

drowned by the roaring sea and the waves, which rose to the height of mountains; would have made it impossible for them to return.

My only comfort now was to observe that the slanting position of the ship would protect us from the water and the stern which had been driven upwards between two rocks seemed immovable. However, at the same time, in the distance, I saw through clouds and rain, several stretches of land.

Sunk and deserted from the loss of all chance of human aid, it was yet my duty to appear calm and collected before my family. "Courage, dear ones", I cried on entering the cabin. "Let us not lose all hope. The ship is aground, our cabin is above water and should the sea be calmer tomorrow we can find the means to reach the land safely."

These few words had an immediate effect on the spirits of my wife who went to prepare supper.

After eating a hearty meal, the younger children turned in for the night and were soon fast asleep. Fritz, the eldest, sat up with us. After a long silence, "I think it will be possible to save ourselves if we had some cork jackets for mother and the boys, you and I, father, could swim to land," suggested Fritz.

So, we looked about and found small empty tin cans which we tied together and thought about fastening them as swimming jackets under the arms of each child and my wife. We also gathered knives, string, and other necessaries which could be put in our pockets, hoping that if the ship went to pieces in the night, we should be able to reach the land with some resources.

The following morning, we struggled up on deck, disillusioned and afraid. But so far we had survived. We were fully expecting to be surrounded by miles and miles of ocean, everyone was actually surprised by what we saw. I could hardly believe my eyes.

"What land is that"? asked Elizabeth.

"I have no idea Elizabeth, but it is beautiful," said I.

Fritz advised that we should all throw ourselves into the sea, while it was calm, and swim to the land.

"Ah! That would be all well for you," said Ernest. "For you can swim, but we others who can't swim will drown. Would it not be better to build a raft and reach the land together?"

"Great idea, Ernest, but we need the resources for contriving such a float. My boys please go around the ship and see what you can find that will enable us to reach the land."

They now all sprung from me with eager looks, to do as I desired. On my part, I lost no time in examining what we had to depend upon with respect to provisions of food and water.

My wife and youngest son fed the animals that they found in a pitiable condition. Fitz hastened to the ammunition room, Ernest to the carpenter's cabin, and Jack to the captain's cabin, but scarcely had he opened the door, when two large dogs sprang upon him who nearly knocked him down with their show of affection.

When we all reassembled in the cabin, each boasted what he had to contribute.

Fritz had collected some powder and small-shot which was contained in horn flasks and small bullets in bags.

Ernest produced his hat filled with nails, and in his hands a hammer and a hatchet; in addition, a pair of pincers, chisels, and a pair of large scissors peeked out at his pockets.

"Look here at these large tubs." Said Jack with an arch motion of his head. "Why can't each of us get into them, and float to the land? I remember, I succeeded very well at the pond at home."

"Excellent idea, my child," said I. "Give me the saw and some nails, we will see what is to be done." I recollected having seen some empty casks in the ship's hold; we went down and found them floating in the water which had got into the vessel. We saw with great joy that they were all in a good condition; with the assistance of my sons, I began to saw them in two. In a short time, I had produced eight tubs, of equal size and of the proper height. Since this work was time consuming and tiring, we allowed ourselves some refreshment of wine and biscuit.

I then sought for a long plank and placed my tubs upon it; leaving a piece at each end reaching beyond the tubs which when bent upward, would present an outline like the keel of a vessel. We next nailed all the tubs to the plank and then the tubs to each other. When we finished, we found we had produced a kind of a narrow boat, which would be able to perform a short course in calm water.

But, we now discovered that the narrow boat we had contrived was so heavy, that with the strength of all united, we were not able to move it an inch.

I bid Fritz fetch me a crow, who soon returned with it. In the mean time, I sawed a thick round pole into several pieces to make some rollers. Along with the crow, I then easily raised the foremost part of my boat, while Fritz placed one of the rollers under it.

"I am confident our narrow boat will stay afloat." As I said this, I tied a long cord to its stern and the other end of it to one of the timbers of the ship, which still appeared to be firm, so that the cord being left loose would serve to guide and restrain when we launched. We now put rollers on under all the tubs and applying the crow, our boat descended into the water with such velocity, that if the rope had not been well fastened, it would have gone far out in to the sea.