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Bears the Signature of

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The Kind You Have Always Bought

In Use For Over 30 Years.

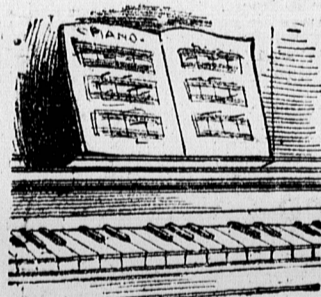
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A CHRISTMAS AT SEA

Evidently people had arranged to spend their Christmas on land. Instead of a ship full of passengers here were fifty in the second cabin, a few more in steerage, and in first cabin only six—an old lady and gentleman, an actress, a tall apple-buyer from Portland, and our two unrepentant selves. As we left Boston harbor we six gazed forlornly at the strange homes, then, as they passed in the distance we stole glances at each other.

"Let us get our rugs and sit out," said Jane.

When we returned to the deck we found the rest had followed our example, so we arranged ourselves in a friendly group, resolved to be agreeable.

The waves were light green and aneering, a fringe of coastline was visible, and the sun shone warm on our out-stretched feet. We talked of where we were from, where we were going, of life on shipboard, and many cognate subjects, and passed a very happy afternoon. It was Jane's first trip, and she was charmed with everything.

"Is it not lovely?" she cried. "I feel as though I could sail on forever."

"We knew the merry world was round, And we might sail for ever," quoted.

The apple buyer to my surprise began the poem at the beginning, and with a little assistance completed it. "I hope it will be rough," said Jane. "I'd love to see a storm."

"Don't wish for a storm child," the actress answered, looking pity or her inexperience. "You'll soon be sick enough as it is."

The captain and first officer made our party eight at dinner. The talk flowed freely, even the old lady and gentleman now and then relating an anecdote or telling an anecdote. Jane made the two old people good night soon afterwards. That was their only appearance at table during the voyage. White and trembling, they came back on deck as we steamed up the mersey, and the apple-buyer assisted them to a cab in Liverpool.

The next morning, looking out of the port-hole, we could see, one moment nothing but crested waves, and the next nothing but cold, cloudy sky.

"I'll have to give it up," said Jane, as after several scrambles to catch her shoes which were frolicking over the cabin floor, she sank back in her berth.

Then for three days silence reigned. At the close of the third I remarked weakly:

"I heard the stewardess say to-norrow was Christmas."

"I'm sure it's long past Christmas," said Jane with more vehemence, "or else they have been having ix meals a day. That awful gong has gone at least twenty times since I've been lying here. There it is again!" And she covered her ears!

It began far down the corridor, wung round by the dining room and past our cabin, always louder, always more brassy, always more vibrating, the stewardess explained that they used the bugle call only in summer when there were more passengers. "Perhaps the bugle-call would have been better," I doubt it. Even our ears were sick.

Christmas morning we staggered into some clothes, throwing on long looks to hide deficiencies, and struggled to the writing room on the forward deck.

"A Merry Christmas!" I exclaimed to the stewardess as I stepped out of my cabin. Then the door-frame bumped up and slapped me on the temple and Jane plunged back against her berth. The stewardess helped us up, laughing. We tried to laugh a little, too, and started again. This time the floor of the corridor gave way, and we took a swift run down all, rounded a corner, and climed up hill, and encountered the staircase.

"Here I stay," said Jane, with a "sick-or-swim-survive-or-perish" air, and she seated herself on the lowest step and put both arms around the post. I grasped the balustrade, and made a run for the top, cleared the door-frame and was about to drop upon the cushion seat which ran around the room, when a yellow head and piquant face emerged from the mass of steam rugs and cushions on which I had contemplated resting. "I'm glad to know some one is alive," the actress said drily, "even if you did intend sitting on me. I've seen up here for two days, and haven't seen a soul. I hope your sister is enjoying the storm."

At that moment Jane was literally thrown into the room and fell full length on the couch in the corner. We all laughed. It sounded a little sickly, but did us good.

"Isn't it lovely to watch the storm?" teased the actress.

"Ugh," answered Jane, "I dare even look at the water."

Then the apple buyer came in, feigning health, but we were not deceived. It was his first appearance, too.

"A Merry Christmas!" we all exclaimed at once, and we laughed as he, too, succumbed to the alluring pillow.

He smiled defeat.

"If you three young women will go down to dinner tonight," he challenged, "and stay till you eat some plum pudding, I'll stand treat for a trip to Chester the day after we reach Liverpool."

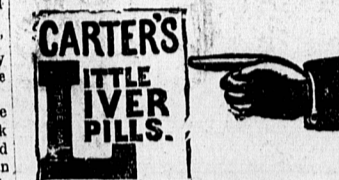
"Done!" cried Jane, on the instant, "provided you sit at the table to see if we stay."

"I think the captain would be the fairer judge," he replied cautiously, his face twitching with amusement.

"Ah cowardly, cowardly custard," laughed the actress.

"Hey, captain," he called, as the captain passed the door; "you must decide between us." And he explained the case to him.

The captain was a big, jovial, brown-whiskered man, and didn't look very judicial, but he gave us all



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