

THE CALIFORNIANS; CAPTAIN AND CAPTAIN'S WIFE

OR, BY JULES VERNE.

CHAPTER VII. IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS.

With the coming of March Mrs. Allaire was permitted to resume her walks in the immediate vicinity of the cottage, in company with Kate and the nurse.

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"You shouldn't be, Molly. There is no reason for it."

"Mr. Hollister, couldn't you send me some of the shipping journals in which there are marine reports, I would like to read—"

"Certainly, my dear Molly, I'll do so. However, if there were anything concerning the Dreadnaught, either that she had been spoken at sea or had safely reached the Indies I would be the first to know it, and would at once—"

"It is not because necessary to change the conversation. In the end Mrs. Allaire might have noticed a certain hesitation in the replies of Mr. Hollister, whose eyes could not bear unflinchingly the steady, honest look fixed upon them.

"How comes it that Kate has never written me?" she asked.

"My dear Molly, you were a very sick woman at the time Mr. and Mrs. Barker left San Diego."

"That's so, Mr. Hollister, and what is the use of writing when the letter would be lost in the sea?"

"But, in fact, from that day Zach French had been in the habit of looking after the mail."

"And, oh, murmured Molly to herself, 'why is it necessary that our kisses and our tears should be mingled on that day?'"

"Then it was the failure of one of his schemes that Law Barker to her gaze riveted upon Hollister, whose constraint was not without effect."

"I mean that you are a rich woman—a very rich woman."

"Your uncle, Edward Manson, is dead?"

"Dead? Why, how long has he been dead?"

"Hollister came near betraying himself by giving the exact date of Manson's death."

"Yes, madam."

"However, isn't it possible that there may be news of the Golden Gate in a few days?"

"No, madam."

"The shipping merchant took to calm her by saying that he had just telegraphed to California, and that he would be ready any day."

"Mr. Hollister, there is a man that I have spoken of as being a stranger in the house."

"That sailor?" stammered Hollister.

"Yes, that sailor to whom I owe my little wealth."

"And this was a fact. It had been done."

"No, my dear Molly, Mr. Hollister had said to her."

"But, in fact, from that day Zach French had been in the habit of looking after the mail."

"And, oh, murmured Molly to herself, 'why is it necessary that our kisses and our tears should be mingled on that day?'"

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