

LXII. THE LAST THAT WAS EVER HEARD OF HARRY BOLTON

That same afternoon, I took my comrade down to the Battery; and we sat on one of the benches, under the summer shade of the trees.

It was a quiet, beautiful scene; full of promenading ladies and gentlemen; and through the foliage, so fresh and bright, we looked out over the bay, varied with glancing ships; and then, we looked down to our boots; and thought what a fine world it would be, if we only had a little money to enjoy it. But that's the everlasting rub--oh, who can cure an empty pocket?

"I have no doubt, Goodwell will take care of you, Harry," said I, "he's a fine, good-hearted fellow; and will do his best for you, I know."

"No doubt of it," said Harry, looking hopeless.

"And I need not tell you, Harry, how sorry I am to leave you so soon."

"And I am sorry enough myself," said Harry, looking very sincere.

"But I will be soon back again, I doubt not," said I.

"Perhaps so," said Harry, shaking his head. "How far is it off?"

"Only a hundred and eighty miles," said I.

"A hundred and eighty miles!" said Harry, drawing the words out like an endless ribbon. "Why, I couldn't walk that in a month."

"Now, my dear friend," said I, "take my advice, and while I am gone, keep up a stout heart; never despair, and all will be well."

But notwithstanding all I could say to encourage him, Harry felt so bad, that nothing would do, but a rush to a neighboring bar, where we both gulped down a glass of ginger-pop; after which we felt better.

He accompanied me to the steamboat, that was to carry me homeward; he stuck close to my side, till she was about to put off; then, standing on the wharf, he shook me by the hand, till we almost counteracted the play of the paddles; and at last, with a mutual jerk at the arm-pits, we parted. I never saw Harry again.

I pass over the reception I met with at home; how I plunged into embraces, long and loving;--I pass over this; and will conclude my first voyage by relating all I know of what overtook Harry Bolton.

Circumstances beyond my control, detained me at home for several weeks; during which, I wrote to my friend, without receiving an answer.

I then wrote to young Goodwell, who returned me the following letter,

now spread before me.

"Dear Redburn--Your poor friend, Harry, I can not find any where. After you left, he called upon me several times, and we walked out together; and my interest in him increased every day. But you don't know how dull are the times here, and what multitudes of young men, well qualified, are seeking employment in counting-houses. I did my best; but could not get Harry a place. However, I cheered him. But he grew more and more melancholy, and at last told me, that he had sold all his clothes but those on his back to pay his board. I offered to loan him a few dollars, but he would not receive them. I called upon him two or three times after this, but he was not in; at last, his landlady told me that he had permanently left her house the very day before. Upon my questioning her closely, as to where he had gone, she answered, that she did not know, but from certain hints that had dropped from our poor friend, she feared he had gone on a whaling voyage. I at once went to the offices in South-street, where men are shipped for the Nantucket whalers, and made inquiries among them; but without success. And this, I am heartily grieved to say, is all I know of our friend. I can not believe that his melancholy could bring him to the insanity of throwing himself away in a whaler; and I still think, that he must be somewhere in the city. You must come down yourself, and help me seek him out."

This! letter gave me a dreadful shock. Remembering our adventure in London, and his conduct there; remembering how liable he was to yield to the most sudden, crazy, and contrary impulses; and that, as a

friendless, penniless foreigner in New York, he must have had the most terrible incitements to committing violence upon himself; I shuddered to think, that even now, while I thought of him, he might no more be living. So strong was this impression at the time, that I quickly glanced over the papers to see if there were any accounts of suicides, or drowned persons floating in the harbor of New York.

I now made all the haste I could to the seaport, but though I sought him all over, no tidings whatever could be heard.

To relieve my anxiety, Goodwell endeavored to assure me, that Harry must indeed have departed on a whaling voyage. But remembering his bitter experience on board of the Highlander, and more than all, his nervousness about going aloft, it seemed next to impossible.

At last I was forced to give him up.

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Years after this, I found myself a sailor in the Pacific, on board of a whaler. One day at sea, we spoke another whaler, and the boat's crew that boarded our vessel, came forward among us to have a little sea-chat, as is always customary upon such occasions.

Among the strangers was an Englishman, who had shipped in his vessel at Callao, for the cruise. In the course of conversation, he made allusion

to the fact, that he had now been in the Pacific several years, and that the good craft Huntress of Nantucket had had the honor of originally bringing him round upon that side of the globe. I asked him why he had abandoned her; he answered that she was the most unlucky of ships.

"We had hardly been out three months," said he, "when on the Brazil banks we lost a boat's crew, chasing a whale after sundown; and next day lost a poor little fellow, a countryman of mine, who had never entered the boats; he fell over the side, and was jammed between the ship, and a whale, while we were cutting the fish in. Poor fellow, he had a hard time of it, from the beginning; he was a gentleman's son, and when you could coax him to it, he sang like a bird."

"What was his name?" said I, trembling with expectation; "what kind of eyes did he have? what was the color of his hair?"

"Harry Bolton was not your brother?" cried the stranger, starting.

Harry Bolton!

It was even he!

But yet, I, Wellingborough Redburn, chance to survive, after having passed through far more perilous scenes than any narrated in this, My First Voyage--which here I end.