

Deliciously warming
— Hot Bouill —

BLUE WATER

A TALE OF THE DEEP
SEA FISHERMEN

BY FREDERICK WILLIAM WALLACE

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN—(Cont'd.)

For the rest of the week Frank busied himself around the buildings of the plant. A bridge was built across the creek in order to connect Ring's place with the new section, and Bill Daley's little packet—still running and looking the same as she did in Shorty's boyhood days—was chartered to bring supplies for the proposed store. Captain Asa's funeral came off—all the Long Covers following the body to the little cemetery; and the day after the interment an auctioneer came up from Anchorville and sold the furniture and household goods. Frank and his uncle and Captain Ring went to Anchorville, and the papers of the Company were duly drawn up, though there was some little hitch owing to Frank's inability to produce the deeds of the property he had purchased from the deceased shipmaster.

"Of course," said the lawyer finally, "you may receive them within a few days, seeing that the transaction was only made within the last two weeks. At any rate you hold his receipt and you have given him your cheque for the amount. He was to write his notary about it, wasn't he?"

"Yes," replied Frank; "but I don't know who he is, or I'd ha' called an' seen him."

"Oh, well," returned the other, "I suppose it'll be all right. But I'll hold these papers until I hear from you."

While they were in town the three partners managed to scrape up a six-dory gang for the Lillian, and when they arrived back in the Cove Frank called Jules to one side.

"Waal, Sabot, ol' sock! An' how's Jessie Leblanc these days?"

Jules grinned. "Veree well, Frank."

"Now, I callate you'll be wantin' t' git hitched up some day, eh?"

"Oh, lots of time—lots of time," answered the other. "I mus' git good job before I marry dat girl."

Frank laughed and slapped his old dory-mate on the back. "Waal, I've got a good job for you."

"What's dat? Down at de fish-house, Frank?"

"No, sir. I'm not a-goin' t' make a flake bird out o' you, Sabot. I want you to go in th' vessel as skipper."

The big Frenchman gasped. "Skipper?" he ejaculated.

"Why, t' be sure," replied Frank. "You kin handle that vessel all right."

"But—but, Frankee, I'm no good off de shore," stammered the other. "I don't know how to navigate—"

"That's all right, Sabot. Uncle Jerry'll make th' first two or three trips with you, an' he'll show you th' ropes. It'll not take you long with the experience you've had."

"Oh, Frankee!"

"Now, we want her t' git out right away. Thar's a six-dory gang waitin' for her down to Anchorville, so git you down thar—tomorrow. Git yer stores aboard—John Watson's goin' as cook—an' bring her aroun' to th' Cove here. D'ye understand, Captain Galarneau?"

"Captain Galarneau?" Sabot rolled the title over on his tongue. "Captain! Oh, Shortee, but I'm please. I hope I be good skipper. I'm glad I'm glad!"

And he danced around and snapped his fingers in the exuberance of his delight, while Westhaver watched him with a secret pleasure at his friend's gratification.

"Can I go an' tell Miss Leblanc about dat, Frankee?"

Frank nodded. "Sure thing! Go ahead! You'll sure be able t' git a few kisses over that bit o' news. Run along now, or some other man'll be cuttin' ye out!"

And with a whoop of joy Jules snatched his hat and ran out of the house.

Westhaver watched him go. "Waal," he murmured, "of any man deserves it, 'tis him. He's true as steel, that feller, an' it's me that knows it."

September passed in all its languor of cool nights and joyous sunlit days, and when October came in, tinging the foliage with the gold and brown of autumnal colors, there was a louder murmur in the crash of the surf on the rocky beach when the winds of the equinox blew inshore. The wharf and breakwater were completed; the build-

ings of the Long Cove Fish Company were painted and ready for business; a store had been constructed at the head of the wharf, and Frank had fixed up an office for himself at the rear.

With the completion of the harbor work, a general holiday was declared, and Long Cove gave itself up to rejoicing. Flags flew from the Fish Company's buildings; the upper floor of the store-house was scraped and waxed ready for a dance, and a sort of indoor picnic was held on the lower floor. It was a beautiful October day, with a fresh breeze ruffling the waters of the Bay, and when the Lillian was sighted coming up the coast there was a general exodus to the wharf-end to view the first large vessel entering the harbor of Long Cove.

The schooner looked remarkably spick and span with her newly painted hull, houses, and deck gear. There were new dories upon her deck; her new mainmast was a splendid spar, fitted with a topmast from which flew a red flag with "Lillian" on it in white letters, and new lettering on the counter—

LILLIAN OF ANCHORVILLE, N.S.

Long Dick Jennings, as harbor-master, was there in all his glory, and his termagant of a wife was strutting proudly by his side when the rangy fisherman greeted Captain Galarneau with a little speech, and presented him with a silver-mounted umbrella for being the first vessel master to open the new harbor. Of course, Frank was responsible for all this, and it was he who directed everything.

The Lillian was securely moored, and the Anchorville gang aboard or her followed their new skipper up to the buildings and participated in the fun. Everybody, young and old, men, women, and children, had congregated at the Cove from all up and down the coast, and the Company's grounds almost represented a country fair.

There were running races, high jumping, dancing competitions, weight throwing, and even a dory race out in the Bay, which caused a great deal of excitement. In the breathing spells between his organizing duties, Frank gazed over the happy, laughing and shouting throng, and wished he had Lillian Denton by his side and viewing the fun.

In the evening a great "hop," or dance, was held in the storage loft, and in the light of the lanterns and with the fiddlers working full steam ahead the Long Covers tripped the light fantastic until the small hours.

It was certainly a day of days in the settlement's calendar, and when a deputation of the guests came to thank him, Frank said that the gathering would be an annual affair—an assurance which was enthusiastically received.

Long Dick—almost three sheets in the wind—clasped Westhaver affectionately by the hand. "Shay, you ol' dog! You've done more t' wake up this place than any man I knows on, ye hev. Long Cove's a-goin' t' be some place after this, m'lad, an' 'tis you what's done it. You're my boy, Frank, an' I mus' shay I've enjoyed myself more t'day than ever I did since I was shingle!"

Then in a confidential whisper. "Shay! This Lillian what th' vessel's named after—she ain't one o' them Bay County Irish women, is she?"

"No, Dick," laughed Westhaver.

"Das all ri' then," replied the other, looking around half-fearfully. "Cause my ol' woman is one o' them, an' she's a terror, Frank—a holy old red-headed terror. I'd sooner see ye bunk along o' th' devil himself, horns, hoof, an' tail, than hev a Bay County Irisher for a wife. Steer clear o' them, son, 'cause I know!" And he winked knowingly as he strode home.

Before he retired that night Frank looked out of his bedroom window. The murmur of the surf on the beach below rose to his ears, and his eyes drank in the glory of the clear starlit sky. Below, everything was dark, and naught pierced the opacity of land and sea but the red light at the head of the wharf, a lantern hanging in the main-rigging of the Lillian, and the green starboard light of a sailing vessel standing up the Bay. For a pace he stared out into the night, and when at last he turned away he murmured, "Aye, Lily, we're started now. Everything is shapin' my way, so wish me smooth sailin' until th' day when I go to claim you, sweetheart!"

Next day while the partners were engaged in unloading salt out of the Lillian's hold, a team with two occupants seated in it came driving down the wharf road. Everybody knocked off to have a look at the strangers.

"Who kin that be?" queried Captain Clark.

"Thar's Jim Henderson from Anchorville a-drivin'," answered a man; "but I don't know th' feller that's with him."

The visitors hitched their horse up at the office, and while the other remained seated, Henderson, the driver, came along to the group on the wharf.

"Is Captain Frank Westhaver here? Oh, you're th' man, sir! Waal, here's a party wants t' see ye, Cap'en. I've jest druv him over from town."

Frank handed his tally board over to Uncle Jerry and went up to the buggy. Its occupant was a clean-shaven, lantern-jawed man, with an exceedingly pale face and faded grey eyes. He looked at Westhaver, and spoke in a perky voice: "Captain Frank Westhaver?"

"Yes, sir!"

The other leaned forward in the seat. "Ah—ahem! You're the party who purchased the property of the late Asa Crawford, master mariner, of this place?"

"Lawyer by his talk," mentally noted Frank, and alquid, "Yes, sir. What about it?"

The other ignored the question. "Ah—ahem! You can prove your title to the property, Captain?"

"Yes!" replied the other, wondering what was in the wind.

"Have you got the deeds?" The stranger gazed hard at him.

"No—not yet," answered Westhaver. "But I expect they've bin put through all right."

The other nodded. "Ah—ahem! What have you to show that you purchased the property?"

Frank resented the interrogations. "What d'ye want t' know for?" he asked. "Who are you, anyway?"

The other gave a dry smile and handed Frank a card. "Pardon me—my card!"

"Wrigley an' Wrigley, Advocates and Public Notaries, Anchorville," Frank read. "Um! An' who are you representin'?"

"Ah—ahem!" The lawyer cleared his throat again. "My client is the legal heir to the Crawford estate, and he wishes to ascertain if the property has really been sold."

"Then you'll be representin'—"

"Captain Robert Morrissey, of Boston, and nephew of the deceased."

Westhaver knew it instinctively. "Waal," he said, "come into the office an' I'll show you my paper."

Frank produced the receipt written out by him and signed by Captain Asa, and he also showed the stub of the cheque. The lawyer produced a note book and pencil. "You have no objections to me making a copy of this receipt?" he said.

"No!"

"And the number of your cheque was 'three,' and dated exactly the same date as this receipt—thirtieth day of August?"

"Yes!"

(To be continued.)

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