

bearers stopped to laugh, and in due time they reached the shore.

Dolly went through more phases than the moon before the steady strokes of Burke and Fossiter brought the boat beneath the black hull of the Waikanae, looming giantwise against the red sky; and in getting up the side he gave them much trouble.

There was more when they marched him aft and stood him between Halkett and Seamore while Fossiter by reason of his seniority, delivered the verdict.

"Prisoner, you have rolled the fame of the Te Utu's in the dust of the road, and for this you are condemned to suffer. Can you give any valid reason as to why you should not be hanged by the neck until you are dead? Be quiet, Burke! I *am* serious—Dolly, you've done a shameful thing, you know, and absolution will be long in coming. The blemished glory of the Club—Choke Burke, somebody! How can I orate when he makes such a row?"

Burke subsided under gentle persuasions, while Dolly defended an utterly untenable position.

"But we don't care a little bit about your private convictions," explained Fossiter; "you belong to the Te Utu Club, and you've broken its first rule. A man may wipe the road with Dolly Fancourt for all I care, but when he takes liberties with one of *us*, it's a very different thing! Our motto is Revenge, and we're going to have it? Any more remarks?"

"Yes. I've got a brother up at the Station and a manager, and several other belongings. You'll be in a worse hole than the Calcutta one when they begin to ask questions."

"It's not wise to play bluff when your opponent holds a straight flush. You can come out of the corner when you're sorry. That's all we want."

"Then it's a jolly sight, more than you'll get!" Dolly sat down on a bulk-head, and they began to understand that they might as well parley with the Town Clock.

"All right;" Fossiter prepared to swing over the side, "we'll pay you a call tomorrow evening. Ta-ta. May remorse and repentance visit your soul!"

"Amen! May they come clad in the garb of Fossiter! Let me steady the rope, Burke. You may hang at the end of another, one of these days, and I should like you to think of me then."

Dolly leaned over the bulwarks and watched them rousing the phosphorescent ripples into streams of fire, as the oars dipped and hung dripping over the dark water.

"He's taking it cooly," remarked Burke, uneasily.

"He is in a blue funk, though. Did you notice his lower lip? That gives a fellow away. I don't think he'll run counter to the Te Utu's again."

"What an excitable little atom it is," mused Seamore, "would that I had his gift of tongues!"

"Would that you'd look where you're going, and not try to spit us on the rock! Hop out, Tommy. We'll beach her in the scrub, and walk back. Questions might be asked if we took her round to town tonight. I'll lend you Dolly's Bike, Fossiter."

Burke's troubled spirit was calmed, and the earth was all a garden fair, until they met at the trysting place the next evening and Tommy Coombes pushed off the boat too soon thereby causing Burke to measure his length in the bottom.

Thus it was in the midst of recriminations and objurgations that they swarmed over the Waikanae's bulwarks, and spread themselves about on the decks. Burke dived below, spun through the saloons and cabins, wetted his feet in the steerage, and fell over things in the cook's galley. Then he came up the companion and bumped against somebody.

"Seamore! Why, in thunder, didn't you tell me he was on deck?"

"Why, in thunder, should I tell a lie? He isn't."

"Wha—at?"

"Isn't he below?" Burke shook his head.

"Oh, I say! Here, you fellows, Burke thinks Dolly's dissolved into thin air! Come and hunt him out."

But though they called him by honey-sweet names, and threatened him with surprising tortures, only the sob of waves