

Read It Here—Then SEE It All in Motion Pictures



The Perils of Pauline



By Arrangement with the Eclectic Film Company.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

IN THE previous chapter of this fascinating story Pauline sets out for a trip in a motor boat, accompanied only by Cyrus, her pet bull terrier. This is the boat in whose hull Owen the night before has bored a hole which is certain to send it to the bottom after a few hours. When far down the bay, Pauline is horrified to see the boat rapidly filling with water from the gaping hole in the bottom. In the distance she sees a sail and with a prayer on her lips she puts the boat at top speed toward this one chance of life.

Written by Charles Goddard, The Distinguished Playwright

(Continued from Last Week)

CHAPTER XL.

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"BY GEORGE, I believe we'd better go after her. She's been out of sight for an hour."

Harry Marvin was nervously pacing the deck of the yacht as it lay at anchor in the bay. He had just lowered his glasses for the fiftieth time since Pauline's departure in the motor-boat and had turned to Owen with a look of alarm.

"I really don't believe that there is any cause for worry," Mr. Marvin said the secretary blandly.

"No cause to worry—with a helpless girl, who can't even handle a motor-boat, out alone in one of the most powerful craft ever built? I think there is cause."

"She is very capable in all such matters; she handles an automobile perfectly."

"Perfectly reckless," volleyed Harry. "I believe I'll order the anchor up and go after her."

"But in that way we are more likely to lose track of her than by staying here."

"That's so," Harry admitted. "But I would like to know what is keeping her out so long. Why, it's nearly time for us to sail."

"She's only taunting us," laughed Owen. "You didn't want to let her go out alone in the motor boat; so now she is going to worry you for revenge."

"There go the battleships," said Harry, as the far boom of a heavy gun announced the beginning of the target practice.

The "sail" that Pauline had sighted from the sinking motor boat and toward which she now drove desperately, was not a sail, as she discovered on closer view. It was a great white sheet of canvas stretched between two masts or uprights that were fixed in the deck of what seemed to be an old canal boat. Pauline was trying to puzzle out the meaning of the strange craft and its peculiar rig when suddenly her attention was gripped by a graver problem.

The engine of the motor boat had stopped.

The water which now half-filled the little vessel had found its way at last through the protection-walls around the motor. Without propulsion, the head of the boat swung slowly around, and within a hundred feet of the goal she sought. Pauline felt herself baffled anew. The motor boat began to drift.

Pauline seized an oar and plied it with all her strength. She managed to swing the boat again, and, standing almost knee-deep in water, paddling now on one side, now on the other, she fought on toward the sheeted hull.

It was only a question of time now. The water continued to flow in through the subtle leak that Raymond Owen had cut in the bottom of the boat. Pauline could feel the rise of the water; she could feel the increasing weight of the craft as the paddling became more and more difficult.

On the seat behind her, with his paws still set patiently upon the now useless wheel, the little bull terrier waited and watched without a whimper.

"It is a canal boat," Pauline said to herself, as she forced the sinking boat past the stern of the hulk. "And it's anchored; there are the chains. I wonder what in the world it is for."

She began to call again, hoping that there might be some one aboard the vessel; but no answer came. There was not the slightest sign of life on the deck or in the low-set cabin.

A sudden gurgling groan—and Pauline felt

the motor boat quiver from stem to stern. Two more desperate paddle strokes and she was within reach of the forechains of the hulk. She stepped back, caught Cyrus under her arm and then, just as the water-filled launch was sucked into the sea from beneath her feet, she grasped the chains and swung herself to the side of the mysterious hulk.

In spite of the weird loneliness, the puzzling surroundings, the fearful uncertainty that still beset her, she reached the low deck with a prayer of thanks on her lips. Here was safety, at least for a time. Here were solid planks under her feet. Here was probably a kind of shelter—if need be. She moved toward the door of the cabin to investigate. Cyrus ran ahead of her, sniffing suspiciously at every corner. But he made no sign of discovery, and Pauline stepped down the rickety steps into the dim cabin without fear.

There was not a sign of human habitation, save a small pine table, two tottering chairs and the wreck of an old desk—furnishings so weak from age and wear that they seemed to have been abandoned as part of the useless hulk.

But was it abandoned? Was it useless? Pauline asked herself again as she explored a small cupboard in the wall. Surely there must be some object in the anchoring of even such a battered ruin out at sea. Surely some one must have rigged up the strange sail as a sort of signal. And that someone—Pauline trusted and prayed—would come and find her and take her back to Harry.

She sat down on one of the quaking chairs and began to wring the water from the bottom of her dress. Cyrus came back from his tour of inspection apparently satisfied that all was safe. He sat before Pauline and so reported with his confident eyes.

"Oh, you precious puppy! What would I do now if you were not with me?" cried Pauline, suddenly catching him in her arms. He barked joyously, but next instant, with a wild squeaking, he tore himself free and dashed out of the cabin, yelping wildly.

Pauline, too, had felt and heard strange things. The hulk had suddenly trembled with a peculiar fore-and-aft motion, and next instant, on the seaward side, sounded the mighty splash of some huge missile flung into the waves.

Pauline breathlessly followed Cyrus to the deck. She found the dog standing under the great sheet of sail-cloth, looking up at it and barking. Through the cloth there was a hole as large around as the body of a man. Pauline gazed in wonder, but her bewilderment was brief. Before she had time to search her mind for possibilities, the mystery was clearly and alarmingly solved for her.

There was a weird whistling sound, a crash that seemed to turn the hulk over on its side, and the aft section of the little cabin was torn to splinters by a battleship projectile. The huge messenger of destruction drove its way through the outer side of the cabin below the water line. The distant "boom!" of the gun followed it.

There was no longer any doubt in the mind of Pauline. All flashed clearly now—the meeting with the young officers the day before, their errand of buying a barge for a naval target. What a fool she had been not to have thought of that the moment she saw the sail! But what else could she have done but seek refuge here anyway? There was no other place. It was only the pity, the helplessness, the hopelessness of exchanging one form of death for another—of finding new peril where she hoped to have found shelter and ultimate rescue—that harrowed her now.

She tried to make her way down into the cabin. She found the way clear. But inside there was havoc. Nothing was left but the old desk and one of the chairs. The

roof of the cabin had crumpled in over the place where the shell had gone through. The place was stifling with the dust of debris. And, more terrifying than all, through the rift in the cabin floor came up the first seeping of the sea.

Pauline watched for a minute. In a sort of fascination of fear, the slow mounting of the water. But another crash on deck drew her there.

This time she found that one of the tall masts which had held the target had been broken off in the middle by a projectile. The target drooped into a flabby triangle upon the other mast.

But still across the water the booming of the guns sounded. There must be other targets near, Pauline thought. Surely this one was useless now.

Her surmise was refuted in its very moment of utterance. A fourth projectile, falling short, cleft the water into white spume as it struck the side of the hulk.

Thrown to the deck by the impact, Pauline crawled again to the cabin. Cyrus had stopped barking and followed her, a mute companion of her despair.

As she stepped to the floor of the cabin her feet felt again the chill of water. It was an inch deep in the cabin. It was coming in from two sides now.

Pauline made her way to the old desk, opened it and felt its farthest crevices. Even in her dire straits, a little cry of joy came to her lips as she found the stub of a pencil. Two sheets of grimy paper in one of the drawers completed the moment's triumph. Pauline wrote hastily:

"Am on board your target. It is sinking. Help! PAULINE MARVIN."

"Oh, Cyrus, can you do it? Can you do it and not be drowned yourself?" she cried, childishly, but very seriously, to the dog as she carried him to the deck.

She moved to the bow of the wreck, and, shading her eyes with her hand, made out clearly the line of battleships, fringed with evanescent white, as the huge guns boomed.

Holding the dog's head with one hand and pointing off with the other: "That's where you must go, Cyrus. Here, take this to Harry! Jump!"

The animal hesitated a moment, as if it realized that the familiar trick was not to be so easily played here as on the veranda at home. But when Pauline urged him to the rail and pointed to the water, he plunged in. For an instant the little white body vanished beneath the surface, but as Pauline watched, breathless, she saw it rise again. Cyrus still held the paper in his teeth, as he swam off sturdily toward the ships.

Pauline gazed after the tiny form until it was beyond her vision.

"Target No. 1 seems dead, sir. Shall we take up a new position and open on No. 6?" asked Lieutenant Selwyn, saluting his commander on the forward deck of the flagship.

"How many hits on No. 1?" asked the white haired Admiral.

"Four out of four shots, sir—two on the target and two in the hulk."

"Going down, I suppose?"

Selwyn levelled his glasses over the water. "Apparently she is, sir. The target is banking by one mast. It wouldn't register a hit if we made it."

"Very well, take on No. 6."

"Just a moment, sir," said Selwyn in a puzzled voice. He still held the glasses to his eyes, but was scanning not the target now, but the waves between the battleship and target. "Would you mind looking, sir? I believe there is some one or something swimming in that sea."

The Admiral took the glasses. "Sea gull, probably," he smiled at the young officer. "I suppose you'll have us putting a boat over to rescue a porpoise from drowning one of these days."

"No, but—"

"Um-m—yes, by George, there is something. It looks like—what is it, anyway? It doesn't swim like a man."

"Shall we see, sir?"

"By all means."

Down the deck Selwyn's ringing voice sounded a command. In an instant a ship's boat was being lowered with a full crew.

As they reached the water the Admiral reached the rail above them. "I've found out what it is," he called down with a laugh. "It's a dog."

"Shall we come back, sir?" asked Selwyn



This is from the Motion Picture of "Pauline" by the Famous Pathe Players "Now don't scold us—Cyrus and me!" commanded Pauline.

"No. I want to save the dog, and I want to find out what it's got in its mouth." The boat shot away from the side of the ship toward the tossing white dot among the waves that marked the weakening progress of little Cyrus.

As the boat drew up to him, the strong hands of Selwyn reached down and plucked the exhausted, chilled, quivering form from the water. But Selwyn was not Harry. And Cyrus had been told to take the paper to Harry. He growled as the Lieutenant tried to pull Pauline's drenched note from the set teeth.

"You'll have to hold him, even if he bites a couple of us," said Selwyn to the men nearest him. "We've got to see this note."

The sailors gripped the struggling Cyrus, body and head, while Selwyn forced open the snapping jaws. Cyrus fought to the last, but there was not enough strength left in him to prevent his defeat.

A swift glance at the paper, and Selwyn muttered an oath in his excitement.

"Make for that wrecked target over there—No. 1," he shouted. "Put all you've got into it. There's a girl on board the hulk and it's sinking."

As the men strained eagerly to the oars and the boat shot through the waves, Selwyn stood up with the signal flag and waved to the waiting Admiral on the deck that a battleship the strangest news that was war-scarred veteran had ever received at sea.

Pauline crept back to the cabin after dispatching Cyrus on his desperate errand. No more shots fell near the target, but the boom of guns continued distantly. A great loneliness appalled her heart. She was even remorseful now for having sent the dog to an almost certain death in the towering waves. How could that tiny body but bet the sea for miles? It seemed to Pauline now that she would rather have him with her—at the end.

For the end loomed very near. The cabin of the wrecked target-boat was now a lake, from the force of the inrush of the ever-widening leak, partly from the violent rocking of the hulk. Pauline sat down on the top step of the cabin entrance, and, with her hands pressed to her face, watched the rapid rising of the tide. Every new inch dampened on the line of the dry wall marked a moment's progress toward her doom.

"If I could only make it seem that I didn't get into trouble with the motor boat!" she said to herself.

"Harry will never forgive himself for letting me go. I shall have broken his heart, and I shall be dead and unable to comfort him. Oh, if I ever—by any chance—should be saved, I will marry him, marry him, marry him to-morrow, and never do another foolish thing as long as I live."

A sudden lurch of the side-heavy craft sent a splash of water to her boot-top. She drew back and got to her feet. She was not afraid of the dampness, for she was drenched head to foot from her frantic endeavors to stay the leaks in the cabin; but these insinuating, subtle tongues of water that grew more and more menacing each moment made her shudder. She thought of the man in "Tollers of the Sea" who had sat in the rock-cleft while the tide crept up over him and killed him. But he had wanted to die. He had lost the one he loved. She—she wanted, with all the strength of her pulsing youth, to live and love.

It seemed hours since she had sent the dog overboard, but she knew that the ships that loomed clearly to her vision were really miles away. She walked to the forward deck and leaned against the surviving mast of the target. Into the mast

at intervals, on either side, had been driven heavy spikes to be used as steps by the riggers in adjusting the target. Pauline wondered why some one was not sent to repair the target.

Even here on deck she could feel the surging of the water in the cabin and in the hold. Now and then the craft writhed to one side, or trembled like a living thing as the deadly waters rolled from one end to the other.

There came a sudden sound almost like a blast from the hold. She felt the deck quiver under her and next instant water came bulging up through a huge rent in the planks.

At the same time the little cabin seemed to boil over. From its burst windows and through its companionway the water poured out upon the deck, which was awash a foot deep within a minute.

Pauline, standing by the mast, shuddered, and shut her eyes. She climbed the mast two steps and looked down, like a trapped wild thing, at bay but helpless before an unrelenting foe.

She climbed higher, step by step, as the water rose. The torture of the slow death was becoming almost unendurable. She was on the point of uttering a prayer for deliverance in death. It seemed incredible that the flooded vessel could keep afloat now.

She could not look at the rising waters any longer. She kept her eyes fixed on the sky or on the far-rolling reaches of the waves that would so soon be her tomb. Gazing thus, she suddenly thrust her hand to her eyes as a sun-bleed and scanned the surface of the sea intently.

Was it—could it be—a boat? She could not believe it. What she believed was that she was going insane. She knew that people wrecked at sea did that, and imagined they were rescued when there was no chance or hope. And yet, fascinated, she looked again, and this time hearing corroborated sight. For, from the tossing gray speck on the billows, came, distinctly, stridently, hopefully, a seaman's hail.

Pauline tried to call back, but emotion choked her. She was trembling so that she could hardly keep her grasp on the mast.

The boat came on with splendid speed. But such speed was needed. Selwyn's keen eye could see that without his glasses.

"Hang on!" he cried cheerily through his megaphone. "We'll be there in a—Jump! Jump!" he finished wildly as he saw the target boat topple, squirm and plunge, stern first, to the bottom.

Pauline had jumped. For a moment the waves enveloped her. But, rising, she had strength and heart to swim, and, within a minute's time she had been lifted into the ship's boat.

Cyrus came creeping toward her, his ears droop with the chagrin of having delivered her message to the wrong person.

Raymond Owen, standing at the rail of the yacht forward, felt a silent presence behind him. He turned to confront Klegg, the old sailor, who had seen Pauline off that morning in the motor boat.

"What in the world are you standing there for—like a ghost?" demanded the secretary.

"I wanted to ask for a word with you, sir."

"Well, a word about what?"

"I wanted to ask why you scuttled that motor boat," whispered Klegg, his weather-seared face twisting itself into an ugly and insinuating grin.

Raymond Owen gasped. For the first time in all the sordid record of his crimes he was disarmed, discovered. For an instant he gazed at Klegg with the wild, blas-

ing eyes of a trapped beast; it seemed that he was about to spring upon the possessor of his secret. But quickly he mastered himself. He did not waste words in pretense or bravado.

"You—saw?" he asked.

"Yes, I—saw," mimicked Klegg grimly. "And for what I saw I want my price."

"You shall have it. Here." Owen drew out his wallet and nervously extracted three \$100 bank notes. "This will show you that I mean what I say. We'll talk the rest over later. Go. Here comes Marvin."

Harry, with his alarm for Pauline writ plainly on his drawn face, paused only for a word with the secretary.

"If she's not back in half an hour, I'm going out after her with the small boats. You'll command one and I'll take the other."

"I'm beginning to think that is best," said Owen.

Harry went down the companionway to the cabin. The secretary paced slowly down the after-deck. Klegg, leaning against the rail and defiantly smoking a cigar against the rules of the yacht, greeted him with another grin.

"My price is just \$50,000, Mr. Owen," he announced. "I talk business straight from the shoulder."

Owen gave no sign of emotion. He seemed to be looking off, absent-mindedly, over the bay, where the dusk was bringing out, one by one and tier by tier, the lights of boat and wharf and town. They were alone on the after deck. Klegg stood at the very end of the rail, his back against the last upright, one foot on the middle rung.

"You mean," said Owen stepping close to him.

But he did not finish the sentence. Instead he lunged at the sailor, caught him by the throat and arm and swung him madly from the protecting rail.

On the naked edge of the deck they struggled for a moment. But Owen's strength was not great, his courage not enduring. Into the darkening water beside the yacht it was he, not Klegg, who fell.

Klegg watched the form of the secretary sink, rise and glide away on the running tide. A choking cry and it vanished again. There were sounds on the other side of the deck forward that drowned the cry and drew the attention of Klegg. He walked into the companionway and looked down. Selwyn and his men were helping Pauline from the battleship's boat to the deck. Harry came rushing from the cabin.

"Now don't scold us—Cyrus and me," commanded Pauline. "If you say I told you so, I'll fly!"

She caught from the deck a cardboard waste paper box that one of the sailors had just emptied.

"But I did tell you so," insisted Harry. "However, thank heaven!"

His words were stifled under the enveloping box which Pauline brought down over his head with a crash.

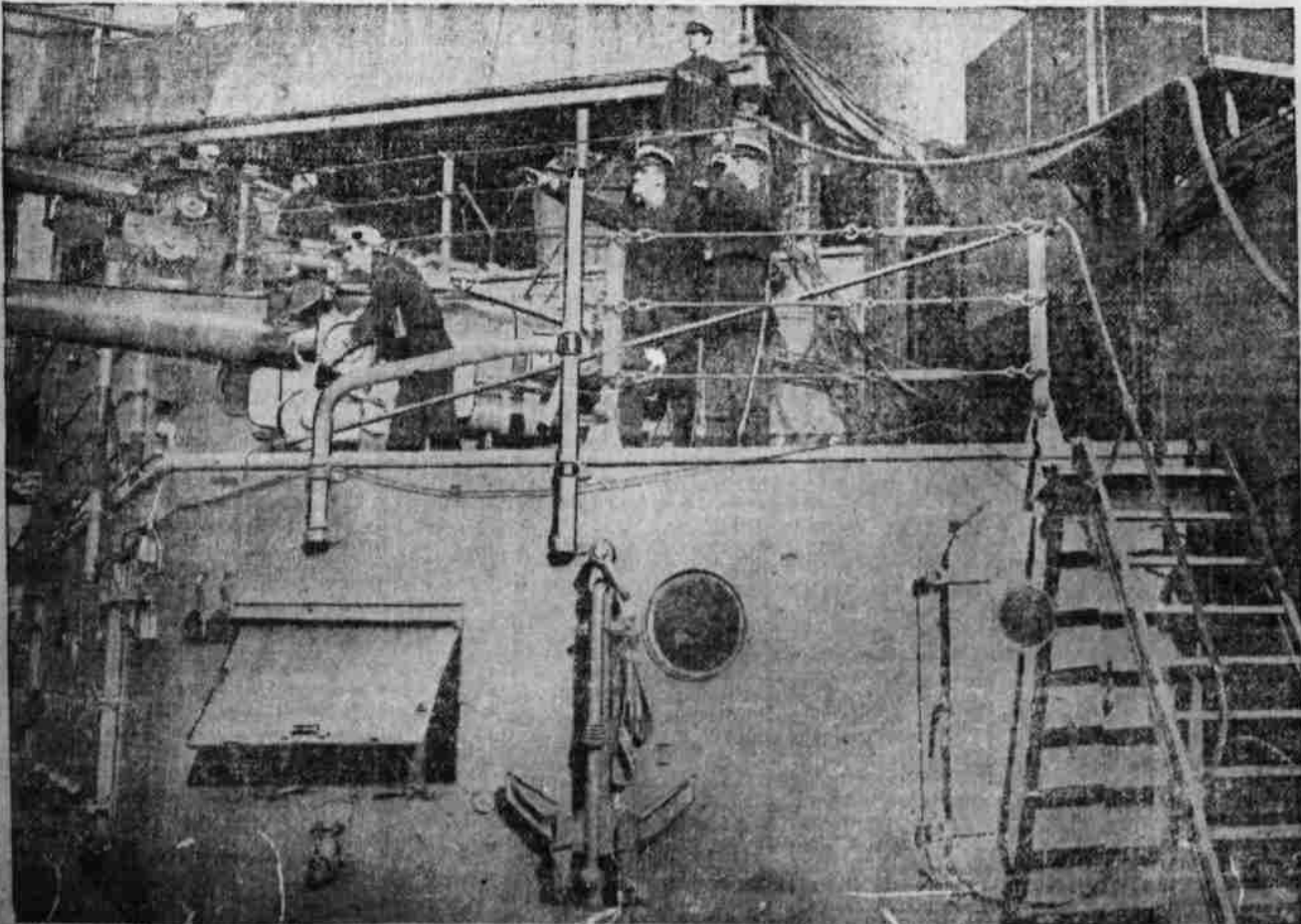
He tore it off crossly, but her beaming face—the unutterable relief of finding her again—left no room for anger in his heart. She came toward him with outstretched arms.

"And this time it is true—I'm all through with adventures. Harry, I'm going to—"

"Marry me? Polly! Do you mean it?"

"Yes." As he clasped her in his arms, their forms, silhouetted in the lights of the yacht against the darkness beyond, were the last vision of a drowning man, who rose for the last time, tried to shout again, but, strangled by the water, sank slowly to his doom.

(THE END)



This is from the Motion Picture of "Pauline" by the Famous Pathe Players "I believe there is somebody swimming in that sea," said Selwyn.