

August 1907

Earl has taken the trouble to prepare the supper, it is certainly up to us to stay and eat it for her!"

Not until afterwards did Mildred realize her serious shortcomings as a hostess. Who officiated at the piano, who took partners for waltz or two-step, who presided over the salad and sandwiches and ice-cream, she never distinctly knew. The minutes slipped away in a golden dream; for the world had restored her to its favor; Gordon was with her, and she was free to listen, free to accept happiness. As through a mist, she caught glimpses of her mother's face, borrowing brightness from the gay young life around her, and heard her mother's voice, not querulous now but full of the old-time suavity, urging upon the guests a second plate of salad, because "no one could make such mayonnaise as Mildred!"

It was long past midnight when Gordon Dexter stopped them all for a last word,

as they crowded together in the hall at parting.

"Miss Earl has authorized me to make an announcement," he said, with an exultant tremor in his voice. "We both wanted you to be the first people to hear about it—you couldn't have heard much sooner, for we didn't know it ourselves until to-night. I don't think you will have much difficulty in guessing," he was openly holding Mildred's hand. "But the invitations will be out sometime in June, and you are all to be included!"

"Make it the Second Thursday for good luck," suggested Sterling.

"Oh, no! I might blunder again about the date," protested Mildred.

"So long as you are a week ahead of time, I, for one, shall not complain!" said Gordon.

And the big Westerner voiced the general sentiment when he called for "Three cheers for Second Thursdays, especially when they are a week ahead of time!"

## Miss Evangeline

BY OLIVIER CURWOOD

Author of "Captain Kidd, of the Underground," etc.

HER name was Josephine Morse. Somebody nicknamed her "Evangeline." The name fitted, and stuck. She had a demure little mouth, eyes that dropped coyly when one looked at her too hard, and a way of using them that made you think of a little girl bred in the atmosphere of a Sunday school. She was a good cook. Also, as nearly every man of the crew of the *Gwenhiddy* could testify, she was a past-master at the art of snapping human heartstrings. One after another they had fallen in love with her until only the patriarch wheelman and the benedicts were left unscathed. After a time the *Gwenhiddy's* men became acclimated, as it were, and ceased lying awake nights. Thenceforth they took an unrighteous pleasure in witnessing the mental agonies of others. They hailed each new addition to the crew with joy; they accepted him as a brother; heaped favors upon him, and quickly paved the way that led him to Miss Evangeline. Then they

watched, and gurgled foolishly from the beginning; and nudged one another until ribs were sore; and roared when they were out of the victim's hearing. And when that victim finally returned to his sanity, a little tired and heartsick for a time, they would generously heap their sympathy upon him, and tell him to brace up, for another would be coming along soon and he could see just what kind of a fool he had been.

Yet nothing was laid up against Miss Evangeline. If she were wicked, men could not see wherein her sinning lay. Johnson, a new deck-hand from Duluth, had been the last to succumb; and when in the crew's quarters he raised his voice in profane denunciation of the young woman in the cook's shanty, half-a-dozen rough faces were turned on him in glowering disapprobation, and one huge hand seized him by the scruff of the neck in a way that showed what he was up against. It was popular favor, spelled in capital letters. That was

the trouble. No man could openly say that Miss Evangeline had done him wrong; and yet she had made them all suffer, with here and there an interesting exception. But there was no one among them who could bring himself to describe just how she had done it. One of them, in a poetic moment, said that the mischief was caused by the deep blue shining softly from under her long lashes, and by half-spoken words, and little trembles and throbs that came in her voice when walking with one in the cool and quiet of evening.

Whatever it was, Miss Evangeline showed no favoritism in its distribution. When her eyes were lifted from her potato-pan there was the same adorable look in them, whether they rested upon a scrub-man or the *Gwenhiddy's* captain. Perhaps, when the captain passed, her glance was not quite so long, but there seemed to be more in it. At least, the captain thought so. His name was McVicker. He was a tall young man, ten years older than he looked, and early in the season he had fallen with the others, but more quietly. Only Miss Evangeline knew of it. With a little tremor in her voice, which had sounded almost like a sob, she had told him that it was not in her heart to become Mrs. McVicker. She would be a sister to him, if that would help McVicker, but never anything more. She did not believe that women could trust sailors, and especially captains. Besides, it was her ambition to discover a missionary some day, and marry him; but she did not think that McVicker would make a good missionary. She asked him to be honest, and to tell her if he thought so himself. Could he get up and talk to the heathen? Could he save souls, for her sake? She had never spoken of these things to others, she said, but she knew that she could trust him.

Now McVicker was anything but a godly man. He hated missionaries, and one of the pictures which he treasured on his cabin wall was that of a group of naked savages sitting expectantly around a big, black, boiling-pot. Yet he did not give up hope. He told Miss Evangeline this, and she gave him a warm little squeeze of her hand. When McVicker took this for something more than was intended, she gently informed him that it was only a sisterly squeeze, and that never, never, so long as

they both lived, could she think of marrying him.

It was after this that the desperate idea came buzzing into McVicker's brain. It kept him awake one whole night. He was not a man of deep morals, so his conscience did not interfere with the working out of his scheme. Worse schemes had occurred to him during the past month, but they had been reluctantly dropped because of the danger they called upon himself. But he could see no flaw in this one, and he believed that it would work. He called in Muldoon, the first mate, for whom the sun rose and set with McVicker, and together the two talked it over. Some weeks previous to this Muldoon had usurped the berth of another Irishman, whose name was Michael O'Keefe, as first-mate of the *Gwenhiddy*; and in leaving, O'Keefe had given him a fearful beating to remember him by. So when Muldoon learned that O'Keefe was to suffer in the captain's scheme, he was filled with ghoulish glee. O'Keefe's story was history. He had taken Miss Evangeline even more seriously than the others, and in a moment of rage and despair had thrown up his job. The captain, who disliked him, lost no time in wiring for Muldoon. After a few hours the mate was sorry, and repented; but McVicker refused to reinstate him, and the Irishman's only balm was the drubbing which he lay in wait to give Muldoon. It was a beautiful fight. Unfortunately the second mate butted in, and got a broken jaw for his trouble. At the time of the council in the cabin he was convalescing in a Marine City hospital; which was a mighty good thing for the scheme, the captain told Muldoon.

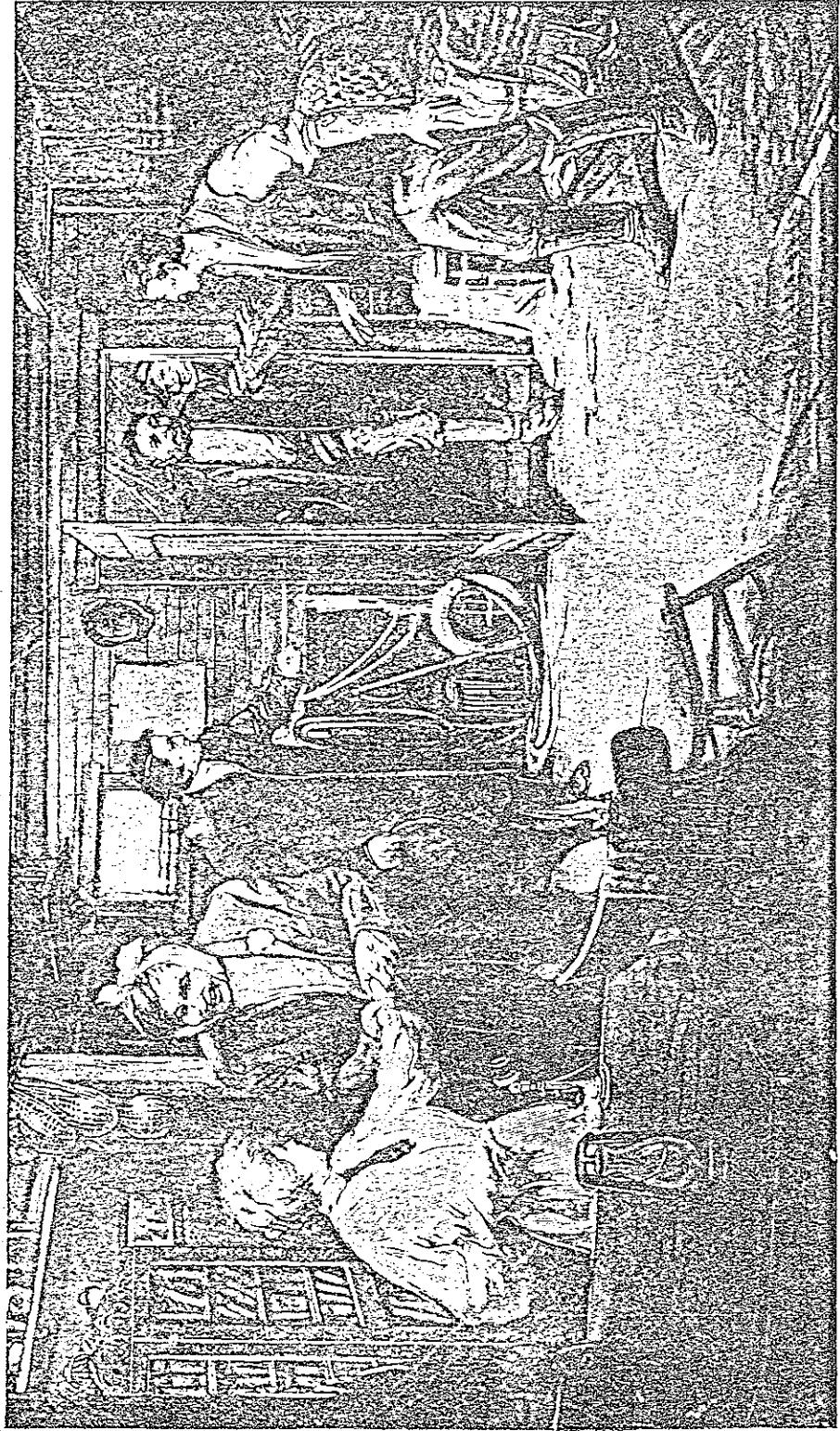
Two days later the *Gwenhiddy* put in at Cleveland. McVicker himself went ashore and hurried to a telegraph-office. From this place he sent two messages. The first ran as follows:

MICHAEL O'KEEFE,  
Seamen's Inn,  
Sarnia, Ont.

Dearest Michael. Have changed my mind. Will marry you. Board *Gwenhiddy* at Sarnia. I will have a minister ready. Will be married on board.

With love.

EVANGELINE.



DRAWN BY E. MARTIN HENNING

Bilkins succeeded in capturing one of her hands

The second telegram was longer. It was addressed to the minister of the little country town from which Evangeline had come. This little village, twenty miles back in the farming country from Port Huron, was a place which the girl seemed fond of dwelling upon in her conversations with the captain. She had described it to him until he knew just how the narrow, dusty road wound up around a hill and down again past the scattered homes of the villagers, the general store, and the church. On one side of this church, so near that one could hear the voices of the choir on Sunday, was Evangeline's home; on the other side was the minister's. McVicker chuckled as he thought how masterfully he had succeeded in getting the minister's name only a day or two before, and when he handed his message through the receiver's window he could not refrain from passing a cigar along with it.

"Just chase it along in a hurry!" he said.

The clerk grinned as he counted the words.

The message read:

REV. EDWARD DUTTON,  
Fairhill, Mich.

Dear Mr. Dutton. On September 12th I am going to be married on board the *Gwenhiddy* at Port Huron. I want you to perform the ceremony. Board boat afternoon or evening that day. Am depending on you and know you wont fail me. With kindest regards.

JOSEPHINE MORSE.

Fifteen minutes later the third message was turned in at a rival office a few blocks away.

SAMUEL BILKINS,  
St. Joseph's Hospital,  
Marine City, Mich.

Dearest Sam. Have changed my mind. Will marry you. Board *Gwenhiddy* at Port Huron. I will have a minister ready. Will be married on board. With love.

EVANGELINE.

Captain McVicker purposely held the *Gwenhiddy* a day overtime in Cleveland after the sending of the messages. The trip across Erie was made with a slowness that aroused speculation on the part of the crew. Another twenty-four hours was tactfully lost at Detroit. It was late in the afternoon of the fourth day before the freighter

neared Port Huron, and McVicker figured that he had given his victims plenty of time to arrive there ahead of him. Several times during this day Muldoon visited the captain in his cabin. Once he brought with him two members of the crew in whom they both placed confidence. These men were detailed to pick up Bilkins and the reverend gentleman in a small boat, and to handle them according to certain instructions.

Immediately after supper the captain went to the galley and asked Miss Evangeline if she would do some copying for him that evening. The work was important, and would not permit of delay. Of course, if she had another engagement—

But Miss Evangeline had none. She would be only too happy to assist the captain. There was the deepest sincerity in her blue eyes when she said it, and she lost no time in taking the papers and retiring to her cabin.

McVicker whistled and sang by turns when he had reëntered the seclusion of his own room. In an ebullition of joy he called up Muldoon by telephone and told him how beautifully he had "caged" the girl. The rawness of thus speaking of his future wife did not strike him. The desire of possession, the passion which the girl's beauty had aroused in him, filled him with but little sentiment. The hour was fast approaching when she would belong to him, and this knowledge, intoxicated him to a point where his finer sensibilities were deadened. He paced up and down the softly carpeted floor, smoking a strong cigar, and occasionally peering out through one of the little windows at the lights along the shores of the river. Thus he kept himself in touch with the progress to Port Huron. As the time for action approached he became a little excited; his face was uncomfortably warm; when he picked up a paper he noticed that it trembled in his hand. This was unnatural. It was something he had not expected, and with a laugh that still more betrayed his uneasiness he went to the buffet and turned out a glass of liquor. He forgot to take the usual chaser. What if his scheme should fail, after all? The doubt had not entered his mind before. Was it possible that Miss Evangeline could find some way out of the

meshes he had laid for her? He went over the plot carefully; he could see no loophole of escape—if he played his part right.

The tinkling of the telephone interrupted his thoughts. Nervously he placed the receiver to his ear.

"Hello!" he called.

The muscles of his face became tense in an instant as he listened to the voice at the other end. It was Miss Evangeline.

"I'm up in the pilot house," he heard. "I've forgotten which you wanted—two copies of the letters for Detroit, or only one of those and two of the Buffalo papers. Don't you think I'm stupid?"

He heard her laugh. That laugh was one of the things that made people love her. It was as if she were laughing with her heart, and always at something she loved. It sounded so now—more than ever before McVicker thought. It went throbbing through his soul.

"Two of the Detroit papers, dear!" he replied.

The last word slipped from his lips unintentionally. After he had hung up the receiver he was glad that he had spoken it.

He helped himself to another glass of liquor, and lit a fresh cigar. After a little he heard the coughing rumble of the freighter's engines, and taking up the paper he began to read. The *Gwenhiddy* was slowing down. Before she stopped McVicker rose and drew the curtains at the windows. It seemed an hour before he felt the throbbing under him again. As a matter of fact it had been only twenty minutes. Soon he knew that the vessel was in motion and was taking up her course for Sarnia. He no longer read; the print before his eyes seemed only a blur and without motion or sound he listened to catch the tramp of footsteps, or a knock at the door. The latter came a few moments later, and in a loud voice McVicker called, "Come in!"

The door opened and Muldoon's red face shone in it. He entered quickly, and behind him followed a tall, thin young man, whose face was rather pale, and whose eyes betrayed him laboring under an unusual strain of some kind. He looked eagerly around the room before he finally rested his gaze upon the captain. McVicker had not expected a young man, particularly one who was good looking,

though thin. The minister advanced and held out a card.

"My name is Dutton—" he said, "the Rev. Mr. Dutton."

McVicker regarded him blankly. His jaw fell in astonishment. He rose from his chair slowly, surprise and curiosity showing plainly in his face. He did not proffer his hand, but glanced, as if for an explanation, to Muldoon.

"Gentleman said he was expected aboard, sir, so I brought 'im 'ere," said the mate.

Mr. Dutton stood as if transfixed, staring from the mate to the captain in the interval of silence that followed.

"Why—didn't you expect me?" he asked.

"Surprise to me," said McVicker.

"Isn't this the *Gwenhiddy*?" cried the minister, pulling a yellow slip of paper from his pocket. "And haven't you a young lady aboard by the name of Josephine Morse?"

He handed the paper to the captain. It was McVicker's telegram. Slowly McVicker read it.

"Yes, this is the *Gwenhiddy*, and we have a young woman aboard whose name is Josephine Morse—but I don't know anything about this!" Suddenly the captain's fist fell with a bang upon the table. "By thunder! I wonder—"

He turned to the mate.

"Muldoon, bring in Miss Evangeline, will you?"

He fell to studying the telegram, while Mr. Dutton rather eagerly watched the door through which Muldoon had disappeared. When approaching footsteps sounded without, the young divine fell a little to one side, and a nervous flush appeared in either cheek. The door opened and Miss Evangeline came in ahead of Muldoon. She was breathing quickly from the exertion of a run across the deck; her eyes shone with laughing fun; and in one hand she held a few of the papers she had been copying. Suddenly she saw the minister, and with a gasp stopped half-way to McVicker's table. As she did so, the mate left the cabin, closing the door behind him. For an instant the girl stared, as if she refused to believe her eyes; then her breath came again, quicker than before, and the papers in her hand slipped to the floor. The fun went out of her eyes in a flash.



DRAWN BY E. MARTIN HENNINGS

"I love you; I want you to marry me!"

"Mr. Dutton!" she exclaimed, in a low queer voice.

"Miss Josephine!" replied the minister, coming to her with an outstretched hand. "You see, I didn't fail you. I—I—want to congratulate you!"

The girl seemed too agitated to speak. She allowed the minister to take her hand, and when she turned, her eyes full of inquiry, from him to the captain, a pathetic tremor passed over her lips, and a hot, nervous glow mantled her cheeks. There was something of pained displeasure in McVicker's gaze. He seemed to reproach her before he had spoken.

"And I want to congratulate you, too, Miss Josephine," he said. "It is a great surprise to me, I should have thought—"

He had nicely prepared his speech, but the throbbing of the freighter's deck involuntarily brought his eyes to one of the curtained windows. They were stopping before Sarnia. O'Keefe would soon be aboard. There was no time to lose, so he held out the minister's telegram to the girl.

"You should have told me something about it!" he concluded.

There were a few moments of tense silence, broken only by McVicker striking a match with which to light his cigar. Then

came a little stifled cry from the girl; she crumpled the telegram in her hand; her bosom throbbed with sudden excitement; the flush in her cheeks went as precipitately as it had come, and when she spoke her voice trembled.

"I—I—didn't send that!" she gasped.

The captain rose and came to her side, smiling frankly down into her face.

"There, there, Miss Josephine," he said with friendly banter in his voice. "You've played us a pretty little joke, and we surely won't get angry with you! Of course, you know that I am very sorry." There was a suggestive emphasis in what he said. "But I'm going to turn the cabin over to you," he added, "and we'll have the biggest supper the *Gwenhiddy* can put up. Only we'd like to know: Who is the lucky man?"

The girl drew back from him; her breath came in sobbing breaks.

"I tell you, I didn't write that!" she cried. "I didn't! Oh, won't you believe me?"

She turned to the minister. Her attitude was almost imploring. The captain was surprised at the change which came over his visitor. There was an aggressive gleam in his eyes as they met his own, and it was with a certain feeling of relief that he welcomed a loud knock at the door.

"Come in!" he called.

Muldoon's face appeared again.

"A gentleman to see you, sir. Shall I let 'im—"

Over his shoulder peered the bandaged visage of the broken-jawed mate, Samuel Bilkins.

In an instant he had seen the girl, and with a noise that would have been a cry of joyful greeting had it not been for the rigidity of his face, he thrust himself into the cabin, and with only a sheepish nod at the captain, and an exploring look at the minister, hurried to Evangeline's side. He succeeded in capturing one of her hands before she had recovered from her surprise; in fact, the girl was now well lost in panic, and he was still holding her hand when another disturbance came from outside, and Michael O'Keefe bolted through the door, followed by Muldoon.

"Howdy, captain!" he bellowed jovially. His face radiated happiness; he thrust out an arm as big as an ordinary man's leg, with a huge red fist at the end of it. "This is the preacher, I suppose," he said, taking in the clerical gentleman as McVicker shook hands with him. "I'm glad to see you, sir!"

He whirled about to give the Rev. Mr. Dutton the friendliness of his grip, and beheld Bilkins and the girl. For a moment he stood as if somebody had stunned him with a stone; then he came up to them, shoved Bilkins aside, and made an effort to kiss Miss Evangeline. With a shriek the girl fled toward the door. O'Keefe followed her, and with Bilkins close behind carried his pursuit to the deck.

Clerical urbanity had left Mr. Dutton's thin face. He advanced to McVicker with flashing eyes.

"What does this mean?" he demanded.

The captain shrugged his shoulders.

"The Lord only knows, sir, I don't!" he replied. "Listen!"

From outside came the sound of loud voices. Among them McVicker recognized that of Muldoon, and he could scarcely repress a smile of satisfaction.

Muldoon was playing game. For a few moments the two men stood in silence, each with his face turned to the door; then a feminine cry arose above a growing tumult of blows and scuffling, and the minis-

ter darted out, his long coat fluttering behind him, his face alight with peculiar enthusiasm. He did not pause until he was lost among the shadowy figures amidships. Hardly had he gone when Muldoon ran up and handed the captain the two telegrams which had been sent to Bilkins and O'Keefe. An exultant grin was on his countenance.

"They're mixin' beautiful!" he chuckled. "O'Keefe has broke Sam's jaw ag'in 'n' the preacher's mixin' with O'Keefe!"

McVicker went inside and locked his door. He laughed aloud as he recovered the telegram dropped by Miss Evangeline, and smoothed it out with the other two upon the table.

Thus far his scheme had worked to perfection. He had not figured on the fight, which was also helping him exceedingly; neither had he hoped that the Rev. Mr. Dutton would unconsciously lend himself to his plot to the extent of mixing up in a battle, out of which he was pretty sure to emerge with but little resemblance to his former self. The rest should be easy for Muldoon—and himself. He could see only one avenue of escape from Miss Evangeline's present predicament, and that led to the happy ending.

Impatiently he waited for her to come to him. That she would come—and soon—he had no doubt—a poor frightened little thing, all atremble with the horror which Muldoon would impress upon her, and craving his protection.

After a little he heard the knock which he was expecting, and opened the door. Miss Evangeline entered. She was as white as a sheet, and one of Muldoon's hands was laid protectingly upon her arm.

The mate spoke in a low voice, ostensibly for the captain's ears alone, but loud enough for the girl to hear.

"They're raisin' hell!" he said. "I don't believe it's safe—" He paused suggestively. "Better keep her here for a time, don't you think? Part of the crew are siding with Bilkins and O'Keefe. It's mutiny, by Heavens! They say she's played 'em dirt, and she's got to—"

He lowered his voice. The two men walked to the door and for a time continued their conversation in a whisper. Then Muldoon went out and the captain again turned the lock.



DRAWN BY E. MARTIN HENNINGS

McVicker opened it and read

Miss Evangeline had buried her face in her hands when McVicker came back to her. For a time the man stood silently beside her, gazing with rapturous eyes down upon the shining coils of hair twisted wreath-like about the beautiful head. His lips parted and his heart hammered excitedly as he leaned gloatingly over the creature whom he regarded as already in his possession. He could hardly resist the temptation of clasping her to him, but his saner judgment prevailed, and he walked quietly around the table and seated himself opposite her. When she lifted her tear-stained face he was toying with the telegrams. The last two he shoved across the table. What was written upon them did not seem to astonish Miss Evangeline. She was already at the breaking-point of distress. McVicker saw this with keen satisfaction.

"I wish you would explain," he said. He allowed a reflection of suspicion to creep into his voice. "I don't understand this little game, and it's costing trouble—a lot of trouble!"

"Neither do I understand!" cried the girl. "Oh, Captain McVicker, wont you be-

lieve me when I tell you that I didn't send them?"

She clasped her hands pleadingly, and it suddenly struck the captain that just now she seemed more like a school-girl than a young woman for whose love he was fighting. For an instant he felt himself losing ground. Her eyes brimming with tears, her voice trembling sobbingly, and the prayerful entreaty of her gaze suddenly awoke a healthier sentiment in him, and he rose to his feet and paced nervously back and forth across the cabin. For the moment Muldoon was forgotten. But the tingling of the telephone recalled him. He was still attending to his end of the game. It also swung McVicker back into the scheme. He placed the receiver to his ear, Miss Evangeline watching and listening with nervous anticipation shining in her eyes.

"Hello—hello—" he called.

The girl heard the answering voice. She leaned forward to catch the words; her eyes were on a level with the captain's, and slowly she saw come into them a look which reflected terror in her own. When the voice had ceased, McVicker spoke softly.



"Well, I'll be—" Then he added, "Keep them off the forward deck, Muldoon, even if you have to use your gun. Miss Evangeline is safe in my cabin!"

He hung up the receiver, and in her questioning eagerness the girl touched one of his hands with her own. McVicker seized her little fingers in one of his huge palms, and for a full half-minute looked across the table straight into her eyes.

"Yes, little girl, I do believe you," he said finally. "I don't believe you sent the telegrams. But somebody did, and we can't say what the result will be. O'Keefe swears vengeance—because he believes you've hoaxed him. Bilkins says that if you don't marry him there'll be—well, something to pay! And a part of the crew have sided with them and more are coming over. They are agreed that you have flirted abominably; they believe that you have purposely led them to make fools of themselves, and almost to a man, Muldoon says, they demand that you marry either Bilkins or O'Keefe. If you don't—"

The captain shrugged his shoulders. To the girl there was terrible significance in his silence,

"And if—if—I don't?" she gasped.

"Well, you never can tell," replied McVicker. "They're desperate—O'Keefe and Bilkins, I mean; and all of the men think you sent the telegrams. When men are like that—"

He interrupted himself again and once more began pacing back and forth across the cabin. Every move he made, almost every breath he drew, was eagerly watched by the girl. Her heart beat faster when she saw him peer cautiously out through one of the little windows; and she thrilled with fear when he moved to the buffet and took from it a revolver, which he carefully examined and placed in his pocket. When he came back to the table she did not attempt to withdraw the hand which he pressed tenderly in both of his own.

"I can see a way out of all this trouble, Evangeline," he said, in a voice filled with the passion he felt. "The men are right—you must marry somebody. It is the only way to save yourself. But you need not marry Bilkins; you need not marry O'Keefe. I love you! I want you to marry me!"

The girl's pale cheeks flushed. The hand

he held twitched nervously, and she made a small effort to withdraw it.

Still she remained silent. Her eyes met his own, steady and questioning. She saw the passion in his face, a lurking fire which made her shudder as she lowered her glance; something rose in her bosom, strangling in its intensity, for she read in McVicker's gaze the deadly sentiment which she feared in Bilkins, O'Keefe, and the crew. A new terror filled her. The sound of loud voices and running feet outside increased her fear. In desperation she again lifted her eyes to her companion. McVicker had seen his mistake, and there was the old friendliness in his voice when he spoke.

"I don't mean that I won't fight for you, whatever may happen, little girl," he said. "I swear that no harm shall come to you, if I can prevent it. But I love you—God! how I love you!"

He released her hand and rose to his feet. The girl slipped from her chair and stood beside the table, trembling, her hands clasped upon her breast.

"As my wife—my betrothed—I could explain everything!" cried McVicker. "I could say that we had planned to get married; that some member of the crew had discovered our secret; that he had written the telegrams, either as a joke or from jealousy, and the men would have to believe me Evangeline—won't you? Won't you?"

He came toward her, his arms held out. For a moment the girl seemed yielding to his entreaty. The proximity of his triumph intoxicated McVicker, and with a cry he caught her to him.

"To-night, Evangeline!" he whispered. "To-night! We will be married quietly, in the cabin, and to-morrow we'll announce it to the men. Tell me 'Yes,' sweetheart!"

"No—no—no!" sobbed the girl. "Oh, not now—not now!"

"Yes, to-night!" pleaded the captain.

Her silence filled him with joy. Behind him the telephone rang, and allowing Evangeline to slip from his arms into the chair he held the receiver to his ear. His face, turned from her, underwent a sudden change, in his heart he was blessing Muldoon. After a moment he signed for the girl to take the receiver. When she had done so, he called out.

"Repeat that, will you, Muldoon?"

The mate's heavy voice rumbled:

"I said that the men are making Bilkins 'n' O'Keefe toss up to see who's going to marry Miss Evangeline!" it said.

McVicker smiled as he took the receiver from the girl's trembling hand.

"We're going to fool 'em, Muldoon!"

Evangeline had risen, and as the captain turned, was retreating slowly toward the door. Her terror was complete; at least, so McVicker assured himself.

"If it must be to-night," she spoke, "you must let me go to my room!"

There was a strange thrill in her voice. Her hand was on the door knob when McVicker hastened to her.

"I must see you there safely," he said. "You will prepare quickly, though?"

She bowed her head, as if in acquiescence, and the captain cautiously opened the door. Except for the man in the wheelhouse the forward deck was clear, and in the deep shadows the two hurried to Evangeline's cabin.

"You will be ready in an hour?"

"No, it will be two," replied the girl.

She had opened her door, and slipped in before the captain could detain her.

A few minutes later the door was slowly reopened. Inch by inch it swung inward, until Evangeline could sweep the starboard-deck, both forward and aft. Quietly she stole forth into the deep shadow of the cabin, and made her way cautiously in the direction of the captain's quarters until she stopped before the room occupied by the old wheelman. Gently she knocked upon the door, until a voice called from within.

"Hello! Who's there?"

"It's I, Mr. Richards—Evangeline," she replied softly, her lips close to the keyhole. "I want to speak with you, please!"

The wheelman, whose watch began at midnight, had retired, and she could hear him get out of his bunk and begin dressing. Soon he opened the door, and Evangeline entered. Half an hour later the door was opened again; the gray-headed seaman peered out, and after a satisfactory survey of the deck allowed the girl to pass him on her return to her own room. Then, even as cautiously, he came out himself, and hurried to the cabin which he had seen assigned to the young minister after that individual's

slight brush with O'Keefe, the former mate.

One of the two hours had passed when Evangeline, listening with throbbing heart heard a light knock upon her door. She opened it a trifle, and discerned the shadow-like form of the old wheelman disappearing into the gloom of the midship-deck.

She even fancied that she could see him after he had entered the darkness enshrouding the starboard-boat. Quietly she glided after him. From the opaqueness into which he had disappeared a figure emerged to meet her. She heard her name spoken softly; she fancied that she could see a pair of arms held out for her, and with an answering name falling from her lips she ran into them. For only an instant she was held in a man's strong embrace; a passionate kiss fell upon her upturned face and then they turned, hand in hand, and went to the starboard-rail.

Richards held the loosened boat-falls in his hands.

"Get in—qujck!" he whispered.

Miss Evangeline ran to his side, and rising on tip-toe pressed her warm lips to his bearded cheek.

"Thank you, Mr. Richards! Thank you—thank you—" she breathed.

The man pulled her gently away, and lifted her into the boat. After he had followed her, the wheelman played out the falls, and the two drifted away.

Half an hour later the wheelman entered the captain's cabin. McVicker was flushed and joyful.

"What is it, Richards?" he asked.

The wheelman advanced, with a letter in his hand.

"Somebody knocked at my door a few minutes ago," he explained, "and when I dressed and went out this was hanging to the latch. It's addressed to you."

McVicker opened it, and read:

DEAR CAPTAIN:

I'm sure I don't know who sent those telegrams. But I'm awfully glad that they were sent. I don't believe that Mr. Dutton and I would ever have made up if it hadn't been for them. Mr. Dutton and I were engaged to be married. Then we quarreled because he refused to turn missionary. But he's promised now. I'm sorry we have to take one of your boats. We'll leave it somewhere at Port Huron. Thanks—and good-by.

EVANGELINE.