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MY SHIPWRECK.

Told by MRS. WESTWOOD, and Set Down by MARY FARRAN.

The exciting experience that befell a sailor's wife while making a voyage with her husband. As Mrs. Westwood remarks, the happenings of that disastrous trip were quite enough to satisfy any reasonable woman's thirst for perilous adventure.

This adventure happened some thirty years ago, when I had not been long married. My husband was part owner and captain of a little coasting schooner, the Two Brothers, of Hull, which used to trade up and down the coast between London and various eastern or northern ports. Her cargoes were of all kinds, and not always particularly clean. Sometimes she carried coals to London and brought back bone manure, which, of course, smelt horribly; or it might be a "clean" cargo of grain or machinery. I didn't appreciate very lengthy partings from my husband, so occasionally, when there was nothing disagreeable about the cargo, he would take me with him on a summer trip for four or five days at a time, and I soon got to be a first-rate sailor, and enjoyed the little cruises immensely.

At the time of this story I had gone on board the Two Brothers for one of these little trips. We sailed from Hull to Newcastle, in order to ship a cargo of fire-bricks and coke to carry to London, where, so far as I was concerned, the voyage would end, for I was to stay a few days there with some cousins, and then go home by train.

We set sail from Newcastle one morning with a strong wind blowing and a rough sea, but as it was still early in September, and we had been having splendid weather for some time, we expected at the most nothing worse than a little delay. But whatever the cause may have been—and I'm not clever enough about such matters to be able to explain that—our little vessel was fated to encounter one of the severest gales known on that coast for many years.

Long before noon we were in the midst of it. The waves dashed right over the schooner, and the wind shrieked and howled around us like a devouring monster. Of course, all sail was furlled, and I had to stay down in our tiny cabin, where I sat shivering with the sudden intense cold and with fear of the dreadful storm.

Occasionally Jack, my husband, would come to cheer me up with a few encouraging words. He was always one to look at the bright side of things, and he said if only he could keep well out to sea, away from the cruel Yorkshire coast, he believed the Two Brothers would yet weather the storm.

"If only you were safe at home, darling," he said, more than once, "I should have nothing to trouble about." And all that day and through the terrible night that followed I believe the brave fellow's one thought was for me; he would have felt little or no anxiety on his own account.

All at once, as I sat listening down below, there was a sharp rending, crashing sound, and the vessel heeled over until the floor of the cabin was like the side of a mountain, and I made sure we were going straight to the bottom. I held on to my seat as well as I could, but I was terribly frightened—too frightened even to scream.

After a short time the vessel gradually righted herself, and presently I heard my husband's voice, and knew that he was coming down to find out what effect the crash had had on my nerves. At the first glance I saw by his grave expression that something serious was the matter, and braced myself to hear bad news.

"What is it, Jack?" I asked. "Please tell me at once."

"The mast's overboard," he replied, speaking rapidly, as if every moment were precious, "but that's not the worst trouble. She's sprung a leak with the straining of the storm, and for the last hour we've been hoping the sea would quiet down enough to let us launch the boat, but, of course, in such a sea as this we couldn't keep afloat two minutes. Now, don't be frightened, dear. There's a big schooner close to us, and we're trying to get near enough to have you aboard as we pass. You must come just as you are; there's no time to think about anything else."

While he was speaking he was all the time gently drawing me up to the deck. Once there, the roar of wind and sea was so great that I knew it was no use my attempting to talk or ask questions. Besides, I didn't want to add to his troubles at such a time by my fears and protestations. I had not hat or wrap or shawl of any

description, and I had to stand shivering and terrified by the sight of the mountainous waves and the howling of the gale.

We were sailing short handed, with only two men on board besides my husband. The first hand, or mate, Tom Hudson, stood ready to help in lifting or throwing me on to the strange ship as she passed us. The second hand, a young fellow called Will Gledhill, was at the helm, and, as even I could plainly see, wore an unmistakable look of fear on his anxious face.

But I hadn't much chance to notice anything, for by this time the big schooner was not more than a dozen yards away. My husband was holding one of my arms in a firm grip, while Hudson took the other, and told me to spring forward with all my might when they gave the word, trusting to them and the sailors on the schooner to do the rest.

Half a dozen men on the other vessel were leaning far over her side, their arms forming a sort of cradle to catch me. They had understood my husband's signals, and with ready kindness, unable to help us in any other way, had steered thus dangerously near in the attempt to rescue a woman in danger.

My knees trembled under me, but I tried to nerve myself to the thought of that dreadful spring, though it seemed to me the schooner would never get close enough to keep me from falling into the boiling waves.

In one way I was right. Just as she swirled past Hudson looked sharply at my husband, who as quickly shook his head, muttering, "Not near enough by a yard," and let go my arm with a despairing gesture. Before I had time to realize the sudden revulsion of feeling, our attention was drawn by a shout from the group of sailors, and we saw Gledhill, as the big schooner passed him, make a flying leap toward her. With the help of strong arms outstretched with a sailor's promptitude he was landed safely on her deck. It was a magnificent jump, one that I think only the madness of panic could have made, for when the schooner passed our stern she was considerably farther off than when she passed us standing in the bows.

"Coward!" shouted my husband, shaking his fist at the fast-disappearing vessel, and Hudson used stronger words still, though I couldn't myself blame the lad overmuch for trying to save his life when he believed nothing but swift death awaited all those on board our sinking ship.

I told Jack so, and, putting my arms around his neck, told him how truly glad I was, even in that moment of despair, to stay with him instead of being unwillingly forced on to the strange ship, leaving him to face death alone. It was only for his sake, I said, that I had consented to go. He brightened up a little after that, though he couldn't long allow himself to forget the peril he had brought me into.

By this time the waves were washing continuously over the deck, and the little schooner was plainly settling rapidly. It was impossible to launch our one small boat, but my husband and Hudson dragged it to the middle of the deck and made me get in and sit in the stern, while Hudson sat in the bow and Jack occupied the middle seat. In a calm sea it would easily have accommodated four or five people, but in such a tempest even one less was a mercy, though we scarcely thought of that until afterward.

One of the strangest things to me was the way in which the big schooner had completely disappeared within a few minutes of passing us—just as if she had been swallowed up in the waves. I felt sure she must have gone down, and, indeed, Jack and Hudson were inclined to the same opinion, though, as we afterward discovered, we were mistaken.

I shall never forget the horror of sitting in that little boat waiting for the Two Brothers to go down beneath us. As I sat there I prayed silently that the wind and waves might go down and enable us to keep afloat on that rough, tumbling sea.

The mate and my husband had each a pair of oars, and at last, when our tiny craft was well aloft above the submerged deck, Jack gave the word, and we literally rowed off the sinking vessel as she went down into the

depths of the ocean. In a few minutes more the last trace of her had vanished, and we were alone in our frail boat on that wide, stormy sea.

I shuddered involuntarily and hid my face in my hands. It all looked so much more terrifying to me now we were so close to the waves, and at first I expected that very roller that bore down upon us would overwhelm us.

"Heart up, little woman!" said Jack, speaking more cheerfully now we were fairly aloft and there was something he could do. "The sea's gone down wonderfully in the last quarter of an hour, and I think we can easily keep this cockleshell moving if you'll help by bailing her out with this tin pail."

It was a fact, as he said, that the waves had gone down considerably, and the gale showed distinct signs of abating. When we first got into the boat, in spite of all I could say, Jack insisted on taking off his coat and making me put it on over my thin dress. He now set me to work bailing out with a small tin pail the water that washed over the sides. I was glad enough, you may be sure, of something to do, and after a while the exercise put some degree of warmth into my frozen limbs. Jack said that his work at the oars kept him warm, but, of course, all of us were soaked to the skin, for we were without the least shelter from the heavy spray that continually broke over us. Sometimes it was all the two men could do to keep the tiny boat's head to the waves, for, though the tumult was much less than before, we were still in danger of instant destruction if she once got broadside on or a wave broke over the gunwale. However, they toiled on bravely, and occasionally one of them took a short spell of rest, while all of us kept a constant lookout for a vessel each time we rose to the summit of a big wave.

This went on for several long, anxious hours, and my arms and back so ached with stooping that I could hardly go on bailing, and even the stern, white faces of the two men began to show signs of exhaustion. If only I could have given them a drink or a morsel of food! But there we were in our little boat, absolutely without food or drink of any description, and what we suffered from thirst I think only those who have felt the same can understand. It wasn't hunger so much; I felt as if food would have choked me, though, of course, I had tasted nothing since our early breakfast. It was the awful thirst brought on by excitement and nervous exhaustion, and Hudson said afterward he believed he should have gone mad if it had lasted much longer.

The afternoon had passed and it was beginning to grow dusk, but we still kept on bailing and rowing mechanically, until suddenly my husband gave a low moan and dropped forward into the bottom of the boat in a dead faint.

I was on my knees beside him in a moment, trying to lift his head as much as possible out of the water and to bring him back to consciousness by rubbing his stiff, frozen hands. But I could make no impression, and, fearing he was dead or dying, I clung to him wildly and implored the mate to tell me what I should do.

"Do, mum?" said Hudson. "If yer don't want us all to be drowned you must take to that there bailing again, an' pretty quick, too! The captain'll soon come round all right if yer leave him to himself." The man's manner was rough, but he showed that he meant well, for he managed with some difficulty to slip off his own coat, which he gruffly bade me put around my husband. I could do nothing else for him in our helpless condition, and, of course, it would be worse than useless to neglect the only means of saving the lives of any of us.

So with aching heart I seized my pail again and tried to lessen the amount of water that had rapidly come in over the sides of the boat. To our dismay the wind had shifted slightly, and the sea was growing more and more tempestuous.

The next half hour was one of horror, and the agony of aching muscles and exhausted strength. I toiled on with mind and body numb with misery, and fearing every moment that the poor mate would collapse like my husband. One cause for thankfulness was that Jack had opened his eyes and was able to regain his seat, but one of his oars had gone overboard, and Hudson would not hear of relinquishing his and taking a spell of rest.

In spite of all our efforts the waves that broke over the boat left more water behind than either Jack or I could bale out, and in almost apathetic despair I watched it gradually rise, un-

til we all felt that hope was over and the end very near.

Just at this terrible moment, through the darkening night, a black shadow suddenly rose before us, and we saw a vessel so close that at first it seemed as if she would inevitably run us down. We all shouted at the top of our voices, and to our joy we were heard. A rope was flung to us and was cleverly caught and made fast by my husband, and in a short time they had drawn us up to the side of the vessel, though our little boat was already half swamped and we were in great danger of being drowned before they could get us on board. Once safely on deck, our boat was cut adrift, and in a few minutes we saw it fill with water and sink like the Two Brothers beneath the surface.

For the second time that day we had been rescued from a watery grave, and it was with very mingled feelings that we looked about us to see what our new shelter was like.

We were almost too stupefied with cold and fatigue to care much when we learned that luck was still against us, and that we had practically jumped from the frying pan into the fire. We had been picked up by Captain Naylor, of the small collier brig *Susannah*, which had been blown out of her course by the storm and had sprung a leak. She was a stout-built vessel, but was now very old and weather beaten; still her captain hoped to be able to make Yarmouth Harbor before she foundered.

Hudson and my husband insisted on turning to with the men in their work at the pumps, for the crew of the brig needed all the help they could possibly get.

As for myself, I went below to the little cabin, where the rising water was already a foot deep, and sat down with my feet on a chair to keep them out of the wet. Jack and one of the sailors did the best they could for me. I took off Jack's coat and the soaked bodice of my dress, and they fastened them up on one of the yards to dry in the wind, and covered my shoulders with a coarse blanket. I dared not attempt to take off my boots, for I knew if I did I should never get them on again, so I had to bear the discomfort of my poor, aching, swollen feet as well as I could.

I was so worn out that even in that constrained position, still oppressed with anxiety as to our ultimate fate, I managed to doze off for a few minutes every now and then, to awake shivering with the cold. By the light of a greasy oil lamp I could see that the water in the cabin was still rising, but very slowly, so that there was a chance, with luck, of the poor old *Susannah* reaching Yarmouth.

At last, after what seemed to me like a dozen ordinary nights rolled into one, my husband returned with my bodice, which I put on with difficulty, for, of course, it had dried as stiff as leather. He had resumed his coat, but looked almost as dirty and disheveled as the crew of the collier. He told me the men were almost at the last gasp with fatigue, having had to work the pumps all night without rest, but the captain kept them going, and was determined to hold on if possible, as he had only one leaky boat, too small in any case to carry us all. Jack said that Captain Naylor worked with the men himself, and forced them to respect him by his pluck and endurance. Dawn was just breaking as Jack helped me on deck, for I could hardly walk. I was so stiff and tired. I had my blanket folded for warmth over my dress, and Jack found a sheltered corner where we partook of another "meal" of biscuit and water.

In the dawning light everybody showed to the worst possible advantage. A more haggard, unkempt, grimy set of men I never saw, and I have no doubt my own looks were a good match for theirs. I hadn't even a hat to cover the wet wisps of hair that clung round my face and fell down my back, and all attempts to fasten them up ended in failure owing to the fact that most of my hairpins had fallen out during my exertions in the small boat.

However, this was all forgotten in the sigh of thankfulness and relief that rose from every breast when the cry went up that Yarmouth was in sight, and we knew that we might soon set foot on land once more.

It was even yet doubtful if the water-logged vessel could reach the harbor in safety. A steam tug, presently signalled to know if she should come to our assistance, but Captain Naylor doggedly refused. He said that after all his efforts to take the brig in he wasn't going to waste money on a

steam tug. In spite of our natural anxiety, we couldn't but admire the man's determination, though I confess I didn't feel so much admiration myself until we were safely ashore.

Well, at last—it seemed a lifetime of waiting—"at last" came; we struggled into Yarmouth Harbor, and Jack helped, almost carried, me on to the quay. A fine sight I was for the few onlookers, but fortunately at that early hour—between 6 and 6.30—there was hardly anybody about. Jack soon had me in a cab, and we were driven straight to the Sailors' Home.

There we were treated with the utmost kindness. After a delicious breakfast of steaming hot coffee, rolls, and fish I was assisted by the matron into a warm bed, and wasn't long in falling into a sound sleep. Later in the day some decent clothing was lent me, so that I could go out and buy some new things, and my husband, though not so badly off as I was, received help of the same kind.

We went home by train to Hull the next day, and Jack duly reported the loss of the Two Brothers. Fortunately for us, his own share in the loss was entirely covered by insurance. He was soon able to get another berth as captain, and Hudson once more sailed with him as mate. As for me, after a few days' rest I felt no ill effects from my adventurous voyage.

I must tell you that the *Susannah* was repaired and again went to sea, but she foundered in Yarmouth Roads in the following spring. Captain Naylor was not on board her when she went down, and we heard he had won both respect and profit by his brave handling of her during that famous September gale.

Many months afterward, one day in the street, I suddenly came face to face with Gledhill. We stared at each other as if we had seen a ghost, for each had thought the other at the bottom of the sea. It turned out that the schooner into which Gledhill had jumped was blown out to sea in the storm, and finally ran ashore on the coast of Norway at a barren, desolate spot far from any town. From there Gledhill had tramped with most of the shipwrecked crew, until at length they reached Christiania. Gledhill was there befriended by the Seamen's Mission, and after some time was able to work his passage to Hull.

So ends my true story of the sea. I think you will admit that my one long day and night of danger and shipwreck was enough to satisfy any reasonable woman's thirst for perilous adventure.—The Wide World Magazine.

He Sat Still.

He was what is known as a "dear little fellow," that is to say, he had heaven-blue eyes, sunny hair, and an expression of complete innocence which would fit him for a soap advertisement were he not the son of respectable parents.

They were all at the photographer's, but sweet Cecil wouldn't remain still enough for his picture to be taken.

"Perhaps," suggested the urbane photographer, after the hundredth effort had failed, "it is the presence of his mother which makes the little darling restless." If mamma would withdraw, perhaps I should be successful.

The doating mother took the hint, and in a moment of two the operation had been successfully concluded.

"However did you manage to sit still, Cecil?" asked his mother. "And what did the nice gentleman say to you to make you do it?"

"The man said, 'If you don't sit still, you ugly little monkey, I'll shake the life out of you.' Tho' I that very little, mamma."—New York News.

Boston's Blank Votes.

The ballot law of Massachusetts has been recommended for adoption in other States because it compels the voter to express a preference for each candidate, and thus in theory favors "split-ticket" voting. It has another curious quality—the number of blank ballots it produces.

Parker for President had 10,000 plurality in Boston, but about 6000 ballots cast were not marked for this office at all. Douglass plurality was 33,078 in the largest vote cast, but even for Governor there were 4615 blanks. For Lieutenant-Governor there were 9750 blanks, for Secretary of State 13,750 and so on in generally increasing ratio until 23,256 blanks out of a total vote of only 98,634 testified that 24 per cent. of the voters didn't care a pencil mark who was to be Sheriff.—New York World.