

madereply. Dolly was not. They descended into the engine rooms, where the rust of the sea battened on twisted irons, and piston-rods and cranks swung idly. The Waikanae was as one long dead, and a creeping silence and chill came down the ladders and along the passages to make them shiver and think undesirable things.

"He may have gone into the hole to measure the tide," hazarded Burke.

"He may have gone up the main-mast to measure the moon." But Seamore swung back the rotten hatchways, and laid himself flat beside the hole. Strange sounds came up from the Waikanae's depths.

"Fetch the rope along, Halkett, will you? I'm going down to have a look."

A sea-gull swooped low along the side in search of a fish, and it screamed, "Where's Dolly?" in Burke's ear. He hung over the hatch as they lowered Seamore down, and thought of a certain verse about the "waters of affliction."

To seaward there was a jagged tear in the Waikanae's timbers. A light weight could be sucked out at high tide. Dolly weighed something under nine stone. Something white hung to a splinter in the gap.

Seamore, standing on a beam, caught it; rolled it in a ball and tossed it up. Burke shook it out, and saw!

"Dolly'shanky," said Fossiter; "oh Lord!" He sat down on the deck and the colour of his face was Payne's grey, but Burke's was chalky. The men looked at each other. They had seen the silk handkerchief with the flaunting initials in Dolly's breast-pocket many a time, and the remembrance made



"I DEMAND MY BROTHER," ROARED THE LITTLE FAT GENTLEMAN.

Far below, dark water bubbled oily through her hull-timbers, and occasional fish flopped and gleamed among her floating cargo. Boxes and beams, not worth salvage, encrusted with mussels and unknown denizens of the deep, lay half-awash against weed-wreathed uprights. Weary unlocatable murmurs from the drawing bolts and rivets, foretold her lingering death, and chattered of past glories.

"There's something like a handkerchief or a tie down there," said Seamore, looking up, and speaking with a shake in his voice.

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them feel worse, which was unnecessary.

Then began a search on a lower strata, even among the fishes and strange beings of the sea. But Seamore came up in fulness of time, empty handed and silent. They stood on the deck, and the spirit of solitude moving over the face of the waters, breathed about them. The long rollers heaved endlessly by, sweeping inshore to die on the grey sand in spirits of fading foam. A cold wind got up among the dusty manuka-scrub and tussock, bearing the smell of decaying seaweed and desolation out to them. Under