rain veil which was frayed by rough wind. The stern of the ship was above water, the nose was filled in by waves. СИМПКИНС examined the deck and saw that the discipline which still existed several minutes

ago is plunged as an easy barrier, a mad pressure of that primitive, animal feeling which is called a self-preservation instinct. Elegantly dressed men, still yesterday with gallant courtesy the small services rendering to ladies, trampled down bodies of these ladies now, opening fists the way to boats. Won against the strongest. The sound of a siren merged with an inhuman roar of mad herd of biped animals. The crushed bodies, the torn to pieces corpses, clothes shreds flashed.

СИМКИНС lost the head, the hot wave of blood filled in a brain. There was a moment when he was ready to rush in a dump. But the thought of ten thousand dollars which flashed even during this moment held it. Head over heels it rolled down a ladder, flew in a cabin, fell, swept to a door, on all fours reached beds and being silent, the shivering hands began to disconnect a chain.

– Upward! – The detective passed Gatlinga forward and followed it.

When they got out to the deck, Simpkins cried in powerless rage: the deck was empty. On the enormous waves lit with fires of windows the last boats overflowed with people flashed. There was nothing and think to reach them by swimming.

Boards of boats were stuck around by hands of drowning. Blows of knives, fists and oars, revolving bullets poured from boats on the heads unfortunate, and waves absorbed them.

– In total because of you! – Simpkins cried, shaking a fist before a nose of Gatlinga.

But Gatling, without paying any attention to the detective, approached a board and attentively looked down. At the steamship of a wave swung the woman's body. With the last efforts she gave hands and when waves beat it to the steamship, vainly tried to catch an iron covering.

The Gatling threw off a raincoat and jumped overboard.

– You want to run? You will be responsible for it. – And, having taken out the revolver, the detective sent it to the head of Gatlinga. – I will shoot in your first attempt to sail from the steamship.

– Do not tell nonsenses and heave rather the line of a rope, the idiot you such! – shouted in reply to Gatling, grabbing the drowning woman who already fainted hand.

– He also disposes! – the detective shouted, ineptly stirring the end of a rope. – Official's insult on duty!

Ms. Vivian Kingman recovered in a cabin. She deeply sighed and opened eyes.

Симпкинс gallantly took leave:

– May I introduce myself: agent Jim Simpkins. And it is Mr. Redzhinald Gatling who is under my guardianship, so to speak...

Kingman did not know how to behave in the company of the agent and criminal. Kingman, the daughter Milliardera, had to share society with these people. In addition she is obliged to one of them by the rescue, she has to thank him. But to give a hand to the criminal? No, no! Fortunately, it is still too weak, cannot set a hand... well, of course, cannot. She moved with

a hand, without lifting it, and told by a weak voice:

– I thank you, you saved to me life.

– It is a debt of each of us – without any posing Gatling answered. – And now you need to have a rest. You can be quiet: the steamship well floats and will not sink. – Having pulled Simpkins's sleeve, he told: – We go.

– On what basis you began to dispose of me? – the detective grumbled, following, however, Gatling. – Do not forget that you – the arrested and I can impose any minute legally manual shackles and imprison you.

The Gatling approached closely Simpkins and is quiet, but impressively told:

– Listen, Simpkins if you do not cease to talk the nonsense, I will take you by the scruff of the neck, here so, and I will throw out overboard as blind kitten, together with your automatic gun which also namozolit to me eyes as well as you are. You understand? Remove in a pocket your weapon now and follow me. We should make a breakfast for Ms. and to find for a bottle of good wine.

– It is the devil's work! You want to make of me the maid and the cook? To clean it shoes and to give pins?

– I want that you stirred less, and did more. Well, turn!

Chapter 3

IN ONE DESERT

– Tell, Mr. Gatling why the ship did not sink? – Ms. Kingman asked, sitting with Gatling on the deck, all lit with the morning sun. Around, as far as covered an eye, the water smooth surface of the ocean as the emerald desert was spread.

– Modern ocean steamships – Gatling answered – are supplied with internal partitions, or walls. At holes water fills only a part of the steamship, without getting further. And if destructions are not too big, the steamship can float even with big holes.

– But why then passengers left the steamship?

– Nobody could tell whether he will sustain the steamship to be capable to float. Look: Kiel went to water. The stern rose so that blades of screws are visible. The deck is inclined at an angle almost in thirty degrees to the surface of the ocean. It is not really convenient to go on this slope, but all this is better, than to flounder in water. We still got off lightly. By steamship there are enormous stocks of provisions and water. And if not too carried us from ocean ways, we can meet soon some vessel which will pick up us.

However there were days behind days, and the blue desert remained still is dead. Симпкинс missed eyes, peering at a sea distance.

Monotonous days began to flow.

Ms. Kingman got into the role of the hostess soon. She strove

in kitchen, washed clothes, kept order in the dining room and “salon” – a small cozy cabin where they liked to spend evenings before going to bed.

The difficult question how to hold and put itself in society, new, alien for it, was resolved somehow by itself. It concerned Simpkins good-natured ironically, with Gatling the simple, friendly relations were established. It is more than that, Gatling interested her mysteriousness of the destiny and nature. Out of a step she not only never asked Gatling about its past, but did not assume that also Simpkins spoke about it though Simpkins tried to tell for lack of Gatling about its terrible “crime” more than once.

They willingly talked with each other in the evenings, at a sunset, having finished the small economy. СИМПКИНС stuck out on the watchtower, looking for a steamship smoke as the messenger of rescue, professional triumph and the promised award.

From this talk Ms. Kingman could be convinced that her interlocutor is educated, tactful and brought up. Conversations with witty Ms. Kingman, apparently, gave also to Gatling great pleasure. She remembered the travel across Europe and made laugh it with unexpected characteristics of seen.

– Switzerland? This mountain pasture of tourists. I visited the whole world, but I hate these ruminant biped with Bedeker instead of a tail. They chewed up eyes all beauty of the nature.

Vesuvius? Some коротыш which puffs a worthless cigar

and puts on importance. You did not see a mountain chain of Colorado? Hes-Pik, Lon Peak, Arankho-Pik – this mountains. I do not tell Everest having 8800 meters of height about such giants as Mont any more. Vesuvius in comparison with them a puppy.

Venice? There can live one frogs. The gondolier carried me on the main channels, wishing to show it to good effect, all these palaces, statues and other beauty which became green from dampness, and big-eyed Englishwomen. But I ordered that it brought me to one of small channels – I do not know whether truly I told, but the gondolier understood me and after a repeated order reluctantly sent a gondola to the narrow canal. I wanted to see how there live Venetians. It is horror. Channels are so narrow that the neighbor can offer a hand opposite. Water in channels smells of a mold, on a surface orange-peels and any litter which is thrown out from windows float. The sun never looks to these stone gorges. And children, unfortunate children! They have no place to gambol. Pale, rachitic, they sit on window sills, risking to fall to the dirty canal, and with serious melancholy look at the passing gondola. I am not sure even whether they are able to go.

– But what it was pleasant to you in Italy?.

Here their conversation was interrupted in the most unexpected way:

– Hands up!

They looked back and uvidat before themselves Simpkins with

the revolver sent to a breast of Gatlinga.

The detective listened to their conversation for a long time, expecting whether Gatling will blab out the crime. Having convinced of innocence of a conversation, Simpkins decided to act in a new role – “the prepredictor and a presekatel of crimes”.

– Ms. Kingman – it began pompously – my office debt and a debt of the honest person to warn you about danger. I cannot allow more this talk alone. I have to warn you, Ms. Kingman that Gatling – the dangerous criminal. And dangerous first of all for you, women. It killed the young lady, having entangled her at first network of the eloquence. Killed and ran, but it was caught by me, Jim Simpkins – he finished and with pride looked at the had effect.

It is impossible to tell that the effect was gained that which it expected.

Ms. Kingman was really confused, excited and offended, but rather its unexpected and rough invasion, than the speech.

And Redzhinald Gatling did not resemble the criminal killed with exposure at all. With usual tranquility it approached Simpkins. Without paying attention to the induced barrel, pulled out after short fight and rejected the revolver aside, having said in low tones:

– You, obviously, still have not enough ten thousand dollars promised you to see me for pleasure of some persons put on an electric chair. Only presence of Ms. holds me to be quit with you

on merits!

The quarrel was stopped by Ms. Kingman.

– Pledge me the word – she told, approaching them and addressing more Simpkins – that similar scenes did not repeat. Do not worry about me, Mr. Simpkins, I do not need guardianship. Leave yours scores till that time until we descend on the earth. Here us three are only three among the boundless ocean. Who knows that he waits for us still ahead? Perhaps, each of us will be necessary for another a minute of danger.

Becomes damp, the sun set. It is time to disperse. Good night!

And they dispersed on the cabins.

Chapter 4

SARGASSO SEA

Jim Simpkins slept badly this night. He turned on a bed in the cabin and to something listened. All it seemed that Gatling somewhere nearby, creeps to deal shortly with him, to revenge it, perhaps, to kill. There are someone's steps, the door somewhere creaked... The detective in horror sat down on a bed.

– No, everything is silent, seemed... Oh the hell what stuffy night! And then – mosquitoes and mosquitoes haunt. From where all these winged evil spirits among the ocean could undertake? Either I rave, or we is close from the earth? Whether not to go to be refreshed?

СИМПКИНС not the first night went to be refreshed to a steamship hold where there were stocks of canned food and wine.

He safely reached the place, blundering about in the dark on familiar transitions, and already took a sip of a good drink of rum as he suddenly heard some strange rustle. In this labyrinth it was difficult to define from where these sounds were heard. At Simpkins grew cold in a breast.

– Looks for. There is nothing to tell, good hide-and-seek. If only it did not find till the morning. And there it is necessary to ask protection of Ms. Kingman. – And it began to make the way, with bated breath, in a far corner of a hold, almost at the covering. Exactly there, behind a covering, rustle as though

some unknown sea monster which came up from a sea bottom rubbed rough skin about a steamship board suddenly was heard. Mysterious sounds became more heard. And suddenly Simpkins felt how from a soft push all steamship kolykhnutsya. Neither waves, nor reefs could make such strange fluctuation. After this a push some more together with some deaf hoot followed.

Simpkins was captured by ice horror of far animal ancestors of the person: horror before the unknown. A grief to the one who will not manage to overcome this horror at once: blind instincts extinguish then a thought, will paralyze will, self-control.

СИМПИНС felt how cold pakhnut in a nape and head hair rose. It seemed to it that he feels tension of each hair. With a wild roar it rushed, stumbling and falling, up, on the deck.

He was met requirements by Gatling. СИМПИНС, having forgotten about everything, except fear of the unknown, nearly fell arms from what just escaped as a mouse in a hole.

– What is it? – he asked some hissing whistle (nervous spasms squeezed his throat) and grabbed with Gatlinga by a hand.

– I know no more than yours... The steamship softly shook on one side, a nasal part fell then and again rose. I hastily put on and left to look.

The moon brightly lit a part of the deck. The kilevy part of the steamship which was injured after accident was shipped in water, and the deck lay almost on water level here.

СИМПИНС remained higher, watching Gatling who examined all kilevy part of the deck.

– Strange, strange... Go down here, Simpkins, are not a coward.

– I thank you, but and from here it is well visible to me.

– СИМПИНС, it you? What there happened?

– Ms. Kingman, I ask you to descend here – told Gatling, увидав Viviana who was going down the deck.

It approached Gatlingu, and after it also Simpkins dared to go down. Presence of the girl calmed him.

– Admire, Ms.!

In bright beams of the moon the deck brightly grew white. And on this white background dark stains and traces were seen. As if some enormous animal всползло on the deck, made a semicircle and fell down from the right board, having broken as a straw, iron rods of a handrail.

– Pay attention: it is similar to a trace from a heavy belly which was dragged on the deck. And on each side – traces of paws or it is rather fins. We were visited by some unknown monster.

Simpkinsu it became terrible again, and he imperceptibly began to move back on the sloping deck back.

– And it that for litter? Some plants which are obviously left by the unknown visitor? – And Ms. Kingman lifted an alga from a floor.

The Gatling attentively examined an alga and disapprovingly shook the head.

– Sargassum, groups of brown seaweed... Yes, there is no doubt! These are alga sargassova. Here where brought us. Devil

take it! Business gets a bad turn. We should discuss situation.

And all three rose by the main deck. Danger pulled together them. Симпкинс waved a hand on “rights”, he understood that only knowledge, experience and energy of Gatlinga could save them.

Most of all detective disturbed an unknown monster. It did not attach to any sargassovy alga significance.

– What do you think, Gatling, about our uninvited guest? – asked Simpkins when all took seat on wattled chairs.

The Gatling shrugged shoulders, continuing to twist an alga in a hand.

– This is not an octopus, not a shark and not some other of the famous inhabitants of the sea... It is possible what is here, in this mysterious corner of the Atlantic Ocean, there live unknown to us monsters, some plesiosaurs who remained from primitive times.

– And suddenly they will get out of water and will begin to pursue us?

– We have to be ready to everything. But, I admit, I am disturbed not so much by unknown monsters, how many this leaf – and it showed an alga leaf. – The steamship after all is too big and strong even for these unknown giants of the underwater world. To them not to get also into our close cabins. At last, we have a weapon. But what weapon can win against this? – and it showed on an alga again.

– What terrible is in this insignificant leaf? – asked Simpkins.

– The fact that we got to the area of the Sargasso Sea, the mysterious sea which is located to the west of Korvo – one of the Azores. This sea six times more Germany occupies the space. It everything is entirely covered with a dense carpet of seaweed. “Alga” in Spanish – “sargassa”, from here and the name of the sea.

– As it so: the sea among the ocean? – Ms. Kingman asked.

– This issue was not resolved also by scientists.

– As you have to know, the warm Gulf Stream Current goes from the passages of Florida to the North to Spitsbergen. But this current is divided into ways, and one sleeve comes back to the South, reaches the Azores, goes to west banks of Africa and, at last, having described a semicircle, comes back to the Antilles. The warm ring in which there is cold, quiet water – the Sargasso Sea turns out. Look at the ocean!

All looked back and were struck: the surface of the ocean lay before them motionless as a standing pond. Slightest wave, movement, splash. The first beams of a rising sun lit this strange, stiffened sea which resembled a continuous carpet of greenish and pale seaweed.

– I do not want to frighten you, Simpkins, but a grief to the ship which got to this to “bank with seaweed” as Columbus called the Sargasso Sea. The screw if we also have it in serviceability, could not work: it would reel up seaweed and stopped. Seaweed detain the course of the sailing vessel, do not give the chance and to row. In a word, they it is tenacious hold the victim.

– What will be with us? – asked Simpkins.

– Perhaps, the same, as with others. The Sargasso Sea is called the cemetery of the ships. Seldom who manages to get out from here. If people do not die of hunger, thirst or yellow fever, they live, their ship from weight of the accrued polyps or a leak will not drown yet. And the sea slowly accepts the new victim.

Ms. Kingman listened carefully.

– Awfully! – she whispered, peering into the stiffened green surface.

– We, in any case, are in the best conditions, than many of our predecessors. The steamship keeps well. Perhaps, we will manage to repair a leak and to extort water. There will be enough stocks of products for us three for several years.

– Years! – Simpkins exclaimed, having jumped up on a chair.

– Yes, the road Simpkins, it is possible that several years you should expect the promised award. Take heart, Simpkins.

– I wanted to spit on an award, if only to me to get out of this damned kissel!

...Monotonous, painful, hot days stretched. Clouds of some unknown insects were above this standing swamp. At night mosquitoes did not allow to sleep. Sometimes fog laid down over the sea a funeral veil.

Fortunately, by steamship there was a good library. Ms. Kingman read much. In the evenings all gathered in big magnificent salon. Viviana sang and played grand piano. And even more often Simpkins began to be on these evening meetings

with a wine bottle: from a grief he washed down.

Gatling was necessary to lock wine cellars. Симпкинс tried to object, but Gatling was relentless.

– There is no that we had to potter with the patient with delirium tremens still. Understand, ridiculous you the person that you will die soon if not to stop you.

Simpkinsu was necessary to obey.

Chapter 5

IN THE KINGDOM OF THE DEAD

It seemed that the steamship is motionless. But, apparently, some slow current carried away it on the middle of the Sargasso Sea: even more often the semi-decayed and become green fragments of the ships began to meet on the way. They appeared as dead persons, with naked “edges” – frames and the broken masts, some time followed the ship and slowly departed afar. By nights Simpkins was frightened by “ghosts”: from the green surface of the sea there were suddenly some columns of pale fog reminding people in shrouds and slowly slid, waved and thawed... It evaporations in those places where in a continuous carpet of seaweed there were “ice-holes” escaped.

In one of moonlight nights some half-ruined brig of the Dutch construction close approached the steamship. It was painted in black color with bright gilding. Its mast and a part of bulvarok were demolished, брашпиль is broken.

With the mixed feeling of curiosity and horror watched Vivian at this dead ship. Perhaps, this their future; time will come – and their steamship will also rush by the sea, not recovered by any human being. And suddenly she screamed:

– Look, look, Gatling!

Having leaned against the broken mast, there was a person in a red cap. In beams of the bright moon on dark, almost black face teeth sparkled. He smiled, smiled from ear to ear. At his

legs the bottle lay.

Consciousness that they not one that in this green desert there is one more living human being, excited all. Симпкинс and Gatling loudly shouted and waved hands.

The person in a red cap, still smiling, waved a hand, but it is somehow strange as if having shown something behind itself. And the hand fell at once as a lash. The moon came for a cloud, and the person already died it is visible. But the brig swam up closer and closer to the steamship.

At last the brig already almost closely approached a ship board. At this moment the moon ascended and lit a strange and terrible picture.

The skeleton was tied to a fragment of a mast. Clothes tatters still remained on it. The escaped bones of hands dangled on wind, but the others dropped out of shoulder joints for a long time and rolled on half of the deck. Face skin remained, dried up by the hot sun. On this parchment face the skull smile sparkled. The semi-decayed red cap covered its top.

One moment, and Gatling jumped on the deck of a brig.

– What do you do, Gatling? The brig can depart from the steamship. Then you died.

– Do not worry, Ms., I will be in time. There is something interesting.

The Gatling ran up to a skeleton, grabbed the sealed bottle and jumped on the deck of the steamship while the brig departed already almost on meter.

– Madman! – the turned pale Ms. Kingman met Gatlinga, rejoicing to its safe return. – Well, for the sake of what, really, you so risked? – asked Vivian, looking at a bottle. – We have enough this good.

– And here we will look. – The Gatling beat off a neck of a bottle and took the semi-decayed leaf of bluish paper. The faded, almost red letters could be sorted.

Obviously, by a goose quill, with a strange stroke and curls, it was written:

“Whoever you were, a Christian or incorrect into whose hands this bottle will get, I ask and I conjure you to execute my last will. If you find me after my death on a brig, take money that lie in a white leather bag, in a captain’s cabin, 50 000 guildens gold. From them take 10 000 guildens to yourself, and give 40 000 guildens to my wife, Marta Tessel, in Amsterdam, Morskaya Street, own house. And if the brig sinks, and one you will find a bottle in the sea, send it, Marta Tessel, my wife, my last greeting. Let will forgive me if upset her in what... All our died... All crew to the sailor... Carat, Gubert... the first... I one am living, so far. Week... without food... I will become attached to a mast... who will notice... Farewell... Gustav Tessel. Brig of ‘March’, 1713 September of the 15th day”.

When Gatling terminated to read, there came silence.

– As it is terrible and strange! We received an assignment from the dead person to say hello it to the wife who two hundred years as in a grave ... – And, having shuddered, Ms. Kingman added: –

How many awful secrets this sea keeps!

– Fifty thousand guldens – Simpkins thought aloud, seeing off eyes the being removed brig. – How many it will be at the rate on today's number?.

Part second

Chapter 6

LANDING PLACE

– Earth! Earth! Ms. Kingman! Gatling! Go here rather. We approach some harbor. Tops of masts and a pipe of steamships are visible already. Over there. Look... more to the left there!

The Gatling looked in the telescope.

– The harbor opened by you has devilishly strange appearance, Simpkins. This “harbor” extends on many miles: masts and pipes and again masts... But pay attention: any pipe does not smoke, and masts... Their equipment, sails?. Look, Ms. Kingman – and Gatling transferred her the telescope.

– Yes it rather some cemetery of the ships! – Viviana exclaimed. – Masts and pipes are broken, from sails there were one shreds. And then... where earth? I understand nothing...

– It is impossible to tell that and for me everything was clear, Ms. – Gatling answered – but I think that the situation is so: in the Sargasso Sea, in this standing swamp, obviously, there are the currents though which are very slowed down by seaweed. Obviously, we got to one of these currents which, alas, and brought us to this “landing place”. You look what “harbor” we enter. Here who meets us – and it gesture showed around.

The closer the steamship approached the unusual harbor, the sad fragments of the ships met on the way more often. There were broken, crippled, semi-decayed vessels of all countries and the people. Here pie from the whole piece of a tree... And here

one skeleton of a fishing bark: the external covering fell off, frames stuck out as naked edges, and a kilevy part resembled a fish spine... Further away more or less remained vessels were seen: barques, schooners, tenders, frigates, galleys... The rusty modern steamship stood side by side with the Portuguese caravel of the sixteenth century. It had beautiful curved ship lines. The low board towered intricate superstructures on a nose and a stern. The core of a wheel passed through all stern, on the middle of boards there were openings for oars. "Santa Maria" – distinctly was seen onboard.

– Surprisingly! – Gatling exclaimed. – Almost on the same vessel Columbus floated, and one of his caravels was also called "Santa Maria", two others – "Pint" and Nina. And here you look – and far-sighted Gatling read onboard the linear ship: – "Henry". Further, you see, the three-deck vessel: "The sovereign of the seas" and "1637" on its board. And between them the wheel steamship of the first half of the nineteenth century – no more than fifty meters of length.

to the internal mass of the ships which are closely pressed to each other which as if merged to a peculiar island.

Satellites were silent. All had such feeling as if they were brought alive at the cemetery.

– If the destiny brought us here, it is necessary to get acquainted with this unusual island. Симпкинс! We go!

Симпкинс it was obviously not located to be let in an excursion on this gloomy cemetery.

– What sense? – he tried to evade.

– Be a man, Simpkins. Who knows that he conceals in himself this island? Perhaps, there are also inhabitants.

– Ghosts of old Dutch seafarers?

– We will look at it. In any case, whoever lived here, it is better if we learn the first about them. This island can become our grave, but who knows, perhaps, here we will find also means to rescue. It is necessary to examine vessels; whether it will be some else suitable for swimming?

– To examine vessels! – СИМПКИНС remembered “Marta” from her 50 000 guildens gold. It fluctuated.

– But how we will leave one Ms. Kingman?

– Do not worry about me. I am not afraid of ghosts – she answered.

– We here that we will make, Ms. – Gatling offered – put straw in a fire chamber. If you are threatened by some danger, set fire to straw; we will see the smoke which is coming out a pipe and immediately we will hurry to the aid. We go.

The Gatling got over on the three-sailing vessel of the eighteenth century Victoria standing nearby. СИМПКИНС reluctantly followed it.

They slowly moved ahead in depth of the island.

Hardly something in the world could be more sad than a show of this enormous cemetery. The sea buries the lost ships, the earth – people. But this cemetery left the dead persons open, at full light of the hot sun. It was necessary to go carefully.

The semi-decayed boards shivered under legs. Every minute travelers risked to fall in a hold. On this case each of them had on a rope to give help each other the necessary minute. A handrail fell off. Scraps of sails at one touch were scattered in ashes. Everywhere a thick layer dust of decay and greens of rotting lay... The skeletons glinting in the sun a whiteness of bones or darkening still the remained skin or tatters of clothes lay on many decks. On an arrangement of skeletons, on the broken skulls it was possible to judge that the people who went mad before death quarreled, revolted, aimlessly and cruelly killed each other, revenging someone for sufferings and the ruined life, Each ship witnessed the great tragedy happening on it fifty, hundred, two hundred years ago.

From what inhuman horror, what terrible anguish living owners of the skulls bleached by the sun grinning now in a terrible smile had to suffer! And all of them smiled, smiled to ears...

Even Gatlingu became terribly from these smiling grins, and Simpkins was shaken by fever.

– Let's leave from here – he asked. – I cannot more!

– Wait, there well remained ship. It is interesting to go down in cabins.

– On ladders which will break off under your legs? – Симпкинс it ozlitsya suddenly. – Gatling! I will not make more to a step. Enough. I ask you not to order me any more. You forgot about the one who you are and who I am! Where you conduct

me? What for? to dump somewhere in a hold and thus to get off me without noise! Oh, I know: I disturb you.

Gatling this speech enraged:

– Become silent, Simpkins, or I really will throw you overboard.

– Not so simply – venomously said Simpkins and, having leaned against a wooden protection at a board, directed a revolver barrel to Gatling. The Gatling quickly stepped forward, but before he grabbed by Simpkins's hand, the shot and a sound of the fallen handrail was distributed. The bullet flew by overhead Gatling. At the same time he saw how Simpkins, having ridiculously waved hands, fell overboard together with fragments of the rotted-through handrail. Behind a board deaf splash of water... silence... then Simpkins's snorting. The Gatling looked overboard. The detective floundered in green porridge of seaweed. Seaweed hanged down in garlands from the head, entangled hands, is tenacious held the victim. СИМПКИНС strained all efforts to be hooked for a ship covering. After a number of attempts it managed it. But his hands were tired, seaweed pulled down, it is a little more – and it would go to a bottom.

The Gatling departed from a board, sat down on a barrel and lit a tube.

– The Gatling, forgive. I was a silly donkey – heard Gatling Simpkins's voice, but continued to smoke silently a tube. – ... save the Gatling... ГАТЛИНГ!

The Gatling approached a board. It fluctuated. Nevertheless

the person asks about the help. But what person? The selling detective, the spy who will not stop even after rescue now to betray Gatlinga in hands of the authorities to receive thirty silver coins.

– No, no – and Gatling sat down again and began to smoke strenuously...

– The Gatling, I beg! Gatling! Gatling! – Simpkins groaned. The Gatling strenuously smoked a tube.

– Ga-at ... – and suddenly this shout turned into some choking sobbing.

The Gatling gritted the teeth, rejected a tube and, having untwisted the end of a rope, threw it drowning.

Grabbed with the last efforts of Simpkins a rope, but as soon as Gatling began to drag it, Simpkins broke: seaweed it is tenacious held it, in hands there was no force any more.

– Tie round a rope! – Gatling shouted to it.

СИМПКИНС somehow tied round, twirled knot and began to rise by the deck.

Facing Gatling, Simpkins was so excited that he only continuously repeated: “Gatling!. Gatling!. Gatling!.” – also gave it a hand.

The Gatling frowned, but, having looked at sincere animal joy in the opinion of saved, good-natured smiled and strong reaped a wet hand.

– I cannot express to you, Gatling...

– Stand – Gatling suddenly pricked up the ears, quickly pulling

out the hand – watch, by our steamship smoke from a pipe. Ms. Kingman calls us. There something happened. We run!

Chapter 7

INHABITANTS OF THE ISLAND

Having remained one, Ms. Kingman was accepted to preparation of a breakfast. She cleaned and fried fish hooked by Gatling, went down in a hold and took several oranges in provisions warehouses. When she, with a basket in hands, rose by the deck, saw an unusual picture: behind their dining table – is more true, on a table and chairs – monkeys managed. They squealed, quarreled, rushed cake and thrust to themselves for cheeks pieces of sugar. At appearance of Ms. Kingman they pricked up the ears and with shout receded to a board. Viviana laughed and threw them couple of oranges. It established friendly relations at once. Not without a fight having finished couple of oranges, a chimpanzee, squatting and grimacing, approached Ms. Kingman and began to take safely fruits from it from hands. There was no doubt that they got used to society of people.

And it is valid, people did not keep themselves waiting long.

Absorbed by amusing tricks of unexpected guests, Ms. Kingman did not see how because of a steamship board two heads carefully looked out. Having convinced that on the deck there is nobody, except the woman, unknown quickly got through a board and, having thrown guns on shoulders, began to approach Ms. Kingman.

She screamed from surprise, having taken away this couple.

One of them – the tolstenky, short little man with pale,

despite the southern sun, the grown fat, long ago not shaved face – struck at once with some contrasts of a suit and all appearance. On his head there was a bowler hat crumpled, dirty, appearing through in many places. The tuxedo, despite holes and patches, still kept traces of good breed. But trousers had the most pathetic appearance, going down a fringe below knees. The worn-out varnished shoes and the torn fulyarovy bow on a neck supplemented a dress.

Another – high, brawny, suntanned, with a black beard, in a wide-brimmed Mexican hat of a sombrero, in a dark shirt, with hands, naked on an elbow, and in high boots – reminded the Mexican sheep breeder. Its movements were bystra and cuttings.

– Bonzhur, mademoiselle – welcomed Ms. Kingman the fat man, exchanging bows in the most gallant way. – Allow to congratulate you on safe arrival on the Island of the Lost Ships.

– I thank you though I would not call my arrival safe... What it is necessary for you?

– First of all may I introduce myself: Aristide Dode. A surname washing Dode and and, Dode. I am Frenchman...

– Perhaps, relative to the writer Alphonse Dode? – involuntarily Ms. Kingman asked.

– E-e... not that... so... remote... Though I had some relation to literature, so to speak... The largest paper-mills and... wallpaper in the south of France.

– Do not say too much, Ternip – gloomy and angrily said his satellite.

– As you are tactless, Flores! When I teach you to keep in decent society? Also I ask not to call me Ternip. They whether you will desire to see, called me so for fun, because of my head which as it seems to them, reminds turnip ... – and, having removed a kettle, he carried out on the naked yellowish skull which kept on a strange freak of nature, a bunch of hair on a darkness.

Ms. Kingman involuntarily smiled to a well-aimed nickname.

– But what from me it is necessary to you? – again Viviana repeated the question.

– The governor Ostrova of the Lost Ships, the captain Feargus Sleyton, issued the order to which we have to obey blindly and steadily: each newcomer of people has to be immediately presented to it.

– Also I assure you, Ms. or Mrs., I have no honor to know who you are, you will get the most hearty welcome at the captain Sleyton.

– I will not go anywhere – Ms. Kingman answered.

Ternip sighed.

– It is very unpleasant to me, but...

– To you will play the diplomat! – again roughly Flores interfered and, having approached to Vivian, imperatively told: – You have to follow us.

Ms. Kingman understood that resistance will be vain. Having thought a little, she told:

– Well. I agree. But allow me to change clothes – and it showed

on the working suit and an apron.

– Superfluous! – Flores cut off.

– It will not take a lot of time – Ternip at the same time addressed Flores and Ms. Kingman.

– Oh, only several minutes! – and it left the deck.

In a few minutes Flores noticed that steamship the pipe filled with smoke. He understood military cunning at once.

– The damned woman outwitted. You see smoke? It is a signal. She calls someone to the aid! – And, removing a rifle from a shoulder, he began to scold Ternip: – And all you! Thawed. Here I will tell your old woman!

– You are incorrigible, Flores. We could not drag by force the defenseless woman.

– Knights! Gallantry! Here Feargus will prescribe you knights... Whether it is necessary? – And, having taken the gun atilt, he nodded to a board through which jumped over Gatling and still wet Simpkins, all in green seaweed, with the crabs who clung to clothes: – It still that for water?.

Negotiations began. The Gatling would not be afraid to try forces with these two ragamuffins. But if they do not lie, fight will not lead to anything: on the Island as they assure, there lives the whole population – forty three well armed persons. Forces are unequal – the victory has to remain on their party.

Having left as proof of Simpkins, Gatling went to discuss situation with Ms. Kingman. It also agreed that fight is useless.

It was decided to go by everything to be presented to the captain Feargus together.

Chapter 8

GOVERNOR FEARGUS SLEYTON

On the Island of the Lost Ships there were quite good means of communication.

Having got over through an old three-deck frigate, Ternip who was going ahead brought captives to the road: it were the bridges thrown between the ships and over the failed decks. Along this road some wire attached to small columns and the remained masts lasted.

– Here, here! Do not stumble, Ms. – he kindly addressed Ms. Kingman. It was followed by Gatling and Simpkins. Gloomy Flores, having pulled a sombrero to eyebrows, concluded a procession.

Halfway to them the inhabitants dressed in the tatters all which acquired suntanned began to meet: blond inhabitants of the North, swarty southerners, several Blacks, three Chinese... All of them with greedy curiosity looked at new inhabitants of the Island.

Among small sailing vessels of different eras and the people, in the center of the Island, the big, quite well remained frigate Elizabeth rose.

– The residence of the governor – Ternip respectfully said.

On the deck of this “residence” there was something like guard of honor: six sailors with guns in hands, in identical and quite decent suits.

The governor received guests in a big cabin.

After the depressing type of the destroyed ships this cabin involuntarily struck.

It had quite inhabited appearance and was removed almost magnificently. Only some diversity of style said that here pulled down everything that found the best by the ships which beat to this strange Island.

Expensive Persian carpets covered a floor. On consoles there were several good Chinese vases. Dark walls with carved eaves of a black oak were covered with fine pictures of the Dutch, Spanish and Italian masters: Velasquez, Ribeiro, Rubens, Titian, Flemish landscape writer Teynyer. Right there was an etude of the dog doing a rack, and nearby, breaking style, the fine Japanese picture embroidered with silk, representing in style Gokpan a crane on showered with snow to a bough of a tree and a mountain Fujiyama cone hung.

On a big round table there were ancient Venetian cut vases of the sixteenth century, the French bronze candelabrams of times of the Directory and several rare pink sinks. The heavy carved furniture fitted by imprinted pigskin with gold rims at the edges, gave to a cabin a solid look.

Прислонясь to a bookcase, there was a governor Ostrova – the captain Feargus Sleyton.

It favourably differed from other inhabitants in strong addition, the vykholenny, well shaved face and quite decent captain's suit.

A little flat nose, heavy chin, sensual mouth made not absolutely pleasant impression. His gray cold eyes directed on comers. He silently and quietly looked at them, as if studying them and weighing something. It was the look of the person who got used to dispose of destiny of people, without paying attention to their personal desires, tastes and interests. Having thrown a cursory glance on Simpkinsa and, obviously, without having considered it noteworthy, he long looked at Ms. Kingman, transferred a view of Gatlinga and again to Kingman...

This silent survey confused Viviana and began to annoy Gatlinga.

– May I introduce myself: Redzhinald Gatling, Ms. Vivian Kingman, Mr. Jim Simpkins. Passengers of the steamship “Veniamin Franklin” which crashed.

Sleyton, without paying attention to Gatlinga, still continued to look at Ms. Kingman. Then he approached it, kindly greeted, carelessly gave a hand to Gatlingu and Simpkins and invited to sit down.

– Yes, I know – he spoke – I know.

The Gatling was extraordinary surprised when Sleyton precisely specified where and when their steamship crashed. None of them spoke about it to islanders.

Sleyton addressed almost only Ms. Kingman.

– If the case brought you on this sad Island, Ms. Kingman, then we, islanders, have to thank only the lucky stars for its fine gift – Sleyton released rather heavy compliment even without

smile upon the face.

– Alas, I am not inclined to thank the lucky stars which so disposed of me – Ms. Kingman answered.

– Who knows, who knows? – mysteriously Sleyton answered. – Here not so badly is, Ms. as can seem from the first. You play music? You sing?

– Yes...

– Perfectly. Perfectly. Here you will find a fine erarovsky grand piano and rich musical library. There are enough books too. Among our islanders there are interesting people. Here at least this Ternip. However, it decently fell, but he saw much, knows much and once was well placed. Now it is ridiculous, but nevertheless is interesting. Then Liu-ders, German. This is our historian and the scientist. He studies shipbuilding history, our Island – the real museum, isn't that so?

– Shipbuilding history? It is interesting – told Gatling.

– It is related to your specialty? – carelessly Sleyton asked, having looked at him squinted.

– Yes, I am a shipbuilding engineer – Gatling answered.

Ms. Kingman with astonishment looked at it. She also did not know about it.

– There now and you will have an interesting interlocutor, Mr...

– Gatling.

– Mr. Gatling... Людере brought together the most interesting library from ship magazines and posthumous notes of all dead

by the ships surrounding us. Well... I do not advise this material to read... However, it would be enough for ten novelists, but it is too gloomy, too. The Sargasso Sea will seem to you after reading this library one of circles of dantovsky Hell.

– And what, by these ships there is probably a lot of and... rarities of everyones found? – squeeze the word and Simpkins.

Sleyton looked at Simpkins more attentively and, having noted some observation or a conclusion in memory, answered:

– Yes, is and ... – he purposely made the same pause, as well as Simpkins – rarities. We have the whole museum. I will show it to you somehow if you are interested in rarities.

But what, unfortunately, lacks us – Sleyton addressed Ms. Kingman again – so it women's society. With the death of my late wife – Sleyton sighed – on the Island there were only two women: Maggie Flores and Ida Dode, or Ternip, as call at us her husband. This is the old, respectable woman. I will provide you it to cares.

– To eat it is given – the Black footman who is dressed up on the occasion of arrival of new settlers in a dress coat and white gloves declared.

– I ask you to eat on a housewarming – and the governor led guests to the dining room where well served table was laid.

During a breakfast Sleyton once again surprised with Gatlinga the awareness on what becomes on light. Sleyton knew the latest world news.

The governor noticed amazed looks and for the first time fatly

laughed:

– We if you want, Robinzona. But Robinzona of the twentieth century. You noticed the wires attached to masts and columns? The island of the Lost Ships has telephone communication. We could arrange also electric lighting, but we do not have fuel. But we have the radio-receiving station and even a loudspeaker. We got all this on the installed radio vessels beaten to the Island in recent years. You wish to listen? – and Sleyton put the radio-receiving device in action.

And in a cabin of an old frigate, among the Island of the Lost Ships, the fashionable song executed in New York by the famous singer who was heard more than once by Ms. Kingman suddenly was heard.

Never before sounds of songs so shook it.

Chapter 9

NEW LIFE

The female part of the population of the Island accepted Ms. Kingman with the most live participation.

If from Maggie Flores at Ms. Kingman friendly relations of contemporaries, then old, strict by sight were established, but the kind wife of Aristide Ternipa-Dode – Ida – took at once patronizing tone of careful mother concerning Ms. Kingman. Women was so a little on the Island! Besides Mrs. Dode thoroughly assumed that Viviana will need her protection. And it accepted the girl under the guardianship.

Maggie Flores in the first day told Vivian Kingman the sad story. When the destiny abandoned her on the Island, she married, with observance of the “laws” and ceremonialisms existing on the Island, the governor Feargus Sleyton. From this marriage she gave birth to the child who was the only representative of new generation on the Island now. Feargus was rough and is even tough with it, but she suffered... During the German war on the Island brought the German submarine and on it three who survived: the sailor, the captain and the young Frenchwoman from the passenger steamship sunk by the same submarine.

When the Frenchwoman appeared on the Island, Feargus wanted to make her the wife. Between Feargus and the German captain of the submarine there was a quarrel. The German was

killed, and the Frenchwoman became Sleyton's wife. Maggie got a divorce and it was the wife of Flores soon.

It is rough too, but he loves Maggie, is strong and does not give her to anybody in offense.

Then... then the Frenchwoman died. Sleyton said that she incidentally got poisoned with fish poison. But on the Island said that she committed suicide as she loved the German captain killed by Feargus. And widowed Feargus Sleyton wished to return Maggie again. But Flores told that, having only crossed through his corpse, Sleyton will manage to receive Maggie back.

For Sleyton to cross through a corpse as easily, as through a log. It would not stop before it. But Flores part was taken by all population of the Island. The governor understood that with it it is not necessary to joke, and receded.

– And I remained the wife of Flores – finished the story of Maggie. – And here such minute, dear Ms. Viviana, you were... You understand all difficulty of your situation? If Feargus Sleyton is pleasant to you, well, then everything is all right. And if is not present or your heart is occupied by another – and she significantly looked at Viviana – that be careful. Be very careful with Sleyton!.

Ms. Kingman reddened.

– My heart is not occupied – she answered – but I am not going to become Sleyton's wife.

The conversation passed to other subjects. Ms. Dode told Vivian about how she is to them on the Island.

– We have quite large supplies of food, mainly canned food. But as it is unknown whether these stocks will be replenished, they are spent only as a last resort, especially flour. Bread, wine, canned and vegetable meat are given only by the patient. As ordinary food serves fish hooked in the sea. From monotony in food quite often there are diseases of a scurvy. Such patients are given a ration from a warehouse.

– Tell, but all these ships cannot sink?

– Our professor Lyuders says that here small depth. The ships sank several centuries here, lifting a bottom. And now we are on the most real Island from the lost ships. We have loved places of walks, the streets and the areas here – on decks of the big ships, “mountain” and “valley” ... With us there live six monkeys, several dogs and the tamed birds whom we caught when they had a rest on the Island during flight. – The old woman sighed. – What to tell? The person gets used to everything! Nevertheless it would be desirable to see still the earth and to bury the old bones in the earth...

Maggie's fears came true. Ms. Kingman was necessary to face Sleyton soon.

He invited her to himself to evening tea. And when it came, he almost without preface made it the proposal to become his wife. She answered with resolute refusal. Sleyton began to ask it, then to threaten:

– Understand that it is inevitable. And in your interests. With me you will be in safety, you will be provided to all necessary. For

you there will be a fine leaving... I know, your father is rich. But all its riches – pennies in comparison with what I have. I will show you full chests of gold, a heap of diamonds and pearls; you the whole handfuls will take emeralds from my treasures. Everything will be yours.

– I am not a child to play stones. And here all these treasures only are also fit for pouring them from a hand into a hand.

– Agree! Agree of own will, differently ... – and it strong squeezed it a hand at an elbow.

– Whether I left a tray here? – having opened a door, Mrs. Dode asked suddenly and entered a cabin.

Sleyton discontentedly frowned, departed from Ms. Kingman and silently waited.

The old woman continued to dart about on a cabin. He lost patience:

– You will get out from here soon?

Mrs. Dode podbochenitsya, became in the most fighting pose, looked up and down at Sleyton from legs to the head and suddenly flew on him as the brood hen protecting the chicken:

– No, I will not clean up! No, I will not clean up until you answer me all my questions. You governor Ostrova?

– I am a governor! Further!

– You issue laws?

– I issue laws!

– Who will be to obey your laws if you the first do not execute them?

– Yes in what business, mad you the woman?

– You madman, but not I! You issued the law that each woman getting on the Island has to marry! So, well. But the woman is granted the right to freely choose to itself the husband... And you what you do?

– You overheard?

– Yes, yes, overheard and very well made! Unless so we make elections of the husband? You wanted to deceive also her and all who are not deprived of the right to count on its choice. You wanted to bypass the law, but you will not manage it. I will trumpet it on all island, and all will be against you. You did not forget history with Maggie and Flores? And so to you and last question: whether you intend to execute the law and to appoint elections of the proper husband by Viviana Kingman how it is necessary?

Feargus was angry, but felt that he should obey.

– Well! We will execute this formality if you so want it! But you will see that the result will be the same. Ms. will not agree to marry the Black or one of my ragamuffins.

– We will see it. And now, the child, we go to me – and she took away Ms. Kingman with a type of the winner.

Chapter 10

CHOICE OF THE GROOM

The sun fell for the horizon, lighting with red beams the bright green surface of the Sargasso Sea and the Island of the Lost Ships with its wood of masts. This deformed by storms, iskroshenny time the wood, its broken boughs yards, shreds of sails, rare as the last leaves – all this could bring into despondency of the most cheerful person.

But professor Lyuders felt here perfectly as the scientist-archeologist in the favourite museum of antiquities.

Having taken seat on the deck of the Dutch caravel, he with enthusiasm told Gatlingu, showing to a broad gesture around:

– Here, before your eyes, all history of shipbuilding. You cannot imagine what there are historical jewelry here. Over there, at the wheel steamship of last century, the ship of a dokolumbovsky era is seen. With such wheel floated in the ocean! And there, behind a three-deck brig, the pearl of my museum is stored: the Scandinavian single-masted nine-oar vessel of the tenth century from west banks of Greenland. In immemorial times it was thrown out by a storm on fragments of earlier lost ships and therefore perfectly remained. Look at its beautiful extended form, with the sharp raised stern and higher nose topped with the carved head not birds, not a dragon. What destinies it got here? What madly brave people were let in this fragile boat in far swimming? And there, below, in motionless

cold depths, likely, ruins of the Phoenician and Egyptian ships, and who knows, perhaps, here, under us lie, the fleet of great Atlantis, among the wood of seaweed and columns of the died civilization is based?

– Mass of Gatling! The captain Feargus Sleyton asks you to welcome to him.

The Gatling saw the half-naked Black whose black body got in beams setting the sun a shade of old bronze.

– What it is necessary for it?

– Asks to welcome to it – the Black repeated.

The Gatling reluctantly rose and went on an unsteady planked footway to “residence” of the governor.

Sleyton accepted it, standing in the usual pose.

– The Gatling, I need to talk to you. You love Ms. Kingman? – it asked Gatlingu an unexpected question.

– I do not consider it necessary to answer you! It concerns only me!

– You are mistaken! It concerns also me!

– Really? Then I can report that I personally as speak, have no Views on Ms. Kingman. We are with it friends, and I deeply respect her. But the same friendship imposes on me and some duties...

– In what they consist?

– That I will allow to dispose to nobody of destiny of Ms. Kingman against her good will.

– Do not forget, Gatling that here I have the privilege to allow

something or not to allow. Only I! – And after a pause he added: – Here that, Gatling! I have an opportunity to bring you to coast of the Azores. I will be able to provide very solidly you on the road.

Gatling all reddened for anger and clenched fists.

– To be silent! – he shouted. – You dare to offer me a bribe? You dare to think that I am capable to betray the person for money? – And after these words it snatched on Sleyton.

Sleyton reflected blow and blew a whistle. Ten different races ragamuffins making bodyguard of Sleyton rushed to Gatlinga because of the opened doors.

The Gatling rejected them extensively, but fight was unequal. In a few minutes it was strong connected.

– To throw it into a dark punishment cell! By the way, arrest also Simpkinsa!

And when Gatlinga took away, Sleyton asked one of servants whether everything is ready to a ceremony of the choice of the groom.

– Perfectly. So, today at nine in the evening!

* * *

The big hall of a saloon was decorated wonderfully well. Walls dazzled with the flags of all nations taken from the lost ships and pieces of color matter. Through all room, up and down, garlands of seaweed lasted. On air these seaweed quickly grew brown and

had quite pathetic appearance, but what to do, other greens could not be got. But on tables several bouquets of the large white colors reminding water lilies flaunted. The multi-colored lamps suspended to a ceiling supplemented furniture. The long table was filled with cold dishes, wine and even bottles of champagne.

The population of the Island literally was rushed off the feet since the morning.

By the evening it was impossible to recognize all these pathetic ragamuffins.

Each of them in a treasured trunk had quite decent suit. They had never before a shave so carefully, did not brush with such diligence the hair which weaned from a brush and a comb, never exhausted so much soap and waters and never so long stared at themselves in splinters of mirrors...

These splinters were reflected by the most various persons: and black as soot, the shining face of the Black, both narrow eyes of the zheltolitsy Chinese, and corroded I will merge and winds a face of the old old salt, and a bright red face of the Indian with intricate jewelry in ears.

But all of them – old and young, white and black – thought of one:

– The right, I am not bad! You never can tell! And who knows the mysteries of whimsical heart of the woman?

In a word, each of them how chances were small, cherished hope to take the place of the groom.

In the middle of a saloon the tribune was erected.

Here, on this eminence, exactly at nine in the evening in a white dress, as well as it is necessary to the bride, Ms. Kingman with the accompanying her Ida Dode and Maggie Flores was built.

At its emergence burst chorus. This singing did not differ in symmetry, it for a musical ear of Viviana was even awful, but choristers could not be reproached with a lack of enthusiasm. Lamps shook and flags when several tens of hoarse and hoarse voices roared waved and roared: “Glory, glory, glory!”

Pale, uneasy and gloomy, “bride” rose by a high scaffold.

Sleyton addressed it with the speech befitting a case. Pointed out “firmness” of the law that each woman entering on the Island of the Lost Ships has to choose to herself the husband.

– Perhaps, Ms., this law will seem to you severe. But it is necessary and, eventually, is fair. To the publication of this law the question was resolved by the right of force, knifing between applicants. And the population of the Island perished, as from epidemic...

Yes, all this was, maybe, and reasonably, but from it it was not easier than Ms. Kingman. Her eyes involuntarily looked for supports. But she did not see either Gatlinga, or even Simpkins among attendees. Sleyton noticed this look and smiled.

Each applicant had to approach with bow the bride and wait for the answer. The bride answered with the movement of the head “yes” or “no”.

One by one grooms stretched... All this chain excited at

Ms. Kingman only horror, disgust, contempt, sometimes and an involuntary smile when, for example, before it appeared with a stick in a hand, “in the best look”, the most ancient settler Ostrova – Italian Giulio Bocco.

It is necessary to tell that Sleyton was afraid in this Mathusela’s soul as competitors. Really, Bokko had chances. Vivian, looking at him, slowed down with the answer, as if considering something, but then also made negative gesture the head and that, without knowing that, saved Bokko’s life as this short minute of fluctuation Feargus Sleyton already decided to get rid of Bokko if happiness falls to its lot. All defiled before Ms. Kingman. The last Sleyton appeared...

But Ms. Kingman, having slipped an eye on its figure, resolutely shook the head:

– No.

– Wow! Here so piece! What now to do? – exclamations were heard.

Sleyton was enraged, but constrained himself.

– Ms. Kingman did not wish to choose none of us – he told with external tranquility. – But it cannot repeal our laws. It is necessary to change only a way of the choice. I offer here that: Ms. Kingman has to become my wife. If someone wishes to challenge it from me, let leaves, and we will try forces. Who will win, that also will receive it. – And Sleyton, having quickly rolled up sleeves, became in a fighting pose.

Minute passed in waiting silence.

And suddenly at the general laughter the old man Bokko, having thrown off a suit, safely rushed to Sleyton. The crowd surrounded them. It was visible that Bokko was once good boxer. It managed to reflect several blows of Sleyton dexterously. Time, on the third attack, he struck quite telling blow to Sleyton in a jaw from below, but right there swept on a floor from strong blow in a breast. It was won.

After it there was a new applicant – Irish O’Gara. It was hefty, broad-shouldered small and was considered as one of the best boxers.

Fight ran high with a new force. But Sleyton, strong, quiet and methodical, mastered also this opponent soon. Being covered with blood, O’Gara lay on a floor, spitting out the beaten-out teeth.

The third rival was not...

The victory remained for Sleyton, and he approached Ms. Kingman and gave it a hand. Viviana reeled and grasped the old woman’s hand Dode-Ternip.

Chapter 11

SLEYTON'S DEFEAT

The Gatling sat in a dark punishment cell, considering the situation. At this time at a door someone quietly knocked.

– Mr. Gatling! It I, Aristide Ternip-Dode... How do you feel?

– I thank you, Ternip. May you tell, day now or night?

– Evening, Mr. Gatling. And, one may say, solemn evening.

Ms. Kingman chooses to herself the husband... All male population participates in this ceremony, except for two married: me and Flores. Therefore also charged us watch: to me – at your camera of the conclusion, and to Flores – at Simpkins.

– Listen, Mr. Ternip, open for me a door.

– With the greatest pleasure would make it, but I cannot. I am afraid. You do not know Sleyton. He will flatten out me in flat cake and will throw on eating up to crabs.

– Be not afraid, Ternip. I pledge you the word that...

– @-@. I will not open for anything. And here, um ... – and it lowered a voice – if you get out from there, then I at anything...

– Where I will get out?

Ternip lowered a voice before whisper:

– In the left corner of a cabin, at height of human growth, is such cat's лазок, covered with a plywood plate. You draw aside a plate, well and... And opposite – Simpkins, by the way...

Ternip did not manage to finish still phrases as Gatling already feverishly rummaged hands on walls, found a plate and quickly

tore off it. The ray of light got into a punishment cell, Gatling rose on hands and crept through a narrow window in a dark corridor which brought to the deck. In a wall opposite there was a same window hammered with plywood. Whether not there Simpkins is located? The Gatling tore off plywood and really uvidat the astonished face of the detective which was looking out of a window soon.

– Zhivey get out from there! It is the devil's work! It is necessary to help out from prison of the own jailer! What you awkward! Hold my hand! Well! So! We go.

The Gatling accompanied by Simpkins entered the hall of “the choice of the bride” while Sleyton gave a hand to Ms. Kingman.

In a cabin there was a movement, then there came the waiting silence.

Ominously – the uneasy type of Gatlinga promised being present that interesting events have to be developed.

– On what elections stopped? – loudly asked Gatling, standing at a cabin threshold.

Sleyton shuddered. Hardly noticeable spasm passed on his face, but in a moment he already regained self-control. Having turned to Gatlingu, he quietly told, pointing to Ms. Kingman:

– You were late. She by right will be my wife.

– I object. You illegally imprisoned me and Simpkins and eliminated from elections.

– Any talk...

But in crowd nervousness already began. At this moment

of Gatling for the first time noticed that Sleyton has the party which is ready to support him in everything, but there are also enemies. They also shouted that again comers have to be allowed to “competition”.

– Well! – Sleyton exclaimed. – Let’s prolong our competition! – And, having clenched fists, it raised them to the person Gatlinga: – You wish to try forces?

– Even I insist on it!

The crowd hooted enough.

Fight was coming hot.

– On the deck! On the deck! – voices were distributed.

All came to the deck. Outlined a circle. Enemies removed jackets and rolled up sleeves. The old man Bokko undertook a role of the arbitrator. Islanders with bated breath monitored each movement of opponents.

On this signal they at the same time met in the center of a circle. The Gatling led the hot attack. Sleyton methodically and somehow inertly beat off.

From crowd remarks were heard. In the heat of hobby began to address boxers on “you”.

– Protect forces, Gatling! You see that Sleyton wants to exhaust them at you and then to finish off!

– Fervor you will not help!

– Sleyton will take! Good fellow our Feargus! Oho, what blow!.

The more fight ran high, the moods of two hostile parties

were shown more brightly. They were imperceptibly demarcated: “sleytonist” stood already behind. Hobby was so big that the crowd repeated gestures of boxers as corps de ballet repeats all a pas of the dancing-master.

The Gatling really got excited at first – his nerves were too strained. But after several mistakes he began to fight more coolly. But Feargus Sleyton, having received several blows from the opponent, got excited. Now their nervous “tone” was counterbalanced, and it was already possible to judge fighting features of the opponent.

Sleyton was stronger physically, more heavy; The Gatling, conceding in force and weight, it was unusually dexterous and quickly in the movements. Sleyton attacked less often, but is more sensitive; The Gatling struck a number of the unexpected blows confusing calculations of the opponent. The result of fight was not clear. Bokko gave a break sign. Sleytonista picked up Feargus, seated, took off a shirt and began to pound strenuously towels. The Gatling other party carefully surrounded.

After a break fight was started again, with even big exasperation. Tension of the audience was at the highest point. From outside could seem that not two persons, but all population of the Island box: all of them, repeating the movements of fighters, did attacks, retreats, squats... bent aside, threw the head in a stomach of the invisible enemy...

Fight came to an end, and this time is obvious not in favor of Gatlinga.

Sleyton, appear, was inexhaustible. He derived strength from some hidden stocks of energy and struck blows with indestructible persistence now. At Gatlinga swam away the left eye from enormous bruise, from a mouth there was blood. Several times it, appear, dead fell to the ground, but the extraordinary tension of will rose again to receive new blow. Sleytonista already triumphed a victory a roar and a rumble.

But suddenly Gatling, having collected the strength, snatched on Sleyton and struck it such blow in a jaw that Sleyton, having thrown the head, failed on a floor. However, having risen hardly, he began to recede, moving back, to a ship board, wishing to wait for several seconds to recover the breath and again to take the offensive. But Gatling as the maniac, with the mad, widely opened right eye, pressed it to a board and here struck such awful blow in a nose bridge that Sleyton, having shaken in air legs, departed overboard.

Shouts of horror and delight, derisive exclamations, laughter, applause – everything mixed up in wild cacophony.

Sleytonista hastily caught the prostrate deity from green seaweed...

When it appeared on the deck, new explosion of shouts and laughter met him. All wet, entangled by seaweed, he resembled the drowned man who stayed kind days in water. His face swelled up and was blood-stained. Despite it, Sleyton tried to keep advantage.

The unsteady gait he approached Gatlingu and gave it a hand:

– You won! It is yours!

The answer of Gatlinga surprised all attendees:

– No, it not mine. I do not wish to impose myself violently at all and to become her husband only because successfully gave blow in your nose bridge!

The crowd calmed down, waiting, what will be farther. Sleyton flushed:

– Devil take it! Whether it will come to an end sometime? There is enough! Ms. Kingman! As the governor Ostrova, I suggest you to make a choice immediately, or I will order to cast lots!

– Lot! Lot!. – the crowd cried.

Ms. Kingman shuddered, unsteadily approached Gatlingu and offered to him a hand.

– At last – with a vinegary smile Sleyton told and approached to congratulate it.

– Ms. Kingman – whispered to her on an ear of Gatling – you are absolutely free, and I do not raise any claim to you. I do not dare to think that you linked life with destiny... the criminal – he added even more quietly.

Part third

Chapter 12

PLOT

– Damned boards as they creak! Do not stumble, Mr. Gatling! Give me your hand. I know the road backwards. Two decades wander I about “streets” of this island. Time as runs!. Twenty years!

And Gatling heard as Ternip heaved a deep sigh.

There was a dead of night. Stars were not visible. Second day will tighten all Island a continuous veil of fog.

It was heard as in water fish lapped, sometimes someone as if sighed. Somewhere deeply in a hold the rat in search of grain scraped. Travelers slowly, gropingly, made the way forward. From time some groan reached time: “kuu-va”, “kuu-va”, the bearing a faint resemblance shout of an eagle owl.

– What is it? – it is disturbing asked Gatling.

Ternip heaved a deep sigh again:

– The devil only knows that! Nobody knows who it cries and groans at night. Ours say that souls of the dead go in a gloom and groan. I do not trust this nonsense. And others assure that this some marine animal who is found in local places.

The Gatling remembered night visit of the deck of their steamship some being who is obviously living in the sea abyss.

– Everything can be! – Ternip answered. – But it is not excluded that it and seemed to you. In these waters harmful fog turns the head.

– But traces on the deck? All of us saw them!

– Can be... can be... Let's sit down we will have a rest, Mr. Gatling. Short wind is damned!.

And they took seat on the deck of the old steamship.

– Now it is close. One brig, two frigates and one more wheel пароходик, and we at the purpose...

– You were on this submarine?

– Happened more than once and spoke with the German sailor who swam on it. He only last year died of a scurvy. I am not an expert, but the sailor assured that all mechanisms of the boat in serviceability and it still can be put in order.

– Whether Sleyton knows about it?

– I think what knows. Whether with this boat he also wanted to transport you to the Azores?

– But why then he did not want to use it to get out of these godforsaken places?

– At us tell each other to an ear that erq there, on the continent, is waited long ago by the gallows. Also leaves that the Island of the Lost Ships – the place which is most suitable for it: here nobody will find. Yes I on wings am ready to depart from here! Sleyton is a despot and the rude fellow. It formenno enslaved us. What it on an old age of years to receive zubotychina and to eat one fish! And I so like to eat... oh as I love!. Though once still to have dinner properly!.

And they became silent, everyone thinking of the.

After Gatling was won by Sleytona, “publicly dishonored it”

as spoke on the Island, and pulled out at it from hands of Ms. Kingman, Gatling was “fateful” and knew it. Sleyton waited only for a case; he wanted to destroy so the rival that most to stand aside and not to arm even more against itself (himself) Ms. Kingman. The Gatling could save one flight. But how to run from here? Neither the raft, nor the boat could move in this green porridge of seaweed. Ternip gave it a thought of flight on the German submarine.

In the most strict secret escape was prepared.

Participated in a plot, except Gatlinga and Ternip, Ms. Kingman, Simpkins, Ternip’s wife and three sailors who had some concept about work with cars. It was necessary to put the boat in order only.

– Well? We go!

– Oh, we go! – obediently Ternip answered, and they started on on a way.

The boat really appeared in a relative order.

Something rusted, something demanded repair. But all bodies of the mechanism were whole. There was even a radiotelegraphic device.

Work on repair began. It went slowly. With the greatest precautions it was necessary to make the way at night in the roundabout ways by “residence” where there were guards and to work till the dawn that for an hour till the dawn to be already on the place.

Little by little the boat was put in order and filled with

provisions: canned food, bread and wine. But in two days prior to the assumed departure there was one unpleasant surprise. Having been fond of work, Gatling was late a little. When it came back with two sailors, to them islanders from Sleyton's party who left at dawn met to catch fish. They suspiciously examined Gatling and passed by... It was not necessary to doubt that Sleyton learns about this suspicious night walk of Gatling in the company of two sailors today and will take measures...

It was necessary to work immediately.

And Gatling disposed to notify now participants of escape that they armed (it was provided) and went to the submarine. The island will wake up not earlier than as in an hour. It was enough. In twenty minutes fugitives were assembled.

With involuntary nervousness they started at way to the submarine.

It was beforehand taken away on the place, rather free from thickets, where it was possible to ship it in water. The small raft stood at the old steamship.

Chapter 13

FLIGHT

Fugitives already reached two thirds of a way when noticed a pursuit. It came nearer from “mountain” – the highest frigate, going down on the sloping bridge. It was necessary to hurry.

Ternip and his respectable half were exhausted from fatigue, catching up with young satellites. From the deck on the deck – up, down, up, down – on a shaky planked footway Gatling, Ms. Kingman, spouses Dode-Ternipy, Simpkins and three sailors ran.

Having passed by itself all, Gatling was late at the narrow bridge which connected caravel fragments to the old steamship broke boards and threw them into water. Thus it was succeeded to detain a pursuit which had to break from this place on roundabout ways.

It was heard as Sleyton who was at the head of a pursuit loudly swore at the destroyed bridge.

Fugitives won time to sail on a raft from the coast towards the submarine. But it was necessary to float with big sluggishness. Though there was a place, rather free from seaweed, nevertheless sargassa clung to a raft, and every minute it was necessary to stop and hands to clear away a way.

The raft hardly crossed a half of a way, and the pursuit already approached that place from where fugitives sailed.

– Give up! Return, or I will leave nobody in live! – Sleyton

shouted from “coast”, shaking by a rifle over the head.

Instead of the answer one of sailors from a raft shook by a fist.

– And, dog! – Sleyton cried and shot. The bullet hit in a raft.

Firefight was started.

Islanders held more advantageous position. They were under cover of masts and fragments whereas the raft was all in the public eye.

Among persecutors there was all population of the Island.

– My God! – the old woman Ternip spoke. – Look, Ms., even Maggie Flores was dragged with the baby; she over there, looks out because of the deck, see?.

Sleyton something ordered. A part of islanders went down to water and began to force down a raft hastily. Driving off attacked them shots. Here also another fell in water one... here, having shaken the head, with groan gets out to the deck of a fishing launch...

Fugitives had a lucky escape so far. The islanders who weaned to shoot, did not hit the mark. Bullets laid down around a raft, lifting splashes. Soon, however, one of sailors on a raft was wounded in a leg. The bullet penetrated the veil fluttering on Ms. Kingman’s head. The Gatling suggested women to lay down.

From the Island the raft with five armed islanders already sailed.

Fugitives rowed, being beaten out with the last bit of strength.

Here at last and the boat towering the surface part with the small bridge above.

The Gatling swelled up on the boat, opened the hatch and lowered women.

In it he was a high time is wounded in a shoulder. Having turned pale from bleeding, he continued to give orders.

– Damned Sleyton! – the Irish sailor, увидав a wound of Gatlinga exclaimed. – I will treat you! In the purpose!

And, having carefully aimed, it shot.

Feargus Sleyton dropped the gun and fell. His breast was painted by blood.

It was visible how on its call Maggie approached it and, inclining, stretched the child. Sleyton touched by the weakening hand the head of the child and told something to Maggie and Flores...

But to watch this scene to fugitives there was no time: the pursuit on a raft already moored to the submarine. And while the hatch of the submarine slammed for the last of fugitives – Gatlingom, islanders already clambered to the bridge...

The boat trembled and began to plunge into water quickly...

The become puzzled persecutors, losing the support crumbling under the feet, zabarakhtatsya in water and, being confused in seaweed, began to climb up a raft.

This moment of immersion was come by shouts “hurrah” by crew of the submarine.

The last fears disappeared: the mechanism operated perfectly. Bright electric light filled in a cabin. The motor worked trouble-free. Lungs breathed freely.

But to indulge in joy there was not time. Wounded demanded cares. Ms. Kingman and the old woman Ternip undertook a role of sisters of mercy. To the wounded sailor tied up a leg, Gatlingu – a shoulder.

With great efforts it was succeeded to lay Gatlinga on a bed. It was in a fever, the shoulder swelled up and hurt, but he wished to steer the boat personally.

At night to it became worse. The old woman Ternip tired with flight and disorders of day left to sleep, and at the patient Ms. Kingman remained to be on duty.

The Gatling did not fall down. Viviana moistened to it whisky with water.

He poorly smiled and told:

– I thank you... I feel better... do not get tired, have a rest.

– I was not tired!

– As all this is strange! – it began after a pause. – To you fell to lot to look after the criminal...

Ms. Kingman frowned:

– Do not speak about it!

– And I for some reason want to speak about it today. Tell, Ms. Kingman, it is frank: you trust in my crime?

Ms. Kingman was confused.

– I do not know whether you committed a crime, but I know that you it is better than much so-called “honest people” – Ms. Kingman answered.

– You trust me... I want to tell you everything.

– The right, is better if you fell asleep.

– No, no... Listen... I served as an engineer at Jackson... The shipbuilding plant... was not heard? I loved to Dell Jackson, the old man Jackson's daughter. After war of business of Jackson reeled. It was threatened by crash. And, as it often happens in a circle of capitalists, Jackson made the plan to improve the things by marriage of the daughter with the son of the large banker Lorrobi. Dell loved me. But she was very attached to the old man to the father and decided that she has to sacrifice herself in spite of the fact that unbalanced, degenerate Lorrobi to it was deeply antipathetic. I did not consider himself to have the right to dissuade her, but wrote her the letter in which asked to see it last time in the neighborhood of the city. I decided to go to Europe, and I already had a steamship ticket in a pocket. Having left the car with the driver at the road, I went deep into a grove, but in the agreed place did not find to Ms. Jackson. I was very upset, however I had no time for further searches or expectations. Having wandered a little more in this deserted place, I got on the car, having arrived to the harbor before the departure of the steamship, and left coast of America.

Once, reading the newspaper already in Genoa, I was struck with the message from the New Mink: Dell Jackson it was killed. Her body is found near the place appointed by us of a meeting. Among its papers the investigative authorities found my letter with appointment invitation, exactly there where it was found, and that day when she was killed...

Testimonies of the interviewed driver who carried me finished a picture. All proofs fell on me. Also motives of murder seemed reasonable: all knew that I reckoned on Ms. Jackson and that Lorrobi pushed aside me. Rivalry. Jealousy. Revenge... In the same newspaper there was a large announcement of delivery of reward of ten thousand dollars to the one who will find stay and will hand over to the police the murderer Ms. Jackson – Redzhinalda Gatlinga... My head was estimated. I had to disappear. Симпкинс tracked down me and had to win a prize for my capture if not our ship-wreck... That's all – wearily finished Gatling.

Ms. Kingman listened to the story with breathless attention.

– But who killed Ms. Jackson?

The Gatling shrugged shoulders:

– It for me remains secret... Perhaps, casual robber... But the fact that to me not to justify oneself is important... All proofs against me... And the coast, desired for all of us – rescue for you, but death for me. As soon as I descend on the earth, I will become a criminal again, and... our roads will disperse – he quietly finished, looking at it.

Ms. Kingman with a mournful face bent to his head and kissed on a forehead:

– I trust you! And for me you will never be a criminal.

– I thank – and he closed eyes.

WITHOUT AIR

Next morning Gatling felt better. Fever decreased. It passed in a radio equipment room and sent the radiotelegram with a signal of “SOS” (a distress signal – “Save our souls!”) and the indication of longitude and width on which there was a boat.

All crew of the underwater vessel was in alarm. Electricity burned dimly. Became to pant. Oxygen was on an outcome. It was necessary to rise by all means to the ocean surface, but dense seaweed it is tenacious held the production...

Old men Ternip, gasping widely open mouths, lay on a floor. Young people felt a little better.

Lamps were ready to go out every minute from a lack of current...

– There is the only means – told Gatling – to get out via the hatch for torpedoes and to try to clear away a knife a way among seaweed. – And it took a knife. – I will try to make it...

– You went crazy, Gatling. With your hand...

– It is impossible! – also other voices were heard. And all exchanged glances, as if looking for who would undertake this venture.

– Here that, Gatling – Simpkins unexpectedly acted – you saved to me life, and I at you in a debt. I undertake this business. Do not contradict. There is no victim. Eventually, if to die whether so everything is equal where. Ladies can turn away! –

Having quickly undressed and having armed with a knife, he told: – I am ready! If in twenty minutes the submarine does not rise to the surface – means, I died!

Quickly turned off an internal cover of the hatch, Simpkins crept in a narrow pipe, the cover was wrapped, and the external cover at the same time automatically opened...

СИМПКИНС disappeared. Painful minutes of expectation stretched.

And Simpkins at this time as the unprecedented torpedo, got out of a side of the submarine and, clinging to seaweed, began to work with a knife quickly. Having felt what to it does not gasp, he emerged on a surface, recovered the breath and again dived into greenish sea depth. Work moved slowly.

The stay periods under water were shorter and shorter, it was necessary to have a rest on a surface longer and longer...

In the twilight of a submarine people choked and with the distorted reddened faces tensely looked behind a minute hand of hours...

Ten... Fifteen... Seventeen... Nineteen... Twenty... Twenty five... Twenty six... It is over...

A half of crew was in subconscious state... In lamps only the red spark as the going-out coal shone. Groans were heard. People grabbed themselves a breast; one rode on a floor, hid in corners under furniture, others climbed up, being piled up on tables and chairs, and looked for greedy, opened, as at fish ashore, mouths though a breath of fresh air. Were stared from orbits. Cold sweat

covered a forehead. But air was poisoned everywhere.

And these last minutes of despair began to seem to people as if the boat easily rose a nasal part, shook again down and slowly began to rise. Yes, it is not a hallucination. The arrow of the device specifying immersion depth spoke about the same. More and more...

– We on a surface!

The shivering hands of Gatling and two sailors hurried to unscrew a cover.

Suddenly bright light blinded all. The stream of vivifying sea air joined the boat.

Air. Light. Life.

And in joyful vanity people clambered up, pulled out old men Ternip, the wounded sailor.

The Gatling rushed to Simpkins's body lying on the edge of the ship case... СИМКИНС fell into a faint from overfatigue, but recovered soon.

And suddenly new explosion of joy: on the horizon, smoking black pipes, the huge American steamship seemed. It went here. He noticed the boat. It gave a signal.

Rough joy turned into silent nervousness... The closer the gray bulk of the steamship approached, the some links which connected all these people in a single whole tried more. This whole broke up to certain people, with the personal cares, the destiny, the roads.

The steamship is closer, the they became farther from each

other.

The daughter of the billionaire, dirty sailors, the fallen Ternip – that the general between them? Симпкинс and Gatling – again enemies.

The Gatling was quiet, but is sad.

And Simpkins already changed clothes and cheerfully whistled a song.

Some more minutes of expectation – and they by steamship.

Chapter 15

RESCUE

To them the captain met halfway; passengers surrounded them with a dense ring... Симпкинс with a professional look as a shadow, followed Gatling...

What did it need to do? In a rush of generosity and affection own heroism it promised Gatlingu before ascending to the steamship, to keep the secret of his personality and suggested to run as soon as the steamship arrives to the next harbor. But Gatling, this unclear person, is dry and with bitterness answered it: "Do the part" as though everything is indifferent for Gatlingu... Eventually, ten thousand dollars do not roll, and Simpkins already managed to whisper something on an ear to the captain.

The sailors islanders who ran wild and weaned from people pressed close aside. Mr. Ternip very clearly tried to show that he not that these dirty people, though are not purer than them. He managed to keep the bowler hat full of holes and now pulled it over a forehead with a type of the dandy...

While there were inquiries, a sharp-sighted eye of the detective managed to notice some portrait in the newspaper which was held by one of passengers of the steamship.

Симпкинс asked the newspaper, fluently read the message and, having suddenly screamed, approached to Gatlingu standing nearby and Ms. Kingman, unexpectedly took out manual

shackles from a pocket and with professional dexterity put on one “bracelet” a hand of Gatlinga, and another – Ms. Kingman’s hand, having held down thus their hands.

All were struck. And Simpkins opened the newspaper and loudly read:

MYSTERY OF MURDER OF DELLA JACKSON

The other day the secret of murder of Ms. Della Jackson of which Redzhinald Gatling was accused was absolutely unexpectedly revealed. In Lorrobi's bank large theft from fireproof cash desk was found. As one of keys of this cash desk was at the son banker Lorrobi who led extremely dissolute life recently, suspicion fell on it, and it executed a careful search. The gone money at it was not found, and its participation in theft remained unspecified. However at a search the documents convicting Lorrobi of murder of the bride, Ms. Della Jackson fell into hands of the investigative authorities. The letter of Ms. Della Jackson to Lorrobi was found in a casket for letters. In this letter she refuses flatly to marry it after learned, through "private bureau of instructions", about some details of his private life. Lorrobi had imprudence to keep the diary in which in detail states crime history. The mentioned letter was received by it in day of murder. Knowing about the rival – Gatlinge, Lorrobi spied on him long ago, using services of the maid Jackson bribed by it who reported to him about the preparing appointment. Believing that her love to Gatlingu, Lorrobi in a rush of jealousy was the valid cause of failure of Ms. Jackson decided to revenge Ms. Jackson. It was to the place of an appointment before Gatlinga, killed Ms. Jackson on the spot and disappeared,

nobody noticed.

Confessed to a crime of Lorrobi. Thus, thanks to combination of circumstances the victim of a miscarriage of justice Redzhinald Gatling whose innocence was investigated quite nearly died. Unfortunately, Gatling, apparently, died at the crash of the steamship “Veniamin Franklin”.

– Here it, Gatling! – Simpkins shouted, finishing reading the newspaper. – And as not in vain I caught it and so much with it was taken, I also decided to sentence him to lifelong imprisonment... from Ms. Kingman if she has nothing against.

It obviously had nothing against.

The public welcomed this “severe” sentence a loud applause.

Part fourth

Chapter 16

SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION

The old man Kingman is Viviana's father – very much was delighted to return of the daughter. He did not hope to see any more it as Viviana Kingman appeared in the list of the died passengers of the steamship “Veniamin Franklin”. Was to marriage of the daughter Kingman kindly favorable disposed. He only shortly asked Gatlinga, meeting him:

– Profession?

– The engineer – Gatling answered.

– Well. Business ... – And, having thought, Kingman added: –

In Europe, apparently, there is a belief that we, the American rich men, dream to give the daughters for the burned-through European counts. It is incorrect. Fools exist everywhere, and the American fools wish to become related with European, but I prefer the husband who made the way in life for the daughter. Besides I at you in unpaid to a debt: you saved my daughter! – And Kingman strong shook hands with Gatlinga.

Once, when young spouses sat over the map, discussing the plan of the travel conceived by them, phone rang out,

and Redzhinald, having taken the call, heard a familiar voice of Simpkins who asked appointments “on an important issue”. Before agreeing, Gatling loudly told in phone tube:

– It you, Simpkins? Hello! You want to see us? – also looked interrogatively at the wife.

– Well, let will arrive – Viviana quietly answered.

– We wait for you – Redzhinald ended telephone conversation.

At Simpkins everything became soon – “for hundred twenty percent rather, than at absolute Americans” as he spoke.

Gatling heard noise of the approached car soon. Simpkins was and at doors started talking:

– News! Large news!

– What is, Simpkins? – asked Gatling. – Really one more of your criminals was the honest person?

– I opened a riddle of a crime of the captain Feargus Sleyton!

– In what this riddle?

– So far it is, um, the evidence which is not subject to announcement...

– Then you did not tell anything new, Simpkins! On the Island we knew that Sleyton has a shadowy past.

– But what! I came to offer you one project – perhaps, to ask for your help.

– We listen to you.

– I should open Sleyton’s riddle up to the end. How you will treat the project once again to visit the Island of the Lost Ships?

– You are incorrigible, Simpkins! – told Gatling. – The world

is of interest as in it there are criminals to you.

– Well, you look at it as on sport. But why you burst out laughing?

– We burst out laughing therefore – Viviana answered – that we just discussed your project before your arrival.

– To go to the Island and to open Sleyton's riddle? – the Simpkins surprised and pleased asked.

– Not absolutely so. We are interested in secrets of other criminal more...

– Another? Really I do not know about it? – Simpkins became interested. – Who this criminal?

– The Sargasso Sea – smiling, Viviana answered. – Unless it ruined the ships a little? To reveal secrets of this criminal sea, to warn others – here our purpose.

– In a word, we go to a scientific expedition for studying of the Sargasso Sea – finished Gatling.

– Here it that! But I hope that you will not refuse to take me with yourself in order that I could make the business in passing...

– Certainly, Simpkins! But what sense to you to go? Sleyton is killed...

СИМПИНС significantly moved with eyebrows.

– Sleyton is not necessary to me any more. But here interests of others are mixed. On the Island I managed to get some documents.

– Really?

– СИМПИНС does not linger – the detective fatly noticed. –

But, unfortunately, I took not all documents. They should be got, and then everything will become clear.

– Interests of others? That is another matter. We go, Simpkins!

– When you sail?

– I think, in a month...

– Who else with you?

– The oceanographer is professor Thomson, two of his assistants, team, and more than nobody.

– So, we go. You know my address. – And, having taken leave, Simpkins hasty left, and Gatlingi went deep into studying of the card again.

– Here look – Redzhinald pointed to the card – this straight line drawn as on a ruler – a way from New York to Genoa. We will go on this way to the three hundred twentieth degree of east longitude and we will curtail on the South – and Gatling made a mark a pencil.

The new visitor prevented them from working. Professor Thomson – the famous researcher of life of the sea entered. After fussy Simpkinsa Thomson struck with the tranquility and even sluggishness. This the person, good-natured, inclined to completeness, never hurried; but it was necessary to be surprised how much he managed to make.

Gatling hospitably met Thomson.

– You study our way? – he asked and, having by the way darted a glance at the card, told: – I think, it is better for us

to head to the south, for Bermuda at once, and from them to go on the northeast. But we still will talk about it. Today I received three boxes of the equipment for chemical and photographic laboratories. The aquarium is ready and already established. Tomorrow the library ordered according to my list will be received. In a week our biological laboratory will be equipped quite. And how at you by an engineering part?

– For about three weeks – Gatling answered. – In a month we can throw down a challenge Sargassam.

Thomson nodded. He understood that the word “call” means. Gatling bought the small, outdated for the military purposes Defiant ship for an expedition, and it under the direction of Gatlinga was adapted for the peace purposes. Its guns gave way to devices for a pulling of drags. Except biological laboratory, a number of storerooms for storage of scientific production was arranged. The Gatling worked much to adapt the ship for swimming among seaweed of the Sargasso Sea. On a nasal part the sharp cutter which had to cut seaweed was fixed into Kiel of the ship. That seaweed did not prevent operation of the screw, it was protected by the special cylinder from the metal gauze.

The radio set, two easy tools and machine guns on a case of collision with islanders supplemented the equipment.

All participants of an expedition worked with such hobby and diligence that the ship was ready to withdrawal even before the appointed term.

At last hour of withdrawal came. Participants already were by the ship. Waited only for Simpkins. The big crowd familiar and just curious stood on the embankment.

– Where it got lost? – Gatling was perplexed, looking for hours. – Forty minutes of the third.

– Let's wait a little – professor Thomson told.

Rub... Half of the fourth... Simpkins is absent everything. The captain hurried with withdrawal. “It is necessary to get out before twilight of a coastal strip with the big movement – he said – especially as fog approaches”.

Decided to sail away to four. The siren is heart-breaking cried as a wounded fantastic giant cat... and the ship sailed away. From the coast waved hats and scarfs.

Suddenly several people standing at the edge of pier jumped aside aside, and on their place there was Simpkins who got wet, disheveled with the hat which got off on a nape. He violently shouted, waving hands.

The captain “Defiant” swore and ordered to reverse. And Simpkins already fell down in the boat and floated to the ship, without ceasing to wave a hand.

– Thousand apologies! – he shouted, climbing a ladder. – Awfully hurried... An unforeseen delay ... – And it appeared on the deck.

– What is with you? – poluispuganno, полунасмешливо asked Vivian, inspecting Simpkins.

His nose swelled, on cheekbones bruises were seen.

– Anything... small boxing with the old acquaintance, Cross-eyed Jim... Such unexpected meeting! Escaped, the villain; his happiness! If I did not hurry ... – And, calming myself, he added: – Nothing, will leave. It is a small game... I will make a lotion, and everything will pass.

Fog tightened coast. The ship went slowly. From time to time the siren shouted.

– Damp, we go down – Viviana told and went down with the husband in biological laboratory. There already professor Thomson and two assistants – Tamm and Müller worked.

The laboratory represented itself quite capacious room with a big square window in a wall and two hexagonal windows in a ceiling. The left side was taken by photographic laboratory, right – chemical. Over wide tables with boxes, as in drugstores, regiments with books. On empty seats of walls various jars, harpoons, regiments and shelves with bubbles and medicines are strengthened. Each span of the area is used. Even on a ceiling oval boxes what are used by naturalists, and spring scales are attached. In the middle of laboratory there was a huge table. Here microscopes, accessories to preparation, stuffing of effigies and preparation of herbariums were located: scalpels, scissors, tweezers, press. Several stools with the rotating seats were strengthened so that could move along a table. Thomson slowly went on laboratory, slowly rearranged banks, humming in a low tone, and work was argued in his hands.

Evening passed enough drearily. And at night the siren did

not allow to sleep. By the morning the siren calmed down, and Viviana fell asleep a sound, healthy sleep.

Morning came solar, clear. Had coffee on the deck, under an awning. The ocean sighed dark blue waves exactly and rhythmically, fresh sea air poured in cheerfulness; and, having forgotten the nightmares and doubts, Viviana told:

– As it is good, Redzhinald that we went to this travel!

– Still – Simpkins who already removed bandages responded for it – we will be able to open Sleyton’s riddle.

– And riddles of the Sargasso Sea – professor Thomson thoughtfully told. – Tamm, prepare a drag. It is necessary to poissledo-vat a bottom.

While Tamm equipped a drag to descent, Thomson continued:

– The sea is a multystoried building. In each “floor” there live the inhabitants who do not rise in top and do not go down to lower “floors”.

– Well, it, we will put, not only in the sea – told Simpkins. – And on the earth the inhabitant of the cellar “is not accepted” in the dress circle...

– A small difference – Müller put in a ward, people from the cellar could live also in “dress circle” as you speak, and sea inhabitants... for them it would be death. If deep-water fish carelessly rises above the set limit, she will become torn there as the boiler when its walls do not maintain internal pressure explodes.

– Um... so sea inhabitants of “dress circle” can sleep peacefully, without being afraid of attack from below?

– In each “floor” there are predators.

Tamm lowered a drag – a rectangular iron frame with a bag from network. Stones were attached to a bag, for weight.

– On what depth to lower? – Tamm asked, unwinding a cable together with Müller.

– Meters on six hundred – Thomson answered.

All silently watched work.

– To decelerate! – Thomson told.

The captain made the order.

– Well, something to us was sent by destiny?

Two sailors came to the rescue of Müller and Tamm.

Hardly the drag appeared on a surface as Tamm and Müller at the same time screamed:

– Linofrina!

All with curiosity started considering a sea monster. All fish as though consisted of a huge mouth with big teeth, not less huge bag stomach and a tail. On a chin of this monster there was a branchy appendage (for a bait of fishes as Thomson explained), and on the top jaw – something like a trunk with a thickening in the middle.

– It is the shining body, so to speak, own electric lighting.

– And why to it lighting? – asked Simpkins.

– It lives in depth where the beam of the sun does not get.

– To live in an eternal gloom – too pleasure! Managed them

to choose such unsuccessful apartment!

– Will even more surprise you if I tell that they test for each square centimeter of the surface weight in several honeycombs of kilograms. But they do not even notice it and, believe, feel perfectly.

– Look, look, sargassa! – Viviana exclaimed suddenly, running up to a handrail.

On the blue surface of the ocean the separate rounded kisteobrazny bushes painted in orange and golden and olive colors really were seen.

All were delighted to sargassa as though they met the old acquaintance.

Between August second and sixth the ship went already near Bermuda. On the third of August just separate bushes of seaweed floated. They were an oval form, but under easy whiff of the southern wind were extended in long strips. The Gatling burned from impatience rather to try the technical devices on continuous sargassa. At last continuous meadows of sargass appeared on the seventh of August. Now, on the contrary, the blue smooth surface of the ocean looked out islands among an olive carpet.,

– Here it, “the curtailed sea” as his ancient Greeks called – Thomson told.

The Gatling with nervousness watched how it will cope “Defiant” with this web of seaweed. But its nervousness was vain: the ship almost did not reduce speed. It cut sargassa, and they parted, baring the long dispersing blue films of water on both

parties of the ship.

– Perhaps, your precautions were excessive – professor told. – Eventually, for modern vessels of a sargassa absolutely do not constitute such danger any more. And in general their “impassability” is exaggerated.

Having caught several seaweed, Thomson began to consider them. Viviana observed too.

– Here you see – he explained to her – white stalks? These are already died off. Sargassa, broken by wind and taken by a current in the Caribbean Sea, rush on the North. Five and a half months are required that they passed a way from Florida to the Azores. And during this time they not only keep life, but also ability of fructification. Some sargassa make the whole circular trip, returning home to themselves, to the Caribbean Sea, and then make a secondary trip. Others get in a circular ring and die off.

– Ah! What is it? Live! – screamed from Vivian’s unexpectedness.

Thomson burst out laughing.

– It is the Australian fad-tryapichnik, and these are aktenna-riya – the most curious inhabitants of the Sargasso Sea. You see how they adapted? Not to distinguish them from an alga!

Really, painted in brown color, speckled by white spots, with the torn shapes of a body, ak-tennariya extremely resembled seaweed of the Sargasso Sea.

NEW GOVERNOR

On the Island of the Lost Ships from the moment of departure of the submarine of an event took its course.

When the captain Sleyton fell, struck by a bullet, Flores silently stood over the lying blood-stained governor, then suddenly pulled Maggie inclined over it a hand and is short, but imperatively told it:

– Leave!

The crying Maggie, having pressed the child, left.

Flores bent to the captain with an evil sparkle in the blinked eyes.

The captain Sleyton was his rival in love and in ambitious plans. They had old scores. Having sated with a type of the prostrate, dying enemy, Flores suddenly raised Sleyton and pushed off it in water.

– It will be so best of all – he told and, having addressed islanders, shouted: – Hey, you! The captain Feargus Sleyton is killed, and his body is buried by me! The island of the Lost Ships has to elect the new governor. I offer myself. Who objects?

Islanders gloomy were silent.

– It is accepted. Pick up wounded and guns. We go!

And he walked towards the new residence, rejoicing that everything was resolved so soon. However his pleasure was incomplete. Some unpleasant, disturbing, still not clear thought

disturbed it as a silent toothache which just about will pass into sharp. Flores walked on the familiar “streets”, a planked footway thrown through the ships crossed the semi-decayed decks, rose by “mountains” of the big ships which are highly sitting in water, went down to “valleys” of broad-bottomed vessels, and some uneasy not clear thought everything drilled his brain...

Having tarried at one transition, he heard voices of Irish O’Gara and the old man Bokko following it.

– As a dog, in water ... – Bokko said.

– It cannot wait for it! – O’Gara answered.

Voices broke off.

“And so it that – Flores thought, getting aboard an old frigate. – Discontent!” And Flores remembered the gloomy silence accompanying it election.

Flores was not mistaken. Even too simplified way of a funeral of the governor made an unpleasant impression on the coarsened, run wild islanders.

Flores was not silly. Approaching the governor’s residence which was by a frigate Elizabeth, the new governor already considered the plan of action.

Having entered the big, perfectly arranged cabin – the former office of the captain Sleyton – Flores fell to a deep leather chair, having collapsed with an independent and at the same time proud air. Then it loudly slapped three times in a palm just as Sleyton, is even better – more distinctly and more loudly.

On a threshold the Black appeared.

Flores Posverlil eyes his black face, but could read nothing on it.

– A bean – Flores told – where at Sleyton the clothes were stored? Spend me and show.

Bob who did not express surprise at the sight of Flores on Sleyton's place was struck with expressly polite address of the new governor instead of former – familiar.

But in it Flores had the calculation: to show a difference of the changed situation. And he was not mistaken. The bean somehow shrank and, having hasty begun to mince to an exit, answered respectful politely:

– I ask you.

They entered the big dark cabin turned into wardrobe. Two walls were busy with cases. Nearly a half of a cabin were occupied by the huge chests of a black oak with a carving fettered by the become green copper with silver.

The Black opened sliding doors of cases. In them in a big order suits of various eras, professions, nationalities – as in wardrobe the Bolshoi opera Theatre hung.

– There are civilian suits – the Black explained, taking out the ancient frock coats smelling of dampness with high collars, wide tops, color and silk vests.

Flores negatively shook the head.

In the second case there were more modern suits: tuxedos, frock coats and even dress coats.

– Not, not.

Before clothes with sea uniform suits Flores stopped a little further. He felt a hand one jacket from fine English cloth – the captain’s suit, but, having thought of something, closed also this case.

– Not that, Bob. And all this?

– Is still here – the Black answered, showing on chests.

– Open.

Not without effort Bob lifted heavy covers. Flores was surprised, without having felt a smell of dampness and decay. Covers were so well driven that in chests was absolutely dry.

When the Black lifted the pure piece of a cloth which was accurately covering suits at Flores involuntarily exclamation escaped and his eyes inflamed. Here precious Spanish suits which breed showed that they are not less than two hundred years old were folded.

Camisoles from figured velvet (velvet) – crimson, blue, red – were embroidered by gold and showered with pearls. Cuffs and mills (big collars in several rows) from the thinnest lace, silk cords “бизетт” [1], “blonda” [2] colors of not bleached cloth – all this struck with the luxury and a subtlety of work. Women’s suits were even more magnificent. Long, with the sleeves hanging to a floor, with zubtseobrazny cuts at the edges, these bright silk, brocade and velvet dresses were heavy from the sewed emeralds, rubies, pearls...

“What wealth! – Flores thought. – And we eat one fish”.

It selected several suits:

– Carry in my office. And stockings and boots?

– Everything is. – And, being bent under weight of a burden,

Bob dragged suits in Flores cabin.

Having remained one, Flores chose dark cherry, shity silver the camisole also put on.

When he looked at himself in a mirror, itself was struck with effect. It changed not only externally, but as though and internally. From where this severe advantage, this confident look, these smooth gestures?

He clapped and told the Black who with amazement stared at it:

– Invite Mrs. Maggie!

“Mrs. Maggie!” – the Black hasty started executing an order.

Flores was mistaken in effect a little: the entered Maggie outright was frightened when, having opened a cabin door, she saw shining silver and pearls of the Spanish grandee [3]. Even Flores laughter brought it into itself not at once.

– Put on rather, here your suit – Flores told, pointing to a blue dress.

Maggie dressed more than simply – in an easy blouse and a short zaplatanny skirt, hardly concerned a dress and stood in indecision.

– Well that you?

– I... I do not even know how to put on it.

To tell the truth, Flores no more it knew all difficult parts of all these “бизетт” and “блонд” and could not give it help. But the

natural feeling of the woman helped Maggie to find the place of each accessory of a toilet. And while Flores corrected the ends of a scarf and tried on in front of the mirror a sword with a gold hilt, it was ready too.

Having turned back, they looked with amazement at each other, without learning and admiring.

Really, it was fine couple. Swarty, suntanned Flores was very effective.

“Devil take it! But she is directly a beauty! Where there were my eyes?” – Flores thought.

– Now it is possible to begin a reception – he told loudly and, having called the Black, gave an order to call all. It was news too. Sleyton let nobody in the office.

If to the Island of the Lost Ships suddenly there arrived people of other planet, it would make probably not bigger impression. All islanders literally hardened from surprise. Even the historian Lyuders stood, having slightly opened a mouth, with a type of extreme amazement.

When all gathered, Flores addressed with the speech:

– Citizens! Islanders! Friends! Not the feeling of personal vanity forced me to put on this suit, but desire to support nice Ostrov’s dignity of the Lost Ships... We will lift this advantage even above. Assistants are necessary for me for performance of the purposes planned by me. You, O’Gara – and Flores scanned the Irish – are appointed my personal secretary. At reports and on festivals you will be in this camisole; it goes into

your full disposal. – And Flores pointed to a beautiful dark blue suit.

O’Gara densely reddened, and Flores not without pleasure noticed that the Irish is flattered.

“One rival it is less” – the new governor thought.

– You, Bokko, are appointed ... – Flores rubbed a forehead – too my secretary. There is your court suit.

Bokko respectfully bowed.

“Other rival it is less – Flores noted. – Who else? Людерс? It is harmless, but after all, just in case...”

– And you, Lyuders, you the person scientific, I appoint you, um... the adviser for affairs of colonies. Your rank will suit a camisole of a black velvet with silver.

Surprising thing! Even Lyuders, still less others paying attention to the suit and going in some rags too, probably, was flattered. However appointment extremely surprised him.

– I thank for honor, but what affairs at us with colonies when we are cut off from the whole world?

– Yes, but we can expand our possession, and we will have colonies.

Islanders exchanged glances. Whether the gilded camisole of their new governor demented?

But Flores was quiet and self-confident.

– You know – it continued – that near our Island, in two kilometers other small island from the lost ships is, no more, located. It is close, but still we could not even visit it – sargassa

protected it. Now we will organize an expedition and we will attach it to our possession.

All liked this invention, and islanders is noisy expressed approval.

– And one more: we have nothing to postnchat and skarednchat when we are immensely rich. All will be given new suits – for everyday life and holidays. I will give you also gun cartridges, and you will hunt birds; I think, fish bothered all. And that the bird seemed more tasty, we will bake bread and we will drink a barrel of good old Spanish wine!

– Ur-and! Long live governor Flores! – the islanders brought to the highest point of delight shouted, and O’Gara and Bokko is the loudest.

When Flores and Maggie remained one, Maggie looked at the husband with eyes in love and told:

– Listen, Flores, I did not even expect...

– What?

– What you so are able to do...

– It is good to operate? – And Flores, unsociable, eternally gloomy, gloomy Flores laughed.

Chapter 18

SMOKER OF OPIUM

Easy glaucescent fog clouded the Island of the Lost Ships. The broken masts and iron pipes of steamships as ghosts, loomed in fog.

The old man Bokko and Chinese Hao-Zhen sat on the deck of an old brigantine. The Chinese sat not movably as a figurine, having drawn in legs and having put palms of hands on knees, and looked at a tall mast.

Bokko repaired network and with boredom asked the Chinese on his homeland and close people. At last he asked the Chinese whether that was married.

Some shadow ran on a face of the Chinese.

– Was not – he answered and added more quietly: – The bride was, the good girl.

– Well and that you?

– It is impossible – a surname one...

– Relative?

– No. Just surname. Law such.

The careless question Bokko awakened some distant memories in the Chinese's soul. It was delivered and rose.

– I will go – the Chinese declared.

– Yes where pulls you? Again you will go to smoke the dope?
Sidi.

But the Chinese already incorrect, unsteady gait went on

a planked footway to the remote bark.

Bokko shook the head:

– The guy will be gone. And so, to what it became similar!

Bokko was not mistaken. Hao-Zhen went to smoke opium. The Chinese somehow found a stock of this poisonous medicine in one of the old ships and since then excitedly indulged in smoking. His face turned pale, became yellow as straw, eyes deeply fell, looked wearily, without expression, hands began to shiver. When learned about his passion, to it most strictly forbade to smoke, being afraid of the fire. Still the captain Sleyton several times cruelly punished Hao-Zhenya, locked him in a hold, starved, demanding that the Chinese gave opium reserves, but could not break persistence of the Chinese. He could be killed rather, than to force to give opium. He well hid stocks and managed to smoke as soon as supervision of it weakened.

Hao-Zhen came to the old bark standing slantwise, at an angle almost in 45° . Under protection of this inclination covering it from looks of islanders it also arranged to itself (himself) кy-рильню at the water.

He prepared by the hands shivering for nervousness everything for smoking and greedy involved sweetish smoke.

And gradually fog began to get a golden shade. Clubs of gold clouds were turned in the long film, and this not a tape, and the river, the great Blue river any more. Yellow fields, yellow rocks, the lodge hollowed in the rock with the paper dragon fluttering

downwind at an entrance. The father strug at the house, on the Chinese custom, not from himself, and to himself. Down the river the fisherman floats, standing aft and rotating an oar. All such close, familiar, native! At the river irises, fine lilac irises blossom.

When Hao-Zhen recovered from a dope, there was a night. Fog dispersed. Only its separate shreds as ghosts, quickly rushed on the North. It was silent. Occasionally fish lapped. Because of the horizon the red moon rose. It was not reflected in water. Seaweed as opaque glass, only poorly gleamed. Only here and there, in small “ice-holes” – in places, free from seaweed – water was lit by moonlight.

Near the island directly on seaweed the silhouette which stood out against the background of the ascending moon clearly moved. The Chinese wiped eyes and began to peer. Familiar figure. Well, of course, it it, late captain Sleyton! On it there is only no jacket. But dead persons do not feel night dampness. Why he wanders here? What it is necessary to it? Hao-Zhenya’s teeth began to beat a tattoo.

In the morning the Chinese whispered on an ear to the friend Bokko:

– The captain went. Sleyton went at night on water. Itself saw. Badly the dead man was buried. Shipko a harm is so the person to bury. Here also goes. It will be bad! The harm will be, m-m-m...

Bokko nodded, with pity looked at the Chinese and thought:

“Was gone, the poor creature, absolutely lost mind from a damned potion”.

In several days this conversation repeated. The Chinese saw the dead captain who was slowly walking by the sea again. Bokko did not bear.

– You bothered me with the dead man! Here that – I with you will be on duty today at night. Also look at me if you see, and I will not see – it is necessary to you, to two pokoynichka to walk about by the sea together! Brosha you in water, you can be sure of that!

Night stood dark. The sky was laid densely over by clouds. Drizzled a rain, Bokko quarreled, muffling up in a latany raincoat.

About one o'clock in the morning in darkness, not far from the Island, Bokko the first noticed a shadow of the person. It was so dark that it was difficult to distinguish figure outlines. But something similar really went on the person on water and disappeared in a gloom.

Bokko felt how at him hands grow cold.

– You see? – the Chinese whispered, grabbing the shivering hand Bokko's shoulder.

– Sh-sh!

And they sat till the morning, without having been able for fear to move.

Only when there ascended the sun, Bokko breathed a sigh of relief. Soon a message about the captain's ghost Sleytona flew

about all population of the Island and reached Flores. He did not trust in ghosts, but this message about the vagrant ghost of Sleyton excited him as not clear danger.

“Why they saw Sleyton? What they, regret for it? Accuse me for the fact that I threw Sleyton into the sea instead of trying to give him help? But it was half-dead. Or... nonsenses! People just with boredom go crazy. It is necessary to entertain rather them” – Flores thought.

And in the evening he secretly summoned Bokko and asked it to see off to that place where they saw the ghost. But neither in this, nor in the next night the ghost did not appear. Flores became cheerful.

– Well, here you see! I said to you that it is one imagination. There are enough nonsenses to be engaged! Desire to be to me on a meeting tomorrow. We should consider the plan of an expedition. Yes do not forget to put on the official suit – you something did not put on it long ago.

– I protect – Bokko ingenuously answered. – Such value!

– For our century will last, Bokko!

Chapter 19

THE DISAPPEARED ISLAND

Since evening “Defiant” entered a strip, free from capracc. And early in the morning, when spouses Gatlingi came to the deck, saw that around the blue smooth surface of the ocean over which small spots capracc flash only here and there is spread.

– Strange, really we so evaded to the South? – asked Gatling of professor Thomson who considered some small fish snared.

– We go the region of the warm current where it fights against cold. These cold currents also carried a part of seaweed aside. Tomorrow we will turn on the North, in the thick capracc.

– What strange fish! – Viviana exclaimed. – Look, Reggie.

The head of fish was supplied wide, an oval form with the guard made of cherepitsevidny plates; the lower body at it was painted in more dark color, than top.

Thomson carefully lowered fish in a big basin with water. Fish immediately turned on a back and densely applied a guard to a basin bottom.

– And well, take fish – Thomson offered.

The Gatling took fish for a tail and tried to lift, but it is vain: fish as if grew to a basin bottom. Thomson laughed:

– You see what exotic fish! It is an ekheneida, or “ры – oh – the bore”. About this fish the whole legends as if she, sticking to an underwater part of the ship, can detain its course in the ancient time went. Here you watch – and Thomson though not

without effort, tore off “bore” from a basin.

– Professor, in the sea swims the whole herd of turtles – Thomson’s assistant Müller reported. – Whether you allow me to hunt on them here with this little small fish? I saw how it is done by natives in Africa.

Having got permission, Müller put on a tail of fish a ring with a strong cord and threw her into water. In transparent water all movements of fish were visible. Having made several unsuccessful attempts to escape, it began to swim up to a big turtle who, probably, peacefully slept on the surface of the ocean; the ekheneida stuck to a belly board of a turtle. Müller pulled a cord. The turtle was swept up, but could not get off the bore and in a minute was pulled out together with fish on the deck of the vessel.

– Bravo! – Viviana clapped the hands.

On the deck Simpkins appeared. He just got up and squinted from a bright sun. Popykhivy indifferently looked with a tubule, Simpkins at a turtle and filtered a mouth corner:

– Turtle soup – it will be not bad. And it that for a bloodsucker?

– This is not a bloodsucker, but a clingfish. The turtle, Simpkins, is intended not for soup, and for a scientific collection.

– Watch what charm! – Viviana exclaimed again, pointing to the sea.

Over the surface of the ocean fishes flew. Their whole packs rose over water and flew by considerable space in several tens

of meters supported by forward fins which at them are turned as if into wings.

All admired this show.

– Dactylopteres – “short meeting” – professor Thomson explained.

– Really and all birds left the sea? – asked Vivian.

– The ocean – a cradle of all organic life on the earth. You see the flying fishes, but there are also such fishes who walk by land and even vlezat on roots of trees. All this ancestors of Amphibia and birds.

– Very interestingly – told indifferently to Simpkins – but as though we gathered for searches not only turtles of both bores, and and Ostrov of the Lost Ships. We get all to the south and already left a belt capracc. There will come rainy time soon – and so often it is raining – when we are engaged in the Island?

– Patience, Simpkins; today we turn on the North, and every hour you will be closer to the purpose.

Симпкинс shrugged shoulders with such look, as if wanted to tell: “Oh these scientists!” – and, having stuffed up hands in pockets, began to look at the sea, spitting out through a board.

– Here shark! – he shouted, having quickened. Obviously, and in the sea he was interested only in a criminal element. – Oho, what big! Only why it is white?

– Yes, it is an interesting copy – Thomson told – the typical representative of the Sargasso Sea. Sargassa detain a sunlight, and local sharks, obviously, do not “sunbathe” as their brothers

living in open places; leather of local sharks remains deprived of a pigment (coloring).

The shark floated near the ship. Its movements were bystra, are strong and beautiful.

Sailors already prepared a rope and smeared with fat an iron hook.

– And why the shark does not eat these little small fishes what spin about her? – asked Vivian.

– This is fish pilot, the inseparable fellow traveler of a shark.

At this time the hook with a bait was thrown. The first fish pilot noticed a bait. She sniffed at a bait and quickly swam up to a shark, trying to pay her attention to production.

– See you, podvodchitsa! – translated Simpkins of an event into language of criminal practice.

The shark turned, noticed production and greedy grabbed in a mouth a hook.

– Devil take it, it was provocation from fish pilot! – Simpkins exclaimed.

The shark was thrown and so pulled a rope that two sailors fell to the deck and the ship took an easy list. Fight began. Sailors released a rope, selected, tightening more and more growing weak animal. Passed not less than an hour, pre-chspr than it was succeeded to pull out a shark on the deck. Tired, it lay as dead.

– Aha, got, my dear! – with a celebration told Simpkins, approaching a shark.

– I bet – told Gatling – that you regret, to Simpkins, about

absence at a shark of hands.

– Why?

– You would put on them “bracelets”.

– Still stuck! – with surprise Viviana, увидав the fish who stuck to a stomach of a shark exclaimed.

– A usual thing – Thomson answered. – Bores often do it and have threefold advantage for themselves: so to speak, gratuitous journey, full safety from other predators under cover of the sea of the enemy, terrible for all inhabitants, and some remains from a plentiful table of gluttonous sharks.

– In a word, everywhere same – noticed Simpkins – around big criminals the small pack of swindlers for small instructions always spins.

– It is a little more, Simpkins, and you will write scientific work: “Underworld of inhabitants of the sea” – told, smiling, Gatling.

Симпкинс approached closer a shark and suddenly, having grasped a hand the bore, began to pull:

– And well, we will look whether you will keep?

The bore as if grew to a stomach of a shark. Then Simpkins with a force pulled fish. The shark unexpectedly started a huge body and slapped Simpkins a tail with such force that it, having waved in air legs, flew through a board and fell in the sea.

Professor Thomson with emotion shouted to the sailor:

– Throw a rope rather!

Gatling this nervousness and haste of the scientist surprised.

Симпкинс there was a quite good swimmer, bathing in warm, almost hot water did not threaten with cold.

But Thomson was afraid of another: he knew that sharks often pass packs. Where one floated, there can be also others.

And his fears were not vain. Not far really suddenly seemed it is unknown from where the undertaken sharks. They quickly approached Simpkins who did not notice them yet. Meanwhile already carried the ship on several meters from Simpkins.

– Rather, Simpkins, rather! – shouted to it.

The captain gave the order to stop the car, and ingenious sailors, without expecting an order, with feverish haste lowered the boat.

– What do you worry? I swim as a stopper! – Simpkins which was not suspecting dangers yet shouted, but, seeing that all views are directed not to it, and somewhere in the sea, looked back, grew cold with horror and began to work with despair hands and legs. But the become wet clothes slowed down swimming.

When the boat with three sailors swam up to Simpkins, sharks were about him. One of them, having swum up under Simpkins, already turned on a back and opened the wide mouth seated by several rows of teeth, but someone from sailors thrust an oar which instantly was shattered in small spills in an open mouth. And it saved Simpkins. Other sailor helped it to get into the boat.

The predators angered by the fact that production left from them fought at the boat, trying to turn it. Several times they almost managed it. The boat turned, tilted, scooping edge water.

The sailor beat off an oar fragment, others strenuously rowed. At last with great difficulty sailors and Simpkins moored to a board and ascended on “Defiant”.

All breathed a sigh of relief.

СИМПКИНС panted. From his clothes water flew down on the deck, spreading pools.

– I thank you – at last he said. – I will go to change clothes. – And, far bypassing the lying shark, splashing wet legs, Simpkins went down in a cabin.

The scientific collection of Thomson quickly grew. Sea needles and skates, aktennariya, flying fishes, a hedgehog fish, spotty sinerog, crabs, shrimps, mollusks, graceful gidroidny polyps, kladokorina and salpa flaunted in banks with alcohol in the form of effigies and skeletons, filling laboratory and adjacent cabins.

“Defiant” turned on the North and went on a continuous carpet of seaweed.

Despite often falling intermittently rains, Thomson tirelessly researched the Sargasso Sea. The Gatling helped it, and time passed imperceptibly. In the evenings, after a lunch, they took seat in comfortably arranged cabin and listened to fascinating stories of Thomson about inhabitants of the sea – the strange, extraordinary world, so unlike the familiar surface world.

From all participants of an expedition one Simpkins missed and felt unfortunate. Its organism got used to the constant movement. Nervous rise, unseparable with ventures, was

necessary for it as drug. And in this quiet situation of Simpkins felt ill. Yawning, he wandered about the ship, disturbed all – from the captain to the fireman, grumbled, smoked and contemptuously spat in the sea.

There were gloomy, gray days. Sometimes fog clouded everything a white veil. In this part of the ocean there was no danger to collide with the passing ship and therefore “Defiant” went, without detaining the course; only occasionally, just in case, the siren howled, and this sound directed horror among surrounding silence.

– And where this Island got lost! – Simpkins grumbled.

And really as if washed away the Island of the Lost Ships from the surface of the ocean. By all calculations, it had to be in these parts. “Defiant” wandered in the center of the Sargasso Sea, changing the direction, but the Island was not.

There passed days behind days, and around there was the same gray sky, a brown surface capracc, an impenetrable distance in fog.

Already not only Simpkins, but also Gatlingi began to worry about whether it will manage to them to find the Island which is not marked on one map.

One night all were going to discuss situation. The captain shrugged shoulders:

– What I can do! We look for as blind people. So we can swim year – and without any result. Our travel dragged on. The team shows discontent. “In this swamp only to catch frogs” – sailors

grumble.

– What do you offer? – asked Gatling.

The captain shrugged shoulders again.

– I suggest to stop these aimless searches and to return.

The Gatling thought.

– Your opinion, professor?

Thomson made a helpless gesture:

– What can I tell? Every day swimming enriches science. But if all decide to return, I, of course, will not object.

– Well you protect interests of science! – Simpkins flared up. He suddenly was the hottest defender of science, however, only to continue searches of the Island. – Object! Demand! Insist!. And the captain... and you are good too! “Aimless wandering! Let’s not find! Whether” Yes you in what places we swim know? Perhaps, here on this very spot Columbus passed! And too sailors grumbled. And to Columbus, you think, it was easier to peddle old stuff or a way to India? Then all were sure that there is no America any and that the ship can reach the end of the earth and fall down to the other end of the world. And Columbus was not afraid and found! And we will find!

As this speech in Simpkins’s lips was comical, but his unexpected eloquence made an impression, and the captain, having a little been confused, answered:

– Yes, but Columbus after all went in one direction, it had trade calculations, and they did not deceive him though it found and not that looked for, and we are just turned on the place. Here

if you are so kind to specify to me precisely the direction, I will not be turned – the captain finished with already a little offended tone.

– I understand nothing seamanship. But as for search, I something understand – Simpkins answered. – Each profession creates the skills, disciplines thoughts in the known direction. I thought much of how to find the Island, and, apparently, thought up. It is a long way too, but it will lead us to the purpose rather. Tell, Gatling how for the first time we got on the Island?

– There was a storm, the steamship crashed. You know.

– Further?

– The screw and a wheel were broken, and incurred us.

– Just about, this most! The screw and a wheel were broken, and incurred us. And what if also to us to break a wheel and the screw? – asked Simpkins.

And the others viewed Vivian Simpkins with undisguised great concern.

He noticed it and burst out laughing:

– Be not afraid, I did not go crazy yet. I told about a wheel and the screw allegorically. Let's stop the car, we will stop operating a wheel and we will watch a current. Here what I offer. Incurred us to the Island some current, isn't it?

The Gatling nodded.

– Let's remember it, first. – And Simpkins stuffed up one finger. – If the whole island, then, obviously was formed of the lost ships, in the Sargasso Sea there are constant currents which

carry all ships which crashed to one place. Truly?

– So.

– Two – Simpkins stuffed up the second finger. – Well – with, and a conclusion is clear: we will slowly circle, stopping the car from time to time and to watch whether there is no current which would carry the ship in depth of the sea. This current will also bring us to Ostrov. In it all focus! – And Simpkins victoriously raised three fingers.

The plan interested not only the captain, but also Thomson.

– Internal currents of the Sargasso Sea?. Over it really it is necessary to think. Only the Gulf Stream Current around the Sargasso Sea was still studied.

– From where there can be strong undercurrents in the Sargasso Sea? – asked Vivian.

– You want that I gave you the answer to one of the most difficult questions of oceanography – Thomson answered. – What reasons cause sea currents? Scientists did not come to the agreement in this question. One explain emergence of currents with action of inflows and otliv, others – a difference of density of water, at last, the third assign a leading role to winds. Perhaps, it will also be the most probable decision. At least, the direction of sea currents coincides on average with the direction of the main air currents. And is even more true that we have set of a variety of reasons. If Simpkins is right and in the Sargasso Sea there is an internal current towards the Island of the Lost Ships, then it can be a branch, or a deviation, the main current –

Gulf Stream. Such deviations most often are caused by some mechanical barriers on the way of the main thing.

– But what mechanical barriers can be among the ocean? – Viviana asked a new question. – There are neither islands, nor banks.

– And underwater mountains? You forgot about them? Imagine that a little to the east under water there is a range which crosses Gulf Stream. Present further that in this range there is a narrow pass – the gorge directed by the exit to the Island which plays at hide-and-seek with us. Gulf Stream is the real river which waters rush with a speed of two and a half meters per second. All this mass of quickly current water presses a mountain range, finds only one narrow pass and directs in it. Here to you and internal current of the Sargasso Sea.

– And it, probably, is! Otherwise there would be no Island also! – Simpkins responded.

– Yes, perhaps, Simpkins’s council is quite good – the captain agreed. – Well, we will try “to break a wheel and the screw” as you speak.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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