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## The Bride's Name;

Or, The Adventures of Captain Fraser

### CHAPTER IX.—(Cont'd).

A startled silence was broken by Mr. Wheeler's chair, which fell noisily. "I mean," stammered Fraser meeting the perturbed gaze of the dock-foreman, "that he told me once if anything happened to him that I was to break the news to Miss Tyrell. It's been such a shock to me I hardly know what I'm saying."

"Yes, you'll go and frighten her," said Bob Wheeler, endeavoring to push past him.

The mate blocked the doorway. "Are you going to try to prevent me going out of a room in my own house?" blustered the young man.

"Of course not," said Fraser, and, giving way, ascended the stairs before him. Mr. Wheeler, junior, after a moment's hesitation, turned back and, muttering threats under his breath, returned to the parlor.

Miss Tyrell, who was sitting by the window reading, rose upon the mate's entrance, and, observing that he was alone, evinced a little surprise as she shook hands with him. It was the one thing necessary to complete his discomfort, and he stood before her in a state of guilty confusion.

"Cap'n Flower couldn't come," he stammered.

The girl said nothing, but with her dark eyes fixed upon his flushed face waited for him to continue.

"It's his misfortune that he couldn't come," continued Fraser, jerkily.

"Business, I suppose?" said the girl, after another wait. "Won't you sit down?"

"Bad business," replied Fraser. He sat down, and fancied he saw the way clear before him.

"You've left him on the Foam, I suppose?" said Poppy, seeing that she was expected to speak.

"No; farther back than that," was the response.

"Seabridge?" queried the girl, with an air of indifference.

Fraser regarded her with an expression of studied sadness. "Not so far back as that," he said, softly.

Miss Tyrell manifested a slight restlessness. "Is it a sort of riddle?" she demanded.

"No, it's a tale," replied Fraser, not without a secret admiration of his unsuspected powers of breaking bad news "a tale with a bad ending."

The girl misunderstood him. "If you mean that Captain Flower doesn't

want to come here, and sent you to say so—" she began, with dignity.

"He can't come," interrupted the mate, hastily.

"Did he send you to tell me?" she asked.

Fraser shook his head mournfully.

"He can't come," he said, in a low voice; "he had a bad foot—night before last he was standing on the ship's side—when he lost his hold—"

He broke off and eyed the girl nervously, "and fell overboard," he concluded.

Poppy Tyrell gave a faint cry, and springing to her feet, stood with her hand on the back of her chair regarding him. "Poor fellow," she said, softly; "poor fellow."

She sat down again by the open window and nervously plucked at the leaves of a geranium. Her face was white and her dark eyes pitiful and tender. Fraser, watching her, cursed his resourceful skipper and hated himself.

"It's a terrible thing for his friends," said Poppy, at length.

"And for you," said Fraser, respectfully.

"I am very grieved," said Poppy quietly; "very shocked and very grieved."

"I have got strong hopes that he may have got picked up," said Fraser, cheerfully; "very strong hopes. I threw him a life-belt, and thought we got the boat out and pulled about, we couldn't find either of them. I shouldn't be at all surprised if he has been picked up by some vessel outward bound. Stranger things have happened."

The girl shook her head. "You didn't go overboard after him?" she asked quietly.

"I did not," said the mate, who was somewhat tired of this tactless question; "I had to stand by the ship, and besides, he was a much better swimmer than I am—I did the best I could."

Miss Tyrell bowed her head in answer. "Yes," she said, softly.

"If there's anything I can do," said Fraser, awkwardly, "or be of use to you in any way, I hope you'll let me know—Flower told me you were all alone, and—"

He broke off suddenly as he saw the girl's lips quiver. "I was very fond of my father," she said, in extenuation of this weakness.

"I suppose you've got some relatives?" said Fraser.

The girl shook her head.

"No cousins?" said Fraser, staring. He had twenty-three himself.

"I have some in New Zealand," said Poppy, considering. "If I could, I think I should go out there."

"And give up your business here?" inquired the mate, anxiously.

"It gave me up," said Poppy, with a little tremulous laugh. "I had a week's pay instead of notice the day before yesterday. If you know anybody who wants a clerk who spells 'impatient' with a 'y' and is off-hand when they are told of it, you might let me know."

The mate stared at her blankly. This was a far more serious case than Captain Flower's. "What are you going to do?" he asked.

"Try for another berth," was the reply.

"But if you don't get it?"

"I shall get it sooner or later," said the girl.

"But suppose you don't get one for a long time?" suggested Fraser.

"I must wait till I do," said the girl, quietly.

"You see," continued the mate twisting his hands, "it might be a long job, and I—I was wondering—what you would do in the meantime. I was wondering whether you could hold out."

"Hold out?" repeated Miss Tyrell, very coldly.

"Whether you've got enough money," blurted the mate.

Miss Tyrell turned upon him a face in which there was now no ack of color. "That is my business," she said, stiffly.

"Mine, too," said Fraser, gazing steadily at the pretty picture of indignation before him. "I was Flower's friend as well as his mate, and

you are only a girl." The indignation became impatience. "Little more than a child," he murmured scrutinising her.

"I am quite big enough to mind my own business," said Poppy, reverting to chilly politeness.

"I wish you would promise me you won't leave here or do anything until I have seen you again," said Fraser, who was anxious to consult his captain on this new phase of affairs.

"Certainly not," said Miss Tyrell, rising and standing by her chair, "and thank you for calling."

Fraser rubbed his chin helplessly. "Thank you for calling," repeated the girl, still standing.

"That is telling me to go, I suppose?" said Fraser, looking at her frankly. "I wish I knew how to talk to you. When I think of you here all alone, without friends and without employment, it seems wrong for me to go and leave you here."

Miss Tyrell gave a faint gasp and glanced anxiously at the door. Fraser hesitated a moment, and then rose to his feet.

"If I hear anything more, may I come and tell you?" he asked.

"Yes," said Poppy, "or write; perhaps it would be better to write; I might not be at home. Good-bye."

The mate shook hands, and, blundering down the stairs, shouted good-night to a segment of the Wheeler family visible through the half-open door, and passed out into the street.

He walked for some time rapidly, gradually slowing down as he collected his thoughts. "Flower's a fool," he said, bitterly; "and as for me, I don't know what I am. It's so long since I told the truth I forget what it's like, and I'd sooner tell lies in a church than tell them to her."

### CHAPTER X.

He looked expectantly on the cabin table for a letter upon his return to the ship, but was disappointed, and the only letter yielded by the post next morning came from Captain Barber. I was couched in terms of great resignation, and after bemoaning the unfortunate skipper's untimely demise, in language of great strength, wound up with a little Scripture, and asked the mate to act as master and sail the schooner home.

"You'll act as mate, Ben, to take her back," said the new skipper, thrusting the letter in his pocket.

"Aye, aye, sir," said Ben, with a side glance at Joe, "but I'll keep for'ard, if you don't mind."

"As you please," said Fraser, starting.

"And you're master, I s'pose?" said Joe, turning to Fraser.

Fraser, whose manner had already effected the little change rendered necessary by his promotion from mate to master, nodded curtly, and the crew, after another exchange of looks. Their behaviour all day was docile, not to say lamb-like, and it was not until evening that the new skipper found it necessary to enforce his authority.

The exciting cause of the unpleasantness was Mr. William Green a slim, furtive-eyed young man, whom Fraser took on in the afternoon to fill the vacancy caused by Ben's promotion. He had not been on board half an hour before trouble arose from his attempt to introduce the manners of the drawing-room into the fore-castle.

"Mr. Will-yum Green," repeated Joe, when the new arrival had introduced himself; "well, you'll be Bill 'ere."

"I don't see why, if I call you Mr. Smith, you shouldn't call me Mr. Green," said the other.

"Call me wot?" inquired Joe, sternly; "you let me 'ear you callin' 'em mister anything, that's all; you let me 'ear you."

"I'm sure the cook 'ere don't mind me callin' 'im Mr. Fisher," said the new seaman.

"Cert'nly not," said the gratified cook; "only my name's Disher."

The new-comer apologised with an urbanity that rendered Joe and old Ben speechless. They gazed at each other in silent consternation, and then Ben rose.

"We don't want no mister 'ere," he said, curtly, "an' wot's more, we won't 'ave 'em. That chap's name's Bob, but we calls 'im Slushy. If it's good enough for us, it's good enough for an ordinary seaman wot's got an A. B. discharge by mistake. Let me 'ear you call 'im Slushy. Go on, now."

"I've no call to address 'im at all just now," said Mr. Green, liftily.

"You call 'im Slushy," roared Joe, advancing upon him; "call 'im Slushy till I tell you to stop."

"Slushy," said Mr. Green, sullenly, and avoiding the pained gaze of the cook; "Slushy, Slushy, Slushy, Slushy, Sl—"

"That'll do," said the cook, rising with a scowl. "You don't want to make a song abart it."

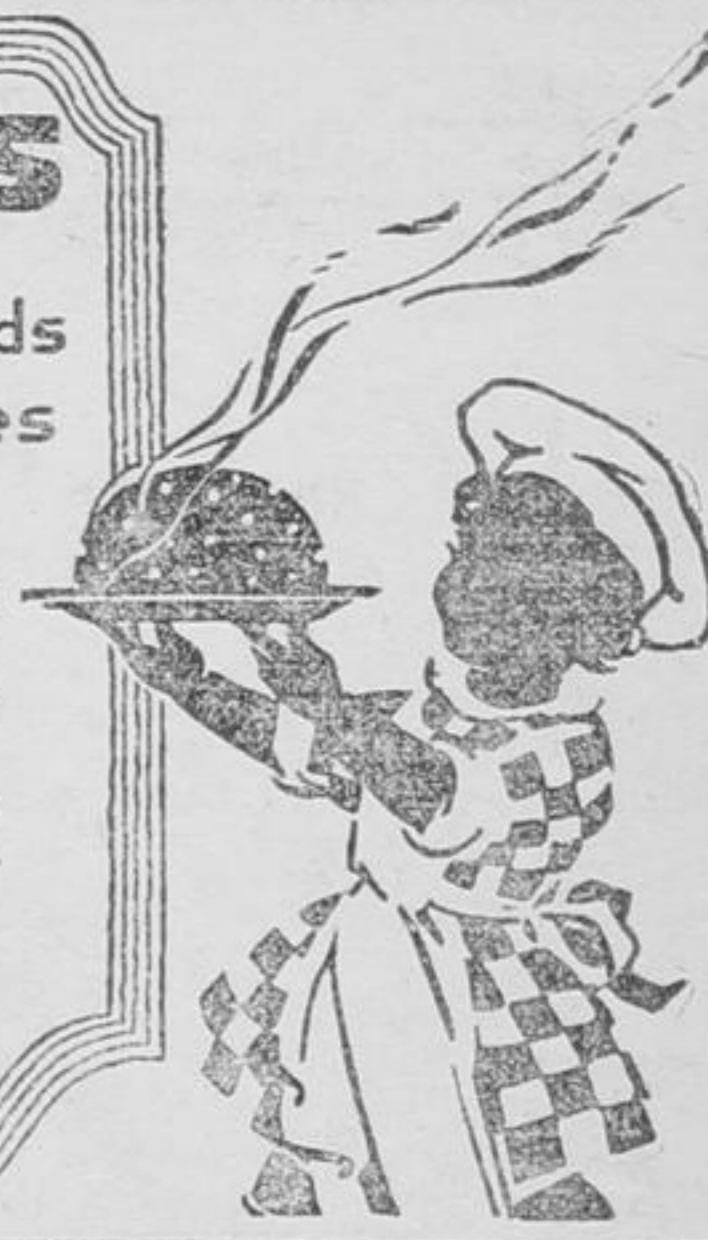
Joe, content with his victory, resumed his seat on the locker, and exchanged a reassuring glance with Ben; Mr. Green, with a deprecatory glance at the cook, sat down and offered him a pipe of tobacco.

"Been to sea long?" inquired the cook, accepting it.

"Not long," said the other, speaking very distinctly. "I was brought up

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for something quite different. I'm just doing this till something better turns up. I find it very difficult to be a gentleman at sea."

The cook, with an eye on Joe, ventured on a gentle murmur of sympathy, and said that he had experienced some thing.

"I 'ad money," continued Mr. Green musingly, "and I run through it; then I 'ad more money, and I ran through that."

"Ben," said Joe, suddenly, "pass me over that boot o' yours."

"What' for?" inquired Ben, who had just taken it off.

"To chuck at that swab there," said the indignant seaman.

Ben passed it over without a word, and his irritated friend, taking careful aim, launched it at Mr. Green and caught him on the side of the head with it.

Pain standing the latter in lieu of courage, he snatched it up and returned it, and the next moment the whole fore-castle was punching somebody else's head, while Tim, in a state of fearful joy, peered down on it from his bunk.

Victory, rendered cheap and easy by reason of the purblindness of the frantic cook, who was trying to persuade Mr. Green to raise his face from the floor so that he could punch it for him, remained with Joe and Ben, who, in reply to the angry shouts of the skipper from above, pointed silently to the combatants. Explanations, all different and all ready to be sworn to if desired, ensued, and Fraser, after curiously reminding Ben of his new position

and requesting him to keep order, walked away.

A silence broken only by the general complaints of the much gratified Tim, followed his departure, although another outbreak nearly occurred owing to the cook supplying raw meat for Mr. Green's eye and refusing it for Joe's.

It was the lack of consideration and feeling that affected Joe, not the want of the beef, that little difficulty being easily surmounted by taking Mr. Green's. The tumult was just beginning again, when it was arrested by the sound of angry voices above.

Tim, followed by Joe, sprang up the ladder, and the couple with their heads at the opening listened with appreciative enjoyment to a wordy duel between Mrs. Tipping and daughter and the watchman.

"Call me a liar, then," said old George, in bereaved accents.

"I have," said Mrs. Tipping.

"Only you're so used to it you don't notice it," remarked her daughter, scathingly.

"I tell you he's drowned," said the watchman, raising his voice; "if you don't believe me go and ask Mr. Fraser. He's skipper in his place now."

(To be continued.)

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