

Brady Cyrus Townsend

**Woven with the Ship: A
Novel of 1865**



Cyrus Brady

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Brady C.

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Cyrus Townsend Brady

Woven with the Ship: A Novel of 1865 Together with certain other veracious tales of various sorts

PREFACE

Prefaces remind me of a certain text of Scripture, —*i. e.*, "the last shall be first," — for they are things written after which go before! Whether or not they serve a useful purpose is hard to say. I have several thousands of them in my library, most of which I have read, and perhaps the fact that I am a reader of prefaces may mark me as unique. And the mark may be accentuated to the gentle reader — if this preface should have any — when I say that I am also one of the few remaining authors who write them. Only one of my books is without a preface, — though some of them are disguised as notes, or forewords, or afterwords, — and I hereby apologize for the acephalous condition of that volume.

I am determined that this book shall be amply provided, and though I write the preface while I am sending back the proof galleys, yet I will begin at the beginning. Beginnings are sometimes interesting, although the interest of a beginning largely depends on the ending thereof. I shall hope that this book in the end may commend itself sufficiently to my indulgent readers to make the story of the beginning worth while.

"The years are many, the years are long," since a happy young sailor, fresh from his graduation at the United States Naval Academy, spent some of the pleasantest days of his life in the shadow of the old ship; for there was a ship, just such a one as I have described, and in just such a condition. There was a white house on the hill, too, and a very old naval officer, who took a great interest in the opening career of the young aspirant who passed so many hours lying on the grass amid the mouldering ways, with the huge bulk of the ship looming over his head and the sparkling waters of the bay breaking at his feet.

There were girls, too, and a sailor, and soldiers galore across the harbor in the barracks, and back of all the sleepy, dreamy, idle, quaint, and ancient little town. The story, of course, is only a romance; but the setting at least is actual, and there is this touch of realism in the tale: when the old ship was torn down to be made into kindling-wood, a part of it fell upon one of the destroyers and crushed the life out of him, — stern protest against an ignoble ending!

The idea of the story came to me twenty years ago. Indeed, in a brief, disconnected way I set it down on paper and forgot it until I chanced to resurrect it last year, when I threw aside the old notes and wrote the story *de novo*.

I intend it as a character sketch of the old admiral, the veteran sailor, the young officer, the innocent woman they all loved, and — dare I say it? — the mighty ship. Here are contrasts, surely.

When I wrote "Hohenzollern," I thought it would be perfectly plain to every one that it was not an historical novel. Vain hope! Yet I am not discouraged by the lack of perception on the part of the critics. Therefore I put this novel forth with a stronger confidence that it will not be considered in that category. Save for what I have admitted, there is not one word of history in it. Indeed, I have deliberately, and because it was my fancy, chosen to appropriate the name of Admiral Charles Stewart, "Old Ironsides," — who did indeed live well into the Civil War period, but who died under very different circumstances, — for the name of the ancient captain in the white house on the hill. I apologize to his *manes*, his descendants, and his friends for the liberty.

Now, I do not write this because I wish to make any apology for the historical novel. Not at all. The thing is slightly overdone at present, but that is proof of its goodness. So far as I am concerned I will stand by my guns. I love to read historic romances when they are good, and I love to write them – even when they are as my own. I expect to write more of them, too; but this really is not one. It is a war story without any war, a sea story without any sea; yet it exhibits a great struggle and rings with a great victory. The reader may characterize it further at pleasure.

As for the second part of the volume I have called it *Veracious Tales* advisedly, for all of these stories are founded upon facts in one way or another. Some of them have been suggested to me by incidents with which I am familiar because in them I bore a small part. The substance of one of them came from a young English traveller who told a romantic incident at a delightful dinner at the New York University Club. A real diary suggested another. An historical mystery as to what became of a certain cargo of slaves captured by Decatur in the Mediterranean evoked a third. Neglected chapters in history and biography are responsible for some of the others, as the Martinique tale, for the Diamond Rock was once a ship! Sir Henry Irving's marvellous rendition of Matthias in *The Bells* so possessed me with its power that after I came home from the theatre I could not sleep until I had written the story. All of these tales represent real incidents, therefore, or are founded upon them in some way.

Writing a short story, with me at least, is very different from writing a novel. I can invent plots of novels without the slightest difficulty, but the making of a short story is different. The making is a case of birth! The single incident, the brief condensed plot, or the vivid character sketch which is necessary to a proper short story has to come to me from outside. The short story is the product of inspiration, the long story the result of labor. Perhaps, therefore, there is more truth in the short story than in the long – from my point of view.

At any rate, in this volume are two kinds, and the readers may decide. If they have half as much pleasure out of the book as I had, they will thank me for having written.

C. T. B.

The Lake Placid Club,
Adirondacks, New York,
June 16, 1902.

Part I
WOVEN WITH THE SHIP

CHAPTER I
The Building of the Ship

Just half a century had elapsed since, cutting down the virgin forest to make room for the ways, they laid her keel blocks in the clearing. With the cunning brain of Henry Eckford, one of the greatest of our shipbuilders, to plan, and the skilful hands of the New England shipwrights to execute, with timber cut by the sturdy woodsmen from where it stood in the forest, the giant frames rose apace, until presently, in an incredibly short time, there stood upon Ship House Point a mighty vessel ready for the launching.

Ship House Point – so called from the ship – was a long ridge of land sloping gently down from a low hill and extending far out into Lake Ontario. It helped to enclose on one side a commodious lake haven known in that day, and ever since, as Sewell's Harbor, from old George Sewell, a hunter, fisherman, innkeeper, and trader, who had settled there years before.

Thither, in the busy warlike days of 1813-14, had resorted dashing naval officers in their ruffled shirts, heavily laced blue coats, with their huge cocked hats, skin-tight kersey pantaloons, and tasselled half boots. In their wake rolled ancient tars in blue shirts and flowing trousers, their mouths full of strange oaths and tales of distant seas; some of the older veterans among them still wearing their hair in the time-honored pigtail of an already disappearing age.

On the bluff across the harbor mouth, and just opposite to Ship House Point, a rude log fort had been erected in 1812, a central block-house and a surrounding stockade, mounting a few inconsiderable pieces of artillery. From a tall staff on the parade the stars and stripes fluttered in the wind, and nodded in amicable salute toward a similar ensign which the patriotic builders had hoisted on the Point.

Government storehouses filled with munitions and supplies of various kinds, both for the naval forces on the lakes and for the armies designed for the long projected invasion of Canada likewise, stood back of the wharves crowded with the miscellaneous shipping of the suddenly thriving little town. Soldiers from the fort, therefore, in blue and gray uniforms mingled with the ship-carpenters, wood-cutters, pioneers, sailors, and traders, and the spot speedily became one of the busiest in the then far Northwest.

Sometimes in the offing the white sails of the English or American squadrons could be seen, and on the summer days from the distant horizon might have been heard the dull boom of cannon telling a tale of some spirited engagement. And more than once thereafter a melancholy and shattered ship brought in a ghastly cargo of dead, dying, and wounded, the care of which heavily taxed the resources of the community; and the women of the village – for there were women there from the beginning – had grim lessons, learned sometimes through breaking hearts, that war was a more serious business than the gay officers, the bright uniforms, the beautiful flags, and the brave ships had indicated.

The town had sprung into being around Sewell's store and tavern, amid all these activities and undertakings, almost as if by magic – quite as the great ship had risen on the shore, in truth. Men did things in a hurry in those days, and no one was much surprised when, some thirty days after the keel was laid, the indefatigable Eckford informed stout old Commodore Chauncey, the American commander on the lakes, that the *Susquehanna* – for so the ship-of-the-line which was to establish finally the American preponderance of force over the British on Lake Ontario was called – was ready

for launching, and great preparations were made in the very early spring of 1815 for this important and interesting ceremony.

A few days before the appointed time, however, there came to the impatient commodore, the persevering builder, and the busy workmen a messenger bearing a heartrending despatch, long delayed in transmission, from the Secretary of the Navy. That official announced that the war was over, that peace with England had been declared at the close of the preceding year, and directed that the preparations for launching and completing the vessel must be at once abandoned. It was a sore grief to Eckford and his fellow-shipwrights, a great disappointment to Chauncey and his brave seamen, and a terrible blow to the thriving town. It had grown and flourished in war, and it was to languish and die in peace – a reversal of natural law apparently! But there was no help for it. The orders had to be obeyed. The war-ships on the lakes were broken up, or sold, and a few were laid up in ordinary, the officers and men were detached to the more congenial salt-water stations, and the ship-carpenters were withdrawn to the seaboard towns whence they had been collected. The fort was dismantled, the garrison mustered out of the service, and the storehouses emptied and closed.

The young ship-of-the-line, hastily housed over, was left alone with the abandoned town. The busy place, its reasons for being gone, speedily sank into a state of public decay. The deserted storehouses fell into ruin; the once noisy wharves, unvisited by any save an occasional small vessel, rotted away; the merchants and traders closed out their stocks and departed; the hunters and pioneers moved farther westward into the vast wilderness extending its mysterious beckoning call to their adventurous souls; the grass grew thick in the silent streets, and it seemed as if the death-sentence of the village had been written.

But as years sped away some of its pristine life came back to it. The farmer again speeded his plow and planted his corn in the clearings. Sheep and cattle once more dotted the fields. A new order took the place of the old. Country churches rose; little feet plodded unwillingly toward a small red school-house, where childish laughter and play at recess mingled with tears over puzzling lessons and unsolvable problems. The stores were opened one by one, and a few vessels came back to the harbor. On market days the farmers crowded the square with their teams, the village awoke from its long sleep and became a modestly thriving little country town again, – drowsing on into life once more. And although the very oldest inhabitants, remembering the busy days forever gone, were not satisfied, the younger people were content and happy in their pretty little hamlet.

Meanwhile, what of the ship in all these changing years? Time was when Ship House Point had been covered with a virgin forest extending even to the water's edge. It was now bare of trees, for the massive trunks had been wrought into the fabric of the ship, and no others had come to take their places. There, neglected and unnoticed, she had stood naked and gaunt for a long time, for the flimsy ship-house covering her had been the first thing to go. Through the swift years the burning sunshine of many summers fell upon her green, unseasoned planks, and the unsheltered wood shrinking in the fierce heat opened her seams widely on every hand. Upon her decks the rain descended and the snow fell. The storms of bitter winters drove upon her in successive and relentless attacks. The rough spring and autumn gales tore from her huge sections of timber, leaving gaping wounds, while the drying rot of time and neglect penetrated her very heart.

Rust consumed the bolt-heads and slowly ate up the metal that held her together. Yet in spite of all she still stood, outwardly indifferent alike to the attack of the storm or the kiss of the sun, – a mighty monster towering high in the air, unfinished, incomplete, inchoate, disintegrating, weaponless, but still typifying strength and power and war. In spite of her decay, in spite of her age, she looked the masterful vessel she was designed to be.

The waves broke in winter in icy assault upon the rocky shore on the seaward side, as if defying the ship to meet them. They rippled on the shoals, on the other hand, in summer with tender caressing voices, wooing her to her native element, stretching out white-fingered hands of invitation. And the air carried the message of the waters into every hidden recess in the most secret depths of the ship.

In some strange way, to those who grew to know her, the ship seemed to live; they imbued her with personality, and congenial spirits seemed to recognize her yearning for a plunge into that all-embracing inland sea. She hung poised, as it were, like a bird ready for flight, and watchers standing within her shadow divined her longing for that mad first rush from the ways.

The ripple of the water had never curled along that ship's massive keel; her broad bows had never buffeted a way through the thunderous attack of the storm-waves; she had never felt the ocean uplift; the long pitch and toss, the unsteady roll and heave which spoke of water-borne life had never been hers; yet, looking at the graceful lines, the mighty frames, the most unimaginative would have said that the old ship lusted for the sea, and, in futile and ungratified desire, passed her shore-bound days in earth-spurning discontent.

CHAPTER II

His Last Command

On the hill back of the Point, embowered on three sides in the trees, which had been cut away in front to afford a fair view of the ship, the Point itself, and the open waters of the lake beyond, stood an old white house facing the water, with a long covered porch, high-pillared and lofty, extending across its entire front. Old, yet young compared to the ship. Overlooking the ship, on a platform on the very brow of the hill, a long, old-fashioned six-pound gun was mounted on a naval carriage. Back of the gun rose a tall flag-staff, and from the top fluttered night and day a small blue flag with two stars, the ensign of a rear-admiral. There were no masts or spars upon the ship below the hill, of course, but aft from the mouldering taffrail a staff had been erected, and from it flew the stars and stripes, for during the last half of her existence the ship had rejoiced in a crew and a captain!

Some twenty-five years since a quaint old naval officer had taken up his abode at the house on the hill. With him had come a young sailor, who, disdainful of the house, had slung his hammock aboard the ship, – finding a place between decks which, after a few repairs, would shelter him from the storms. When the old officer came, he hoisted at the mast which was at once erected in the yard the broad blue pennant of a commodore, and it was only after Farragut had made his splendid passage up the Mississippi, and awakened the quiet shores of the Father of Waters with the thunder of his guns, so that the title of commodore became too small for him, that the old veteran had been promoted with other veterans – and with Farragut himself – to the rank of rear-admiral, recently established, – certainly a rank entirely in consonance with his merit at least.

The old man had been practically forgotten, lost sight of, in the glory accruing to the newer names among the Civil War heroes; yet he had been among the foremost in that great galaxy of sailors who had made the navy of the United States so formidable in the War of 1812.

Old men of the town, whose memories as children ran back beyond even the life of the ship, recalled having seen, in those busy, unforgettably days of 1814-15, many uniforms like to the quaint old dress which the admiral sometimes wore on occasions of ceremony; and there were some yet living who remembered the day when the news came that the mighty *Constitution* had added to her record the last and most brilliant of her victories in the capture of the frigates *Cyane* and *Levant*. The man who had made the capture – who, when his wife had asked him to bring her a British frigate for a present when he set forth upon the cruise, had answered that he would bring her two, and who had done it – was the man who had been stationed in the white house on the hill to watch over the old ship.

The battles and storms, the trials and cares, the sorrows and troubles of eighty-five years had beat upon that white head; and though he was now bent and broken, though he tottered as he paced up and down the porch after the habit of the quarter-deck, though his eye was dim indeed and his natural force greatly abated, he was still master of himself. When the Civil War broke out his brave old soul had yearned to be upon a heaving deck once more, he had craved to hear the roar of guns from the mighty batteries beneath his feet, to feel again the kiss of the salt wind upon his tanned and weather-beaten cheek. He had longed in the deadly struggle of '61-'65 to strike another blow for the old flag he had done so much to make formidable and respected on the sea; but it was not to be. Superannuated, old, laid up in ordinary, he quietly watched over the rotting ship which was his last command.

In some strange way, with a sailor's superstition, as the years had passed, as he had grown feebler and the ship had grown older, he bound up his own term of life with that of the vessel. While it stood he should live, when it fell should come his end. He watched and waited.

When the night threatened to be wild and stormy, the report of the evening gun with which Captain Barry invariably saluted the flag ere he struck it would seem to him the sounding of his death-knell. When the tempest howled around the old house, he could hear, in fancy, above its wild screaming the crashing of the timbers of the ship falling in shapeless ruins on the mouldering ways. In

the morning, after such a night, he would rise and creep to the door, totter out on the porch with the aid of his cane, and peer down on the ship. Some portion of it might have been swept away, perhaps, but if it still stood he would feel that he had a respite for another day.

Many a tall vessel had he commanded, many a gallant frigate or great ship-of-the-line he had driven through the tempestuous seas. Upon some of them, as on the *Constitution*, he had won eternal fame, yet never had he loved a vessel as his heart had gone out to the rotting mass of this incompleting ship.

He did not dream, when he came there twenty-five years before – an old man then – that either he or the ship would last so long; yet there they both stood; older, weaker, feebler, more broken, and breaking with every passing hour, but still a ship and still a captain.

During the years of their association the admiral had unconsciously invested the ship with a personality of its own. It seemed human to him. He dreamed about it when he slept. He was never so happy as when awake he sat and watched it. He talked to it like a friend when they were alone. Sometimes he reached his old trembling hand out to it in a caressing gesture. He had long since grown too feeble to go down to it; he could only look upon it from afar. Yet he understood its longing, its dissatisfaction, its despair. A certain sympathy grew up between them. He loved it as it had been a woman. He would fain have kissed its keel.

Yet the devotion the admiral felt for the ship was scarcely greater than that which had sprung up in the heart of the old sailor who lived aboard it.

Old John Barry had been a quartermaster on the *Constitution*, and had followed the fortunes of his captain from ship to ship, from shore to shore, until he died. After that the duty of looking after the captain devolved upon his son, young John Barry; and when the commodore had been ordered to Ship House Point, more with the intention of providing him with a congenial home for his declining years than for any other purpose, young John Barry had followed him.

Young John Barry he was no longer. He was fifty years old now, and, like the admiral, had unconsciously made the life of the ship stand for his own life as well. The witchery of disappointment and regret, pregnant in every timber, bore hard upon him also. He had been a gay, dashing, buoyant, happy-go-lucky jack-tar in his day; but, living alone on that great old ship, some of the melancholy, some of the dissatisfaction, some of the longing, some of the futile desire which fairly reeked from every plank had entered his own rough and rugged soul.

The bitter wind had sung through the timbers of the ship too many tales of might-have-been, as he lay in his hammock night after night, not to have left its impression upon him. He became a silent, taciturn, grave old man. Of huge bulk and massive build, his appearance suggested the ship-of-the-line, – strength in age, power in decay. He loved the ship in his way even as the admiral did.

Risking his life in the process, he climbed all over it, marking with skilful eyes and pained heart the slow process of disintegration. He did not kiss it, – kisses were foreign to his nature, he knew nothing of them, – but he laid his great hands caressingly upon the giant frames, he pressed his cheek against the mighty prow, he stretched himself with open arms upon the bleaching deck, as if he would embrace the ship.

When the storms beat upon it in the night, he sometimes made his way forward and stood upon the forecandle fronting the gale, and as the wind swept over him and the ship quivered and shook and vibrated under the tempestuous attack, he fancied that he felt the deck heave as it might under the motion of the uptossed wave.

He dreamed that the ship quivered in the long rush of the salt seas. Then the rain beat upon him unheeded. Wrapped in his great-coat in winter, he even disdained the driving snow, and as he stood by the weather cathead, from which no anchor had ever depended, and peered out into the whirling darkness, he seemed to hear the roar of a breaker ahead!

The ship was his own, his property. The loss of a single plank, the giving way of a single bolt, was like the loss of a part of himself. With it he lived, with it he would die. Alone he passed his

nights in the hollow of that echo of the past. Sometimes he felt half mad in the rotting vessel; yet nothing could have separated him from the ship.

The little children of the adjacent village feared him, although he had never harmed any of them, and was as gentle as a mother in his infrequent dealings with them all; but he was so silent, so grave, so grim, so weird in some way, that they instinctively avoided him. Their light laughter was stifled, their childish play was quieted when Captain Barry – so they called him – passed by. He never noticed it, or, if he did, he gave no sign. Indeed, his heart was so wrapped up in a few things that he marked nothing else.

The old admiral, whom he watched over and cared for with the fidelity of a dog, – nay, I should say of a sailor, – was the earliest object of his affections. To look after him was a duty which had become the habit of his life. He cherished him in his heart along with the ship. When the others had gone to their rest, he often climbed up on the quarter-deck, if the night were still, and sat late in the evening staring at the lights in the house on the hill until they went out, musing in his quaint way on the situation. When the days were calm he thought first of the admiral, in stormy times first of the ship. But above both ship and captain in his secret heart there was another who completed the strange quartet on Ship House Point, – a woman.

Above duty and habit there is always a woman.

CHAPTER III

The Woman and the Man who Loved Her

The wife of the admiral, to whom he had brought the flags of the two British ships on that memorable cruise, had long since departed this life. Her daughter, too, who had married somewhat late in life, had died in giving birth to a girl, and this little maiden, Emily Sanford by name, in default of other haven or nearer relationship, had been brought, when still an infant in arms, to the white house on the hill, to be taken care of by the old admiral. In the hearts of both the old men she divided affection with the ship.

With the assistance of one of the admiral's distant connections, a faithful old woman, also passed to the enjoyment of her reward long since, Emily Sanford had been carried through the troubles and trials incident to early childhood. At first she had gone with other little children to the quaint red school-house in the village. She had been a regular attendant until she had exhausted its limited capacity for imparting knowledge. After that the admiral, a man of keen intelligence, of world-wide observation, and of a deeply reflective habit of mind, had completed her education himself, upon such old-fashioned lines as his experience suggested. She had been an apt pupil indeed, and the results reflected great credit upon his sound, if somewhat unusual, methods of training, or would have reflected had there been any one to see.

In all her life Emily Sanford had never been away from her grandfather for a single day; she had actually never left that little town, and, except in school-time, she had not often left the Point. Although just out of her teens, she was not old enough to have become discontented – not yet. She was as childlike, as innocent, as unworldly and unsophisticated a maiden as ever lived, – and beautiful as well. It was Prospero and Miranda translated to the present. The old admiral adored his granddaughter. If the ship was his Nemesis, Emily was his fortune.

As for Barry the sailor, – and it were injustice to the brave old seaman to think of him as Caliban, – he worshipped the ground the girl walked on. He was in love with her. A rude old man of fifty in love with a girl of twenty; a girl immeasurably above him in birth, station, education – in everything! It was surprising! Had any one known it, however, it would not have seemed grotesque, – only pitiful. Barry himself did not know it. He was too humble and too ignorant for self-examination, for subtle analysis. He loved, and he did not comprehend the meaning of the word! Even the wisest fail to solve the mysteries of the heart.

Although the veteran seaman was too ignorant of love rightly to characterize his passion, it was nevertheless a true one. It was not the feeling of a father, nor of a companion, nor yet that of a servant, though it partook in some measure of all three. That was an evidence of the genuineness of his feeling. Nothing noble, no feeling that is high, self-sacrificing, devoted, is foreign to love that is true, and love is the most comprehensive of the passions – it is a complete obsession. Captain Barry would have given his soul for Emily Sanford's happiness, and rejoiced in the bestowal.

He cherished no hopes, held no aspirations, dreamed no dreams concerning any future relationship. He was just possessed with an inexplicable feeling for her. A feeling that expected nothing, that asked nothing, that hoped for nothing but the steady happiness of being near her. To be in sight, in sound, in touch, that was all, that was enough. The sea in calmer mood gives no suggestion of potential storms. Barry's love was the acme of self-abnegation. If he had ever reached the covetous point he would have realized that she was not for him. He never did.

He loved her with a love beside which even his devotion to the old admiral, the passionate affection he bore for the old ship, were trifles. The girl had grown into his heart. Many a time he had carried her about in his arms when she was a baby. He had played with her as a child; she could always call a smile to his lips; he had cared for her as a young girl, he had served her as a woman.

He, too, had been happy to contribute to her education as he had been able. There was a full-rigged model of the *Susquehanna* in her room in the white house. He had made it for her. It was a perfect replica, complete, finished in every detail; so the ship might have looked if she had ever been put in commission. Emily knew every rope, every sheet, line, and brace upon it. She could knot and splice, box the compass, and every sailor's weather rhyme was familiar to her. She could handle a sail-boat as well as he, and with her strong young arms pulled a beautiful man-o'-war stroke. He had taught her all these things. When study hours were over and play-time began, the two together had explored the coast-line for miles in every direction.

So far as possible he had gratified every wish that she expressed. If a flower grew upon the face of an inaccessible cliff and she looked at it with a carelessly covetous glance, he got it for her, even at the risk of his life. He followed her about, when she permitted, as a great Newfoundland dog might have done, and was ever ready at her beck and call. His feeling towards her was of so exalted a character that he never ventured upon the slightest familiarity; he would have recoiled from such an idea; yet had there been any to mark, they might have seen him fondle the hem of her dress, lay his bronzed cheek upon her footprint in the sands, when he could do so without her knowing it.

There was no man in the village with whom Emily could associate on terms of equality. The admiral had come from a proud old family, and all its pride of birth and station was concentrated in his last descendant. Simply as she had been reared, she could not stoop to association with any beneath the best; it was part of her grandfather's training. He was of a day when democratic iconoclasm was confined to state papers, and aristocracy still ruled the land by right divine, even though the forms of government were ostensibly republican. There were some quaint old novels in the library, which the girl had read and re-read, however, and, as she was a woman, she had dreamed of love and lovers from over the sea, and waited.

Her life, too, had been bound up with the ship. Not that she feared an end when it ended, but she often wondered what would happen to her when it fell. What would she do when the admiral was gone? And Captain Barry also? Who would take care of her then? What would her life be in that great world of which she dreamed beyond that sparkling wave-lit circle of the horizon? Who would care for her then? That lover who was coming? Ah, well, time would bring him. Somewhere he lived, some day he would appear. With the light-heartedness of youth she put the future by and lived happily, if expectantly, in the present.

CHAPTER IV

Cast up by the Sea

One early autumn evening in 1865 the sun sank dull and coppery behind banks of black clouds which held ominous portent of a coming storm. The old admiral sat in a large arm-chair on the porch leaning his chin upon his cane, peering out toward the horizon where the distant waters already began to crisp and curl in white froth against the blackness beyond. Emily, a neglected book in her lap, sat on the steps of the porch at his feet, idly gazing seaward. The sharp report of the sunset gun on the little platform on the brow of the hill had just broken the oppressive stillness which preceded the outburst of the tempest.

Having carefully secured the piece with the thoroughness of a seaman to whom a loose gun is a potential engine of terrible destruction, Barry ran rapidly down the hill, clambered up on the high poop of the ship, and hauled down the colors. As the flag, looking unusually bright and brave against the dark background of the cloud-shrouded sky, came floating down, the admiral rose painfully to his feet and bared his gray hairs in reverent salute. Emily had been trained like the rest, and, following the admiral's example, she laid aside her book and stood gracefully erect, buoyant, and strong by her grandfather's side.

Old age and bright youth, the past with its history, memories, and associations, the future with all its possibilities and dreams, alike saluted the flag.

They made a pretty picture, thought Captain Barry, as he unbent the flag, belayed the halliards, and gathered up the folds of bunting upon the deck, rolling the colors into a small bundle which he placed in a chest standing against the rail at the foot of the staff. It was a nightly ceremony which had not been intermitted since the two came to the Point. Sometimes the admiral was unable to be present when the flag was formally hoisted in the morning, but it was rare indeed that night, however inclement the weather, did not find him on the porch at evening colors.

The smoke of the discharge and the faint acrid smell of the powder – both pleasant to the veterans – yet lingered in the still air as Barry came up the hill. He stopped before the foot of the porch, stood with his legs far apart, as if balancing to the roll of a ship, knuckled his forehead in true sailor-like fashion, and solemnly reported that the colors were down. The admiral acknowledged the salute and, in a voice still strong in spite of his great age, followed it with his nightly comment and question:

"Ay, Barry, and handsomely done. How is the ship?"

"She's all right, your honor."

"Nothing more gone?"

"No, sir."

"I thought I heard a crash last night in the gale."

"Not last night, sir. Everything's all ship-shape, leastways just as it was since that last piece of the to'gallant fo'k'sl was carried away last week."

"That's good, Barry. I suppose she's rotting though, still rotting."

"Ay, ay, sir, she is; an' some of the timbers you can stick your finger into."

"But she's sound at the heart, Captain Barry," broke in Emily, cheerily.

"Sound at the heart, Miss Emily, and always will be, I trust."

"Ay, lassie," said the old admiral, "we be all sound at the heart, we three; but when the dry rot gets into the timber, sooner or later the heart is bound to go. Now, to-night, see yonder, the storm is approaching. How the wind will rack the old timbers! I lie awake o' nights and hear it howling around the corners of the house and wait for the sound of the crashing of the old ship. I've heard the singing of the breeze through the top-hamper many a time, and have gone to sleep under it when a boy; but

the wind here, blowing through the trees and about the ship, gets into my very vitals. Some of it will go to-night, and I shall be nearer the snug harbor aloft in the morning."

"Oh, don't say that, grandfather! Sound at the heart, the old ship will brave many a tempest, and you will, as well."

"Ay, girl, but not many like yonder brewing storm. Old things are for still days, not for tempests. What think ye of the prospect, Barry?"

"It's got an ugly look, your honor, in the nor'west. There's wind a plenty in them black clouds. I wish we'd a good frigate under us and plenty o' sea room. I lies on the old ship sometimes an' feels her shiver in the gale as if she was ashamed to be on shore. That'll be a hard blow, sir."

"Ay," said the admiral, "I remember it was just such a night as this once when I commanded the *Columbus*. She was a ship-of-the-line, Emily, pierced for one hundred guns, and when we came into the Mediterranean Admiral Dacres told me that he had never seen such a splendid ship. I was uneasy and could not sleep, – good captains sleep lightly, child, – so I came on deck about two bells in the mid-watch. Young Farragut, God bless him! was officer of the watch. The night was calm and quiet but very dark. It was black as pitch off to starboard. There was not a star to be seen. 'Mr. Farragut,' I said, 'you'd better get the canvas off the ship.' Just then a little puff struck me in the cheek, and there was a sort of a deep sigh in the still night. Barry, your father, old John, was at the wheel, and a better hand at steering a ship I never saw. 'Call all hands, sir,' I said, sharply, 'we've no time to spare,' and by gad, – excuse me, Emily, – we'd no more than settled away the halliards when the squall struck us. If it hadn't been for the quick handling and ready seamanship of that youngster, and I saw that he was master of the thing and let him have his own way, we'd have gone down with all standing. As it was –"

The speech of the old man was interrupted by a vivid flash of lightning, followed by a distant clap of thunder. In another moment the black water of the lake was churned into foam, and the wind swept upon them with the violence of a hurricane. As soon as the storm burst forth, Barry sprang upon the porch to assist the old admiral into the house.

"No," he said; "I'm feeling rather well this evening. Let me face the storm awhile. Fetch me my heavy cloak. That's well. Now pull the chair forward where I can get it full and strong. How good it feels! 'Tis like old times, man. Ah, if there were only a touch of salt in the gale!"

Closely wrapped in a heavy old-fashioned boat cloak which Barry brought him, he sat down near the railing of the porch, threw up his old head, and drank in the fresh gale with long breaths which brought with them pleasant recollections. The sailor stood on one side of the veteran, Emily on the other; youth and strength, man and woman, at the service of feeble age.

"See the ship!" muttered the old man; "how she sways, yet she rides it out! Up with the helm!" he cried, suddenly, as if she were in a seaway with the canvas on her. "Force your head around to it, ye old witch! Drive into it! You're good for many a storm yet. Bless me," he added, presently, "I forgot; yet 'tis still staunch. Ha, ha! Sound at the heart, and will weather many a tempest yet!"

"Oh, grandfather, what's that?" cried the girl; "look yonder!"

She left the side of the admiral, sprang to the edge of the porch, and pointed far out over the lake. A little sloop, its mainsail close reefed, was beating in toward the harbor. The twilight had so far faded in the storm that at the distance from them the boat then was they could scarcely distinguish more than a slight blur of white upon the water. But, flying toward them before the storm, she was fast rising into view.

"Where is it, child?" asked the old man, looking out into the growing darkness.

"There! Let your eye range across the ship; there, beyond the Point. She's running straight upon the sunken rocks."

"I sees it, Miss Emily," cried Barry, shading his eyes with his hand; "'tis a yacht, the mains'l's close reefed. She looks like a toy. There's a man in it. He's on the port tack, thinkin' to make the harbor without goin' about."

"He'll never do it," cried the girl, her voice shrill with apprehension. "He can't see the sunken ledge running out from the Point. He's a stranger to these waters, evidently."

"I see him, too," said the admiral. "God, what a storm! How he handles that boat! The man's a sailor, every inch of him!"

The cutter was nearer now, so near that the man could easily be seen. She was coming in with racing speed in spite of her small spread of canvas. The lake was roaring all about her and the wind threatened to rip the mast out of the little boat, but the man held her up to it with consummate skill, evidently expecting to gain an entrance to the harbor, where safety lay, on his present tack. This he could easily have done had it not been for a long, dangerous ledge of sunken rocks which extended out beyond Ship House Point. Being under water, it gave little sign of its presence to a mariner until one was right upon it. In his excitement the admiral scrambled to his feet, stepped to the rail of the porch, and stood leaning over it. Presently he hollowed his hand and shouted with a voice of astonishing power for so old a man:

"Down with your helm, boy! Hard down!"

But the stranger, of course, could not hear him, and the veteran stood looking with a grave frown upon his face as that human life, down on the waters beneath him, struggled for existence. It was not the first time he had watched life trembling in the balance – no; nor seen it go in the end. Emily's voice broke in murmurs of prayer, while Barry stared like the admiral.

Presently the man in the boat glanced up and caught sight of the party. He was very near now and coming on gallantly. He waved his hand, and was astonished to see them frantically gesture back at him. A warning! What could their movements mean?

He peered ahead into the growing darkness; the way seemed to be clear, yet something was evidently wrong. What could it be? Ah! He could not weather the Point. With a seaman's quick decision, he jammed the helm over.

"Oh, grandfather!" screamed Emily in the old man's ear; "can't something be done?"

"Nothing, child; nothing! He can't hear, he can't see, he does not know."

"It's awful to see him rush smilingly down to certain death!" exclaimed the girl, wringing her hands. "Captain Barry, can't you do something?"

"There goes his helm," said the admiral; "he realizes it at last. About he goes! Too late! too late!"

"Oh, Captain Barry, you must do something!" cried Emily.

"There's nothin' to do, Miss Emily."

"Yes, there is. We'll get the boat," she answered, springing from the steps as she spoke and running down the hill like a young fawn. The sailor instantly followed her, and in a moment they disappeared under the lee of the ship.

CHAPTER V

The Rescue

As the practised eye of the admiral had seen, the tiny yacht was too near the rocks to go about and escape them. She was caught in the trough of the sea before she had gathered way on the other tack, and flung upon the sunken ledge, broadside on. The mast snapped like a pipe-stem. After a few violent shocks she was hurled over on her beam ends, lodged securely on the rocks, and began to break up under the beating of the angry sea. A few moments and she would be beaten to pieces. The man was still there, however, the water breaking over him. He seemed to have been hurt, but clung tenaciously to the wreck of the boat until he recovered himself a little, and then rose slowly and stood gazing upon the tossing waters, seething and whirling about the wreck of his boat.

There was, during high winds, a dangerous whirlpool right in front of the reefs and extending between them and the smooth waters of the harbor. The water was beating over the rocks and fairly boiling before him. A man could not swim through it; could, indeed, scarcely enter it and live – even a boat would find it difficult, if not impossible. Things looked black to the shipwrecked man. He stood in hopeless hesitation, doom reaching for him on either hand. He could neither go nor stay with safety. Yet he apparently made up his mind at last to go and die, if need be, struggling.

"Don't try the whirlpool, boy," said the admiral softly to himself, as he looked down upon the scene. "You could never make it in this sea. Say a prayer, lad; 'tis all that is left you. By heaven! A noble girl, my own child! And a brave oar, too! Steady, Barry, steady! Don't come too near! Your skiff can't live in such a sea. Merciful God! can they do it?" continued the veteran, as the light skiff shot out from the lee of the Point and, with Barry at the oars and Emily at the helm, cautiously made its way toward the whirlpool.

The instant they got out from the lee of the Point the full force of the storm struck them, although they were still within the shelter of the harbor. But they struggled through it, for a stronger pair of arms never pulled oars and more skilful hands than those on that little skiff never guided a boat. Barry's strokes were as steady and powerful as if he had been a steam propeller, and not even the admiral himself could have steered the boat with greater dexterity than did the girl.

The man on the wrecked cutter saw them when the admiral did. Evidently he was a sailor, too, for he knew exactly what they intended to do. The two on the boat brought the skiff as near the rocks where the wreck of the cutter lay as they dared, – they were almost in the whirlpool, in fact, – and then Emily, gathering the yoke-lines in her left hand, with the other signalled him to jump. Nodding his head, he leaped far out over the whirling waves toward the boat. It was his only chance.

"A gallant lad, a brave boy!" exclaimed the admiral, as he saw the man spring from the wreck. "I believe they'll save him yet. No, by heavens! he's struck on one of the reefs! Is he gone? He rises! He's in the whirlpool! He strikes out feebly; the waves go over his head! No, he rises again! They have him! Well done, Emily; well pulled, Barry!"

Taking a desperate chance, the girl, seeing that the man was practically helpless, for he was swimming feebly and apparently scarcely able to keep his head up, boldly sheered the boat into the whirlpool and then turned her about. The man, retaining his self-possession, seized the stern with his uninjured hand. Emily leaned down and caught him by the coat collar, and then Barry pulled his strongest to escape from the twisting grip of the little maelstrom.

Emily steered the boat with one hand and with the other held on to the stranger. It was, of course, impossible to get him into the boat. Presently he fainted and hung a dead weight on her arm. The admiral watched them, praying fervently for their success. It was a terrible pull for the old sailor and a terrible strain on the young woman. Again and again she thought she would have to release the man dragging astern. Her arm was almost jerked from her body, yet she held on with grim determination, steering the boat as best she could with her single hand.

Barry pulled until the sweat beaded his forehead. His muscles stood out like whipcords. For a few moments he feared that he could not do it; but he looked at the resolute figure in the stern-sheets, the girl he loved, and that nerved his arms. Presently – and it seemed hours to both – he got the boat out of the whirlpool and into the comparatively smooth water under the lee of the Point. After a few weary strokes the keel grated upon the shore.

The sailor stepped out, made fast the painter, waded back to where the man lay in the water, lifted him up with the assistance of Emily, and slowly made his way up the hill, carrying him in his arms.

CHAPTER VI

The Water-Witch

We have a deeper sense of proprietorship in a thing we have earned by hard labor or gained by the exercise of our abilities than in that which has been given to us, has cost us nothing.

As Emily, walking close by Barry's side, giving him such assistance as was possible, looked with mingled pity and anxiety upon the white face of the man hanging limply back over the arms of the sailor, she was conscious that in her soul had arisen a new and curious sense of ownership in humanity, – the most satisfactory, yet disappointing, of our possessions. A strange and indefinable feeling surged in her breast as she thought hurriedly of the situation. A budding relationship – the deep relationship of services rendered, in fact – attached her inevitably to this stranger – if he were yet alive.

She flushed at the feeling, as if her privacy had been invaded, as she gazed upon him. Her thoughts ran riot in her bosom, her soul turning toward him, helpless, unconscious, water dripping from his torn, sodden clothing. Perhaps he was dead or dying. The thought gave her a sudden constriction of the heart. That would be untoward fate surely. It could not be.

She had saved him. The weak woman had been strong. Her heart leaped exultingly at that. He was hers by the divine right of service. The strange relationship had suddenly become a fact to her. Her arm still ached with the strain of holding him, yet she was glad of the pain. It was the inward and spiritual evidence of her ownership in that she had found and brought to shore. If he would only live!

As they walked she prayed.

She was not in love with him, of course, – not yet, – and yet she could scarcely analyze – hardly comprehend – her feelings. Her mind was in a whirl. Faint, exhausted physically, she did not yet see clearly. But he was there. She had brought him. This human bit of flotsam was hers – but for her he would have gone down forever in the dark waters. If he lived, what things might be? What might come? She admitted nothing, even to herself.

It was some distance from the landing-place to the top of the hill, and although the man they had rescued, albeit tall, was a slender young fellow, yet as the sailor toiled up the well-worn path he felt the weight of the inert body growing greater with every ascending step. Perhaps it would not have been so had he not previously exhausted himself in the desperate pull to gain the shore; but when at last he reached the porch, he felt that it would have been impossible for him to have carried his burden another pace. Indeed, had it not been for the assistance Emily had given him, he could not have managed it without a stop or two for rest. But he had plunged blindly on, something – an instinct of the future, perhaps – bidding him rid himself without delay of the growing oppression of his incubus. Not Sindbad had been more anxious to throw off his old man of the sea than he to cast down the man.

And Barry and Emily began to play at cross-purposes from that hour.

The man saved so hardly had as yet given no sign of life. When the three reached the porch, the sailor laid him down at the admiral's feet and stood panting, sweat beading on his bronzed brow. The old man, still wrapped in his cloak, stood on the steps, careless alike of the rising wind or the rain which had begun to fall.

"Well done!" he cried, extending his hand to them, as the sailor deposited his burden. "I never saw a boat better handled, girl! 'Twas a gallant rescue, Barry!"

"Oh, grandfather!" cried Emily, too anxious to heed approval, even from such a source; "is he dead, do you think?"

"I hope not; but we'll soon see. Call the servants, Emily. Barry, lift him up again and take him into my room."

"No, mine," exclaimed Emily, as she ran to call assistance. "I won't have you disturbed, and mine is right off the hall here."

"Very well. Lay him on the floor, Barry. And, Emily, bring me my flask. Bear a hand, all."

Presently the man was stretched out upon a blanket thrown upon the floor of Emily's room, and the admiral knelt down by his side. He felt over him with his practised fingers, murmuring the while:

"No bones broken apparently. I guess he'll be all right. Have you the flask there, daughter? This will bring him around, I trust," he added, as he poured the restoring liquid down the man's throat. "Barry, go you for Dr. Wilcox as quick as you can. Present my compliments to him, and ask him to come here at once. Shake a leg, man! Emily, loosen the man's collar – your fingers are younger than mine – and give him another swallow. He's worth a dozen dead men yet, I'm sure."

As he spoke the admiral rose to his feet and gave place to Emily. Very gently the girl did as the old man bade her, and presently the man extended before her opened his eyes and stared up at her vacantly, wonderingly, for a few moments at first, and then, with a dawning light of recognition in his eyes, he smiled faintly as he remembered. His first words might have been considered flippant, unworthy of the situation, but to the girl they seemed not inappropriate.

"The blue-eyed water-witch!" he murmured. "To be saved by you," he continued, half jestingly, – it was a brave heart which could find place for pleasantry then, she thought, – "and then to find you smiling above me."

At these whispered words what he still lacked in color flickered into Emily's face, and as he gazed steadily upon her, the flicker became a flame which suffused her cheeks. He had noticed her even in those death-fronting moments on the wreck.

"Are you better now?" she asked him in her confusion.

"Better, miss?" he answered, softly, yet not striving to rise; "I am well again. I came down to –"

"Silence, lad, silence fore and aft! Belay all until the surgeon comes, and you shall tell us all about it then," interrupted the admiral. "He'll be here in a moment now, I think, if Barry have good luck. Will you have another swallow of whiskey?"

"No, sir, thank you; I've had enough."

At that moment the sailor entered the hall, fairly dragging the fat little doctor in his wake.

"I fell foul of him just outside of the yard, your honor," said Barry, as he appeared in the doorway.

"Fell foul of me! I should think you did! You fell on me like a storm," cried the doctor, dropping his wet cloak in the passage-way and bustling into the room. "What is it, admiral? Are you –?"

"I'm all right, doctor."

"It's not Miss Emily?"

"No, sir; I'm all right, too; but –"

"Oho!" said the doctor, his glance at last falling to the man extended on the floor; "this is the patient, is it? Well, young man, you look rather damp, I am sure. What's up?"

"Nothing seems to be up, sir," answered the man, smilingly, amusedly. "I seem to be down, though."

"I guess you're in pretty good shape, sir," said the doctor, laughingly, "if you can joke about it; and if you are down now, we'll soon have you up."

As he spoke, the physician knelt and examined his patient carefully.

"How did it happen, Miss Emily?" he asked, as he proceeded with his investigations.

"Why, doctor, we picked him up out of the water."

"We?"

"Yes, sir. Captain Barry and I."

"My sloop was wrecked on the rocks beyond the old ship," said the young man; "and when this young lady came along in a boat I jumped, and as I am not quite recovered from a wound I got at Mobile Bay, I suppose I lost consciousness from the shock. I'm all right now, though."

"I think so, too," said the doctor; "we'll get these wet clothes off you in a jiffy, and then I'll give you something, and in the morning you'll hardly know you've been in danger."

"I shall never forget that I was in danger this time, sir," said the young man, addressing the doctor, but looking fixedly at the young girl.

"No, of course not; but why particularly at this time?"

"Because I was saved by –"

"Oh, that's it, is it? Faith, I'd be willing to be half drowned myself to be saved in that way. Meanwhile, do you withdraw, Miss Emily, and we'll get him ready for bed. Where is he to lie?"

"Here," said the girl.

"In your room?"

"Certainly."

"I protest, sir," said the man, sitting up with astonishing access of vigor.

"Nobody protests when Miss Emily commands anything. Here you'll stay, sir!" said Barry, gruffly, as the girl left the room.

The doctor and the sailor soon tucked him away in bed, the admiral looking on. As they undressed him they noticed a long scar across his breast where a shell from Fort Morgan had keeled him over. The doctor examined it critically.

"That was a bad one," he said, touching the wound deftly with his pudgy yet knowing finger. "That'll be the one you spoke of, I take it?"

"Yes, sir," answered the young man; "it's been a long time in healing. I feel the effect of it yet sometimes."

"But you'll get over it in time, young man, I'm thinking," said the kindly little country doctor.

"I hope so, sir."

The patient was thin and pale from the effects of the wound, which, as he said, had been a long time healing. It was evident that he had not yet recovered his strength or his weight, either, or the burden on Captain Barry would have been heavier than it was.

"Did you say," said the admiral, as they prepared to leave him, "that you had been at Mobile Bay?"

"Yes, sir."

"What ship were you on?"

"The *Hartford*, sir."

"Bless me!" exclaimed the old man; "with Dave Farragut?"

"Yes, sir; I had that honor."

"Why, I knew that boy when he was a midshipman. I –"

"Now, admiral, excuse me for giving commands in your presence, but you know there are times when the doctor rules the ship. This young man must be left alone, and, after the excitement, I think you had better go to bed – excuse me, I mean turn in – yourself," interposed the physician, peremptorily.

"Hark to the storm!" said the old man, turning to the window, his thoughts diverted for the moment from the accident and his guest – it needed but little to turn his mind to the ship at any time or under any circumstances. "Mark the flash of the lightning, hear the thunder, doctor! She'll be sore racked to-night!"

He peered anxiously out into the darkness over the Point.

"Come, come, admiral."

"Nay, sir. I must wait for another flash to see whether the old ship still stands. Ay, there she is! Well, 'twill not be long; and were it not for Emily, I'd say, thank God! Good-night, lad. A boy with Farragut, and he a boy with me! Well, well! Good-night; sleep well, sir."

Long time the veteran lay awake listening to the wind and waiting for the crash of the ship. And in the room above, where the servants had made a bed for Emily, another kept sleepless watch, though she thought but little of the storm; or, if she did, it was with thankfulness for what it had brought her.

How handsome he had looked, even with that death-like pallor upon his brown sunburnt cheek, as she had knelt beside him! Had the waves of the tempest indeed brought the long-expected, long-dreamed-of lover to her feet? And he was a sailor; he had been with Farragut; he had been wounded in the service of his country – a hero! And what had he said? "Saved by a blue-eyed water-witch!" How delightful to think on! And he would never forget the rescue because she had done it! He jested, surely; yet could the words be true?

How different he was from the young men of the village! Even the few officers of the different detachments of volunteers which had successively garrisoned the fort were not as he. How different from Captain Barry, too – alas, poor old sailor! Her grandfather, now, might have been like him when he was younger.

What a storm it was! How the wind howled around the corners of the house! What had he come there for? Strangers rarely visited the quiet little town. What business or pleasure had brought him to the village? Was the ship braving the storm? If the ship went down, her grandfather would go, too, and perhaps Captain Barry. Who would care for her then? What was that young man's name? Pity he had not mentioned it. "A blue-eyed water-witch!"

She drifted off to sleep.

Down upon the deck of the old ship, heedless of the storm, Captain Barry paced restlessly up and down. What had he done it for? What fool's impulse had made him obey her sharp command? 'Twas his arm that had held the boat under iron control; 'twas his powerful stroke that had brought it near enough to enable the man to make the leap with the chance of safety; and he had carried him up the hill. The increasing weight of the incumbrance but typified the growing heaviness of his heart. The man was one of the admiral's class, – a gentleman, an officer, a man who had been wounded in the service of his country, a hero. How he had stared at Emily when his senses came back to him! He, Barry, was only a common sailor, a blue-jacket, the admiral's servitor, Miss Emily's dog, old enough to be her father, – a fool!

He stood up in the darkness and stretched out his arms to heaven, – what voiceless, wordless prayer in his lonely old heart? The storm beat full upon him. His mind was filled with foreboding, regret, jealousy, anguish. Why had the man come there? Was it for Emily? What should any man come there for if not for her?

But, stay; he was a sailor. Perhaps he had come for the ship! The war was over, retrenchment the cry. Poor Barry had heard strange rumors. There was no sleep for him that night.

CHAPTER VII

The Home of the Sea-Maiden

Mr. Richard Revere was a young lieutenant in the navy of the United States. He came of an ancient and honorable family, possessed of wealth and station. He had graduated from the Naval Academy in 1863, and, by an act of daring gallantry in cutting out a blockade-runner, had easily won a lieutenant's commission. When Farragut sailed into Mobile Bay on that hot August morning in 1864, the young man stood on the deck by his side. A Blakely shell from Fort Morgan had seriously wounded him, and this wound, coupled with a long siege of fever subsequently, had almost done for him.

Although over a year had elapsed since that eventful day, he had by no means regained his strength, although he seemed now on the fair road to recovery. Anxious to be on duty again after this long period of enforced idleness, he had recently applied for orders, and had been detailed to proceed to Lake Ontario and make arrangements for the sale, or other disposal, of the *Susquehanna*. His mother owned a cottage on one of the Thousand Isles, and the distance was, therefore, inconsiderable. When the orders had reached him there, he determined to sail down to Sewell's Harbor in a little yacht which he had chartered for lake cruising, instead of taking the longer and more tedious journey by land.

He had reached his destination in the way which has been told. It was imprudent in him to have attempted to make the mouth of an unknown harbor in such a storm, and he had nearly paid the penalty for his folly with his life. Exhausted by his adventure, he fell speedily into a sound and refreshing slumber, his last thought being of the radiant face bowed over him when he had opened his eyes in the very room in which he now sought rest.

He awoke in the morning feeling very much better. On a chair opposite the bed lay a suit of clothes. He glanced at the garments curiously and observed that they were the different articles of a blue-jacket's uniform. They evidently belonged to that sailor-man who had assisted in his rescue. They were new and spotlessly neat; certainly his best suit. His own uniform was nowhere to be seen. It must have been badly torn and, of course, thoroughly soaked by his adventure. His clothes, probably, were not yet fit to put on. If he were to get up at all he must make use of these. Well, it would not be the first time that he had worn a seaman's clothes. They reminded him of his cadet days, and so he arose, somewhat painfully be it known, and dressed himself, curiously surveying the room as he did so.

It was a strange room, he thought, for a young girl, as he remembered that it belonged to her. Her? How indefinite that was! He wished he knew her name. He wondered whether it were beautiful enough to be appropriate. He hoped so. The chamber was not at all like that of a young woman. For instance, there was a deadly looking harpoon standing in the corner. He picked up the sinister weapon and examined it.

"Queer toy, that thing, for a girl," he murmured; "quite a proper weapon for a whaler, though."

Its barbs were as sharp and keen as a razor. On the wooden staff the letters "J. B." were roughly carved. Were those her initials? Pshaw, of course not! But whose? He experienced quite a thrill of – it could not be jealousy! That was absurd.

"What's this? A model of a ship. By Jove! I believe it's the old *Susquehanna* herself, – the ship I am come to sell! And here's a shark's tooth rudely carved. Oars in the other corner, too. And a fish-net and lines! This bunch of wild flowers, though, and the contents of this bureau mark the woman; but I'm blessed if there isn't a boatswain's call, laniard and all! That's about the prettiest laniard I ever saw," he continued, critically examining the knots and strands and Turk's heads. "Have I stumbled into Master Jack's quarters by mistake, or – oh, I see how it is. I suppose that old sailor has loaded her with these treasures. He probably adores her – who could help it? And the admiral, too. Now, what's this, I wonder? What a queer-looking sword!"

He lifted up the weapon, which lay on a wooden shelf between the windows, crossed pistols of ancient make hanging above it beneath a fine old painting of a handsome young naval officer, in the uniform of a captain of the 1812 period. The leather scabbard was richly and artistically mounted in silver, but the hilt was a rough piece of unpolished, hammered iron. He drew the weapon from the sheath. The blade was of the most exquisite quality, beautifully chased, a rare bit of Toledo steel, handsome enough to throw a connoisseur into ecstasy. He tested it, cautiously at first, and then boldly; it was a magnificent weapon, tempered to perfection. Such a blade as a king or conqueror might have wielded, – and yet, that coarse iron hilt! What could it mean? He thrust it back reverently into its scabbard and laid it down, and then completed his toilet.

When he was dressed, he took a long look at himself in the little, old-fashioned mirror swinging between two lyre-shaped standards on the dresser, and smiled at the picture. In height he was, perhaps, as tall as the sailor, but in bulk there was no comparison. He laughed at the way the clothes hung about him. Yet the dashing, jaunty uniform was not ill adapted to set off his handsome face. It was complete, even to sheath-knife and belt. On the chair lay the flat cap, bearing on its ribbon, in letters of gold, the name *Susquehanna*. He put the cap on and went out on the porch.

Captain Barry was standing at the foot of the steps leading from the porch, looking at the ship. It was early morning.

"My man," said the young officer, meaning to be entirely friendly and cordial, as he was profoundly grateful, yet unable entirely to keep the difference of rank and station out of his voice and manner, – a condescension which irritated the sailor beyond expression. They were both dressed exactly alike, and certainly physically the older was the better man. He had lived long enough in the society of the girl and the old man to have developed some of the finer feelings of his nature, too. He shook himself angrily, therefore, as the other spoke.

"My man, you lay me under double obligation. You and your golden-haired mistress presented me with my life last night, and now you 'paint the lily' – gad, that's a good simile, isn't it?" he chuckled to himself – "by giving me your clothes. How am I to acquit myself of all I owe you?"

"Sir," said the old man, grimly, knuckling his forehead, with a sea-scrape of his foot, more as a matter of habit than as a token of respect, "you owe me nothing."

He turned abruptly, and went around the house without looking back.

"Queer duck, that," soliloquized the young man, staring after him in amazement; "seems to be mad about something. Mad at me, perhaps. I wonder why? Well, those old shellbacks are apt to take quaint notions. Never mind; let him do what he likes. Where would you be, Mr. Dick Revere, if it had not been for him and the girl? How funny I must look, though! I wonder whether the apparel becomes the man? I flatter myself I have given the proper hitch to the tie. It is 'a touch of wild civility that doth bewitch me,'" he quoted. "I wish I had brought that bo's'n's whistle out. I'd like to sound a call or two."

He drifted off into a brown study, thinking hard in this manner.

"I wonder what Josephine would say if she could see me now? Is all our difference of rank but a matter of uniform? By Jove! I forgot all about her. I don't believe I've thought of her since I left them; yet, if the novels are right, I should have been thinking of her when I stood on the deck of the yacht expecting every moment would be my last. I was thinking of that girl in the boat, though. Wasn't she splendid? Plucky, pretty – well! Gracious me, Richard Revere, at the age of twenty-four you are surely not going to fall in love with the first woman you see, especially since you have been engaged to Josephine Remington pretty much ever since you were born, – or ever since she was born, which was four years later. But I swear I'd give a year of Josephine's cold, classic, beautiful regularity for a minute of – pshaw, don't be a fool! I'll go and look at the yacht. I wonder whether anything's left of her? Nobody would think there had been a storm of any kind to look at the lake to-day. What a lovely morning!"

Indeed, the wind had gone down to a gentle breeze, and the surface of the lake was tossing in thousands of merry little waves, their white crests sparkling in the sunlight.

"The old ship is still standing," he continued, soliloquizing again, as he walked toward the bluff. "I suppose it will come awfully hard on the old man when he finds out that the government is going to sell her. What did they tell me his name was? Somebody or other distinguished; I forget who. Must have been a fine old chap in his day. What was it he said when he looked out of the window before he bade me good-night? This is going to be rather a tough sort of a job, I'm afraid, and I don't half like it."

He had reached the hill by this time, and, feeling a little tired, he sat down on the steps overlooking the sea. There, below him on the Point, stood the ship-of-the-line. An imposing picture, indeed. He had been too busy the night before to notice it. He stared at it with growing interest, and a feeling of pity, for whom, for what, he could scarcely say, slowly rose in his heart.

"Poor old ship!" he murmured.

A ragged mass of fallen timber on the lee side proclaimed that some portion of her had been carried away during the storm of the night, – and she had little left to spare. There, too, on the reef beyond, were the remains of the *Josephine*, battered into a shapeless ruin.

"Well, that was a close shave; the *Josephine* will never carry sail again. What melancholy pictures!" he said, thoughtfully; "poor little boat, too! I've had many a good time on her, and now I – But I'd cheerfully give a dozen yachts," he continued, with the reckless hyperbole of youth, "to be rescued by –"

CHAPTER VIII

"Old Ironsides"

The continuity of his thought was suddenly broken. A beautiful hand, of exquisite touch, sunburned, but shapely, delicate, but strong, was laid lightly on his shoulder. He glanced down at it, thrilled!

"Captain Barry," exclaimed a fresh, clear young voice, which in perfection matched the hand, "have you looked to the comfort of our guest? Oh, sir, I beg your pardon. I thought –" she cried in dismay, as Revere rose to his feet and bowed low before her.

"May I answer your question? He has, as these clothes, which account for your mistake, will witness."

"And are you well, sir? Are you none the worse for –?"

"Much the better, I should say," answered the young man, "since my adventure has gained me the privilege of your acquaintance."

"You might have had that without risking your life, sir," she responded, smiling.

"Not without risking my heart, I am sure," he replied, gallantly.

"What a strange way you have of addressing people!" she continued, looking at him so frankly and so innocently that he felt ashamed of himself. "Do you always talk in that way?"

"Well, not always," he replied, laughing; "but I jest –"

"Oh, it was only a jest, then," she interrupted, her heart sinking faintly.

"But I jest when I should be thanking you for giving me my life," he continued, disregarding her interruption. "You saved my life, Miss – I do not know your name."

"I am Emily Sanford, the admiral's granddaughter."

"You saved my life, Miss Sanford."

"I don't believe I've ever been called 'Miss Sanford' in my life. How strange it sounds!" she exclaimed, naïvely. "Everybody here calls me 'Miss Emily.'"

"You will not find me unwilling, I am sure, to adopt the common practice," he exclaimed, lightly. "But, seriously, death never seemed nearer to me than it did last night, and I have been near it before, too. Had it not been for you –"

"And Captain Barry," she interrupted, quickly.

"Of course, for him, too, I'd not be here thanking you now."

"But it was nothing, after all; anybody could have done it."

"There I disagree with you. I am sailor enough to know that it was a most desperate undertaking. You put your own life in hazard to save mine. If that old man had relaxed his efforts, if you had made a mistake with those yoke-lines, – well, there would have been three of us to go instead of one."

"Oh, hardly that."

"But I know, Miss Emily, and I cannot allow you to disparage your action so. 'Twas a most heroic thing, and I'm not worthy the risk and the effort."

"But you have been with Farragut; you were at Mobile Bay in the *Hartford*; you –"

"You did not know it then, surely?" in great surprise.

"I did not then; but since I did – as you persist in saying – save you, I am glad to know it now. But you have not told me your name."

"My name is Richard Revere. I am a lieutenant in the United States navy."

"How did you happen to come here?" curiously.

"I came about the ship."

"The ship?" she cried in alarm. "What of it?"

"I came to inspect it," he answered, evasively, something prompting him that he was getting in dangerous waters.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, greatly relieved; "I thought you might have come to destroy it, or to dispose of it. You see, it would be the death of grandfather if anything should happen to the old ship, and it would kill the old sailor, too; and then what would become of me?"

Her frankness delighted him. An answer trembled on the tip of his tongue, but by a great effort he restrained his inclination and questioned her.

"Have you no relatives, no friends?"

"No relatives at all except grandfather," she answered, freely and frankly. "I have lived here since I was a baby with the admiral and Captain Barry. My mother died when I was an infant, and she was the only child of her mother. I haven't a connection in the world that I know of. Friends? Yes, everybody in the village is a friend of mine; but they are different, you know. I wonder sometimes what will happen when – they can't last much longer, you know, but God will take care of me," she continued, simply.

"And I, too," he murmured softly, in spite of himself.

"You!" she cried, surprised, turning her clear, splendid eyes toward him and confronting him in one unabashed glance. "What do you mean? I – "

"Never mind, Miss Emily," he answered, recovering himself again; "you are right. God will find some way, I doubt not. I only mean to say that if you ever need a friend, a real friend, you may count upon me and upon my mother. She owes you a son, you know, and I am sure she would gladly pay her debt in kindness to you."

Dangerous promises, Richard, so far as you are concerned, in spite of Plato; and few men there be who dare assume to speak for a woman, a mother, to a possible daughter-in-law!

His words were simple enough, but there was such intensity in the glance that accompanied them that the girl, innocent though she was, shrank from it, – not with fear, but from the old, old instinct of woman that suggests flight when fain to be pursued.

"More of the ship went with the gale last night," she murmured, pointing; "see yonder. I think every gale that comes will be the last of her. Your boat is gone to pieces, too."

"I count it well lost," he replied, softly, "for it has brought me to you."

"You must not say that," she answered, gravely; "and I am forgetting my duty. Breakfast is nearly ready. I came to tell you. Will you come into the house?"

It was not the first time that a maiden forgot her duty – even in trifles like this – in the presence of a man she was beginning to love, nor would it be the last.

"Did you, then, do me the honor to seek me? I am delighted."

"At the prospect of breakfast?" she asked, smiling at him merrily.

"Of course. Did you ever see a sailor-man who wasn't?"

"The only sailor-men I know are my grandfather and Captain Barry. Grandfather cares nothing about it, but I must say that Captain Barry – "

"Does full justice to his rations, I doubt not. He looks like it. Well, I am only a lieutenant. I will follow the captain. May I help you up the hill?"

She laughed lightly at him.

"Why, Mr. Revere, I run up and down that hill a dozen times a day, and I should think, after your battering of last night, you would rather depend upon me. Come, let us go."

They had gone but a few steps when an idea struck the lieutenant. He stopped, pressed his hand against his side, and gazed beseechingly at his companion.

"Oh, what is it?" she cried; "your wound? You ought not to have come out. What shall we do?"

"I am afraid," answered this mendacious deceiver; "I am sorry to trouble you, but I will have to be helped up the hill, after all. You see – "

"Of course, of course. How thoughtless of me! I'll call Captain Barry at once."

"Oh, no; that will be unnecessary. If you will give me your hand I think I can manage."

She extended her hand to him instantly with all the freedom of her character, and her ready offer shamed him again. His repentance of his subterfuge did not rise to the renunciation point, for it must be confessed that he seized the beautiful, sunburnt little hand with avidity, and clung to it as if he really craved assistance. She helped him religiously up the hill, and, as he showed no desire to relinquish her hand when they reached the top, she asked him if he did not feel able to walk alone now; and when he was forced to reply in the affirmative, she drew it gently away.

"You see," he said, "it was so delightful, I quite forgot."

"What was delightful?"

"To have reached the top of the hill; you know it was so pleasant, I – I – forgot – I was holding your hand."

If Emily had been a modern young woman she might have asked him how he could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was holding her hand; but as his glance carried his meaning home to her she flushed deeply. The admiral's voice calling to them from the door-way put an end to a scene which was delightful to both of them.

On seeing the old man, the young man took off his cap and bowed respectfully.

"Sir," he said, "my name is Richard Revere."

"Are you related to Commodore Dick Revere of the old navy?"

"He was my grandfather, sir."

"I knew him well; I sailed on many a cruise with him. A gallant fellow, a loyal friend. I'm glad to meet you, sir. You are welcome."

"I have to thank you for your hospitality, sir, even as I thank your granddaughter for her heroic rescue of me last night."

"It was, indeed, nobly done, young sir, and I am glad that my child should have been of service to a grandson of Dick Revere, or to a friend of Dave Farragut. You were at Mobile, were you?"

"Yes, sir, and on the *Hartford*."

"I've seen many a battle in my day, young sir," said the old admiral, simply. "It was old-fashioned fighting then, yard-arm to yard-arm, but we went at it good and hard, and our hearts were in it, I doubt not, just as yours were."

"May I know your name, sir?"

"I am called Charles Stewart," responded the other.

"What?" cried the lieutenant. "Charles Stewart of the *Constitution*? The man who took the *Cyane* and the *Levant*?"

"The same, sir."

"Him they call 'Old Ironsides'?"

"I believe my countrymen do apply that name to me sometimes," replied the old man, smiling with pleasure at the hearty admiration of the younger.

"I am proud to know you, sir, and proud to see you. We of the new navy only hope that we may live up to the record you of the old made in the past, sir."

"You have more than done that," said the old man, heartily; "we had no better men than Farragut and young Porter. I sailed with old Porter, his father, many a time. I knew him well."

"But come, grandfather," said Emily, "breakfast is ready."

"A moment, child," said the old man, forgetting for the moment, apparently, his environment. "I must look at the ship. Good-morning, Barry," he continued, as the sailor approached him; "is it well with the ship?"

"A good piece of it went down last night, your honor, I'm sorry to say. It lies off on the port side, yonder, under the lee, but nothin' vital yet, sir."

"I did not think to see it this morning. Bit by bit it wears away. Well, please God, there will be an end some day."

CHAPTER IX

The Sword of the Constitution

Clothed in his own uniform, but hardly in his right mind, Mr. Richard Revere sat down late in the afternoon to consider the situation.

He had passed a delightfully idle day in the society of the admiral and his granddaughter; principally, it must be confessed, and in so far as he could contrive it, with the latter. Her cunning fingers had mended the rents in his uniform, which had been dried and put into a passably wearable condition. The versatility of her education and the variety of her accomplishments were evidenced to him when he saw that she wielded the needle as deftly as she steered the boat.

They had sat on the porch most of the time in the pleasant fall weather, and the dozing old admiral offered but little check to the freedom of their intercourse. In response to her insistent questioning, this young Telemachus, cast up by the sea at her feet, poured into the ear of this new Calypso stories of the naval battles in which he had participated and whose honorable scars he bore. Like Desdemona, she loved him for the dangers he had passed.

She was familiar with the history of the old navy, of which the admiral had been one of the brightest stars. Many a tale had the old man told her of storm and tempest, battle and triumph, shipwreck and disaster, and his own adventures and distinguished career she knew by heart. Although the great wave of the Civil War had ebbed and flowed far to the south of them, she and her grandfather had prayerfully and anxiously followed its mighty course, especially on the sea; yet it so happened that this was the first time that either of them had been brought in personal contact with its naval side. A returning volunteer, a wounded soldier, – for the little town had done its patriotic part with the rest, – had sometimes brought fresher news of the battles than might be read in the papers, but no sailor had come to tell them how Farragut had damned the torpedoes and steamed through the pass until Revere told the thrilling story of the immortal fight.

The admiral waked up while this was being recounted, and he pressed the young man with the keen questions of a veteran who knew well the sound of battle and had fronted the enemy undismayed. Even the story of the wound that disabled Revere must be told, in spite of his reluctance to mention it, and Emily dropped the needle and listened with bated breath to the simple and modest recital.

"Were you ever wounded, admiral?" questioned the young sailor, when he had finished his story.

"Never, by God's providence," said the old man; "though I came near to it once."

"And how was that, sir?"

"Well, sir, when the old *Constitution* took the *Cyane* and the *Levant*, a shot from the *Cyane* struck the hilt of my sword, carried it away, and slewed me about so that I thought for a moment that I had been hit in the side. It was a Spanish blade, and I prized it highly. I was lucky enough to give some succor to a Spanish brig in distress down in the West Indies on a certain occasion, years before, and His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain was pleased to present me with a sword for it, a beautiful Toledo blade, the finest sword I ever saw. It was richly hilted and scabbarded, as became such a weapon, and I always wore it in action. Of course, the hilt was ruined by the shot, and the armorer of the *Constitution* made a rude guard out of a piece of iron he took from the *Levant* after she struck, to replace the broken hilt, and I've never cared to change it since."

"I saw it this morning in Miss Emily's room," said Revere. "I took the liberty of examining it, and I was struck by the beauty of the blade and the roughness of the hilt. I quite agree with you, sir. I should not have it changed for anything."

"I call it the sword of the *Constitution*," said Emily.

"How comes it in your room, may I ask, Miss Emily?"

"Grandfather gave it to me. I am the only son of the house, you see," she continued with a melancholy sigh. "I would that I had been a man."

"That is a wish in which I cannot join you," said the young officer, quickly.

"I think it's a pity," responded the girl, "that so great and gallant a sailor as my grandfather should leave no one to bear his name."

"My dear young lady, his name is borne in our history and upon our hearts," answered Revere, quickly. "The world will never forget '*Old Ironsides*' and her last great fighting captain. The new navy is the child of the old, and, in a certain sense, we all feel the obligations of such distinguished ancestry. As for me, that I have been permitted to meet you, sir," he said, turning to the admiral, "in this intimate and familiar way, is one of the proudest moments of my life."

"Is it so?" said the old man, simply; "we only did our duty then, just as you are doing it now. Dave Farragut, now, he was trained in our school – "

"And we are trained in his school; so you see here is a connection. Some day we may show what we have learned from him, as he showed what he had learned from you."

"I doubt it not, young sir, I doubt it not; and while I have no sons or grandsons to bear my name, yet Emily is a good child. No one could wish for a better daughter."

"Of that I am quite sure," interrupted the lieutenant, spontaneously.

"And, perhaps," continued the admiral, simply, "in the hands of her children the sword of the *Constitution* may again be drawn in the service of our beloved country. But where is Barry? The sun is just setting. He should – Ah, there he is. Evening colors, Mr. Revere," said the veteran, rising to his feet as the gun on the terrace boomed out in salute, and standing still until the colors slowly and gracefully floated down.

One of the most beautiful of sights is the fall of a flag, when it comes down by your own hand and betokens no surrender. The declining banner lingers in the evening air with sweet reluctance until it finally drops into waiting hands with a touch like a caress.

"You see, we keep up the customs of the service as near as we can, sir. How is the ship, Barry?" the admiral asked, as the old sailor delivered his report, as he had done the evening before and on all the evenings of their long sojourn on Ship House Point.

"I have a fond fancy, Mr. Revere," resumed the veteran, after the termination of the customary conversation with the sailor, "that the ship and I will sail into the final harbor together. Both of us are old and worn out, laid up in ordinary, waiting for the end. But let us go into the house. The night air grows chill for me. Emily shall sing to us, and then I shall bid you good-night."

The girl's sweet, low voice, although unaccompanied, makes rare music in the old room. The admiral sits with his eyes closed, a smile upon his lips, beating the time upon the arm of his chair with his withered fingers. The songs the girl sings are of the music of the past; the words, those the admiral heard when he was a boy. Now it is a rollicking sea-chorus which bubbles from her young lips, now it is a sweet old ballad that his wife sang in the long ago time. His head nods, and he says, softly, under his breath, half in time with the rhythm, —

"Ay, just so. When I was a boy, so many years ago!"

Revere listens entranced, though possibly he had arrived at such a state that he would have listened entranced if she had sung badly, – which she did not. Her voice, though untrained, was delightful. It had the naturalness of bird notes, the freshness of youth, and the purity that charms the world. The airs were half-forgotten things, lingering familiarly in his memory. He may have heard them when he was a baby in his mother's arms, and she from her mother, and so on down through the long line of ancient ancestry maternal.

The sweetest songs, are they not the oldest? Have not the peasants of Sicily been singing the music of "Home, Sweet Home," for a thousand years?

And so the young man listens and loves, the old man listens and dreams, and the girl sings as never before, for this time she knows that a young heart beats in harmony with her voice. Alas for

the old! he has had his day. Compelling youth enters and displaces him. Emily sings not merely for the past, but with thoughts reaching out into the future. When she stops, fain to be persuaded, Revere entreats her to continue, he begs for more. She knows not how to refuse, indeed does not wish to do so, so she sings on and on.

The admiral sleeps, but what of that? Youth listens, and by and by, as she strikes something that he knows, in a fresh, hearty tenor voice he ventures to join with her. In the harmony of their voices they almost see a prophecy of the future harmony of their lives.

Many a time has she sung to the admiral and the old sailor, but never quite as to-night. And Captain Barry has not been there. The heavy oaken chair, which he made himself from the timbers of the ship, which stands by the door, and which, in its rude strength, its severe plainness, somehow suggests the man, is empty. To the admiral she has sung like a voice from the past, to Barry her music has been like that of an angel in heaven, to Revere it is the voice of the woman he loves. But to-night, although he hears the music, Captain Barry will not come in. He stands on the porch, peering through the blinds. Unskilled as he is in the reading of character, unaccustomed to the observation of faces, there is no mistaking, even in the sailor's mind, the look in the eyes of Revere.

The young man sits opposite Emily, listening to her, watching her, drinking in the sweetness of the melody and the beauty of her face; the light that is in his eye is the light of a love that has come, not as the oak grows from the tiny seed, slowly developing through the ages, and spreading and bourgeoning until it fills the landscape, but the glory of a passion that has burst upon him with the suddenness of a tempest, and one that promises to be as irresistible in its onset. And Barry sees it all, divines, knows, feels, and in the light of another love recognizes at last his own futile passion. The revelation of hopelessness in the light of hope, of despair in the glow of success.

Never had the Bostonian been brought in contact with a personality quite like that of Emily. More beautiful girls, measured by the canons, he had seen, possibly; wiser in the world's ways, better trained, more accustomed to the usages of society, undoubtedly; but never one so sweet, so innocent, so fresh, so unspoiled, so lovely, and so lovable. As frank as she was beautiful, as brave as she was innocent, as pure as she was strong. There was no use denying it; he could not disguise it; he had loved her from the moment when, standing on the wreck, he saw her steering the skiff in the storm, with her fair hair blown out by the breeze and her face turned up toward him, full of encouragement and entreaty.

And Barry knew it now.

As a young sailor, Revere had flirted and frolicked with many girls, he had been staidly engaged to another for a long time, but not until that day had he really loved any one. As for the girl, she had taken him at his face value; and while it would hardly be just to say that she entirely reciprocated his feeling, yet it was easy to see whither her heart tended and what the end of the acquaintance would be unless something checked the course of the growing interest she felt in the young man.

Could Barry check it? He yearned to try. And all these things were plain to the old sailor. He suddenly found himself dowered with an unwonted ability to reason, to see, to read beneath the surface. 'Twas love's enlightening touch; hopeless, uncoveting, yet jealous love, that opened his eyes. Love blinds? Ay, but he enlightens, too.

Barry's glance through the window ranged from the dozing admiral to the adoring young man, and paused over the face, exalted, of the young woman. His breath came hard as he gazed, his heart rose in his throat and tried to suffocate him. He clinched his hands, closed his teeth – a dangerous man, there, under the moonlight. He cursed the gay young lieutenant under his breath, as Adam might have cursed the serpent who gave him, through the woman, of that tree of knowledge that opened his eyes and turned his paradise into a hell.

CHAPTER X

Facing World-Old Problems

When the lights in the house were all out, and they had all gone to their rest or their restlessness, to their dreams or their oblivion, the sailor returned to his ship. Lighting his lantern, that hung in the sheltered corner aft where he slung his hammock, he pulled from the breast of his shirt a little bundle of water-stained papers. One was a long, official-looking envelope, bearing the stamp of the Navy Department, and evidently containing an order or an important communication. Barry had often seen such envelopes addressed to the admiral. The others, if he could judge from the outside, were private letters, and the envelopes bore, he thought, a woman's handwriting. He arrived at this last conclusion instinctively, for he was without familiarity with such things; he had scarcely ever received a letter in his fifty years of life.

He had found them that morning on the shore by the landing, where they had fallen from the pocket of Revere's coat the night before. Instead of handing them to the young man, he had retained them; moved by what idea that they might be of value to him some day, who could say?

The envelopes had all been opened, and nothing prevented him from examining the contents. He was but a rude sailor; the niceties and refinements of other ranks of life were not for him, yet he hesitated to read the documents. Two or three times he half drew one of the letters from its envelope only to thrust it resolutely back. Miss Emily would not have read them, nor the admiral either; that he knew. Finally he gathered up the handful, put them in the locker near where he stood, and turned the key. He would not read them, but he would not return them, either.

Ah, Barry, 'tis not alone hesitant woman who loses!

He had won a partial advantage, the first skirmish in a battle which was to be renewed with increasing force with every passing hour. He would have given the world to have examined those documents and papers. They would tell him something of the errand of the man, perhaps; but he had not reached the breaking point, – not yet, although, under the influence of his furious jealousy and consequent animosity, he was not far from it. Unconsciously he contrasted Revere with himself, and suffered keenly in the ever-growing realization of his disadvantage. Old, common, rude, lonely, faithful, that was all, – and it was not enough.

As for Revere, the loss of the letters, which he had discovered when he put on his own uniform, annoyed him somewhat, although he did not consider it serious. That afternoon he had written to the Navy Department detailing his accident and asking that new orders be made out for him. He had also written to his mother, lightly mentioning his adventure and his lost baggage, and directing that other clothing be sent him immediately by his man. In this letter he had enclosed a short note for Josephine. In neither of them did he dwell much upon Emily Sanford.

Of the trio in the house he was one to whom oblivion did not come readily that night. He was facing a very serious crisis in his life. He had been betrothed to Josephine Remington, a far-off connection of his mother, since his graduation, and the betrothal was only the carrying out of a plan which had long been agreed upon between the respective families. The engagement was a matter of general notoriety, and was an accepted fact among their many friends. In the absence of any other affection, he had never realized that he had not loved Josephine as he should, and never suspected, until he had felt the touch of genuine passion, and had become thereby an authority upon the subject, that she did not love him either.

But what was to be done was a grave question. Was it right for him to make love to Emily Sanford, which he had certainly done, by implication at least, and which he certainly wanted to do directly and unequivocally, under the circumstances? or, was it right to allow Emily Sanford to fall in love with him, which, without vanity, he felt she might do, and which he fervently hoped with

all his soul she would do, while he was engaged to Josephine? It certainly was not right. That was a conclusion about which there could be no other opinion.

He finally resolved that he would treat Emily Sanford with proper reserve, and circumspectly watch his conduct toward her for the present. Perhaps it would be best, after all, to try to put her out of his heart and keep to his engagement his mind suggested faintly. That was impossible he felt in his heart. It was Emily or nothing. No, he could not and he would not. He must at once secure a release from the one so that he could have the right to woo the other honorably and openly.

Yet, how to be free? Could he ask Josephine to release him? What would his mother think of such a demand, and how would his conduct in the affair be regarded by his friends? And yet he could not carry out his engagement. That was final. In one moment the delusion of years which he had accepted – nay, even encouraged – with a youth's indifference had been swept away. Love had smitten him; his eyes, too, had been opened. Whatever betided, there was but one woman in the world for him. Yet he must conceal his feeling and make no avowal until he was free. Poor Richard! He did not realize that the man does not live who can conceal from the woman he loves the fact that he loves her. It is in the very air, and nature has a thousand ways to tell the tale, with each one of which the most untutored woman suddenly grows familiar at the right moment.

They were puzzling and annoying questions, but, with a conduct quite what would be expected from so gallant a sailor, he at last made up his mind. Of one thing he was certain, – that he loved Emily, and that she was the only woman in the world for him. And he would be free. So Revere, like Barry, hesitated and was lost!

Even the situation with regard to the old ship was a puzzling one. There would be no evading the orders of the government. The ship must be sold to the best advantage and broken up. Yet to destroy the ship was to write the admiral's death-warrant. He had to obey his orders. No sentimental considerations would be allowed to interfere with the command of the department. Still, how could he do it? He did not dare tell the news to the admiral, he could not mention it to Emily, he would not even like to declare it to the old sailor.

The more he considered the situation the more unfortunate the position in which he found himself. As a lover, – of Emily, that is, – he was pledged to another woman. As a guest of the admiral, he was there to take away the ship. And, although he entered little into his calculations, he might have added, had he known it, that on both counts, ship and maiden, he was about to break the heart of the man who had saved his life. And all of this had been brought about in the most innocent and unwitting way. He felt himself, in some strange manner, the sport of a hard and malignant fortune.

The night was still and calm to the admiral, sleeping dreamlessly without foreboding; but to his granddaughter – ah, she was the dreamer. This young hero, this demigod from over the sea, how he had looked at her, how he had listened to her, how his eyes had seemed to pierce the very depths of her maiden soul! He had not complimented her upon her singing; he had only asked for more and still more. And how beautifully his voice had blended with hers! Was he, indeed, the fairy prince come at last to awaken the sleeping beauty of her passion, – to kiss into life the too long dormant feeling in her heart?

There are songs without words in maidens' hearts, and one of them rippled through the innocence of her girlish soul in the still watches of that heavenly night.

And they all forgot old Barry alone on the ship.

CHAPTER XI

Blows at the Heart

Revere spent the next morning in a thorough inspection of the ship. It was a duty enjoined upon him in the carrying out of his orders, and he had felt somewhat guilty in having neglected it the day before. His Naval Academy course had included instruction in wooden ship-building, – iron ships were only just beginning to be at that date, – and he therefore viewed the *Susquehanna* with the eyes of an expert. At his own request, he had been attended in this survey by the sailor Barry, although it is more than probable that, in any case, the old man would have insisted upon accompanying him.

With what jealous pain the veteran seaman dogged the footsteps of the young sailor and watched him examine his beloved ship! Nothing escaped Revere's rigid scrutiny. Barry himself, after his years of familiarity with the old hulk, could not have made a more exhaustive investigation. There was but one spot which Revere did not view. That was the private locker which the old seaman had made for himself in the one habitable portion of the ship.

"What's this?" Revere had asked, pausing before the closed, locked door. "Your traps, eh? Well, I guess we have no need to inspect them," he continued, smiling, and passing on.

Yet, had he known it, behind that closed door lay his fate, for the lost letters and papers – which Barry had not yet read – were there.

The keen, critical examination of the old ship by the young lieutenant enhanced the growing animosity of the sailor. His cool comments seemed like a profanation. Barry felt as if his enemy were appraising the virtues of his wife; as if, examining her in her old age, he were disappointed and surprised at not finding in her the qualities and excellencies of her youth. Every prying finger touch, crumbling the rotting wood, was a desecration. Every blow struck upon the timbers to test their soundness was an added insult.

Had the young man been less intent upon that task he would have seen in the clouded brow, the closed lips, the stern expression upon his companion's face something of the older man's exacerbated feelings; but, engrossed by his inspection, he noticed nothing. Indeed, like many very young naval officers of the time, he thought but little of the sailor at best. He was a part – and a very essential part – of the vast naval machine, of course, but otherwise nothing. When Revere grew older he would learn to estimate the value of the man upon the yard-arm, the man behind the gun, and to rate him more highly; but at present his attitude was more or less one of indifference.

It was true that Barry, equally with Emily, had saved his life; but by a perfectly natural trick of the mind – or heart, rather – all the heroism of that splendid achievement had focussed itself about the woman, and to Revere the man became an incident rather than a cause, – merely a detail. Just as the captain who leads the forlorn hope gets the mention in the despatches and enrolls his name upon the pages of history, to the exclusion of those other men, perhaps no less brave than he, who followed him, so Emily stood to the fore, and Barry's part was already half forgotten. This carelessly oblivious attitude of mind, which he divined even in the absence of any very specific outward evidence of it, added to the exasperation of the sailor, and he fairly hated the officer.

"There are certain categories of the mind which must be true, else would reason reel and totter on its throne." As an illustration, we cannot think of love without thinking of hate, and perhaps the capacity for one may be measured by the ability for the other. The man who loves high things, burns with corresponding hatred for the base, – or else something is lacking in his love; and, as is the case with all other antitheses of sentiment, both feelings find lodgment in the normal mind.

Barry had loved through years. He had loved the admiral, he had loved the ship, and, above all, he had loved the girl. The peaceful, quiet, even tenor of his life had offered no lodgment for antagonisms. To love, to serve, – that had been his happy existence. Living alone on Ship House Point, attending to his simple duties, wrapped up in his devotion, he had found neither cause nor

reason for hatred, and when that awful passion found a lodgment in his bosom, it came so suddenly, so violently, that it destroyed the mental and spiritual balance of the man. The faculty of hating had years of disuse to make up for, and the feeling swept over him like a tidal wave, uncontrollable, appalling. The swiftness with which it developed had but added to his confusion. There is love at first sight, but there is antipathy as well. He was a living illustration of the latter fact.

So perverted had become the sailor's mind, under the influence of this rising feeling, that in his bewilderment he sometimes fancied that his antipathy was universal, – that he hated the admiral, the ship, Emily, himself! Yet this could not be; and in calmer moments, although without the power of analysis, he realized dumbly that these gripping emotions were but the concomitants of his obsession.

Of all this the lieutenant was yet blithely unconscious. It is said that but a single object can engross the mind at one time, and that concepts of other objects, even if simultaneous therewith, are merely auxiliary thereto. Emily filled Revere's mental horizon to the exclusion of everything else. It was with difficulty he kept his mind away from her when, in pursuance of his duty, he inspected the ship. To Barry he paid but little attention, noticing him, if at all, in the most perfunctory way. Disassociated from Emily, the sailor counted for nothing.

To his relief and Barry's, presently the long task was over. The duty discharged, the two men scrambled down the battens which Barry had nailed to the side of the hulk to enable him to pass to and from the deck, and stood on the grass in the shadow of the ship.

"Well," said Revere, "she has been a fine ship in her day, Barry."

"Ay, sir; none better."

"See how sharp she is in the lines of her bow; look at the graceful swell forward. See how she fines down in her run aft, yonder. She should have been a good goer. The ship was built for speed as well as strength; and probably she was laid out by the rule-of-thumb, too," he continued, reflectively. "We don't build better to-day, with all our boasted science. Yes, she was a fine ship. I should like to have commanded her; but she is worthless now."

"Worthless!" exploded the old sailor, darkly; "worthless!"

"Absolutely. There is hardly a sound plank in her. The iron bolts, even, are rusted. I wonder how she holds together. The habit of years, perhaps; nothing else, surely. She's a positive danger. Some day she'll fall to pieces, and, if I were you, I'd sleep elsewhere."

"My God, sir!" exclaimed the old man, wrathfully, his face changing; "you don't know what you're sayin'! You can't mean it! Me leave the ship! I've slept on her for twenty-five years. You're wrong, sir! She's good for many a year yet. Some of the planks is rottin', I grant you, but most of the frames is good yet, an' she's sound at the heart. She'll weather many a storm, you'll see. Sound at the heart! Leave her! I'll leave her when she falls, and the admiral, too. He's an old man. My father sailed with him; he was a man when I was a boy; yet he's alive still, an' he'll live as long as she does, too."

"Nonsense, man!" said Revere; "you are dreaming! The ship ought to be broken up. She might be worth something as stove-wood of inferior quality," he continued, carelessly, and ruthlessly, too; "but I tell you she's a menace to every one who comes here."

"Broken up, sir!" gasped the man, forgetting duty, courtesy, everything, in his anger; "by heaven, I'd rather set fire to her with my own hands an' burn her down! Burn the life out of the admiral, an' out of me, too, than a timber on her should be touched! I tell you, I've lived on her. I know her. I love her! Don't dare to –"

"Look here, Barry," said the young man, quickly, but with great firmness, "you are rated a boatswain's mate in the United States navy, I believe, and as such I will have to caution you not to address me in this imperious way. There, man, hang it all, I oughtn't to have said that, perhaps," he continued, as he saw the man's face working with grief and rage. "You saved my life, you know, and the ship, I suppose, is dear to you, and I can well understand it. We'll say no more about it."

"I wish to God I hadn't," muttered the sailor, entirely unmollified.

"Well, now, that's rather ungracious of you; but, never mind, you did, and I can forgive an old salt a good deal; only there is one thing I must say: Miss Emily must not go aboard the ship any more. You can risk your life if you want to, but I won't have her risk hers; it's dangerous."

The old man noted the cool, proprietary note in the voice, and broke into fury; difference of rank and station quite obliterated from his perturbed mind.

"Mustn't, sir! Mustn't! I may be a bo's'n's mate, sir, an' you can command me, but you've got no call to say 'mustn't' to Miss Emily."

"Of course not; but I shall speak to the admiral. There, now, that will do. Keep cool. No harm's done. I have inspected the ship and shall report on her."

"What are you goin' to report, sir?"

"Well, by George! If you are not the most extraordinary blue-jacket I ever saw! What I report will be sent to the Secretary of the Navy. I do not publish it to the ship's crew. What's the matter with you, man? Pull yourself together. You seem to be in a dreadful state."

"What are you goin' to do with the ship?" insisted Barry, savagely.

"I'm not going to do anything with her. I have been sent here to report on her, and I shall report."

The situation had become tense. The young officer felt that he had humored the sailor long enough; indeed, that he had allowed him far more freedom in his address than he would have given any one else. Ignorant of the mainspring of the man's apparent antipathy to him, possessing no clew to the cause of it, unable to divine Barry's mental condition, he had been greatly surprised by his insolent and insulting conduct. It seemed to the lieutenant that his forbearance had reached its limit, and that something would have to give way. In another second there would have been trouble.

The state of affairs was relieved by the cause of it, for Emily appeared on the brow of the hill at that moment and called to the sailor. The old man instantly turned on his heel and, without deigning to notice the young man, walked toward her. Revere followed him promptly, and both men arrived at the top of the hill before her at the same moment.

By a violent effort the sailor had smoothed some of the passion out of his face, though he still looked white and angry.

"What's the matter, Captain Barry?" she asked, noticing his altered visage.

The man stood silent before her, not trusting himself to speak, especially as it would have been difficult to assign a tangible cause for his feelings, real though they were.

"I think I can tell you, Miss Emily," said Revere, pleasantly. "I have been inspecting the ship, and the man has not liked my opinion of her, I fancy."

"Captain Barry is very fond of the old ship, Mr. Revere," said Emily, quietly, "and I doubt not that any inspection of her hurts him."

The sailor looked at the girl gratefully, as a dog might have done. The young man's heart went out to her, too, for her kindly championship of the older man. He was glad, indeed, that she had found a way to dispel his anger, for the lieutenant was a kind-hearted young fellow, and would have all others about him happy, especially in this beginning of his romance.

"Well," he said, generously, "perhaps I did speak rather harshly of the ship. You see I hardly realized how you all love the old thing, and indeed 'tis a fine, melancholy old picture."

"It always reminds me of grandfather and Captain Barry – old on the one hand, strong on the other," responded Emily, divining the instinct of consideration in his heart that had prompted Revere's words, and smiling graciously at him.

It was reward enough for him, he thought, as he returned her approving glance with interest.

"You called me, Miss Emily," said the uncompromising Barry, speaking at last. "Do you want me?"

"Yes; I am going over to the village, and I wish you to row me across the harbor."

"By no means, Miss Emily," broke in Revere, promptly. "I claim that honor for myself."

"Do you think you are quite strong enough to do it?"

"Strong enough!" he exclaimed. "Certainly I am! I should like nothing better. Besides, I have business in the town myself: I expect answers to some letters and my man with a portmanteau and some other clothes. I should be delighted to row you to the village or anywhere."

"Well," said Emily, hesitating, "Captain Barry always rows me and –"

"All the more reason for giving him a rest; he is old and will be glad of this relief. Let the duty be performed by younger hands. Come, then, if you will allow me."

Barry stood silent during this little colloquy. His face, when Emily glanced at it, was as impassive as if he had been a stone image. He was putting great constraint upon himself, determined not to betray his feeling. If she could choose Revere, the acquaintance of a moment, and disregard him, the servant of years, let her do so. He would see. Not by word or look would he try to influence her. If he had ever heard of the Spartan with the wolf at his vitals, he would have realized what the story meant then.

Now, Emily much preferred to have Revere row her; he was a much more congenial companion than the grim, silent sailor. There was a sympathy, already an affection, developing between them which made her greatly enjoy his society. She would not have hesitated a moment, therefore, but for a certain understanding of the feeling entertained for her by the sailor. Not a sufficient comprehension, however, to amount to an assurance, but a deep enough realization to give her pause. What woman is there without that much comprehension? But when she saw Barry standing before her, impassive, stern, apparently indifferent, her hesitation left her for the moment, and, bidding the sailor inform her grandfather of her departure, she turned and descended the hill, followed by the lieutenant.

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