

A STOWAWAY.

Copyright, 1908, by American Press Association. We were but a day out from Bremen when a seaman stepped up to me and smiling said, "Mr. Warren one of the men on the lower deck heard a cough among the freight and after a search the stowaways pulled out a girl."

"A girl?" I exclaimed, surprised. "Yes, sir, a girl."

I directed the stowaway to be brought up on deck in order to look her over with a view to determining how much work she could stand and what kind of work to give her. For our orders were to work stowaways so hard as to render that method of gaining free transportation undesirable. The girl came up frightened, but after a glance at the ocean, seeing that we were well away from land, a look of triumph crossed her features. Knowing by my uniform that I was an officer, she stood demurely before me, with her eyes on the deck. She was very fair—indeed, so fair that I knew she came from my native north.

"What have you done this night?" I asked her. "Don't you know that we work stowaways harder than those who live themselves to us honestly?" She did not reply. Only a faint flush passed over her face. The longer I looked at her the more her delicate beauty grew upon me. Her features, especially her mouth, could not have been more exquisite if they had been chiseled by an artist, and though her clothes were soiled and torn, she had not been long enough in the hold to show the effects usual to stowaways. There was something pitious about the slender, shrinking figure that deterred me from visiting the usual hardships due to such offenders.

"What's your name?" I asked. "Gretchen."

"Well, Gretchen, you have been a very foolish girl. You'll be worked hard, and if you can't show that you can support yourself when you get to New York you will be sent back."

At that moment the captain, came along and, taking in the situation, relieved me of all responsibility. He was a terror to stowaways and sent the girl away to be worked day and night. I shuddered, for I knew the delicate frame before me could scarcely stand the ordeal. Any word of protest from me would only result in a heavier strain for the girl.

We had stormy weather all the way over. Gretchen, though sick, was forced to continue at her duties. Every moment of the day and much of the night she was either at work in the galley under the head cook or in the cabin under the stewardess, and both were ordered to make her life miserable. The weather kept us all busy, and I saw nothing of her till we reached New York. Then on the day of our arrival I saw—well, it was what remained of the poor girl. In five days her beauty had departed. Her cheeks were sunken and had taken on a bluish white tint. Her eyes were sunken, her arms were bones covered only with a bloodless skin. She was tottering to the gangway to go ashore with the immigrants. She carried no bags or bundles like the rest—indeed, she would not have been able to carry them if she had possessed them.

"I was off duty and, going up to her, took her arm and steadied her down the gangway. I went with her into the room where the disembarked immigrants were assembled for examination. Suddenly she gave a cry and, breaking away from me, ran toward a young man standing with his hands in his pockets watching the crowd come into the room.

"Hans," she called. "I am here!" The young man drew back from this skeleton of a girl in filthy rags and with unkempt hair.

"I am Gretchen. Oh, Hans, don't you know me?" Hans stared at her curiously. Gradually he showed signs of recognizing her. She was his betrothed and had come as a stowaway to marry him. He knew of her coming and was there to meet her. But the sight of her after her torture was too much for him. Without a word he turned and left the place.

Gretchen fell fainting into my arms. She was deposited in the same ship in which she had come over, but she did not work her passage. The government attended to that.

One night while I was on duty I saw a woman's figure come up a companionway and make a dash for the gunwale. She was half over when I caught her and dragged her back. She was Gretchen.

I placed her in a deck chair and questioned her. I learned that she had lived in the German province from which I had come. I secured a promise that she would make no further attempt on her life. I also got some better clothes for her and a berth in the second cabin. On the day we reached Hamburg I was leaning over the rail of the bridge, looking down at some second class passengers on their deck watching for land. Suddenly my eyes met those of Gretchen. Decently dressed, much of the color back in her cheeks, the look of suffering faded from her eyes, she was again something of the beauty I had met as a stowaway. For the first time since that meeting she smiled at me.

"My life is a blank page from what it was before this episode. Then when ashore I grew tired of misery and myself and I came back to my native land. Now I have a cottage near Hamburg and when coming into port can see a figure standing before it throwing its knees. It is Gretchen, my wife, and the mother of my children."

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R. R. TIME TABLE.

Santa Fe. West Bound. No. 17. 10:35 a. m. No. 115. Lv. 6:50 p. m. No. 405. 11:05 p. m. East Bound. No. 18. 4:50 p. m. No. 116. 8:40 a. m. No. 406. 5:25 a. m.

Eastern Oklahoma. East Bound. No. 409 Ar. 10:15 a. m. No. 413 Lv. 6:30 a. m. West Bound. No. 410 Lv. 5:00 p. m. No. 417. Ar. (ex. Sunday) 3:10 p. m.

Denver, Enid & Gulf. East Bound. No. 441 Ar. 9:20 a. m. No. 443 Ar. 6:45 p. m. West Bound. No. 442 Lv. 5:00 p. m. No. 444. Lv. 6:50 p. m. Cashion Line. No. 146 Ar. 1:45 p. m. No. 145. Lv. 9:25 p. m.

M. K. & T. North Bound. No. 566 Lv. 7:00 a. m. No. 106 Lv. 10:45 a. m. No. 198 Lv. 2:40 p. m. No. 110 Lv. 6:25 p. m. South Bound. No. 105 Ar. 10:05 a. m. No. 107 Ar. 1:10 p. m. No. 108 Ar. 5:10 p. m. No. 565 Ar. 9:10 p. m.

Rock Island. West Bound. No. 745. west bound. 9:05 a. m. No. 746. east bound. 3:50 p. m.

Ft. Smith & Western. West Bound. No. 1. Ar. 6:45 p. m. No. 5. Ar. 10:20 a. m. East Bound. No. 2. Lv. 8:50 a. m. No. 6. Lv. 4:50 p. m.

St. Louis, El Reno & Western. West Bound. No. 15. Lv. 7:05 p. m. No. 19. Lv. (ex. Sunday) 8:20 a. m. East Bound. No. 16. Ar. 8:45 a. m. No. 28. Ar. (ex. Sunday) 5:00 p. m.

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52 Passenger Trains daily Bank Deposits of \$3,500,000 Eight Lines of Railroads Coal Oil and Natural Gas 400 Business Houses Electric Street Cars Two Daily Papers Ten schools Five Public Parks. Convention Hall costing \$175,000 \$100,000 Federal Building 49,000 Carnegie Library 35,000 City Hall 150,000 Masonic Temple 150,000 Court House Largest and Only Fire Proof Hotel in the State

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