

every fresh flaw. The "Fancy," cloaked in spray and ice, toiled up the quick slopes of the rising sea, and plunged with sickening heaves into the hollows beyond. Dolan bent all his strength to the spokes to match the angry jerking of the rudder, and a wild hope beat in his heart that the "Fancy" would pitch her crippled engines from their foundations. With a fierce exclamation he answered down the tube.

"Afraid, hey?" he mocked. "Scared o' yer bloomin' engynes, are ye? Well, ye'll stick to it, and not weaken on me, Jim Garrity—ye chicken-heart."

A wild squall fell upon the tug; she settled under it as one quails beneath the lash, her timbers lamenting as if in pain. Dolan was half-minded to turn back, but Garrity's warning spurred him on. He tossed a shovel of coal into the pilot-house stove, and leaned forth again from the open window, his black hair matted and dripping with the wet, and his wild eyes scrutinizing the range lights shining dimly through the flying vapor.

As he looked, out of the blackness he saw a sea rise up against the skyline, and slip silently down toward them. Its black bulk was crested with a line of foam, and the riot of the night seemed stilled at its approach. Convulsively Dolan reached for the bell, one elbow hooked over the wheel, and a cry burst from his lips. "Hang on for your lives!"

The "Fancy" set her nose against the slope, and strove desperately to rise. He saw her with terrified eyes drive her bows into the weight of water; the sea poised an instant above her decks—with a roar of thunder it broke, burying the "Fancy" fore and aft.

Deafening sounds followed—a wild chorus of straining timbers and tortured planks. The tug settled as if she must founder; then, with a crash, shook herself free. The cataract poured from her deck; she pitched forward like a loosened charger; there was still another crash, and a burst of flame spouted up in the pilot-house. Dazed by this fresh terror, Dolan turned slowly around.

The cast-iron stove in the pilot-house, torn from its stays, lay a wreck upon the floor. Its blazing coals had already fired the woodwork, the varnish was crackling busily, and one side of the structure was a sheet of flame. Stupidly, he tried to stamp out the fire, and then fell to screaming down the engine-room tube:

"Fire! Fire! Fire! The pilot-house—Garrity!"

The alarm fell upon Garrity like a blow. He looked out on deck, and saw the glow aloft. "Below there!" he cried to the fireman. "Stand by the engine—we're afire!"

He rushed forward to the galley and knocked up the crew. "The pumps!" he roared. The next moment, he was scuttling up the companion-ladder, and bursting into the pilot-house.

Dolan still stood at the wheel, staring in stupid terror at the catastrophe. "Turn her—turn her before the wind!" Garrity cried. "We'll be afire fore and aft if ye don't!" But Dolan was past giving aid. Snatching the wheel from the man's nerveless hands, Garrity wore the tug around, the flames licking at his jumper. He turned then to hand over the wheel, but Dolan had dashed out through the smoke to the momentary safety of the deck.

Rimmed by the inferno, Garrity stuck to the wheel. To give the tug her head would have been to court disaster, for the first sea would have broached her to, the second would have scuttled her. He waited an age, it seemed, for the quick thudding of the pumps, and as his greasy jumper crisped up his back in agonizing heat, he heard them begin. An instant later, a stream of water drenched him to the skin, and the peril was past.

Stooping before the gale, the "Fancy" fled back to cover, her mate standing at the wheel. Below in the galley sat Dolan, nerveless and still stupid from terror. None gave him any attention, for his cowardice was understood. But he paid no heed to their ill-disguised sneers, and sat there silent. Garrity had returned to his engine, while the mate stood at the wheel, bringing the "Fancy" up through the