CHAPTER IX.

was indisputably Machiavellian.

The lovers had come down from the An hour late, in dusk of evening, down at the wharf. and strain eased by not one instant's lifted her into a taxicab. relaxation from the high tension of "Best hotel in town," he demanded. through this tedious afternoon on the train from Moosehead—a trap of phys- scheme to the girl en route, receiving ical torment only made possible by her indorsement of it. So, having reg-Alan's luck in securing, through sheer istered for her and seen her safely to accident, two parlor-car reservations the door of the best available room in

fore leaving Kineo station. No matter—the longest afternoon gulped a hasty meal—which Rose had must have its evening: the pokiest of | declined to share, pleading fatiguetrains comes the more surely to its and hurried away into the night with destination; in another hour or two only the negro driver of a public back, they would be in Portland-free at | picked up haphazard at some distance last to draw breath of ease in a land | from the hotel, for his guide. of law, order and sane living.

As if in answer to this thought, the train slowed down with whistling brakes to the last hill-station, and as the trucks groaned and moved anew, the aisle, brandishing two yellow envelopes and blatting like a stray calf: "Mista Lawr! Mista Lawr! Tel'-

grams for Mista Lawr! station a prepaid reply to his wire for hands in pockets, gaze turned to a reservations on the night express from tide whereon, now black night had

Portland to New York. But why two envelopes superscribed "Mr. A. Law, Kineo train southbound, lights.

Oakland Sta.?" He tore one open, unfolded the inclosure, and grunted disgust with its curt advice, opened the other and caught his breath sharply as he withdrew-part way only-a playing card, a trey of hearts.

Thrusting it back quickly, he clapped both envelopes together, tore them into a hundred fragments, and scatfered them from the window. But the fiendish wind whisked one small scrap back-and only one!-into the

lap of the woman he loved. be asleep. The silken lashes trembled his hand toward a vessel moored on her cheeks and lifted slightly, dis-, alongside the wharf: "There she is, closing the dark glimmer of question- and a better boat you won't find any ing eyes. And as she clipped the scrap where schooner-rigged, fifty feet over of cardboard between thumb and fore- | all, twenty-five horsepower, motor auxfinger he bent forward and silently i liary, two staterooms all ready for took it from her one corner of the as long a coastwise cruise as you care trey of hearts, but inevitably a corner bearing the figure "3" above a heart.

"The Pullman agent at Portland wires no reservations available on any New York train in the next thirty-six hours," he said with lowered voice. "Couldn't we possibly catch the New

York boat tonight?" looked that up first. It leaves before we get in."

She said, "Too bad," abstractedly, reclosed her eyes, and apparently lapsed anew into semi-somnolencebut without deceiving him who could well guess what polgnant anxiety gnawed at her heart.

exasperation—the impish insolence of faced. "I found myself hard up this that warning, timed so precisely to set | spring with this boat on my hands, their nerves on edge at the very mo-



He Could Have Ground His Teeth in Exasperation.

ment when they were congratulating themselves upon the approach of

The sheer insanity of the whole damnable business-

The grim, wild absurdity of it!

To think that this was America, this the twentieth century, the apex of the highest form of civilization the world had ever known—and still a man could be hunted from pillar to post, haunted with threats, harried with atempts at assassination in a hundred forms—and that by a slip of a girl

with the cunning of a madwoman, the heart of a thug, the face of a charming child-the face of the woman that sat beside him, duplicating its every perfect feature so nearly that even he who loved the one could scarcely distinct, intuition, blind guesswork. . .

tion of a surmise slowly settling into out eagerly to meet him with an eager conviction in his mind, that such cun- air of hope that masked measurably. ming, such purpose and pertinacity the signs of fatigue. could not possibly spring from a mind well balanced, that the woman, Judith | told him guardedly as he drew her Trine, sister to the Rose he loved so well, was as mad as that monomaniac, per father, who sat helpless in his | you drive up."

cell of silence and shadows in New York, day after day, eating his heart fortune. out with impatience for the word that The thing was managed with an in- his vengeance had been consummated

North in hot haste and the shadow of the train lumbered into Portland stadeath. Two days of steady traveling | tion; and, heart in mouth, Alan helped by canoe, by woods trail, by lake Rose from the steps, shouldered a way of the trey of hearts was to bring steamer-forty-eight hours of fatigue for her through the crowd, and almost disaster upon them it would

He communicated his one desperate turned back at the last moment be- | the house within ready call of the public lobby and office, he washed up,

CHAPTER X.

Fortuity.

a lout of a boy came galloping down hour in fruitless and perhaps illadvised inquiries; then his luck, such as it was, led him on suspicion down e poorly lighted wharf, at the extreme end of which he discovered a Alan had been expecting at every lonely young man perched atop a pile, fallen, pallid wraiths of yachts swung just visibly beneath uneasy riding-

"Pardon me," Alan ventured, "but perhaps you can help me out-

"You've come to the wrong shop, my friend," the young man interposed with morese civility; "I couldn't belp anybody out of anything-the way I am now."

thought possibly you might know where I could find a seaworthy boat to charter."

The young man slipped smartly the wharf. down from his perch. "If you don't look sharp," he said ominously, "you'll | even a flying leap Alan lingered watch-Vainly he prayed that she might charter the Seaventure." He waved to take. Come aboard."

He led briskly across the wharf. down a gangplank, then aft along the deck to a companionway, by which the two men gained a comfortable and roomy cabin, bright with fresh white

Here the light of the cabin lamp re-He shook a glum head. "No-I | vealed to Alan's searching scrutiny a person of sturdy build and independent carriage, with a roughly modeled, good-humored face, reddish hair, and steady though twinkling blue eyes.

"Name, Barcus" the young man introduced himself cheerfully; "christened Thomas. Nativity, American. State of life, flat broke. That's the He could have ground his teeth in | rub," he laughed, and shrugged, shamesunk every cent I had-and then some -fitting out on an oral charter with a moneyed blighter in New York, who to have met me here a fortnight He didn't-and here I am, in pawn to the ship chandler, desperate enough for anything."

"How much do you owe?" "Upwards of a hundred." "Say I advanced that amount-when

can we sail?" The young man reflected briefly. "There's something so engagingly idiotic about this proceeding," he observed wistfully. "I've got the strangest kind of a hunch it's going to go

through. Pay my bills, and we can be off inside an hour. That is-" He checked with an exclamation of dismay, chapfallen. "I may have some trouble scaring up a crew at short notice. I had two men engaged, but last week they got tired doing noth- est."

ing for nothing and left me flat." "Then that's settled," Alan said, "I know boats; I'll be your crew-and the better satisfied to have nobody else

aboard." The eyes of Mr. Barcus clouded. "See here, my headlong friend, what's you?" your little game, anyway? I don't "Oh, no I den't" he contended. "Bemind playing the fool on the high seas, but I'll be no party to a kidnaping

"It's an elopement," Alan interrupted on inspiration. "We've simply got to get clear of Portland by midnight." "You're on!" Barcus agreed promptly, his face clearing. "God only knows

CHAPTER XI.

why I believe you, but I do-and here's

Blue Water.

Anxiety ate like an acid at Alan thought a desperate venture, he light fast falling astern. a weathered salt-water man and undismayed; nothing would have been more to his liking than a brisk coastauspices less forbidding.

But when he re-entered the hotel one surprising thing happened that gave him new heart-momentarily it seemed almost as if his luck had of the cashier to demand his bill, the He nodded heavy-hearted confirma- elevator gate opened and Rose came

"I worried so I couldn't rest," she aside; "so I arose and got ready, and watched from the window till I saw

He acquainted her briefly with his

But she seemed unable to echo his through the first afternoon watch. Six Alan shook a helpless head. The genuity that Alan termed devilish-it by the daughter whom he had inspired heaviness of her spirits when their cab, without misadventure, set them suddenly and radically wrong, Alan out much satisfaction either to him-

Here, Alan had feared, was the crucial point of danger if the influence In the hush and darkness of this serted water front. And he bore him-



Lingered Watchfully on Deck.

the Seaventure. But nothing happened; while Mr. Barcus was as good "I'm sorry," said Alan, "but I as his word. Alan had barely set foot on deck, following the girl, when the gangplank came aboard with a ciatter. and the Seaventure swung away from Until the distance was too great for

fully on deck.

he returned to the cabin. of that lot, apparently; nebody but the induced Barcus to let his crew sleep | bride-to-be?"

He was on deck again almost before "No-it's all a damnable mistake! he rubbed the sleepiness from his She's her sister-I mean, the right eyes, emerging abruptly from the half- girl's sister-and her precise doublelight of the cabin to a dazzle of sun- fooled me not quite right in the head. light that filled the cup of day with I'm afraid." wigilance upon which their very lives "And be quick about it—for a double self most warily as he helped the girl conviction of security to realization of flat!" Mr. Barcus snapped. "D'you from the car and to the gangplank of immediate and extraordinary peril.

His first glance discovered the wheel deserted, the woman with back to him ago, sweet as peaches and all standing at the taffrail, Barcus-no- sudden whips out a gun as big by rights, well down the northern horizon-not two miles distant, and standing squarely for the smaller vessel,

Bewildered, he darted to the girl's nized-but still he didn't understand. The inevitable inference seemed a thing unthinkable; his brain faltered when asked to credit it. Only when painter, striving to cast it off and with it the dory towing a hundred feet or so astern, and when another wondering glance had discovered the head and shoulders of Mr. Barcus rising over the stern of the dory as he strove what had happened.

Even so, it was with the feeling that all the world and himself as well had gone stark, raving mad, that he seized the girl and, despite her struggles, fore succeeded in unknotting the painter. "Rose!" he cried stupidly. "Rose! What's the matter with you? Don't

you see what you're doing?" Defiance inflamed her countenance and accents. "Can't you ever say any- loveliness, Alan noted that her first thing but 'Rose! Rose!' Is look was for him, of untempered ma-At length, satisfied that all was well, there no other name that means anything to you? Can't you understand a curling lip; her third, astern, wit "All right," he nodded; "we're clear | how intolerable it is to me? I love you no less than she better than she



She Whips Out a Gun as Big as a Cannon.

three of us aboard. Now you'd best | ever dreamed of loving you-because turn in. This is evidently to be your ! hate you, too! What is love that just find a mirror and kiss yourself stateroom, this one to port, and you'll is no more than love? Can't you unhave a long night's sleep to make up | derstand?" for what you've gone through-dear-

He drew nearer, dropping his voice tenderly. And of a sudden, with a arms and clung pasionately to him. "But you?" she murmured. "You need rest as much as I! What about

sides I'll have plenty of time to rest up once we're fairly at sea. Barcus and I stand watch and watch, of course. There's nothing for you do but be completely at your ease.

But-you must let me go." Eyes half-closed, her head thrown back, she seemed to suffer his kiss rather than to respond, then turned hastily away to her stateroom-leaving him staring with wonder at her

By midnight the Seaventure was spinning swiftly south-southeast, close reefed to a snoring sou'west windthe fixed white eye of Portland head

CHAPTER XII.

Down the Cape

At four o'clock, or shortly after, Alan was awakened by boot-heels pounding imperatively overhead, and bound for Boston, raised and over aboard, after he had pulled the dory hauled a graceful but businesslike fish- up under the starn by its painter. erman (from Gloucester, Barcus He came over the rall in a towering opined when called to stand his trick) temper. at eight) and saw it a mile or two | "I hope you'll pardon the ap astern when—still aching with fatigue impertinence," he suggested acidly, —he was free to return to his berth as soon as able to articulate coher for another four-hour rest.

"Judith!" he cried in a voice of stu pefaction, "But-Good Lord!-how did you get aboard? Where's Rose?" "Where you'll not find her easily little low cry, the girl came into his | again," the woman angrily retorted. "Trust me for that!"

"What do you mean?" Illumination came in a blinding flash. "Do you mean it was you-you whom I brought aboard last night?"

"You waylaid her there in the hotel substituted yourself for her, deceived me into thinking you-!"

"Of course," she said simply. "Why not? When I saw her sleeping therethe mirror of myself, completely at my mercy-what else should I think of than to take her place with the man I loved? I knew you'd never know the difference—at least I was fool enough for the moment to believe h could stand being loved by you in her name! It was only today, when I'd had time to think, that I realized how impos sible that was!"

A sudden slap of the mainsail boom athwartships and a simultaneous cry from over the stern roused Alan from his consternation to fresh appreciation of the emergency. With scant consid eration he hustled the woman to the companionway and below, slammed its doors and closed her in with the slid sprang to the taffrail, just in time lend a helping hand sorely wanted by of a Cunard liner in- Mr. Barcus in his efforts to climb

ently-"but may I inquire if th

This time misguided consideration bloody-minded vixen is your blushing as it grew still more dark she lowered

bells were ringing, when, in drowsy ap- thing defied reasonable explanation. prehension that something had gone He made a feeble stagger at it withself or to the outraged Barcus.

know what she did? Threw me overboard! Fact! Came on deck a while where to be seen. The second con- cannon, points it at my head and or firmed his surmise that the Seaventure | ders me to luff into the wind. Before had come up into the wind, and now I could make sure I wasn't dreaming was yawing off wildly into the trough | she had fired twice -in the air a sig of a stiff if not heavy sea. A third nal to that blessed fisherman astern showed him, to his amazement, the there at least, they answered with Gloucester fisherman - overhauled two toots of a power whietle and with such ease that morning and now, changed course to run.up to us. Look how she's gained already!"

"But how did she happen to throw you overboard?"

"Happen nothing!" Barcus snapped. side, with a shout, demanding to getting to his feet. "She did it aknow what was the matter. She purpose—flew at me like a wildcat. turned to him a face he hardly recog- and before I knew what was up-I was slammed backwards over the

"I can't fell you how sorry I am." Alan responded gravely. "There's he saw her tearing frantically at the more to tell-but one thing to be done

"And that?" Mr. Barcus inquired suspiciously

"To get rid of the lady," Alan announced firmly. "Make that fisherman a present of the woman in the to lift himself out of the water—only case. You don't mind parting with then did Alan begin to appreciate the dory in a good cause—if I pay for

"Take it for nothing," Barcus grumbled. "Cheap at the price!" He took Alan's place, watching him with a sardonic eye as he drew the her away from the rail before she had | tender in under the leeward quarter. made it fast, and reopened the companionway.

As the girl came on deck with out other invitation, in a sullen rage that only heightened her wonderful lignity; her second, for Barcus, with a glimmer of satisfaction as she rec ognized how well the fisherman had drawn up on the Seaventure.

"Friends of yours, I infer" Alan inquired civilly. Judith nodded. "Then it would save us some trouble -yourself included-if you'll be good

Without a word, Judith stepped to the rail and, as Barcus luffed, swung herself overside into the dory. Immediately Alan cast off, and as

enough to step into the dory without a

the little boat sheered off, Barcin with a sigh of relief, brought the Seaventure once more back upon her course. For some few minutes there was si

lence between the two men, while the tender dropped swiftly astern, the woman plying a brisk pair of oars. Then, suddenly elevating his nose. Barcus sniffed audibly. "Here," said sharply, "relieve me for a min-

ute, will you? I want to go forward and have a look at that motor." In the time that he remained invisible between decks the fisherman luffed, picked up the dory and its occupant, and came round again open chase of the Seaventure.

When Barcus reappeared it with a grave face. "The devil and the deep She," he o served obscurely, coming aft, "from all their works, good Lord deliver us!

"What's the trouble now?" "Nothing much-only your playfu little friend has been up to another of | puzzled. her light-hearted tricks. should happen to want a smoke or anything to eat when you go below good-by before striking the match The drain-cocks of both fuel tanks have been opened, and there are up wards of a hundred and fifty gallons of highly explosive gasoline sloshing around in the bilge!"

CHAPTER XIII.

No Quarter.

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Barcus indulgently, breaking a long silence. "Very interesting. Very interesting, indeed I've seldom listened to a more entertalning life-history, my poor young friend. But I tell you candidly, as man to man, I don't believe one word of it. It's all d-n foolishness!" His voice took on a plaintive ac

cent, "Particularly this!" he expos tulated, and waved an indignant hand compassing their plight. "The rest of your adventures are

reasonable enough," he said, "they won my credulity-and I'm a native o Missouri. But this last chanter is possible. And that's flat. It couldn' happen-and has, And there, in manner of speaking, we are!" Against the western horizon a le

ow-lying strip of sand dunes reste like a bar of purple cloud between th crimson afterglow of sunxet in th The wind had gone down with the sup, leaving the Seaventure begainer

of fuel-in shoal water a mile or

with the aid of glasses, figures mi

of the desolate and harren coast that Barcus, out of his abounding knowledge of those waters, named Namet Still another mile further off shore the so-called Gloucester fisherman rode, without motion, waters as still and glassy. Through the glosming

a small boat that theretofore had swung in davits. A little later a faint humming noise drifted across the tide. "Power tender," the owner of the Seaventure interpreted. "Coming to call, I presume. Sociable for What

back. Uneasy conscience, maybeglanced inquiringly at his employer, who grunted his disgust, and said no

I can't make out is why they seem to

think it necessary to tow our dory

"Don't take it so bard, old top," Barcus advised with a change of note from irony to sympathy. Then he rose and dived down the companionway presently to reappear with a megaphone and a double-barreled shotgun

"No cutting-out parties in this out fit," he explained, grinning amiably "None of that old stuff, revised to suit your infatuated female friend-once aboard the lugger and the man is Stationing himself at the seaward

rail, where his figure would show in sharp silhouette against the glowing sunset sky, he brandished the shotgun at arm's length above his head, thing instantly successful. You do not and bellowed stertorously through the

you! Come within gunshot and I'll but I am cured and my friends are curblow your fool heads off!"

Putting aside the megaphone, he sat down again. "Not that I'd dare fire this blunderbuss," he confided, "with



Flames Licked Out All Over the

this reek of gasoline; but just for moral effect. Phew-w! I'd give a dollar for a breath of clean air; I've inhaled so much gas in the last few hours I'm dry-cleaned down to my silly old toes!"

Gaining no response from Alan, he observed critically: "Chatty little customer, your are," and resumed the

For thirty minutes nothing happened, other than that the sound of the fisherman's launch was stilled. It rested moveless in the waters, two figures mysteriously busy in the cockpit, the Seaventure's dory trailing behind it on a long painter.

Gradually these details became blurred, and wese blotted out by the closing shadows. The afterglow in the west grew cool and faint. The crimson waters darkened, to mauve, to violet, to a translucent green, to blackness. Far up the coast two white eyes, peering over the horizon, stared steadfastly through the dark. "Chatham lights," Barcus said they

Abruptly he dropped the gisses and umped up. "Hear that!" he cried. Now the humming of the motor was again audible and growing louder with every instant; and Alan, getting to his feet in turn, infected with the excitement of Barcus, could just make ou at some distance a dark shadow neath the dim, spluttering glimmer o light, that moved swiftly and steadily

toward the Seaventure. "What the devil!" he demanded.

You uttered a mouthful when you said 'devil'!" Barcus commented grasping his arm and hurrying him to the landward side of the vessel. "Quick-kick off your shoes-get set for a mile-long swim! Devil's work, all right!" he panted, hastily divesting himself of shoes and outer garments. "I couldn't made out what they were up to till I saw them lash the wheel, light the fuse, start the motor, and take to the dory. They've made on grand little torpedo hoat out

of that tender-" He sprang upon the rail, steadying himself with a stay. "Ready?" he

asked. "Look sharp!" By way of answer, Alan joined him; the two had dived as one, entering the water with a single splash, and coming to the surface a good ten yards from the Seaventure. For the next several seconds they were swimmin dred feet or more separated them from the schooner did either dare

pause for breath or a backward glance ainst the Seaventure's side rang out across the waters, and with a husky roar the launch blew up, spewing skywards a widespread fan of flame. Over he Seaventure, as this flamed an lied, pale fire seemed to hover like a

burned in this wise—it was probably antoine St., Montreat, P.Q., who make a specialty of it." up and the flames swept rossing to

the sky. By the time Alan and Barcus, swimming steadily, had gained a shoel at a wedding who is roped in. waist deep waters, the Seaventure had on, but a widow of 25 is capable of burned to the water's edge. looking out for No. 1—and also for

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