

left the life of the city behind. He peered forward now and then, to be sure, but it was with a less anxious manner than before. The waterman's manner was matter-of-fact and business-like. No one might have detected from the flat, thick face what thoughts were teeming in his brain. When they had gone some half a mile, and were so far from the shore that its noises came indistinctly, he carefully set his course, then stepped round behind the engine and laid his hand on the stranger's arm.

"Do you want to pay for your friend, too?" he asked. The man stared at him stupidly, then asked what friend.

Captain Morain put his mouth close to the stranger's ear and whispered lowly. The passenger stared incredulously, then gave expression to a frightful anger; there was murder in his eyes, and he was for dashing on deck and assaulting the shadow, with which intention he lay hold of an enormous wrench.

"Put it down! I won't have it!" said the waterman slowly.

The stranger swore roundly, declaring that if the creature who skulked outside learned his destination—Then he checked himself, leaving the other to infer what he would.

The two men looked into each other's eyes, both unflinchingly, the one showing much of his emotions, the other nothing at all.

The waterman was the first to speak. "Leave it to me," he said. "I have my own account to settle with a dog that tries to do me this way."

The old sailor's thin eyelids fluttered ominously. He stepped to the rear wall of the cabin, removed a square piece of the paneling and disappeared into the cramped, black hole under the deck.

Save for the ceaseless cough of the engine and the lower whirr of the balance-wheel, all was silent, the boat speeding ahead in the way her course had been set. The long-continued silence wore on the man as he sat with ears pricked, waiting. All at once there was a sharp creaking sound, a sharp cry, and a splash in the water behind. The waterman came hurrying out of the black hole and sprang its cover into place.

"Did someone shout?" he questioned. "I thought I heard something." Nothing showed in his face. He hurried to the window, looked astern, then, in a tone of surprise, "Man overboard!" he cried, and brought the lever to reverse.

From back in the darkness of the water came a cry for help. The launch turned in a short circle; her search-light was switched on and swept the water in little, quick crescents till the beam fell full on a white face and waving arms.

"You won't pick him up?" gasped the passenger.

"Yes!" fiercely. "Pick him up, of course! Do you s'pose I'd let a man drown?" There was something masterful in the way he roared it. The passenger, big man that he was, cowered to the wall, choking back his words.

From the boat to the man stretched that hard shaft of white light; the solid dark pressing it from either side, the deep green supporting it from below. Closer and closer ran the launch toward the form that rose and fell in the everlasting swell. Soon they were close enough to make out the face of the swimmer, and, though it was impossible to catch what he called, it could be seen that the man's color was ghastly, and that his eyes were terror stricken and his mouth gibbered with cold.

It could have been no more than three minutes since the man took the water, yet already his arms struck out stiffly, and he barely kept his head above the water. Once or twice the little swells washed over him, and he came to the surface spluttering, struggling against the gripping, ice-cold sea.

The captain decreased the speed, stepped outside the cabin, and with boat-hook in hand leaned far over the water, supporting himself by a grip on a rod.

Nearer they came to the man, sweeping up to him gently, and the captain reached out and down and would have had the hook in the swimmer's clothes. But a sudden terror must have inspired the struggler; it must have seemed to him that the launch was running him down, for all at once he twisted about and tried to swim away. The old waterman, roaring, swung himself down from a cleat at the outside of the deck and reached again; and the hook caught in the clothing somehow.

A dog might have been fished aboard more gently than was this man. The old waterman, jerked him up against the side of the launch, shortening his hold of the long pole in some mysterious way. Then, still clinging with his left hand to the deck, he drew himself safe again, and lifted the limp weight of a big man from the water, and tossed it on the deck. With another movement he disposed of his hook, caught the man in his powerful hands and tossed him upon the floor in the cabin, close by the engine.

With a shudder expressive of many emotions, the passenger drew away from the wet form on the floor and made himself as inconspicuous as possible. Not that he need have done so, for the shadow lay shivering and moaning where it had fallen.

Captain Morain was a man of ready wit. He rolled

the wet man about in a manner which, though not tender, was effective; then he put a flask to his lips and poured much liquor down his throat. The man from the water tried to sit up, but Captain Morain thrust the spirits on him again. Often as the man moved, or attempted to move, the old waterman, the muscles of his face grimly set, poured the liquor down his throat.

The passenger sat drawn up in one corner, watching wonderingly, uneasily. At length, when the waterman put the flask to the man's lips no liquor would go down; it simply ran out around the corners of the mouth. Then it was that Captain Morain turned to his passenger. "I think his life is saved," he said harshly, then rolled the body over with his foot.

"What will you do with him now?" asked the passenger, a little easier in his mind.

"Find a bed for him," said the captain. But the other did not understand.

The launch now changed her course, running at right angles to her previous direction. It was a long, silent, moody run, fitting in well with the capricious whims of the night itself.

The old waterman left his wheel long enough to run deft, accustomed fingers through the pockets of the prostrate man, and remove a bunch of papers, which he threw overboard, and to unpin a small badge which he also cast to the sea.

"Ahoy, 'Pole Star!'" shouted the waterman, when a great hull loomed up before them. "I think that here is a bed for our friend," he said to the passenger, then ran the launch skilfully alongside the mountain of iron.

A voice from the deck called down to the launch. Captain Morain went up a line and disappeared; when

## Slaughter of the Innocents

By Mrs. M. L. Rayne

*"The very head and front of my offending."*

From the clear waters of a pool  
That sparkled in the moonlight cool  
Arose a crowd of spectral shapes,  
Croaking and grimacing like apes.

They winked and blinked as they essayed  
A rude, discordant serenade;  
For in their weird, metallic notes  
There seemed an overplus of throats.

Then bobbed aloft an apparition  
In a most curious condition—  
'Twas the historic frog we know,  
The frog who would a-woooing go.

Vowels and consonants compose  
Frog language, as the novice knows;  
When "brek-ek-ek-co-ax" smote the air  
Our own interpreter was there.

"I was a frog of parts; they swiped  
My legs," the ancient wooer piped,  
"Now I'm parts of a frog; they threw  
My carcass here, which brought me to.

"But gaze upon this noble trunk,  
Brother batrachians—kerplunk!  
'Tis true they've pulled my legs. I know  
I can no more a-woooing go.

"And I've contributed at least  
To make a Barmicidian feast,  
And featured as an entrée comic  
Achieved some glory gastronomic."

"Cheap glory that," a bull-frog spoke—  
His head tones were a dismal croak—  
"Your orator attention begs;  
I gave to surgery my legs."

The vivisection frog sat down.  
Up popped a brother of renown—  
He too was legless; but he knew  
Of jumping frogs a thing or two.

"Our heads are on our shoulders yet—  
For that be thankful," said the vet.  
"Fellows, I have not lived in vain—  
I owe my glory to Mark Twain."

A gay half-frog his courage tooted:  
"Too true," he said, "my legs are looted;  
But, friends, it takes a frog of nerve  
His own anatomy to serve."

Amid the general commotion,  
A sly, old frog advanced this notion:  
"When all our legs are gone, I fear  
The people must give up their beer."

On this conundrum rock they split—  
At first no frog could answer it.  
When lo! the whole convention pops:  
"Brek-ek!—where would they get the hops?"

he returned there was a piece of canvas under his arm, which he wrapped about the wet, snoring form. Then he carried the man to the deck and fastened the end of the swinging line into the canvas.

"Yo-ho!" he shouted. The form swung into the air and up out of sight.

The passenger mumbled something to himself about preferring the other fate, and the launch turned back again.

Each man kept his distance and his silence, and the little launch ran on and on till the rattle of an anchor-chain told where the "Penguin" lay.

"There's your ship," said Captain Morain, with a bob of his head.

"And thank you for getting me there," said the man.

"We're not safe there yet," said the captain.

The passenger flashed a quick look at him. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"That you're not there yet," said the captain. He had hardly said the words when it was evident that something ailed the machinery, and that it was slowing down. "There, an accident at last," said the captain. "Don't know when we will get there now," said he.

"She's getting under way," said the man. Then he cursed and raved; while the waterman sat staring calmly, and the noises from the "Penguin" told plainly that she was slowly moving away.

The man swore till he could swear no longer; cursing the boat openly and cursing the waterman in his heart. He worked himself into a nervous, impotent, trembling rage, while the ship floated one way and the launch drifted the other.

"Suppose you read the papers?" said the captain genially. But the man did not answer. Then the boatman played his last card. Taking a newspaper from the locker he folded it so that a double-column heading showed and passed it to the man. "Know him?" he asked.

The man knew. He knew so well that he came to the floor in a dead faint.

"Kind of hard," said Captain Morain to himself. Then he put the flask to the man's lips, and tried to calm him when he sat up wildly. "You're all right," he said. "I'll see that you make your ship yet. Only thing is that you're slow to understand." Here he tapped his pocket significantly.

The man heaved a sigh. "If that's all you want, you may have all I've got," he said.

"No," answered Captain Morain, "half is good enough for me."

The iron fins turned, the launch gathered way, catching up with the "Penguin" rapidly. Even the sky seemed to recede and lift its awful weight a trifle.

## MOTHER LOVE

By Smith D. Fry

WE special agents of the pension office are secret service men," said one of the most capable public officials in Washington to the narrator. "I was given a case to investigate not long ago, and it took me to a country town in Illinois. The applicant for widow's pension was reputed to have received a legacy of seven thousand dollars from her late husband, and I was sent to investigate.

"I told the old lady that if she was really dependent she would receive a pension, but I asked her what had become of the seven thousand dollars which had been left to her by her husband.

"She became deeply agitated. She was past seventy years old, and her frail frame shook with emotion, while tears ran freely down her pale cheeks. At last, with kindly manner and gentle voice, she said: 'My days are few, and I will suffer in poverty without my pension, before I will answer that question.'

"I was greatly interested in this case. There could not be any subterfuge or dishonor here. When I was able to convince her at last that her statement would be absolutely confidential, she told me this story:

"Less than a year after father died our little house was burned down. I sold the lot for two hundred dollars, and put that in bank along with the other money, making me a total of seventy-two hundred dollars in bank—quite enough for my old age, and more. One day when I wanted to invest it in bonds, the banker told me that more than half of it was gone. As I looked at the checks, I saw that my two sons had been forging my name; but I said nothing. Two weeks later I found that all of the money but three hundred dollars had been drawn out. The banker suspected the truth, and insisted upon arresting my two sons; but I told him that it was all right. He alone on earth knows of the dishonor and crime of my boys, and I would rather die in poverty than reveal this to the world. Bad as they have been, they are yet my boys—once my dear little babies—and I will suffer rather than that they should suffer."

"With her permission I went to the banker in Pennsylvania, and he corroborated her story. I made my report to the pension office, and the old lady received her pension. No, the boys were never prosecuted. I kept faith with the dear, old mother, and the pension office holds her secret safely. The world shall never know it."