

## THE CAT AND THE QUEEN

By ADELE THANE

© McClure Newspaper Syndicate, WNU Service.

HE WAS a cat and she was a queen and like another indiscreet feline of a more antiquated day he looked at her, thereby proving conclusively that history repeats itself.

But here the parallel ends, for it is not recorded that the original queen declined to return the stare of a menial cat, whereas this queen did. Which was impudent of her, as the royal gaze started a train of ideas racing through the cat's head which, by all the acknowledged laws of class distinction, had no right to be there.

Of course he wasn't really a cat. He was the seventh son of the seventh son of a sailor. His chief duty consisted of swabbing the deck of Wilbur Gaumont-McCoy's new million-dollar yacht, the *Leodore*, and he was in the midst of a most creditable performance when the queen stopped daintily up the gangplank.

"Gob!" roared the captain. "Why wasn't this done before?"

"Sir?"

"Come to attention when you address me, Turner!"

The smart click of heels. "Aye, aye, sir!"

"Now answer my question! The captain was becoming apoplectic.

"Why—"

"Oh, it doesn't matter," broke in a young, accustomed-to-obedience voice. And thus did Gob Turner come to look at the queen.

She was small-statured and slender and carried her bronze head high and her black lashes low; but precisely at the moment when she entered Gob's line of vision, the long lids swept upward like abruptly released windowshades, and their eyes met in swift contemplation.

That was all. But it was enough for Gob. He resolved, after that first pregnant blue glance, to command others. And he laid his plans accordingly.

He learned her name from the steward.

"Aurelia," he echoed softly to himself, and added enthusiastically, "Just like her!"

At two bells of the second dog watch the *Leodore*'s steamed out of New York harbor and turned south. The sea was like a mastodontic looking-glass which some pernicious Titan-child had streaked with aquamarine paint, and the weather was prematurely warm for the last week of April. Seasonal inconsistencies to the contrary the yacht's initial cruise, with 20 patrician guests on board, should be incomparable.

Late on the afternoon of the second day out, Gob was standing near the sheet anchor, submerged in meditation which did not concern irate captains and unwashed quarters-decks, when he became aware that someone was watching him. He jerked up his head and looked straight into two inquisitive eyes, very blue and very feminine.

"That is an anchor, isn't it?" inquired Aurelia.

So she hadn't been regarding him at all. Gob's heart sensations were

"Aye, that's an anchor," he answered, scanning it balefully.

"What is this part called?" She reached out a rose-tipped forefinger and touched the coil iron. Gob was instantly jealous of it.

"That's the stock."

"And this?"

"The shank. That there's the fluke. And these are the arms."

"The arms?"

"Aye." He said it wearily.

"I—I'm not tiring you, am I?"

Gob straightened, panic-stricken.

"Oh, no!" he declared hastily. He imagined her fleeing from him with queenly solicitude. That must not happen! Her presence, though occasioned by interests in which he had no part, was preferable to her absence. "Oh, NO!" he said again.

She smiled with relief. "Tell me more about the anchor," she urged.

"Tell me about the—labor of a seaman. Tell me—tell me—about yourself," she finished breathlessly.

He told her—more about the anchor, less about the labor, and nothing about himself. The next day, he enlarged upon the labor. And the third day, with a slate-colored blur which was Cumberland Island showing mistily against the western horizon, he conversed at length and with gusto upon the merits and demerits, virtues and vices, dreams and realities, of Gob Turner, mariner. But of that thing which had so recently crept into his heart—his passionately tender love of her—he uttered not a word until the *Leodore* was homeward-bound.

Off the coast of Delaware, wind and thick fog were encountered and immediately the yacht's speed diminished. Gob and Aurelia leaned against the wet rail of the poop-deck, shoulder touching shoulder, peering absent-mindedly into the shifting opacity.

Gob broke the silence. "We berth tomorrow at 4:30," he said in a low tone.

"Yes."

A damp strand of her hair whipped spasmodically across his face. "Will you be sorry?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean by that?" he asked, endeavoring to keep his voice steady and roundly cursing it because he failed.

"It—it has been a pleasant trip."

"Aye—a pleasant trip," he repeated slowly, and his reserve crumbled. He caught her fiercely to him, kissing her warm mouth again and again. "I want you—I love you!" he cried in a hoarse whisper, then, feeling her grow sudden limp within his arms, he gently released her. "I'm sorry, dear," he said, and turned away with bowed head.

"But it's true," he added gruffly a moment later, "all true."

He heard her running toward the after-house, and then he was alone with the fog and the wind and the falling darkness. For long minutes he stood there, insensible to time. He had no knowledge of Aurelia's return until she spoke.

"I just wanted to tell you," she faltered through the swirling dusk, "that I knew all about anchors the other day." And she was gone.

That simplified matters for Gob. He did not spend tedious hours pondering the true meaning concealed in those last hesitant words of the woman he loved. When the *Leodore* docked a half hour after schedule, Aurelia was not among the score of aristocratic guests who disembarked. And when she finally escaped the barred door of her cabin and reached the afterdeck, Pier 10 was a brown blot in the distance, with an appalling breadth of oily water between it and the gleaming rail upon which her fingers were tightly clenched.

She faced Gob with upflung chin and steely eyes, a queen once more.

"How melodramatic, Mr. Turner! Surely you do not intend to—"

She paused uncertainly.

"Kinsnap you," supplied Gob. "Oh but I do!"

"Of course, you realize that is impossible. How you envious the captain into being a party to this insane attempt at medieval horse-play, is beyond my comprehension, but you can not expect a like operation from the owner of the yacht."

"That is largely a matter for him to decide," smiled Gob.

She whitened. "Please be so good as to explain."

"I am Wilbur Gaumont-McCoy," he replied, moving to take her hand.

She drew back. "YOU! What new joke is this?"

"The joke's on dad," he laughed.

"You see, he was punishing me for ridiculing the common sailor. He's an old sea-dog himself. The cap'n knew of my ignominious chastisement, but I didn't learn that until this morning. Then he had to take my orders, anyway." He succeeded in capturing her hand, and covered it lovingly with both of his.

"Dear girl," he said, "shall we hunt up the kedge anchor and dissect it?"

Never Too Old to Learn;

Interest Is Vital Element

In his office in an obscure corner of the winding old buildings of Teachers college, Columbia university, Prof. Edward L. Thorndike has been busy looking important discoveries about those most years after forty. His experiments in the field of adult learning and education have pinned orchids on middle age, writes Constance J. Foster in *Good Housekeeping*.

Professor Thorndike devised a series of experiments to discover just how dull grandma really is. His conclusions are startling. They completely demolish the old adage that you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Hundreds of thousands of tests given over a period of years to subjects of all ages prove that mental powers fall off much more slowly than we imagined—only about 1 per cent a year. Childhood is not, as we supposed, the best age for learning. Any age below forty-five is better than ten to fourteen. Nor is the decline of ability in later years rapid. A woman of sixty-five may expect to learn at least half as much per hour as she could at the age of twenty-five, and much more than she could at eight or ten.

"Any adult between twenty-one and seventy," Doctor Thorndike told me, "can learn anything in which he is really interested with no greater effort than at fifteen."

"Interest is the vital factor in education. No one can learn with any facility what doesn't interest him, whether he is six or sixty. That's your real clue if you want to go on growing. We are all born with certain abilities. If you have a vital interest in anything from painting pictures to collecting butterflies, it's safe to say that you have an innate ability which is educable. The greater the interest, the easier you can learn and remember. Age doesn't count much. Whatever differences exist between you and your children are moderate and will not prevent your doing anything at forty-five that you did at twenty-five."

Indian Named Red Jacket

Red Jacket (Sagoyewatha) was a Seneca Indian chief who fought for the British during the Revolution.

Because of his ability as a runner, he was a favorite among the officers, one of whom presented him with an embroidered red coat. This made him conspicuous among his people who henceforth called him Red Jacket.

Gave Name to "Ampere"

Andre Marie Ampere, French scientist, gave his name to the unit used in measuring the intensity of electricity. "Ampere" is one of many words we use without a thought of the men who are responsible for them.

# Farmington Folks!

# REMEMBER

to go to the polls next Tuesday to roll up our vote for our fellow-citizen

Archie G.  
**LEONARD**



for  
REPUBLICAN NOMINATION  
for  
**PROSECUTOR**

## YOUR SUPPORT

of 'Archie' won't count unless it's put in the ballot-box.

(Contributed by Farmington supporters of our friend and neighbor, Archie G. Leonard)