

Where the Cross Is Made

CHARACTERS—

CAPTAIN ISAIAH BARTLETT *of the schooner Mary Allen*

NAT BARTLETT, *his son*

SUE BARTLETT, *his daughter*

DOCTOR HIGGINS

SILAS HORNE, *mate*

CATES, *bosun*

JIMMY KANAKA, *harpooner*

SCENE—*Captain Bartlett's "cabin"—a room erected as a lookout post at the top of his house situated on a high point of land on the California coast. The inside of the compartment is fitted up like the captain's cabin of a deep-sea sailing vessel. On the left, forward, a porthole. Farther back, the stairs of the companionway. Still farther, two more portholes. In the rear, left, a marble-topped sideboard with a ship's lantern on it. In the rear, center, a door opening on stairs which lead to the lower house. A cot with a blanket is placed against the wall to the right of the door. In the right wall, five portholes. Directly under them, a wooden bench. In front of the bench, a long table with two straight-backed chairs, one in front, the other to the left of it. A cheap, dark-colored rug is on the floor. In the ceiling, midway from front to rear, a skylight extending from opposite the door to above the left edge of the table. In the right extremity of the skylight is placed a floating ship's compass. The light from the binnacle sheds over this from above and seeps down into the room, casting a vague globular shadow of the compass on the floor.*

The time is an early hour of a clear windy night in the fall of the year 1900. Moonlight, winnowed by the wind which moans in the stubborn angles of the old house, creeps wearily in through the portholes and rests like tired dust in circular patches upon the floor and table. An insistent monotone of thundering surf, muffled and far-off, is borne upward from the beach below.

After the curtain rises the door in the rear is opened slowly and the head and shoulders of Nat Bartlett appear over the sill. He casts a quick glance about the room, and seeing no one there, ascends the remaining steps and enters. He makes a sign to some one in the darkness beneath: "All right, Doctor." Doctor Higgins follows him into the room and, closing the door, stands looking with great curiosity around him. He is a slight, medium-sized professional-looking man of about thirty-five. Nat Bartlett is very tall, gaunt, and loose-framed. His right arm has been amputated at the shoulder and the sleeve on that side of the heavy mackinaw he wears hangs flabbily or flaps against his body as he moves. He appears much older than his thirty years. His shoulders have a weary stoop as if worn down by the burden of his massive head with its heavy shock of tangled black hair. His face is long, bony, and sallow, with deep-set black eyes, a large aquiline nose, a wide thin-lipped mouth shadowed by an unkempt bristle of mustache. His voice is low and deep with a penetrating, hollow, metallic quality. In addition to the mackinaw, he wears corduroy trousers stuffed down into high laced boots.

NAT—Can you see, Doctor?

HIGGINS—*(in the too-casual tones which betray an inward uneasiness)* Yes—perfectly—don't trouble. The moonlight is so bright—

NAT—Luckily. *(walking slowly toward the table)* He doesn't want any light—lately—only the one from the binnacle there.

HIGGINS—He? Ah—you mean your father?

NAT—*(impatiently)* Who else?

HIGGINS—*(a bit startled gazing around him in embarrassment)* I suppose this is all meant to be like a ship's cabin?

NAT—Yes—as I warned you.

HIGGINS—*(in surprise)* Warned me? Why, warned? I think it's very natural—and interesting—this whim of his.

NAT—*(meaningly)* Interesting, it may be.

HIGGINS—And he lives up here, you said—never comes down?

NAT—Never—for the past three years. My sister brings his food up to him. (*He sits down in the chair to the left of the table.*) There's a lantern on the sideboard there, Doctor. Bring it over and sit down. We'll make a light. I'll ask your pardon for bringing you to this room on the roof—but—no one'll hear us here; and by seeing for yourself the mad way he lives—Understand that I want you to get all the facts—just that, facts!—and for that light is necessary. Without that—they become dreams up here—dreams, Doctor.

HIGGINS—(*with a relieved smile carries over the lantern*) It is a trifle spooky.

NAT—(*not seeming to notice this remark*) He won't take any note of this light. His eyes are too busy—out there. (*He flings his left arm in a wide gesture seaward.*) And if he does notice—well, let him come down. You're bound to see him sooner or later. (*He scratches a match and lights the lantern.*)

HIGGINS—Where is—he?

NAT—(*pointing upward*) Up on the poop. Sit down, man! He'll not come—yet awhile. HIGGINS—(*sitting gingerly on the chair in front of table*) Then he has the roof too rigged up like a ship?

NAT—I told you he had. Like a deck, yes. A wheel, compass, binnacle light, the companionway there (*he points*), a bridge to pace up and down on—and keep watch. If the wind wasn't so high you'd hear him now—back and forth—all the live-long night. (*with a sudden harshness*) Didn't I tell you he's mad?

HIGGINS—(*with a professional air*) That was nothing new. I've heard that about him from all sides since I first came to the asylum yonder. You say he only walks at night—up there?

NAT—Only at night, yes. (*grimly*) The things he wants to see can't be made out in daylight-dreams and such.

HIGGINS—But just what is he trying to see? Does any one know? Does he tell?

NAT—(*impatiently*) Why, every one knows what Father looks for, man! The ship, of course.

HIGGINS—What ship?

NAT—His ship—the Mary Allen—named for my dead mother.

HIGGINS—But—I don't understand—Is the ship long overdue—or what?

NAT—Lost in a hurricane off the Celebes with all on board—three years ago!

HIGGINS—(*wonderingly*) Ah. (*after a pause*) But your father still clings to a doubt—

NAT—There is no doubt for him or any one else to cling to. She was sighted bottom up, a complete wreck, by the whaler John Slocum. That was two weeks after the storm. They sent a boat out to read her name.

HIGGINS—And hasn't your father ever heard—

NAT—He was the first to hear, naturally. Oh, he knows right enough, if that's what you're driving at. (*He bends toward the doctor—intensely*) He knows, Doctor, he knows—but he won't believe. He can't—and keep living.

HIGGINS—(*impatiently*) Come, Mr. Bartlett, let's get down to brass tacks. You didn't drag me up here to make things more obscure, did you? Let's have the facts you spoke of. I'll need them to give sympathetic treatment to his case when we get him to the asylum.

NAT—(*anxiously—lowering his voice*) And you'll come to take him away tonight—for sure?

HIGGINS—Twenty minutes after I leave here I'll be back in the car. That's positive.

NAT—And you know your way through the house?

HIGGINS—Certainly, I remember—but I don't see—

NAT—The outside door will be left open for you. You must come right up. My sister and I will be here—with him. And you understand—Neither of us knows anything about this. The authorities have been complained to—not by us, mind—but by some one. He must never know—

HIGGINS—Yes, yes—but still I don't—Is he liable to prove violent?

NAT—No—no. He's quiet always—too quiet; but he might do something—anything—if he knows—

HIGGINS—Rely on me not to tell him, then; but I'll bring along two attendants in case—(*He breaks off and continues in matter-of-fact tones*) And now for the facts in this case, if you don't mind, Mr. Bartlett.

NAT—(*shaking his head—moodily*) There are cases where facts—Well, here goes—the brass tacks. My father was a whaling captain as his father before him. The last trip he made was seven years ago. He expected to be gone two years. It was four before we saw him again. His ship had been wrecked in the Indian Ocean. He and six others managed to reach a small island on the fringe of the Archipelago—an island barren as hell, Doctor—after seven days in an open boat. The rest of the whaling crew never were heard from again—gone to the sharks. Of the six who reached the island with my father only three were alive when a fleet of Malay canoes picked them up, mad from thirst and starvation, the four of them. These four men finally reached Frisco. (*with great emphasis*) They were my father; Silas Horne, the mate; Cates, the bo'sun, and Jimmy Kanaka, a Hawaiian harpooner. Those four! (*with a forced laugh*) There are facts for you. It was all in the papers at the time—my father's story.

HIGGINS—But what of the other three who were on the island?

NAT—(*harshly*) Died of exposure, perhaps. Mad and jumped into the sea, perhaps. That was the told story. Another was whispered—killed and eaten, perhaps! But gone—vanished—that, undeniably. That was the fact. For the rest—who knows? And what does it matter?

HIGGINS—(*with a shudder*) I should think it would matter—a lot.

NAT—(*fiercely*) We're dealing with facts, Doctor! (*with a laugh*) And here are some more for you. My father brought the three down to this house with him—Horne and Cates and Jimmy Kanaka. We hardly recognized my father. He had been through hell and looked it. His hair was white. But you'll see for yourself—soon. And the others—they were all a bit queer, too—mad, if you will. (*He laughs again.*) So much for the facts, Doctor. They leave off there and the dreams begin.

HIGGINS—(*doubtfully*) It would seem—the facts are enough.

NAT—Wait. (*He resumes deliberately.*) One day my father sent for me and in the presence of the others told me the dream. I was to be heir to the secret. Their second day on the island, he said, they discovered in a sheltered inlet the rotten, water-logged hulk of a Malay prau—a proper war prau such as the pirates used to use. She had been there rotting—God knows how long. The crew had vanished—God knows where, for there was no sign on the island that man had ever touched there. The Kanakas went over the prau—they're devils for staying under water, you know—and they found—in two chests—(*He leans back in his chair and smiles ironically.*)—Guess what, Doctor?

HIGGINS—(*with an answering smile*) Treasure, of course.

NAT—(*leaning forward and pointing his finger accusingly at the other*) You see! The root of belief is in you, too! (*Then he leans back with a hollow chuckle.*) Why, yes. Treasure, to be sure. What else? They landed it and—you can guess the rest, too—diamonds, emeralds, gold ornaments—innumerable, of course. Why limit the stuff of dreams? Ha—ha! (*He laughs sardonically as if mocking himself.*)

HIGGINS—(*deeply interested*) And then?

NAT—They began to go mad—hunger, thirst, and the rest—and they began to forget. Oh, they forgot a lot, and lucky for them they did, probably. But my father realizing, as he told me, what was happening to them, insisted that while they still knew what they were doing they should—guess again now, Doctor. Ha—ha!

HIGGINS—Bury the treasure?

NAT—(*ironically*) Simple, isn't it? Ha—ha. And then they made a map—the same old dream, you see—with a charred stick, and my father had care of it. They were picked up soon after, mad as hatters, as I have told you, by some Malays. (*He drops his mocking and adopts a calm, deliberate tone again.*) But the map isn't a dream, Doctor. We're coming back to facts again. (*He reaches into the pocket of his mackinaw and pulls out a crumpled paper.*) Here. (*He spreads it out on the table.*)

HIGGINS—(*craning his neck eagerly*) Dammit! This is interesting. The treasure, I suppose, is where—

NAT—Where the cross is made.

HIGGINS—And here are the signatures, I see. And that sign?

NAT—Jimmy Kanaka's. He couldn't write.

HIGGINS—And below? That's yours, isn't it?

NAT—As heir to the secret, yes. We all signed it here the morning the Mary Allen, the schooner my father had mortgaged this house to fit out, set sail to bring back the treasure. Ha—ha.

HIGGINS—The ship he's still looking for—that was lost three years ago?

NAT—The Mary Allen, yes. The other three men sailed away on her. Only father and the mate knew the approximate location of the island—and I—as heir. It's—(*He hesitates, frowning.*) No matter. I'll keep the mad secret. My father wanted to go with them—but my mother was dying. I dared not go either.

HIGGINS—Then you wanted to go? You believed in the treasure then?

NAT—Of course. Ha—ha. How could I help it? I believed until my mother's death. Then he became mad, entirely mad. He built this cabin—to wait in—and he suspected my growing doubt as time went on. So, as final proof, he gave me a thing he had kept hidden from them all—a sample of the richest of the treasure. Ha—ha. Behold! (*He takes from his pocket a heavy bracelet thickly studded with stones and throws it on the table near the lantern.*)

HIGGINS—(*picking it up with eager curiosity—as if in spite of himself*) Real jewels?

NAT—Ha—ha! You want to believe, too. No—paste and brass—Malay ornaments.

HIGGINS—You had it looked over?

NAT—Like a fool, yes. (*He puts it back in his pocket and shakes his head as if throwing off a burden.*) Now you know why he's mad—waiting for that ship—and why in the end I had to ask you to take him away where he'll be safe. The

mortgage—the price of that ship—is to be foreclosed. We have to move, my sister and I. We can't take him with us. She is to be married soon. Perhaps away from the sight of the sea he may—

HIGGINS—(*perfunctorily*) Let's hope for the best. And I fully appreciate your position. (*He gets up, smiling.*) And thank you for the interesting story. I'll know how to humor him when he raves about treasure.

NAT—(*somberly*) He is quiet always—too quiet. He only walks to and fro—watching—

HIGGINS—Well, I must go. You think it's best to take him tonight?

NAT—(*persuasively*) Yes, Doctor. The neighbors—they're far away but—for my sister's sake—you understand.

HIGGINS—I see. It must be hard on her—this sort of thing—Well—(*He goes to the door, which Nat opens for him.*) I'll return presently. (*He starts to descend.*)

NAT—(*urgently*) Don't fail us, Doctor. And come right up. He'll be here. (*He closes the door and tiptoes carefully to the companionway. He ascends it a few steps and remains for a moment listening for some sound from above. Then he goes over to the table, turning the lantern very low, and sits down, resting his elbows, his chin on his hands, staring somberly before him. The door in the rear is slowly opened. It creaks slightly and Nat jumps to his feet—in a thick voice of terror*) Who's there? (*The door swings wide open, revealing Sue Bartlett. She ascends into the room and shuts the door behind her. She is a tall, slender woman of twenty-five, with a pale, sad face framed in a mass of dark red hair. This hair furnishes the only touch of color about her. Her full lips are pale; the blue of her wistful wide eyes is fading into a twilight gray. Her voice is low and melancholy. She wears a dark wrapper and slippers.*)

SUE—(*stands and looks at her brother accusingly*) It's only I. What are you afraid of?

NAT—(*averts his eyes and sinks back on his chair again*) Nothing. I didn't know—I thought you were in your room.

SUE—(*comes to the table*) I was reading. Then I heard some one come down the stairs and go out. Who was it? (*with sudden terror*) It wasn't—Father?

NAT—No. He's up there—watching—as he always is.

SUE—(*sitting down—insistently*) Who was it?

NAT—(*evasively*) A man—I know.

SUE—What man? What is he? You're holding something back. Tell me.

NAT—(*raising his eyes defiantly*) A doctor.

SUE—(*alarmed*) Oh! (*with quick intuition*) You brought him up here—so that I wouldn't know!

NAT—(*doggedly*) No. I took him up here to see how things were—to ask him about Father.

SUE—(*as if afraid of the answer she will get*) Is he one of them—from the asylum? Oh, Nat, you haven't—

NAT—(*interrupting her—hoarsely*) No, no! Be still.

SUE—That would be—the last horror.

NAT—(*defiantly*) Why? You always say that. What could be more horrible than things as they are? I believe—it would be better for him—away—where he couldn't see the sea. He'll forget his mad idea of waiting for a lost ship and a treasure that never was. (*as if trying to convince himself—vehemently*) I believe this!

SUE—(*reproachfully*) You don't, Nat. You know he'd die if he hadn't the sea to live with.

NAT—(*bitterly*) And you know old Smith will foreclose the mortgage. Is that nothing? We cannot pay. He came yesterday and talked with me. He knows the place is his—to all purposes. He talked as if we were merely his tenants, curse him! And he swore he'd foreclose immediately unless—

SUE—(*eagerly*) What?

NAT—(*in a hard voice*) Unless we have—Father—taken away.

SUE—(*in anguish*) Oh! But why, why? What is Father to him?

NAT—The value of the property—our home which is his, Smith's. The neighbors are afraid. They pass by on the road at nights coming back to their farms from the town. They see

him up there walking back and forth—waving his arms against the sky. They're afraid. They talk of a complaint. They say for his own good he must be taken away. They even whisper the house is haunted. Old Smith is afraid of his property. He thinks that he may set fire to the house—do anything—

SUE—(*despairingly*) But you told him how foolish that was, didn't you? That Father is quiet, always quiet.

NAT—What's the use of telling—when they believe—when they're afraid? (*Sue hides her face in her hands—a pause—Nat whispers hoarsely*) I've been afraid myself—at times.

SUE—Oh, Nat! Of what?

NAT—(*violently*) Oh, him and the sea he calls to! Of the damned sea he forced me on as a boy—the sea that robbed me of my arm and made me the broken thing I am!

SUE—(*pleadingly*) You can't blame Father—for your misfortune.

NAT—He took me from school and forced me on his ship, didn't he? What would I have been now but an ignorant sailor like him if he had had his way? No. It's the sea I should not blame, that foiled him by taking my arm and then throwing me ashore—another one of his wrecks!

SUE—(*with a sob*) You're bitter, Nat—and hard. It was so long ago. Why can't you forget?

NAT—(*bitterly*) Forget! You can talk! When Tom comes home from this voyage you'll be married and out of this with life before you—a captain's wife as our mother was. I wish you joy.

SUE—(*supplicatingly*) And you'll come with us, Nat—and father, too—and then—

NAT—Would you saddle your young husband with a madman and a cripple? (*fiercely*) No, no, not I! (*vindictively*) And not him, either! (*with sudden meaning—deliberately*) I've got to stay here. My book is three-fourths done—my book that will set me free! But I know, I feel, as sure as I stand here living before you, that I must finish it here. It could not live for me outside of this house where it was born. (*staring at her fixedly*) So I will stay—in spite of hell! (*Sue sobs hopelessly.*)

After a pause he continues.) Old Smith told me I could live here indefinitely without paying—as caretaker—if—

SUE—*(fearfully—like a whispered echo)* If?

NAT—*(staring at her—in a hard voice)* If I have him sent—where he'll no longer harm himself—nor others.

SUE—*(with horrified dread)* No—no, Nat! For our dead mother's sake.

NAT—*(struggling)* Did I say I had? Why do you look at me—like that?

SUE—Nat! Nat! For our mother's sake!

NAT—*(in terror)* Stop! Stop! She's dead—and at peace. Would you bring her tired soul back to him again to be bruised and wounded?

SUE—Nat!

NAT—*(clutching at his throat as though to strangle something within him—hoarsely)* Sue! Have mercy! *(His sister stares at him with dread foreboding. Nat calms himself with an effort and continues deliberately.)* Smith said he would give two thousand cash if I would sell the place to him—and he would let me stay, rent free, as caretaker.

SUE—*(scornfully)* Two thousand! Why, over and above the mortgage its worth—

NAT—It's not what it's worth. It's what one can get, cash—for my book—for freedom!

SUE—So that's why he wants Father sent away, the wretch! He must know the will Father made—

NAT—Gives the place to me. Yes, he knows. I told him.

SUE—*(dully)* Ah, how vile men are!

NAT—*(persuasively)* If it were to be done—if it were, I say—there'd be half for you for your wedding portion. That's fair.

SUE—*(horrificed)* Blood money! Do you think I could touch it?

NAT—*(persuasively)* It would be only fair. I'd give it you.

SUE—My God, Nat, are you trying to bribe me?

NAT—No. It's yours in all fairness. *(with a twisted smile)* You forget I'm heir to the treasure, too, and can afford to be generous. Ha—ha.

SUE—(*alarmed*) Nat! You're so strange. You're sick, Nat. You couldn't talk this way if you were yourself. Oh, we must go away from here—you and father and I! Let Smith foreclose. There'll be something over the mortgage; and we'll move to some little house—by the sea so that father—

NAT—(*fiercely*) Can keep up his mad game with me—whispering dreams in my ear—pointing out to sea—mocking me with stuff like this! (*He takes the bracelet from his pocket. The sight of it infuriates him and he hurls it into a corner, exclaiming in a terrible voice*) No! No! It's too late for dreams now. It's too late! I've put them behind me tonight—forever!

SUE—(*looks at him and suddenly understands that what she dreads has come to pass—letting her head fall on her outstretched arms with a long moan*) Then—you've done it! You've sold him! Oh, Nat, you're cursed!

NAT—(*with a terrified glance at the roof above*) Ssshh! What are you saying? He'll be better off—away from the sea.

SUE—(*dully*) You've sold him.

NAT—(*wildly*) No! No! (*He takes the map from his pocket.*) Listen, Sue! For God's sake, listen to me! See! The map of the island. (*He spreads it out on the table.*) And the treasure—where the cross is made. (*He gulps and his words pour out incoherently.*) I've carried it about for years. Is that nothing? You don't know what it means. It stands between me and my book. It's stood between me and life—driving me mad! He taught me to wait and hope with him—wait and hope—day after day. He made me doubt my brain and give the lie to my eyes—when hope was dead—when I knew it was all a dream—I couldn't kill it! (*his eyes starting from his head*) God forgive me, I still believe! And that's mad—mad, do you hear?

SUE—(*looking at him with horror*) And that is why—you hate him!

NAT—No, I don't—(*then in a sudden frenzy*) Yes! I do hate him! He's stolen my brain! I've got to free myself, can't you see, from him—and his madness.

SUE—(*terrified—appealingly*) Nat! Don't! You talk as if—

NAT—(*with a wild laugh*) As if I were mad? You're right—but I'll be mad no more! See! (*He opens the lantern and sets fire to the map in his hand. When he shuts the lantern again it flickers and goes out. They watch the paper burn with fascinated eyes as he talks.*) See how I free myself and become sane. And now for facts, as the doctor said. I lied to you about him. He was a doctor from the asylum. See how it burns! It must all be destroyed—this poisonous madness. Yes, I lied to you—see—it's gone—the last speck—and the only other map is the one Silas Horne took to the bottom of the sea with him. (*He lets the ash fall to the floor and crushes it with his foot.*) Gone! I'm free of it—at last! (*His face is very pale, but he goes on calmly.*) Yes, I sold him, if you will—to save my soul. They're coming from the asylum to get him—(*There is a loud, muffled cry from above, which sounds like "Sail—ho," and a stamping of feet. The slide to the companionway above is slid back with a bang. A gust of air tears down into the room. Nat and Sue have jumped to their feet and stand petrified. Captain Bartlett tramps down the stairs.*)

NAT—(*with a shudder*) God! Did he hear?

SUE—Ssshh! (*Captain Bartlett comes into the room. He bears a striking resemblance to his son, but his face is more stern and formidable, his form more robust, erect and muscular. His mass of hair is pure white, his bristly mustache the same, contrasting with the weather-beaten leather color of his furrowed face. Bushy gray brows overhang the obsessed glare of his fierce dark eyes. He wears a heavy, double-breasted blue coat, pants of the same material, and rubber boots turned down from the knee.*)

BARTLETT—(*in a state of mad exultation strides toward his son and points an accusing finger at him. Nat shrinks backward a step.*) Bin thinkin' me mad, did ye? Thinkin' it for the past three years, ye bin—ever since them fools on the Slocum tattled their damn lie o' the Mary Allen bein' a wreck.

NAT—(*swallowing hard—chokingly*) No—Father—I—

BARTLETT—Don't lie, ye whelp! You that I'd made my heir—aimin' to git me out o' the way! Aimin' to put me behind the bars o' the jail for mad folk!

SUE—Father—no!

BARTLETT—(*waving his hand for her to be silent*) Not you, girl, not you. You're your mother.

NAT—(*very pale*) Father—do you think—I—

BARTLETT—(*fiercely*) A lie in your eyes! I bin a-readin' 'em. My curse on you!

SUE—Father! Don't!

BARTLETT—Leave me be, girl. He believed, didn't he? And ain't he turned traitor—mockin' at me and sayin' it's all a lie—mockin' at himself, too, for bein' a fool to believe in dreams, as he calls 'em.

NAT—(*placatingly*) You're wrong, Father. I do believe.

BARTLETT—(*triumphantly*) Aye, now ye do! Who wouldn't credit their own eyes?

NAT—(*mystified*) Eyes?

BARTLETT—Have ye not seen her, then? Did ye not hear me hail?

NAT—(*confusedly*) Hail? I heard a shout. But—hail what?—seen what?

BARTLETT—(*grimly*) Aye, now's your punishment, Judas. (*explosively*) The Mary Allen, ye blind fool, come back from the Southern Seas—come back as I swore she must!

SUE—(*trying to soothe him*) Father! Be quiet. It's nothing.

BARTLETT—(*not heeding her—his eyes fixed hypnotically on his son's*) Turned the pint a half-hour back—the Mary Allen—loaded with gold as I swore she would be—carryin' her lowers—not a reef in 'em—makin' port, boy, as I swore she must—too late for traitors, boy, too late!—droppin' her anchor just when I hailed her.

NAT—(*a haunted, fascinated look in his eyes, which are fixed immovably on his father's*) The Mary Allen! But how do you know?

BARTLETT—Not know my own ship! 'Tis you're mad!

NAT—But at night—some other schooner—

BARTLETT—No other, I say! The Mary Allen—clear in the moonlight. And heed this: D'you call to mind the signal I gave to Silas Home if he made this port o' a night?

NAT—*(slowly)* A red and a green light at the mainmast-head.

BARTLETT—*(triumphantly)* Then look out if ye dare! *(He goes to the porthole, left forward.)* Ye can see it plain from here. *(commandingly)* Will ye believe your eyes? Look—and then call me mad! *(Nat peers through the porthole and starts back, a dumbfounded expression on his face.)*

NAT—*(slowly)* A red and a green at the mainmast-head. Yes—clear as day.

SUE—*(with a worried look at him)* Let me see. *(She goes to the porthole.)*

BARTLETT—*(to his son with fierce satisfaction)* Aye, ye see now clear enough—too late for you. *(Nat stares at him spellbound.)* And from above I saw Horne and Cates and Jimmy Kanaka plain on the deck in the moonlight lookin' up at me. Come! *(He strides to the companionway, followed by Nat. The two of them ascend. Sue turns from the porthole, an expression of frightened bewilderment on her face. She shakes her head sadly. A loud "Mary Allen, ahoy!" comes from above in Bartlett's voice, followed like an echo by the same hail from Nat. Sue covers her face with her hands, shuddering. Nat comes down the companionway, his eyes wild and exulting.)*

SUE—*(brokenly)* He's bad tonight, Nat. You're right to humor him. It's the best thing.

NAT—*(savagely)* Humor him? What in hell do you mean?

SUE—*(pointing to the porthole)* There's nothing there, Nat. There's not a ship in harbor.

NAT—You're a fool—or blind! The Mary Allen's there in plain sight of any one, with the red and the green signal lights. Those fools lied about her being wrecked. And I've been a fool, too.

SUE—But, Nat, there's nothing. *(She goes over to the porthole again.)* Not a ship. See.

NAT—I saw, I tell you! From above it's all plain. *(He turns from her and goes back to his seat by the table. Sue follows him, pleading frightenedly.)*

SUE—Nat! You mustn't let this—You're all excited and trembling, Nat. (*She puts a soothing hand on his forehead.*)

NAT—(*pushing her away from him roughly*) You blind fool! (*Bartlett comes down the steps of the companionway. His face is transfigured with the ecstasy of a dream come true.*)

BARTLETT—They've lowered a boat—the three—Horne and Cates and Jimmy Kanaka. They're a-rowin' ashore. I heard the oars in the locks. Listen! (*a pause*)

NAT—(*excitedly*) I hear!

SUE—(*who has taken the chair by her brother—in a warning whisper*) It's the wind and sea you hear, Nat. Please!

BARTLETT—(*suddenly*) Hark! They've landed. They're back on earth again as I swore they'd come back. They'll be a-comin' up the path now. (*He stands in an attitude of rigid attention. Nat strains forward in his chair. The sound of the wind and sea suddenly ceases and there is a heavy silence. A dense green glow floods slowly in rhythmic waves like a liquid into the room—as of great depths of the sea faintly penetrated by light.*)

NAT—(*catching at his sister's hand—chokingly*) See how the light changes! Green and gold! (*He shivers.*) Deep under the sea! I've been drowned for years! (*hysterically*) Save me! Save me!

SUE—(*patting his hand comfortingly*) Only the moonlight, Nat. It hasn't changed. Be quiet, dear, it's nothing. (*The green light grows deeper and deeper.*)

BARTLETT—(*in a crooning, monotonous tone*) They move slowly—slowly. They're heavy, I know, heavy—the two chests. Hark! They're below at the door. You hear?

NAT—(*starting to his feet*) I hear! I left the door open.

BARTLETT—For them?

NAT—For them.

SUE—(*shuddering*) Sssh! (*The sound of a door being heavily slammed is heard from way down in the house.*)

NAT—(*to his sister—excitedly*) There! You hear?

SUE—A shutter in the wind.

NAT—There is no wind.

BARTLETT—Up they come! Up, bullies! They're heavy—
heavy! (*The paddling of bare feet sounds from the floor below*
—*then comes up the stairs.*)

NAT—You hear them now?

SUE—Only the rats running about. It's nothing, Nat.

BARTLETT—(*rushing to the door and throwing it open*)
Come in, lads, come in!—and welcome home! (*The forms of*
Silas Horne, Cates, and Jimmy Kanaka rise noiselessly into
the room from the stairs. The last two carry heavy inlaid
chests. Horne is a parrot-nosed, angular old man dressed in
gray cotton trousers and a singlet torn open across his hairy
chest. Jimmy is a tall, sinewy, bronzed young Kanaka. He
wears only a breech cloth. Cates is squat and stout and is
dressed in dungaree pants and a shredded white sailor's
blouse, stained with iron rust. All are in their bare feet. Water
drips from their soaked and rotten clothes. Their hair is
matted, intertwined with slimy strands of seaweed. Their eyes,
as they glide silently into the room, stare frightfully wide at
nothing. Their flesh in the green light has the suggestion of
decomposition. Their bodies sway limply, nervelessly,
rhythmically as if to the pulse of long swells of the deep sea.)

NAT—(*making a step toward them*) See! (*frenziedly*)
Welcome home, boys!

SUE—(*grabbing his arm*) Sit down, Nat. It's nothing.
There's no one there. Father—sit down!

BARTLETT—(*grinning at the three and putting his finger*
to his lips) Not here, boys, not here—not before him. (*He*
points to his son.) He has no right, now. Come. The treasure is
ours only. We'll go away with it together. Come. (*He goes to*
the companionway. The three follow. At the foot of it Horne
puts a swaying hand on his shoulder and with the other holds
out a piece of paper to him. Bartlett takes it and chuckles
exultantly.) That's right—for him—that's right! (*He ascends.*
The figures sway up after him.)

NAT—(*frenziedly*) Wait! (*He struggles toward the*
companionway.)

SUE—(*trying to hold him back*) Nat—don't! Father—come
back!

NAT—Father! *(He flings her away from him and rushes up the companionway. He pounds against the slide, which seems to bare been shut down on him.)*

SUE—*(hysterically—runs wildly to the door in rear)* Help! Help! *(As she gets to the door Doctor Higgins appears, hurrying up the stairs.)*

HIGGINS—*(excitedly)* Just a moment, Miss. What's the matter?

SUE—*(with a gasp)* My father—up there!

HIGGINS—I can't see—where's my flash? Ah. *(He flashes it on her terror-stricken face, then quickly around the room. The green glow disappears. The wind and sea are heard again. Clear moonlight floods through the portholes. Higgins springs to the companionway. Nat is still pounding.)* Here, Bartlett. Let me try.

NAT—*(coming down—looking dully at the doctor)* They've locked it. I can't get up.

HIGGINS—*(looks up—in an astonished voice)* What's the matter, Bartlett? It's all open. *(He starts to ascend.)*

NAT—*(in a voice of warning)* Look out, man! Look out for them!

HIGGINS—*(calls down from above)* Them? Who? There's no one here. *(suddenly—in alarm)* Come up! Lend a hand here! He's fainted! *(Nat goes up slowly. Sue goes over and lights the lantern, then hurries back to the foot of the companionway with it. There is a scuffling noise from above. They reappear, carrying Captain Bartlett's body.)*

HIGGINS—Easy now! *(They lay him on the couch in rear. Sue sets the lantern down by the couch. Higgins bends and listens for a heart-beat. Then he rises, shaking his head.)* I'm sorry—

SUE—*(dully)* Dead?

HIGGINS—*(nodding)* Heart failure, I should judge. *(with an attempt at consolation)* Perhaps it's better so, if—

NAT—*(as if in a trance)* There was something Horne handed him. Did you see?

SUE—*(wringing her hands)* Oh, Nat, be still! He's dead. *(to Higgins with pitiful appeal)* Please go—go—

HIGGINS—There's nothing I can do?

SUE—Go—please—(*Higgins bows stiffly and goes out. Nat moves slowly to his father's body, as if attracted by some irresistible fascination.*)

NAT—Didn't you see? Horne handed him something.

SUE—(*sobbing*) Nat! Nat! Come away! Don't touch him, Nat! Come away. (*But her brother does not heed her. His gaze is fixed on his father's right hand, which hangs downward over the side of the couch. He pounces on it and forcing the clenched fingers open with a great effort, secures a crumpled ball of paper.*)

NAT—(*flourishing it above his head with a shout of triumph*) See! (*He bends down and spreads it out in the light of the lantern.*) The map of the island! Look! It isn't lost for me after all! There's still a chance—my chance! (*with mad, solemn decision*) When the house is sold I'll go—and I'll find it! Look! It's written here in his hand writing: "The treasure is buried where the cross is made."

SUE—(*covering her face with her hands—brokenly*) Oh, God! Come away, Nat! Come away!

(*The Curtain Falls*)