

Right Use of Wealth

When wealthy, show thy wisdom not to be to wealth a servant, but to make wealth serve thee.—Sir J. Denham.

Our Non-Dumb Animals

An old gentleman said to some girls who were talking very loud at the opera, "My dear young ladies, please talk a little louder; the music makes such a noise I can't hear half you say."—Our Dumb Animals.

On Repairing a Book

The Princeton University Press says it usually costs more to repair a binding of a book than it does to do the whole job over.

In Valhalla and Out

By George Ethelbert Walsh

Wrote Stories

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SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I.—Fishing in the fashionable district, Dick Vale took a private boat, and while he was fishing he saw a yacht. He followed it, and when it was close he saw that it was the yacht of a man whom he had seen in the city. He followed it to a small island, and when it was close he saw that it was the yacht of a man whom he had seen in the city. He followed it to a small island, and when it was close he saw that it was the yacht of a man whom he had seen in the city.

CHAPTER II.—Dick overhears a conversation between Captain Brent and a man who gives him the impression that the yacht is bound for a voyage of adventure. He decides to follow it.

CHAPTER III.—Continued

The spring had been a little rusty, and possibly it had not closed completely. The presence of a little dirt or near the crack might excite Brent's suspicion. Dick drew a sigh of relief when the man finally moved away, and after another tour of the cabin walked out on deck.

"It's an even chance, cap, that I'll go with you on this little trip," he mused, grinning to himself. "Anyway, you'll have a hard time finding me."

A little light entered the compartment through the register, and as the air from the cabin escaped through this, the suction created kept the narrow quarters fairly well ventilated.

"I won't smother," he reasoned, looking up. "Plenty of air." He glanced at his package and smiled again. "Grab and drinks enough for a week."

Unconsciously, he drew forth a cigarette and started to light it. But checked himself. "Smoking forbidden," he said in a rueful voice. "That's hard luck!" Then in a relieved voice, he added, "At night when everybody's asleep, I can light up. The ventilator will carry away the smoke and odor."

After that he tried to make himself as comfortable as possible in his narrow quarters. It was some satisfaction to know that he would be far more comfortable than in the cool bunkers, where he had first thought of hiding.

"As a stowaway I'm pretty well off," he decided. "Nothing to do but eat, drink and sleep, with a quiet smoke at night." He opened his box and distributed its contents around in the corners, counting the number of sandwiches and bottles of drink. Making a mental calculation he concluded that with careful rationing, he would not suffer for a week. Then, making a pillow of his coat and box, he lay down and tried to kill time with sleep.

The noises outside did not disturb him. Coal was still pouring into the bunkers, and the tramping of many feet, accompanied by loud orders and oaths, convinced him that the search was still going on. Now that he felt secure this did not concern him, and listening dreamily to the confusion of sounds he dropped off into restful slumber.

He woke with a start finally. Up at first to collect his senses, he sat upright and stared around him. Over his head a stream of electric light entered through the register. Outside voices sounded so clear and distinct that it gave him a shock of fear. The jar and vibration of the yacht told him they were under way. A querulous voice was saying:

"I don't know, uncle, I'll find out. Please don't excite me, you know the doctor says the change will do you good."

Dick recognized the voice of Alice Cutler. "It won't," came the explosive contradiction. "It will make me worse! Go on deck, and send Blake to me! No, send Doctor Alister! I've got to have some relief from this pain. Tell him to hurry!"

There were soft footsteps across the carpeted floor, and a moment later the cabin door opened and closed. Dick could hear loud, stertorous breathing of one in great pain.

CHAPTER IV

Without premeditation Dick had placed himself in the position of being an eavesdropper to every bit of gossip and conversation that took place in the main cabin. In planning to get aboard the Pelican he had hardly given consideration to the thought that the open register would admit any and all sounds. He was a little startled when he heard the patient's voice, which was carried to him. It was as if the cabin was a great sounding board, with its focal point of wave vibration at the register over his head.

The first light he had had in the cabin was a faint, dim light. He was startled when he saw the light. It was as if the cabin was a great sounding board, with its focal point of wave vibration at the register over his head.

The yacht was bound for Valhalla, an island off the southern coast, that had been fitted up at great expense by the millionaire for a quiet winter resort. It was a small, isolated island without any communication with the mainland, and far enough from the lanes of travel to protect the occupants from visitors and curiosity seekers.

Cutler was a sick man, according to the testimony of his physician, and unless he took a rest of a few weeks the inevitable breakdown would follow. Angered both at the doctor who condemned him to a period of isolation, and at nature for playing him such a sly trick, the old man fumed and fretted.

When he realized the actual situation Dick regretted the course he had taken. The romance of the voyage suddenly lost its flavor. There was a chance of adventure on a deserted island, with a party of searchers for buried treasure; but a small, private, private owned place, even if it were a mere dot on the ocean far from land, offered little of romance and less of adventure.

There would be servants on it, a small army of them, perhaps; formal gardens and cultivated fields; conventional summer houses, golf links, tennis courts, and all the artificial inventions of civilization to amuse visitors. There would be hardly a wild nook or cranny where he could hide and make himself comfortable.

Disgusted by the outlook, he felt inclined to abandon all secret and step forth from his place of concealment and confess. They could do nothing more than hold him as a stowaway and make him work for his passage. On the whole that was not to be envied.

The presence of Alice Cutler would add a little zest of romance to the experience. The second night out his cramped prison began to tell on his nerves. The inaction was worse than too much exercise. Scrubbing the deck under the angry eyes of Captain Brent seemed preferable to remaining in the narrow compartment.

The main cabin was deserted, and Dick struck a match to light a cigarette. It was his one consolation, and now that he was indifferent about his future he had just his own satisfaction. Only one electric light was burning in the cabin, and the stillness of the place got on his nerves.

"I'll get out tonight and take a good rest on one of those cushions," he mused. "Captain Brent will get told when he finds me there." He grinned at the thought.

Suddenly he became conscious of the presence of some one in the cabin. The soft glow of a foot on the deck carpet near his hiding place was followed a moment later by the opening and closing of a door. Another foot-step, heavier and clumsier than the first, reached his ears. The two met not far from the open register, so that their whispered words could be distinctly heard.

"We'll be there by tomorrow night, won't we, captain?" It was Mr. Blake speaking.

"Yes, if nothing happens. The doctor's giving a little, but I guess we'll get ahead of any alarm. It seems to be breaking behind us instead of ahead."

There was a second or two of silence. Then Blake added:

"You understand just what to do? When I give the sign you must move away. Don't stop to ask questions, and don't inland what others say. Get off at once, and hang around Marshall until you get a wireless from me."

"Suppose your wireless ashore don't work?"

"It will work. I'll see to that. I'm something of an expert. If anything's wrong with it, I'll soon repair it. Don't worry about that."

"You think you can keep the old man quiet?"

"He won't bother me any," was the quiet reply, accompanied, Dick imagined, by a smile of confidence.

"Well, good night. We don't want to be seen together alone. I shall speak to you again unless the others are around."

Dick heard then, across the cabin, in opposite directions. Captain Brent went outside on the deck, and Mr. Blake crept back to his stateroom.

Dick forgot his cigarette and permitted the light to go out. He was pondering the words of the two men. They puzzled him, and awakened in his mind the old suspicion that there was something in the cruise not put down in the itinerary of Steve Cutler.

"I guess I'll sleep over it," he decided, smiling. "Maybe I won't see my sick man, but I'll see a prize fighter." He slept fitfully until morning, and with the dawn of a new day came a new resolution. He would see the adventure through no planned, and not expose his hand until they landed. In the hope that he would overlook mere conversation to enlighten him he kept his ears open every time anyone entered the cabin; but as it was a beautiful day most of the passengers remained on the deck, and nothing of consequence happened.

It was late in the afternoon when a commotion on deck aroused him. From the tramp of many feet he concluded that something unusual had happened; but he was a little disappointed when Alice Cutler passed through the cabin and said to her maid:

"Get my things ready, Marie. We'll land before dark."

Once again the desire to step out of his hiding place surged up in Dick, but he suppressed it. Now that, rather from his intolerant position was in sight he didn't want to make a bad break. If the family landed before dark the yacht would be partly deserted, and the opportunity of stealing forth unobserved would come to him.

Half an hour later the screw of the yacht slowed its revolutions. Dick judged they were approaching land or passing through some crooked channel that required caution. The engine-room bell clanged repeatedly, and the yacht varied its speed accordingly.

Then came a slight jar and vibration. Sharp orders from Brent, another jar, and then the propeller ceased its activity. They were at Valhalla, and the voyagers were landing. Dick listened impatiently to the bustling commotion outside until it subsided. He waited a full half hour after that to make sure they were ashore.

Then he quietly touched the spring that controlled the secret panel, and as the latter flew open he craned his head forward. The cabin was empty.

With a smile of relief he stepped out. One foot had scarcely touched the carpeted floor when a shriek that filled the cabin with echoes startled him. Around the way from him, with her back to the opposite end of the cabin, a woman with both hands, stood Marie, her eyes bulging with fear. She had seen him emerge from the dusty compartment, materializing out of a blank wall, as it were, and all the superstition of her native was aroused. Shriek after shriek filled the cabin.

Dick's first impulse was to step back and hide again, but the girl's discovery of him made that course impracticable. He closed the panel with a touch of the spring, and sprang back into the gloom of the cabin. The door of a stateroom stood open, and through it he plunged without looking around.

At almost the same instant Captain Brent appeared in the cabin, and demanded of the maid, "What's the matter? What're you yelling for?"

Marie was unable for a few seconds to recover her wits. She kept on shrieking and crowing herself until the skipper shook her by the arm.

"Quit that!" he commanded. "Shut up, and tell me what's the matter."

"A ghost, captain," she stammered between chattering teeth. "It came right out of the wall—come—come—"

"Ghost, your grandmother!" growled Brent. "Now—"

Dick waited to hear no more. The statement he was in opened directly upon the deck. He slipped the catch noiselessly and stepped out. It was dark, and there was no one on that side of the yacht. In the gloom he saw the dark outlines of trees and rocks, with the land rising abruptly from the water to a sort of peak, topped off by a low, rambling structure, whose chimneys stood silhouetted against the sky like black fingers.

Lights twinkled here and there in the distance, some stationary, others moving, and voices broke the stillness occasionally as one called to another. At his left the phosphorescence of the ocean gleamed fitfully in the half light. The yacht had landed at a dock that jutted out into the water.

Dick glanced at the end, measured the distance to the island, and decided that his safest way would be to drop overboard and swim ashore. The commotion in the cabin, caused by Marie's screams, had extended to the deck, and running feet could be heard approaching.

Climbing over the rail he lowered himself with a rope until his feet touched the water. He shivered a little at the chill, and then dropped noiselessly in the cold brine and began swimming quietly toward the shore.

Marie's alarm, after all, helped him, for it drew the attention of the whole crew to the cabin, and by the time any one thought of searching the outside of it Dick was pulling himself upon a rock completely sheltered from view.

He sat there wringing his clothes when Marie, accompanied by Brent, crossed the gangplank and landed on the dock. She was still protesting that she had seen a ghost.

"He came right through the wall, Captain Brent," she moaned. "I nearly fainted when I saw him."

"You'd better not tell Mr. Cutler you saw a ghost on his yacht. If you don't want to be fired," replied Brent. "Now get up to the house or Miss Cutler will."

"Captain," interrupted a voice out of the darkness, "what's all this noise about? Mr. Cutler sent me down to inquire about the house or Miss Cutler will."

Dick recognized the voice of Mr. Blake.

"Nothing but a hysterical woman," growled Brent. "She thought she saw something—a ghost—and she let out a shriek like a fog whistle. Hysteria her up to her mistress. I got enough to do without looking after her."

"Oh, Mr. Blake," wailed Marie, "on my word and honor I saw something—a man!"

"Thought you said it was a ghost," jeered Brent.

"Well, sir, it was a man ghost—a tall young man, with dark hair and a white face. He was a sick man, and he was a prize fighter."

"But I never saw him before; he was not in the crew. He was a beautiful day most of the passengers remained on the deck, and nothing of consequence happened."

Blake and the captain exchanged glances, and the latter finally said:

"Well, if he's aboard, Marie, I'll find him, and when I do I'll bring him up for you to identify. If he's a gentleman he won't try to frighten you again; but between you and me and the fishes, I don't believe there was anybody. If there was it was one of the crew."

Brent turned and walked away. Marie shuddered, and murmured, "Oh, no, sir, he wasn't one of the crew. I know all of them."

CHAPTER V

"Go up to the house, Marie," Blake interrupted sharply. "Your mistress is waiting for you."

In the darkness Dick had little opportunity to explore his surroundings with any degree of satisfaction, and rather than risk discovery through blundering he contented himself with watching the yacht tied up at the dock, until the moon came up. Then with its rays striking everything as clear as day he glimpsed the rocks and cautiously made his way in the direction of the house.

It was a big fumbling affair in the moonlight, low of roof, but spread out over so much ground that it bulked large and formidable. It blended so well with the rocks and trees that it seemed a part of the landscape, growing naturally like a huge mushroom from the ground itself.

Lights twinkled in different windows, but a portentous silence seemed to brood over it. There were no voices to break the silence; no laughter, no music, nothing for human origin.

Dick concluded that the occupants were so tired with their long sea trip that rest and sleep were demanding their attention. This conclusion seemed corroborated when the lights in the windows began to go out, one at a time, until the great building was wrapped in gloom.

The last light to be extinguished was on the upper floor in the front of the building. When it disappeared Dick shivered slightly as it left suddenly in the cold.

But almost immediately it flared up again, brighter than before. It seemed for an instant that an increase of its candlepower had been miraculously given to it. It twinkled brilliantly for a moment, and then went out again.

This did not startle Dick, but when it appeared again and went out as before he blinked. He stared at the window, watching for its reappearance. It came in due, twinkling an instant as before and then went out for the last time.

"Looks like a signal of some kind," he mused. Then recollecting the words of Blake to Captain Brent, he swung around and glanced down at the dock. A peculiarly bright light was shining from the masthead of the yacht, and as Dick looked it dipped three times, then remained motionless.

"That's Brent answering," he said. "First up at the window and then down at the yacht he glanced, watching for a renewal of the signals, but they were not repeated. The house was wrapped in darkness, and the lights on the yacht stationary."

But the latter did not remain so for long. While Dick looked they began moving seaward, gliding through the darkness with an almost imperceptible motion. Captain Brent evidently had received his signal from Mr. Blake, and was leaving with the yacht for Marsh inlet, there to wait for further orders by wireless.

"I wonder what it all means," Dick mused. "I suppose I ought to have seen old man Cutler, and tell him—"

He was suddenly cut short by two shadows moving across the moonlit way in his direction. He had barely time to duck behind a clump of bushes before they were upon him. Dick caught sight of a man and woman, but their identity was uncertain until they began to talk.

"I tell you, Marie," Mr. Blake was saying, a little irritably, "you must be careful or you'll spoil the whole plan for us. If you appear too familiar with me, Miss Alice will take notice. It was risky for you to call me out. Suppose she's caught you at my door?"

"What difference does it make if she did?" was the quick retort. "You love me, don't you? Then what else matters? Miss Cutler has her lovers. I don't see why I can't have mine, too."

"Don't think that way, Marie," interrupted Blake harshly. "We can't be ordinary lovers—not here."

"Why not? We were in the city. Why is it different down here? Isn't the moonlight beautiful?"

"Yes," replied Blake moodily. "It's a good night for sailing. Captain Brent will be out of sight long before morning."

"Where is he going?—not back home?"

"No, he'll hang around until I want him—out of sight, of course. I'll instruct him by wireless." He stopped suddenly, and asked: "How does Miss Alice take it? She doesn't suspect anything, of course, does she?"

"No. Why should she? But in the morning—struggling, her shoulders—it may be different. She was furious when she found the servants weren't here."

"Of course, I expected that, but she'll blame me, and not you. That's why I'm sending the yacht back—to get the servants—taking the responsibility upon myself, you see. Mr. Cutler may rave and tear around, but he'll quit soon. How's the medicine working? Did Alister say?"

"No, he doesn't tell me much. I don't know. But Miss Alice is worried about her uncle—more than about the servants."

"Too bad—for her sake."

There was genuine sympathy in the voice, and Marie turned quickly and glanced at him.

"Why should you be sorry for her?" she asked, with awakening jealousy.

"Why?—Oh, no reason whatever," Blake stammered. Then halting abruptly, he added, "We must go back now. You're lucky if you can reach your room without disturbing Miss Alice."

(To Be Continued)

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