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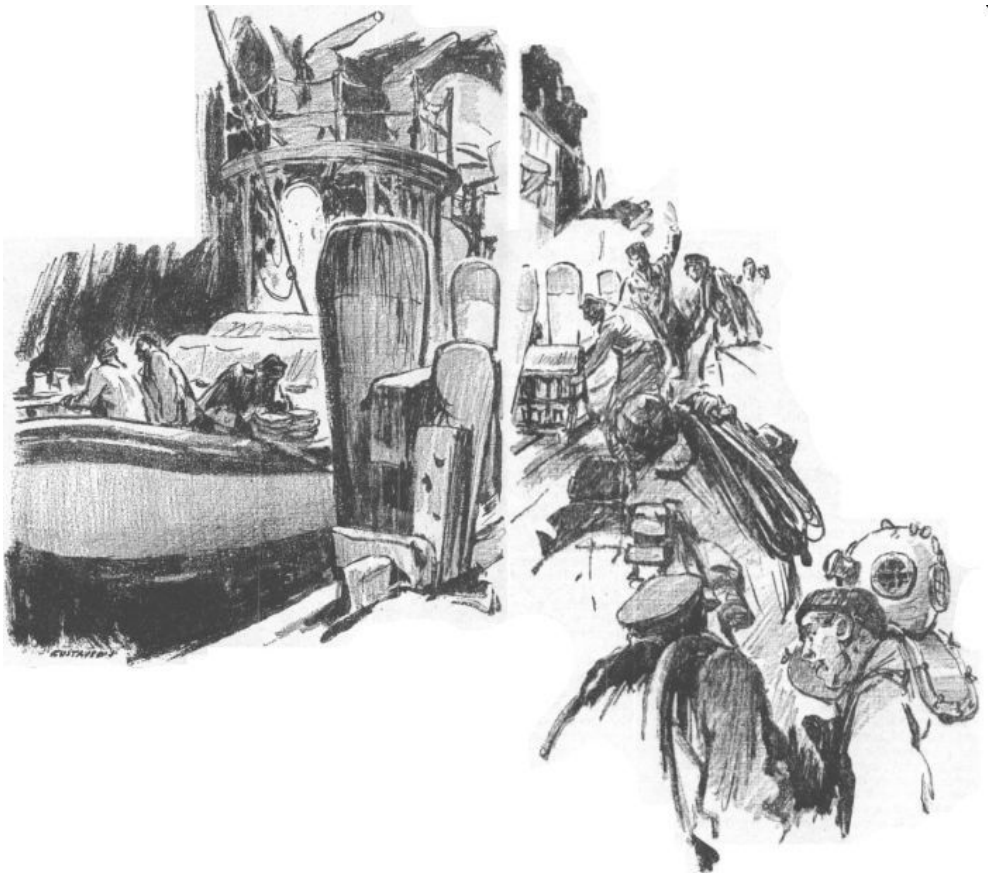
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*HARBOR
HAZARD*

By
CAPTAIN
MICHAEL
GALLISTER

Illustrated by
L. R. Gustavson

First published in *The Blue Book Magazine*,
July 1938.



“Hop to it, you lardos!” shouted Captain Lawrence. “Get those chests over! Move around!”

Fireboat men must be not only firemen, but sailors, divers, engineers and police—dangerous callings, all. . . . This first poignant story of a colorful series centers about Gunboat Brendan and the tragic problem he met below the murky harbor waters.

Bill Brendan was head fireman-diver on Fireboat Two; but, a man being what his background makes him, Brendan was more than this.

Everybody in the Los Angeles harbor district knew Gunboat Brendan, the former Navy boxer, seaman gunner and so forth. . . . The Navy knew him for his work on sunken submarines; the fireboat crew knew him for what he was, and Mother Brendan knew him for what she thought he was. All this was behind his shoulder now, as he sat hulking over his pipe, listening to the police broadcast.

“My gosh, boys!” Taylor, the pilot, whistled softly. “Twenty thousand in currency, and the mugs get away with it! Three of ’em burned down by the cops. The other two steal a parked patrol car—”

He fell silent, listening. The engineer broke out excitedly.

“Hear that? Headed for the harbor district! Reported by an officer at Main and Weford; emptied his gun into the car as it went past, but it kept on.”

Brendan nodded soberly, cocking an eye at the window of the pier office.

“Aint so good. Heavy fog-bank rolling up out o’ the west basin tonight,” he observed. “Good night for some drunk to hit Suicide Curve, too.”

The police broadcast ended. There was brisk discussion of that stolen police car bearing two thugs and a small fortune, headed now for the harbor. Here at its berth, however, Fireboat Two was in no position to see any possible fun. Suicide Curve, eh?

“That’s right,” said Taylor solemnly. “About time for another one. Eleven year’t I been here, we’ve fished out sixty-four cars. Harbor Commission’s been eleven year waiting to put up stop warnings at those open dead-end streets between the piers. People heading for the ferry terminal in a fog like this had better not be in a rush.”

“Remember the family we fished out last winter?” growled Brendan. “That guy was just plain lost. Riles me up whenever I think o’ them little tykes drowned, on account of the Harbor Commission saving money. I’d like to be a politician for about ten days.”

“You’d make a hot one, all right,” jeered the engineer. “You and your—Holy mackerel, listen to that! Talk of the devil, and up he comes!”

The alarm was shrilling. One and all were in motion instantly. A car off the foot of Berth 187, came the shout. A watchman had heard it go off, but knew no details; his alarm had been relayed from headquarters.

Already Fireboat Two was like a swarming beehive. Twenty firemen were loading equipment on the boat’s stern, working with precise rapidity. Every instant counted, for there was always the chance of pulling somebody up alive. Not much hope of it tonight, however. This blanketing fog would keep them from getting there in time.

“Hop to it, you lardos!” shouted Captain Lawrence. “Get those chests over. Mike and Johnny, over with the diving ladder. The pump—lower away there!”

Seventy-one seconds after the alarm shrilled, they had the equipment stowed on the wide, flat stern.

Captain Lawrence shot his orders at Duke Dumas, the master-diver.

“Duke! Get Howard dressed for the first dive; slap a suit on Brendan for a stand-by, as usual. Move, you sleepwalkers! This is no pleasure cruise—”

The Captain ran forward to where Taylor hung out of the wheel-house, whistle-cord in hand, all three annunciators on *stand-by*. His voice roared:

“All right, all right, men, let’s roll! Berth 187. Give her the gun—a car’s down. Come on, what’s holding us?”

Pilot Taylor tooted the *cast-off* signal. These skippers were all alike, he grumbled audibly; thought a pilot could go speeding upchannel in a pea-soup fog at twenty-five knots, like the rescue wagon from Headquarters. They never seemed to realize that the fireboat master had to feel his way against harbor traffic, sounding his signals according to navigation law and regulating his speed by the same.

“The pilot can’t help it,” he growled, “if this makes it impossible to get folks up from cars in time. Cars got no business going overboard anyhow.” He turned to the engine-room tube as the boat, going slow speed ahead on three engines, emerged from the slip. “Five hundred revs a minute, chief. Dead slow all engines. Keep your crew set for four bells and a jingle astern.”

He snapped the speaking-tube shut and took position in the center of the darkened wheel-house, while the Captain cursed softly. “Steer 355 degrees,” he instructed the first mate. “Nothing to the west’ard.”

“Aye,” said the mate, a lean State of Maine mariner. “Three fifty-five and nothing to the west’ard.” Peering into the binnacle, he rolled the wheel to port and starboard and settled on his course.

Fireboat Two headed up the channel. Her air-horn tooted at minute intervals, while the watch up forward strained every sense into the woolly wall of fog that hemmed them in. A voice sounded abruptly:

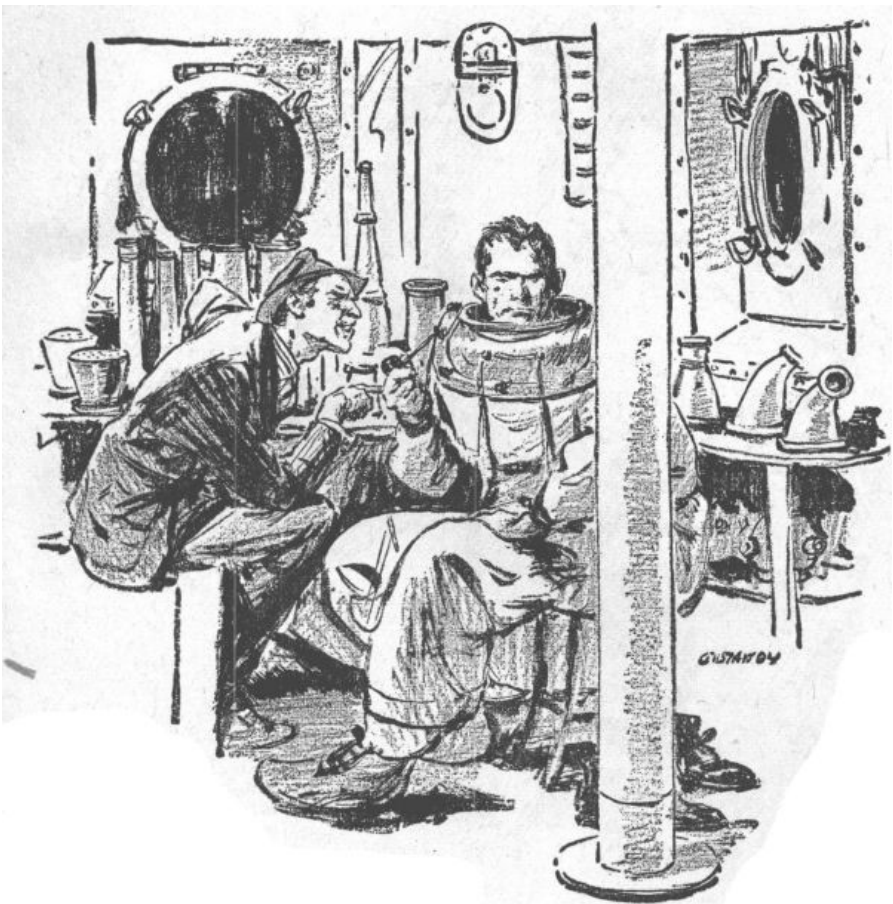
“Beacon Eight dead ahead, skipper! Hear the foghorn on 175, port bow.”

“Aye,” said Taylor, and changed course at once. Fireboat Two cautiously nosed into Slip Five, and in another minute was alongside Berth 187.

One more minute, and apprentice-diver Howard, in stiff rubber and canvas dress, his domed helmet, hundred-pound waist weights and thirty-pound leaded shoes, was on his way into the pitch-black depths below. Forty feet of water here. An ambulance and a gathering crowd showed on the pier, dimly; so dense was the fog that even the rescue wagon’s red light was no more than a dim blur.

Duke Dumas, the master diver in charge, leaned over the guard-rail, holding the air hose and life-lines. Four men aft at the pump were turning it over with measured beat, keeping the pressure at exactly fifteen pounds. Other men tended coils of life-line and hose, keeping these and the braided telephone-cable free-running at all times.

The fog swirled eerily. The mist deadened all ordinary sound, transforming the moving figures into dim wraiths of gigantic proportions. There was no excitement aboard Fireboat Two. Under the glaring flood-lights the men went about their work quietly, efficiently. Many of them had brought Navy discipline into this job. No undue noise or talk. They were hosemen, firemen, engineers, paid to fight fire and do rescue work ashore and afloat; diving duty for sunken cars was nothing novel to them.



“Twenty thousand bucks in a suitcase, see? We’ll get it. . . . Five grand goes to you.”

It occasioned far more interest and excitement in the crowd on the pier—police, land firemen, reporters, morbid gawkers, watchmen. Most of them knew the procedure and discussed it as they watched the distorted shapes under the flood-lights.

Usually the first diver located the car in the deep mud, made fast the hook-rope, and signaled topside to break the car out of the swiftly clutching ooze. Then, his diving-time up, he would be hauled to the deck, making his report to the battalion chief in charge. The second, or more experienced diver, would go down to open the car doors, remove the bodies within, then bend on the hook-rope preparatory to hoisting the car.

A shadowy figure dropped from the pier to the port side of the deck, where no one was working. Picking his way over the tangle of gear, he slipped forward to the open door of the nozzle-room. Inside on a stool towered a monstrous figure in diving dress, but without the helmet and weights. Brendan was calmly finishing his pipe, awaiting his turn to go down. He glanced up in astonished recognition as the visitor came in.

Runt Welch was a waterfront rat of repute as vicious as his face, twitching that long ratlike nose and staring with blazing eyes that told their own story. Rumored to be a snowbird and

dope-peddler, he certainly was not a person Brendan would have expected to see aboard. Welch came in, and with a nod of greeting sat down on an inhalator box.

“Hello, Brendan. Looking for you.”

“Like hell.” Brendan’s scarred, heavy features showed his contempt. “Get out of here before you’re kicked ashore.”

Welch grinned excitedly. Brendan noted the glassy eyes, the pinpoint pupils. He remembered that he himself was practically helpless while encased in this diving-suit.



Brendan’s mind seemed unable to function: he could think only of Hughie. . . . “O. K.!” he growled to the tender, and clumped down the iron ladder.

“No time to gam.” Welch spoke rapidly. “Gunboat, I got a five-thousand-dollar diving-job for you.”

Brendan grunted a disdainful laugh. “I don’t do commercial diving, Runt. Right now, I’m doing a civilian diver out o’ fifty bucks by hooking to this car. Aint fair, maybe, but orders is orders. I hear tell this may be the police wagon stolen after that hold-up job tonight.”

“So it is,” said Welch, his eyes a gleam.

“Huh? If you know it is, run along and tell the cops.”

“I’m telling *you*,” snapped Welch. “I drove that car, see? I was in it. Me and Denver Red. All the others got burned. Then Denver, he got burned on the way when a cop let go at us as we passed him. I come down through the fog, missed the turn and went off the pier. Swam clear to a boat I got waiting, changed my rags, and here I am. Fast work!”

Brendan’s blue eyes were wide.

“My God, if you aint all doped up! Why, you blasted little cockroach—”

“Save it, you big stiff,” spat out Welch. “I got to talk fast. Twenty thousand bucks in a suitcase, see? Pay-roll made up at the bank; we copped it, sure. It’s under the back seat o’ that car, Gunboat. When you go down to hook on to the car, you slip out the suitcase and carry it over to one of the pilings; anchor it. You and me—we’ll get it tomorrow night with my boat. Five grand goes to you.”

Brendan still stared in blank amazement. He knew a dope-fiend when he saw one, and the Runt was obviously all hopped up. The thing was incredible.

“Are you off your nut?” Brendan scowled suddenly. “A cheap rat like you in on a hold-up? Not likely. Chase yourself!”

“Dry up,” snapped Welch, leaning forward intently. “Listen here. Denver Red aint been mugged or printed. He aint got a record, see?”

“What’s it to me?” snarled Brendan angrily. “Get out of here! You and your orders to me—I don’t know if you’re crazy or what.”

“You’ll know damned quick,” shot out the other. “I know who Denver Red was, see? And you’re doing just what I tell you, Gunboat. You get that suitcase out; then you get Denver out and anchor him too. Then we’re all set. Yeah, Denver has told me a lot about you, and about Mother Brendan too.”

Brendan took the pipe from his mouth and set it down. He tried to speak and could not. His massive features were suddenly gray, as comprehension came to him. Welch, at these evidences of agitation, uttered a jeering laugh.

“Got the idea, have you? Hughie Brendan—that’s him, all right. Your kid brother. And if they pull him up in that car, it’s good night! You know what’ll happen, what it’ll mean, when the story breaks in the papers. It’ll dish you and your record. It’ll dish her, too. Denver thought a lot o’ Mother Brendan, he sure did! Now, you big stiff, you’ll do what I tell you. I’ll give you a ring later tonight. So behave.”

He cocked his head, listening; then suddenly rose, darted out into the fog, and was gone. He had heard some one coming on the run.

Brendan sat there in stark misery, sick of heart and soul, his scarred features agonized, his huge fists clenched, his breath coming fast. Hughie, gone to the bad these two years, vanished, lost! And all the while, Mother Brendan had prayed for him every night and morning, certain he would come back. Well, if this rat spoke truth, he had come back!

It was not of himself or his record that Bill thought; this mattered little. It was of Mother Brendan, and what the story would mean to her.

Probably it was not over thirty seconds that he sat thus; yet his brain moved in the span of days and years. Hughie, for one thing; all the ruined wastrel life of the young fellow. And what this news would mean to the old mother. No pleasant prospect. . . . Then too there was Welch. The rat’s words had unrolled an entire panorama.

A boat waiting here somewhere in the harbor, close by. The pay-roll made up at the bank—yes, all that had come in over the radio broadcast—and Welch acting as driver, probably in charge of the waiting boat and the get-away. Three of the gang shot down. Two away in the stolen police-car, and one of them killed on the mad drive. Welch, going off the dead end in the fog—and below, Hughie Brendan waiting for his brother.

“Come on, Gunboat!” Voices at the door, hasty, excited, jarred through him. “Got to go down. Car’s there, but Howard cut his hand on broken glass and didn’t get inside. The cops think it may be their car, the one the bandits made a get-away with; probably one or two of ’em are inside now.”

Agony, terror, acute horror swept through Gunboat Brendan. Even to move seemed rankly impossible, for his brain was frozen; yet he found himself mechanically rising. Two firemen helped him from the nozzle-room across the deck to another stool. Without a word, he sat while his heavy shoes were laced on.

One of the men was cursing softly; something about volunteer firemen-divers who got no extra pay or merit-marks for going into black depths foul with sunken timbers, cast-off wire hawsers, saw-edged boiler iron and whatnot. Any other time Brendan would have added a curse or two on his own account; but now his mind seemed unable to function. He could only think of Hughie, who had come home again. It was paralyzing.

Lead shoes, lead belt, copper breastplate, then the telephone receivers over his ears. He tested the phones. The helmet was lowered over his head, given a quarter-turn and locked into position. He peered through the glass faceplate, tried his air-valve, tested the exhaust valve, felt for his knife, the wrench, the hanks of light line in his belt; all this done swiftly, automatically.

“O. K.!” he growled to the tender, and clumped down the iron ladder.

No one could tell, thanks to the helmet, that his face was gray and drawn, that his eyes bulged with acute terror behind the thick glass. Had Runt Welch told the truth? There was one way he could be certain. If a suitcase was under the back seat of that car down below, he might be sure the story was true. All sense of sight was ruled out, in the depths. He could see nothing. But the pay-roll suitcase, the same one described in the police radio broadcast, was all the proof he needed.

Groping, Brendan found the car; the touch of it balanced him, heartened him with reality. Here he must work entirely by feel. He got the doors open. He touched the Thing so limply awaiting him, and a sweat of horror bedewed his scarred features. The suitcase was there. The story was true. This limp clay aswing in the water was his brother.

Satisfied of this, he rallied; he knew the worst. Waist-deep in the ooze, he hauled Hughie out. As he lugged the swinging body through the blackness, he could feel the tears on his cheeks. The air hissing through the intake-valve seemed to choke him as he plowed along. Now there was only one thing he could do, and not for his own sake but for that of Mother Brendan. He went grimly ahead with the gruesome, soul-rending job.

For a hundred feet along the wharf, creosoted piling was thrust down into the sand and mud. From his belt Brendan unhooked the light line, cutting off a length with his knife; and by means of this he anchored Hughie to the piling.

He groped his way back to the car and got the heavy suitcase. Back to the piling again; presently he had the suitcase anchored there too. If anything slipped up now, if for any reason a diver came down here tomorrow, he knew full well the implications, and what it would

mean to him; but the knowledge did not stagger him. Then he was back at the car again, speaking through the helmet transmitter.

“O. K.! Send down the hook-rope,” he told the tender up above. His voice sounded heavy, hoarse. “Ready to send her up. Tell the Chief I’ve searched the car. Nothing inside except the rear seat cushion floating. No bodies.”

When the rope came down and he hooked on, the job was done.

When they brought Brendan up, he leaned heavily on the rail while the tenders unlocked and lifted off the helmet. One look at him, and Duke Dumas spoke anxiously.

“You look sick, big boy. What’s wrong?”

“I’m a bit off. Must have been something I ate for supper,” Brendan replied. “Give me a hand over the rail.”

They helped him to the deck, stripped off the clammy suit, wrapped him in blankets and gave him a slug of brandy. He had the shivers, sure enough; they hustled him into Fireboat Three and sent him back to quarters.

After that, Fireboat Two lifted the sunken car with her winch, the eager reporters and police finding it empty. Then, her work done, the boat went hooting back through the fog to her Terminal Island station.



Brendan grunted: “I didn’t go to do that, confound it! No help for it now, though. And no harm done the world, either!”

Brendan was still off his feed when the chief looked in on him, so they bundled him into a car and sent him home. For him, home was the Wilmington bungalow where he lived with Mother Brendan.

Half an hour after he got there, the phone rang. Brendan answered the call. At sound of Welch's thin and squeaky voice, he shivered again and felt sweat on his face.

"Aye," he said grimly. "Everything done. Tomorrow night? It's my shift off; yes."

He listened. Welch had the boat made ready for the gang; he, the sole survivor, was now heir to all their preparations. He, out of all those five men, alone was living. And Gunboat Brendan knew that he himself must now depend on this cheap crook, this contemptible scoundrel of the waterfront.

"I'll get everything and send it to the boat, aye," he said. "You've marked the piles, you say? All right, you can depend on me. Will there be fog tomorrow night, you say? Sure. Every night for a week, now."

So it was settled.

Next evening, fog was again rolling in past the Point. The battleships inside the breakwater were sounding "At anchor" signals, and the giant bell that some authority had placed near Fireboat Two's berth was tolling its nerve-shattering warning, its voice fairly shaking the quarters of the boat crew. There would be no sleep for the boys this night.

Gunboat Brendan, on his regular off shift, was ready for the dreaded job. Near midnight, a little fishing-boat left its moorings at the landing near the yacht club, and cautiously felt its way down the channel to Slip Five. In the boat lay a helmet and oxygen jacket Brendan had bought that day from "Suicide" Svenson's widow. Svenson had lost his life going after a fouled dredge anchor off the new breakwater extension. Brendan figured he could use the outfit himself, later.

"Did you read about the job in the papers?" Brendan asked.

Welch grunted.

"Sure thing. Lucky they blasted them three mugs good and proper; nobody's left to squeal about me and your brother. Somebody had tipped off the cops and they were all set for the mob."

"Who did the talking?" Brendan inquired and the other swore viciously.

"I dunno. Monk Hawley had a moll. I dope it that she was sore on him and phoned in a tip to the cops. Can't tell."

Brendan sensed suspicion, defiance, distrust, in the manner of Welch, who pointedly kept him beyond arm's reach. He accepted the situation without argument, intent solely upon what now lay ahead. A man is what his background makes him; Brendan's one and only thought at the moment was back in the bungalow where, this same night, Mother Brendan prayed for the return of Hughie.

The fishing-boat crept into Slip Five, with Brendan forward and Welch at the helm. She made fast to the piling where Fireboat Two had lain the previous night. Not a soul moved on the pier, no ship or tug navigated the fog-bound channel. Welch was a long time in finding the particular piles he had marked the night before, but at last he found them, and came down the ladder from the dock platform.

"All set. The watchman's asleep in his doghouse, as usual. We're O. K., if some other darn' fool don't come along and run his car off. Ready?"

"Yeah," grunted Brendan. He sent down a shot line to the bottom. Hughie would be there, within a few feet of it. Then he got out the diving jacket and helmet.

“Now, listen,” he said. “It aint so hot working in one of these gadgets at forty feet. If I get fouled, down there, I’m liable to stay with Hughie. You handle your end of the job right, or we’re all sunk together.”

“Shoot, and don’t waste time,” said Welch impatiently. “This fog is cold as hell.”

“So’s the water down below,” Brendan countered grimly. Even in the fog and dark, he suspected from Welch’s position that the smaller man was holding a pistol. “First, I’ll get up my brother’s body. Then, after the suitcase comes up, I want to use this boat. I’ll go out while the fog’s heavy and bury Hughie in deep water off the Point.”

“Sure, sure, you can have the damned boat, and five grand besides,” snarled Welch. He did not move from where he stood. “Get on with the job.”

Brendan indicated the shot line. “See this line? I go down on it, taking the heaving line with me. You hang on to the heaving line from topside. Better come forward and take it now, and keep it running free. In the cockpit it’s apt to get fouled.”

As he spoke, he flaked out the heaving line on the little fo’c’sle. It was dark up forward; the fog was thicker than ever, swirling around him, distorting his figure out of all proportion. The deck was wet and slippery, filmed with fish oil and the grease of years.

Welch peered at him intently but did not move.

“I’m staying here till you go down,” he rejoined decisively. His hand jerked up a bit; Brendan was certain now that he held a gun. “Don’t you try to pull nothing on me, Gunboat. I aint trusting you a whole lot.”

“Oh, don’t be a damned fool—”

Brendan swung around. His feet slipped and went out from under him. He fell with a crash, half against the little wheel-house. A groan escaped him, as he lay in a twisted heap. Welch’s voice shrilled with alarm.

“Hey! What’s the matter with you?”

Brendan moved, tried to claw himself up, and fell back with a subdued oath.

“Can’t make it. Can’t get up. Must have twisted my back. Come here and give me a hand, you rat!”

Welch cursed softly, viciously. “You big lummoX, to go hurt yourself at a time like this! You’re pulling something. I got a mind to blast you right now.”

“And bring everybody down on us? You’re no such fool.” Brendan laughed harshly. “Why you damned cokehead, I’m just as anxious as you are to get this done! My kid brother’s down there with the crabs eating on him. I can’t get him buried without your help, and you know it. Come on, damn you, give me a hand!”

“I guess you’re right.” Welch moved forward, reluctantly. “Where you hurt?”

“It’s my back. Jammed against the wheel-house, here; I can’t seem to get on my feet.” Brendan twisted again, and once more relaxed with a low gasp. “Confound it all! If I could just get up on my legs, I’d be all right. This deck’s an inch thick with slime. Come on, get your hands under my shoulders and lift, will you? I’m stuck here.”

His suspicion dissipated, Welch came and stood over the big, helpless figure. He leaned down, got his hands under Brendan’s arms, and pulled. Brendan groaned.

“It hurts, but it helps. Get a better grip, now, and we’ll make it.”

Welch obeyed. His hands well under Brendan’s arms, he stooped to tug upward.

Of a sudden, Brendan’s arms clamped in with tremendous pressure, pinioning Welch’s wrists. A sharp yelp broke from Welch. He lost balance. The gun escaped his fingers. He

clutched frantically at Brendan—and yelled again as he fell.

The two figures thrashed confusedly about the little deck, under a swirl of thick fog. Twice more little convulsive yelps broke from Welch, like the squeaks of a cornered rat. Then came a subdued, thudding crash. . . . Presently Brendan scrambled to his feet.

No alarm. The sleeping watchman had heard nothing. The little boat rocked quietly under the fog. Brendan stooped to feel the limp figure at his feet, and grunted.

“I didn’t go to do that, confound it! No help for it now, though. If his neck broke, he deserved it a dozen times over. And no harm done the world, either.”

He turned calmly to the equipment. He laced on the heavy lead shoes and donned the diving jacket and helmet; this light, shallow-water equipment would do in such a pinch. He made his preparations with unhurried care. Gunboat Brendan always took one thing at a time and made sure it was right before going ahead. No more need to worry about Runt Welch, at least. Now to keep the rendezvous with Hughie; no earthly pay would have tempted him to undertake what he was about to do for love.

Gingerly, he lowered himself down the knotted shot line into the oily water. Never had his huge gnarled paws stood him in better stead than on this night, or done grimmer work. Once in the blackness, acute fear struck him. Never before had he gone down without tenders watching above. Now, if the least thing went wrong in the gripping ooze, he was lost.

Better so, however, than with Runt Welch waiting to kill him, after the suitcase was recovered. He had cherished no illusions regarding that man’s intent.

Even in this moment of gnawing revulsion and fear, he could not repress a grim smile that curled his battered lips like a snarl, and a twisted thought that came into his brain slantwise. Once he had heard a frenetic soapbox orator blaspheming about “God’s jokes.” The phrase crept upon his mind. God’s jokes! Well, this was one, and no mistake. If only Runt Welch had known the truth!

His outstretched hands came upon the floating, anchored Thing, and he shivered. . . .

When he had made fast his lines to corpse and suitcase, he went back topside with the hiss of the oxygen fretting his senses. No tenders, no helpers over the side. Swirls of fog blacker than ever. He might have cast off his heavy weighted shoes, but Brendan was a practical man, and this equipment had value. He felt his way up the line; those big knotted hands of his accomplished the impossible.

At length, trembling with exhaustion, he was aboard. He rid himself of the outfit and lay gathering his forces. Then he rose on the slippery deck and fell to work. The worst of it was over, anyhow.

He brought in the stiff, streaming figure and the suitcase, all its seals intact. From the fo’c’sle of the boat he dragged some old canvas. Impartially, he swathed Welch and the other in this canvas. Before finishing, he secured Welch’s flashlight and stole just one glimpse of the face from the depths. The recognition of Hughie steeled him to all he had done and still must do.

He bound the two wrapped bodies around and around with lobster-pot lines.

At Hughie’s feet he secured the boat’s anchor. Then he lifted the slippery suitcase into the wheel-house, took out his diving-knife, and slit one side of the wet leather. He felt inside and brought out a number of pieces of metal, and flashed the light on them.

“Washers! Washers and junk!” he muttered grimly. “Those cops around the boat, last night, sure told the truth. Lucky thing it never got into the newspapers, or Welch would have

seen about it. A decoy suitcase! The holdup had been tipped off, of course. A decoy suitcase, and five men dead because of it! Oh, Hughie boy—”

He checked back his threatening emotion. Lugging the suitcase out again, he made it fast to the limp bundle that was Runt Welch. One of God’s jokes, sure enough, he told himself.

Then, starting the motor, he cast off.

At the entrance of Slip Five, he took his departure from Beacon Eight and headed down the main channel toward the Point. He passed Fireboat Two. The B-platoon boys would be playing cards down below, he knew, trying to dull their senses to the damning toll of the giant fog-bell so close beside. That bell dinned its unending solemn dirge as he thrummed past and away into the fog, heading for Barracuda Flats and the two-hundred-fathom depth that would close the story.

And Mother Brendan would go on with her prayers, in blessed ignorance.

[The end of *Harbor Hazard* by Henry Bedford-Jones (as Captain Michael Gallister)]