

Rye, Fortchester, the car flew. And like grim death, his purpose never swerving, Gungsdorf clung to the spare tires. His feat was worthy of a better. Vengeance is no man's. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord."

The old fishing town of Giddings was dark as sin. The financiers, conferring, had determined to make this, rather than Missaquid, their point of departure. They would be late to catch the last boat for Bartell's. Giddings, with Missaquid, formed the base of a triangle, of which Gull Island was the apex. Therefore, if they could here charter some craft to convey them to the island, there would be a great saving of time.

The car ran half way through the little town, turned a right angle and descended to the wharves, and here, in the darkness, stopped. Gungsdorf was the first to alight. He slipped into the shelter of a shed that smelled of fish and flung himself to the ground.

Why didn't he shoot down the financiers as they alighted from the car? His hands were so cramped from gripping the tires he could not have held or pointed a gun; they were shaking like leaves of poplar trees in a wind. He was in acute physical pain.

But, lying on the ground, writhing with exhaustion, he began to recover little by little from the ordeal through which he had passed, and he was able to keep an eye on the car and on the shadowy men whom he hated, and to listen to what they had to say to each other and to the fisherman whom they routed from his bed, and who finally, for a prodigious sum of money, consented to venture out in the easterly storm that was brewing and carry them and their luggage to Gull Island.

The name of his little schooner was the Mary Nye. She was at the end of the long wharf, half unloaded. No, he had given up fishing. There was more money in coasting. They could start at once; he would have to get his crew together—two men and a boy. Had they really come all the way from New York? They must be hard set. Better come to the house. He'd rout the misses out of bed, and she'd give them coffee.

Barclay gave some orders to his driver, and much money; also he gave much money to the other man on the box, and he shook hands with them both and thanked them for their devotion to them, and told them that their future would be his care.

Then the car went one way, and the financiers and the fishermen went another, and presently Gungsdorf doubled half over, like a man crippled with rheumatism, rose from his hiding place, and hobbled off in a third.

The Mary Nye lay in the lee of the long wharf near the end. She was a

that the presence on the schooner of a man unknown and unvouched for was not pleasant. So he descended into the hold, struck a match, and had a look at the sleeper's face.

Then very softly he returned to the deck, half closed the hatch, and, thrusting his head through the opening that remained, he called loudly: "Wake up, there!"

The snores ceased and were followed by a kind of sleepy groaning. "Gungsdorf," called Barclay in a sharp, incisive voice, "can you hear me?"

"I hear you."

"What are you doing on this boat?"

No answer.

"Well, you'll not be able to do any mischief. You seem to like it down there. I am going to close this hatch so that you can't open it. You will not get out until the boat is back of her starting point. The captain is a safe man. You will not find out from him where I have been set ashore. So good-night to you."

Gungsdorf's answer was to fire two wild shots from his automatic. Barclay slammed the hatch to and succeeded in fastening it so that it could not be opened from below.

Then he went once more to the captain and talked to him for some time in an undertone. After that he waked Sturtevant and Semmes to tell them what had happened.

"He's been insane for some time," said Sturtevant. "He wouldn't stop at listening to what they had to say to each other and to the fisherman whom they routed from his bed, and who finally, for a prodigious sum of money, consented to venture out in the easterly storm that was brewing and carry them and their luggage to Gull Island."

So they'd land somewhere, would they? He'd be carried back to the starting point, would he? Not if he knew it. His ride on the back of the automobile was all in vain, was it? He'd show 'em—damn em!

And his hands, their strength refreshed by hatred, insanity and suicidal daring, sought and found the big auger and began to bore a hole through the bottom of the schooner. He would drown, but so would they!

After a time the edge of the hole he was boring became damp, water began to trickle from the bit, then to spit and hiss, then the bit went clear through, and when he had withdrawn it water spouted upward as from a garden hose.

Gungsdorf laughed aloud, and at once began to bore a second hole. When he had nearly finished a third the bit broke short off, and Gungsdorf cursed. But the Mary Nye was taking in a good deal of water, and the failure of the bit only seemed to have post-

poned the time when the sea should close over her.

But in the book of fate the Mary Nye was not destined to perish by water alone. Among her heterogeneous coastwise cargo which had not been unloaded, from the small hold back of the main hold, were two sacks of unslaked lime. After a time a trickle of water found its way to these, and they began to smoke.

The first person to be aware of the smoke was Gungsdorf. It filtered into the main hold before it found its way to the deck. Gungsdorf at the moment, with a kind of diabolical eagerness, was trying to calculate the rapidity with which the water was rising. This was a difficult matter, owing to the motion of the vessel.

When he smelled the smoke his heart almost stopped beating, he was frightened. Water and dynamite had no terror for him, but death by fire had always been his nightmare. He was like a man waking after a great drunkenness, during which, let us say, he has committed some crime which his frenzied brain at the time of its commission had seemed a reasonable and even a meritorious thing to do, but the memory of which makes the same brain, the fumes of alcohol gone, a prey to the most awful terror and remorse.

In short, the man had recovered from his murderous and suicidal madness. He was sane—a rational creature, who realized what he had done, and that the deed was in vain, and that he alone would be destroyed by it.

What madness to suppose that such a man as Barclay would stay by the

Mary Nye till she went down? She carried a boat for just such an emergency. But he, Gungsdorf, while the others rowed merrily off, would be left in the dark.

In the first moment of reasoning it did not occur to him that the ship was on fire. Rather he thought that the smoke was some devilish device of the triumvirate to asphyxiate him.

From the eastern cliffs, which received the onslaught of the open sea, Tommy and Celestia walked to those lower western cliffs whose feet are washed by the less strenuous waters which flow between Gull Island and the mainland, and here, sheltered from the wind, they seated themselves, ostensibly to admire the view, but really to admire each other.

The view consisted of gray water, a vast expanse of it, in commotion, and of a vast expanse of small gray sky; and, many miles distant, a small schooner beating slowly up to the island.

"They must be cooking a bonny breakfast," said Tommy, "judging from the smoke."

"Judging by the smoke," said Celestia, "they've got more than one stove."

"By George you are right!" said Tommy. Then, a moment later, with excitement: "She's on fire. That's why the davits are swung outboard. They are waiting till the last moment to lower a boat. Thank the Lord they've got one! I suppose they want to get into the lee of the island. It must be pretty rough out there for a skiff. They're not making much headway, though. She looks very low in the water. Probably leaks like a sieve, and the fire keeps them from getting to the pumps."

"Can't we do anything to help?"

"Not unless the launch has come back from Bartell's. She went over early for newspapers and supplies. Let's go see."

So they raced off to the landing. The launch had not yet returned, and there was neither sight nor sound of her. A catboat without even a mast was drawn up on ways, and the only other craft at the landing was a flat-bottomed skiff, so low in the water that she could not have lived in the rough water outside of the harbor.

"We can't do any good," said Tommy with a great deal of regret in his voice. Let's hurry back and see the end of it."

They stopped at the house for field glasses, of which there were several pairs in a drawer of the hall table, and hurried back to the western cliffs.

In his explorations of the night before Gungsdorf had noted the sacks of lime raised from the floor of the hold to keep them from any chance water. And it dawned upon him it was his own fault that they had got wet, and generated enough heat to set the ship on fire.

Captain Nye had kept his courage up, and held grimly to the task of trying to make head against the fire and against the water rising in the hold.

Through what remained of the night, and through all the long, anxious morning, he and his two men, aided by Barclay, Semmes and Sturtevant, had fought like heroes against the fire and water.

It was discouraging to have to cart into the burning after-hold so much of the water that they blistered their hands pumping it out of it. At one time it looked as if they were going to get the fire under control. In that event they could have kept the vessel afloat indefinitely.

Captain Nye had suggested bringing Gungsdorf on deck and putting him to work, and the effort had been made. The man was disarmed as he came up, wet to the knees and choking with smoke. But at the sight of Barclay all his hate returned. He would not work; they couldn't make him.

"Why the hell should I," said he, "when I took the trouble to bore the holes that are sinking her and to start the fire that's burning her?"

All regarded the man with a horror that was akin to awe. Anger succeeded this.

"Is that the truth?" asked Captain Nye.

"Yes."

Captain Nye motioned to his two men. They seized Gungsdorf, and after a short struggle cast him back into his prison and battened down the hatch.

"There's no room for him in the small boat," said Captain Nye; "and there's no more mischief he can do down below."

It was only the fatigue of those who were trying to save her that eventually settled the fate of the Mary Nye. Her captain called the party together.

"Thanks, all hands," he said. "You've done all men could do. We'll need what strength we've got left to get us ashore. So let her burn."

The boy, who had been at the wheel ever since the discovery of the fire, was relieved by Captain Nye. The boy promptly lay down on the deck, and the others followed suit, resting themselves against the time of embarking in the small boat.

At last the moment came when Captain Nye thought best to abandon his ship. His eyes filled with tears.

"Don't grieve, captain," said Barclay; "I'll pay you her value five times over. You're a good man."

As they were about to step into the boat that bumped alongside, but little below the level of the sinking deck, Barclay said curtly: "I can't leave Gungsdorf to die like that."

He himself unfastened the hatch. Gungsdorf had climbed up the ladder to keep out of water as long as possible. He was more dead than alive. They had to lift him into the boat. She rode very low in the water and

rolled precariously when she had drifted out of the lee of the doomed schooner, and when she hit the rough water she rolled quietly over and floated bottom up.

The shock of the cold water revived Gungsdorf so that he did not at once drown. He succeeded in getting hold of the boat and keeping his head out of water.

Over the inverted bows Barclay crawled out of the water and lay sprawling on the arched, slippery bottom of the boat. From this advantageous position he looked about eagerly to see whom he could help. Of that whole party only Barclay and the boy could swim. Sturtevant and Semmes, if they ever came to the sur-

face, were never seen again by mortal eyes. The boy swam to the boat and climbed up on it, with Barclay's help.

Then for the first time Barclay saw the agonized face of Gungsdorf. The man's grip was failing, and he knew it. At a little distance Captain Nye floated face down. His two men came to the surface, came together, clinched and died, each trying to use the other as a ladder by which to climb out of the water.

Barclay looked for a while coldly into Gungsdorf's face, and then looked away.

"For God's sake help me!"

Barclay's expression did not change. He did not look at Gungsdorf.

"For Christ's sake!"

Then the little boy, his teeth chattering, said:

"Tain't pretty to see men drown," and began to blubber.

With an oath Barclay reached for Gungsdorf and tried to draw him out of the water. It was a difficult and precarious operation.

"Steady! Don't get rattled!" said Barclay. "You, boy, steady her as much as you can."

And Barclay worked with all his strength to save the wretched man's life.

There was a strange look in Gungsdorf's face. It was no longer hatred. There was hope in it; but, more than that, there was something that was akin to love. A miracle had been wrought in the evil man's heart.

Barclay trying to save him!

"You're a good man," he said. "I thought you were the devil."

"My man," said Barclay, "I can't get you up here. I'm sorry. My strength is petered out. If it's any comfort to you, I forgive you for what you have done. I've done plenty of evil, too. I guess we both thought we were trying to do good. We looked at life from different angles. You didn't believe that men like me were human beings; I had the same feeling about men like you. I guess that's mostly what's the matter with this world, anyway."

Holding tightly to Gungsdorf's hand, he still managed to keep the anarchist's head out of water.

All this Tommy and Celestia saw from the top of the cliffs. They had recognized the two chief actors in the drama, and Tommy's suspense over the fate of the man who had been good to him was awful to see. It was that white, quiet suspense that transcends all outcry and lamentation.

"Gungsdorf," said Barclay, "I'm slipping; I can't hold you any longer. I'm sorry."

"All right," said Gungsdorf. And he let go of Barclay's hand and sank like a stone.

"My God!" exclaimed Barclay. "What sand!"

The moment Gungsdorf's head reappeared Barclay slipped quietly into the water and tried to save him. But Gungsdorf had gone down open-mouth. He was too confused to understand the calm, steady command of Barclay—to keep his head—to keep still.

He tried to climb upon his would-be savior, and they went down together. Then Barclay's presence of mind left him, and he, too, grappled.

And so they died—in each other's arms.

The little boy, his teeth chattering, pushed on the inverted boat, blubbering bitterly.

On the cliff of Gull Island the girl from heaven was trying to console one of the richest men in the world.

(THE END.)

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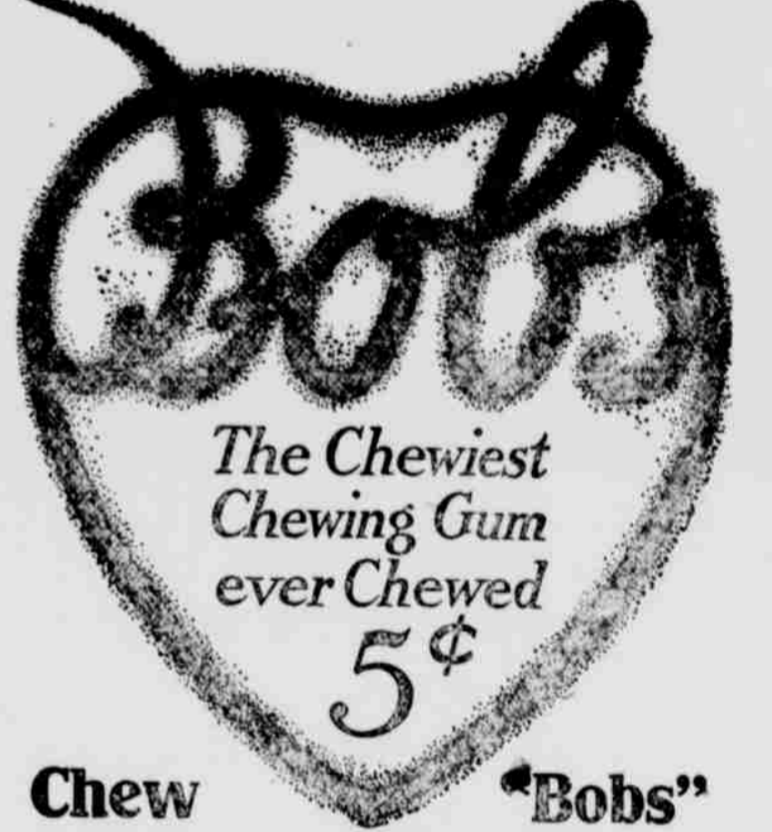
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Gungsdorf Clung to the Spare Tires.

dirty little ship. Amidship was a hold, formerly used as a container for codfish; it still smelled of them. The hatchway giving access to this hold was open, and into it Gungsdorf descended. It seemed to him, after exploring the schooner from stern to stem, to offer the best means of concealment. The little cabin aft was cleaner. It would be the choice of the triumvirate for their own quarters.

Gungsdorf was half crazy with fatigue. In a far corner of the hold he found a pile of sacking and flung himself down on them. But there was something hard among them that hurt him. He groped for this, and found that it was a powerful two-handed augur, fixed with an inch and a half bit.

He pushed it to one side and in a moment was sound asleep.

Barclay was restless; the cabin was stuffy and verminous; he preferred the deck and the open air. So it happened that in passing the main hatch, in a lull of the wind, he heard a sound of a man snoring. He had left Semmes and Sturtevant complaining of the discomforts of the cabin. Captain Nye was at the wheel, the two men and the boy forward.

"Here," thought Barclay, "we've got a stowaway aboard. Some poor son-of-a-gun of a wharf rat, I suppose."

He strolled aft.

"There's someone asleep in the main hold," he said.

"The hell there is!"

"You can hear him snoring if you listen in the hatchway."

"Well, let him snore." Gradually it dawned upon Barclay