

The young fisherman glanced at his father with smoldering eyes.

"He has put up my fine ketch for sale," he said brokenly. "On the pier, 'fore my ears, he offered it to Jem Polperrin." Suddenly his eyes flamed into wrath. "He's not made I a farmer yet. I'll work the rocks in a dinghy 'fore I'll turn from the sea!"

"Be still, boy!" Japhet commanded. "There's good news for 'ee, Mark," he hurried on, to mask his son's defiance. "I ha' told Mr. Stull here how 'ee've yearned to come ashore, but pride held 'ee back. He's offered to buy 'ee a fine piece o' land to pay for your boat and that knock i' the head."

"In place of salvage," said Mr. Stull genially. "I owe you a yacht, and lives besides."

Mark Penares digested this slowly. Under the sheets he moved his legs experimentally. They were still good legs. A tap on the head was not enough to lay a man out for life. Indeed, it seemed to have knocked off years as well as skin. Not for many a day had he felt so light-hearted.

"Not a man knew o' the rock!" he muttered happily. After a glance at Paul Trench's despairing countenance, he raised his eyes to the yacht owner. "If 'ee are set on repaying I so handsome for my old

boat, sir, will 'ee just get me another—on the lines o' Trench's ketch, perhaps?"

"Certainly," Stull assured him. "As you will."

"Paul, boy, if 'ee are set on the sea—a dangerous calling, that—will 'ee take an old man for fishing mate—an old one wi'-out sons to help him carry on?" Mark asked.

Paul Trench stared incredulously, and then nodded with great vigor.

"What's this?" gasped Japhet, his mouth agape. "A boat! 'Ee will not ha' a farm, Mark Penares? Fool! Fool! If 'twere pride kept 'ee among the cruel rocks, why not 'scape now, as I did long years ago?"

"It were not pride, it seems, Japhet," said the Old One slowly. "Queer, mortal queer, how a knock on the skull will clear a man's head for un! It were not pride that kept I afloat, and now I know it, man. It were something else—something—'tis hard to put a tongue on it, but 'tis something about the water, do 'ee see? 'Tis something soothing like."

"Soothing! The man blethers," said Japhet bitterly. "There's naught but cruel hard work and the fear o' death tearing at un's heart upon the water!"

"No!" said Paul Trench. "The man speaks truth. There's life on the sea, and none on the land, for such as we!"

#### DEPTH CHARGE

We'd been two days on patrol  
 In the Channel's gloomy roll,  
 Shipping seas that pulled her under to the stack:  
 We had all abandoned hope  
 Of a solitary 'scope  
 When the lookout, yelling, pointed through the wrack.

Yes, a tube awash showed white,  
 And the skipper held her right  
 Till the forward gun crew let out with a slam;  
 Then hard over went the wheel,  
 She spun round right on her heel,  
 And the ash can shook us with a muffled "Bam!"

The fountain went so high  
 It seemed to hit the sky;  
 It made the water near us fairly boil.  
 Then our egg began to hatch  
 In a greasy, sleazy patch,  
 As the U-boat's rainbow tombstone spread in oil!

*Meredith McCullough*

# Any Time!

THE STORY OF AN EXCELLENT WIFE AND MOTHER WHO  
STAGED A REBELLION AGAINST THE GREAT GOD,  
ROUTINE, AND LOST THE VERY FIRST BATTLE

By Jean Allister

**B**-R-R-N-N-N-G!

With a quick, impatient gesture the wife of Edward H. Emerson reached across the pillow and silenced the alarm. Could it possibly be 7 A.M. already?

Curiously she stared at the stereotyped black numerals set so methodically upon the white background, and wished she could as easily silence her hatred of all clocks in general and this one in particular. It was the only timepiece in the Emerson household.

Suddenly a diabolical craving to stop its inescapable ticking possessed her. Her hands clenched in anger. Every move she made was ruled by this maddening bit of mechanism. Why, she even went to church and said her prayers by it!

And some day some one would sit in a low chair by her bedside and gaze steadily at the long hand to determine the exact tick her weary body finally found rest.

For a minute she indulged in a mental recapitulation of all the restless times her restless life had held. But only for a minute. A parallel column of daily incidents and worries kept equal pace and emphasized the futility of combating rules and regulations. However, rising from her bed and brightening her mood mechanically, she thought that this Monday might be different; yes, in spite of the heavy downpour of rain.

Dressing hastily, she made her way to the kitchen and began preparations for her husband's breakfast favorite, muffins. The oven door had scarcely closed upon her effort when she heard hurried descending steps.

Her face fell. It was going to be the same after all. The next minute Edward

Emerson, shirtless, half lathered and furious, stood in the doorway and yelled:

"Say, who the deuce has been monkeying with my safety razor? I never leave a blade in it. If that young rascal even as much as touches—"

"No, no, Ed. It wasn't Junior. I used it."

"You?" he demanded, peering closely at his wife.

"Uh-huh. I shaved our daughter with it."

"W-h-a-t?"

Mrs. Emerson made an undecided pantomimic gesture that embraced the back of her neck and murmured:

"You know."

Mr. Emerson did not know. Betty had bobbed hair, but her father failed to associate this style with a razor at work on the back of her slender neck. Tossing up both hands in disgust and shaking his head sadly, he ascended the stairs again and slammed the bathroom door.

Nevertheless, he managed to finish the first meal of the day without further comment or criticism, and now was standing in the front hall properly rain-coated and umbrellaed. Several envelopes were slid through the brass mail opening at this moment and fell to the floor. Mrs. Emerson rushed forward, but he was quicker. Of course, one had to be the electric light bill.

But he ignored the familiar blue envelope and pounced upon a bulky book circular liberally splashed with huge red and black lettered captions. With a sigh Mrs. Emerson took a step nearer. Was Ed actually contemplating the purchase of more books? It would not be such a loss if he ever read them!

Oblivious to his surroundings, Mr. Em-