

THERE ARE 77 PUNS IN THIS DOCUMENT

A Yarn to Unravel

Water mess we were in - adrift in the Sargasso Sea, and Captain Low was not quite compass mentis. He had been highly educated at Harbour and Gale, and some people said he was like his father - a ship off the old block, in fact but since he had joined the jetty set, he had deteriorated, and now his bark was worse than his bight. One of the natives said he would like to keel the captain, but the second-in-command was infinitely more detestable; he was a mate worse than death, and a shark little fellow as well.

We had been mountaineering in the Alps, the Andes and the Drakensberg-that is to seaweed been in foreign climbs. Then a bunch of newspaper reporters had bundled us on board Captain Low's ship. Yes, folks, we'd been press-ganged! Now, days later, we were lost in the interminable miles of weed of the Sargasso Sea, and food was running out. Schooner or later we'd starve unless we sighted our home port, our haven on earth.

We were down in the galley swabbing crewd jokes when the nautical waitress, Bertha de Blues walked in. She was a cantankerous mer-maid who looked like a creek goddess, and I'd always suspected something fishy about her. Actually, I tended to equator with a woman of ill repute, because she was our sextant. She had seven females with her. This made it obvious it was the last watch: eight belles.

"Give us a sea shanty," I called.

"You want a neptune?" she aft.

"S, OS!" we replied enthusiastically. Whereupon she gave a couple of choruses of 'Vessel while you work' and hit me over the head with a bottle of rum.

"Who tot you that?" I asked grogilly.

"I'd rudder knot say," she replied sternly.

"Tar very much anyway," I said. Suddenly, a frogman appeared at the hatch. "Hop it," I snapped.

Just then, Captain Low entered and tripped over our 8-legged cat. (We had an octopuss on board) He was looking downcast.

"What's the matelot?" I asked.

"I can't coralate our position with the readings," he replied.

"You're too vague, yacht to be more pacific," I growled. "Do you know weather we'll make it oar not?"

"Funnely enough, surf far as I know, we will," he retorted. "Mate, get up to the wheelhouse."

"Ali, helm, sweet helm," muttered the mate.

"Quiet, you'll get us bo's'n trouble," I whispered.

"There's a storm brewing and we'll have to make a rum for it," Captain Low announced.

I can't sea us making it in one piece," I said. "Fo'c'sle wonder where we are."

"Must you harpoon that subject?" he yelled. "We're bounty make it," he added blythely.

" Cor! " came the cry from the crow's nest.

"Land?" shouted the Captain. "Fish direction?"

"Hard a-starboard," came the reply. (We had an Italian look-out.)

"We'll be drinking in Beacon Brodie's tonight, buoys," I grinned. "Just what the docktor ordered; I can hardly weight. It'll be better than that Turkish pub in Anchora."

"We're going to be triton time," said the captain. "Better lake than never."

"Whale done, captain," I said. "I manta thank you before for taking us home."

"I am your obedient serpent," he replied.

"I'm going to buy a steamer with my wages and rent it out at six squid a go," I said.

"I'm shore you'll make a packet out of it too," chortled the mate. "However, to beach his own."

"What an excrewciating joke to assail us with," I retorted.

"You mist the point," he replied, moceaning for the gang-plank to be lowered. I disembarked as fast as possible.

"The world is flat!" I announced to the assembled crowd.

"How do you know?" they asked.

"It's just plane sailing," I answered.

--C. Sikh

a.k.a. D.J. Martin.