

TINA GOES HOME

**By Bruce Whiteley
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PROLOGUE

One of the important laws of the universe that has been overlooked by most philosophers and physicists is that everybody, except a small percentage of mentally deranged individuals and most wives, loves boats. Within this mass of dreamers we find a subdivision of people who actually do something to turn their fantasies into reality and acquire some sort of craft. In most cases, owning the boat is enough and, after an initial wetting, it sits in a garage, floats at a mooring, or deteriorates in a back yard, often awaiting transference to a new owner. The people who acquire boats can be further classified into those who use their boats and those who do not. To continue with this scientific categorization of the human race, it should be noted that there are two types of people actively involved in boating.

The first is the "yachtsman," This person has a boat that he can afford to maintain, be it a modest twenty-footer or a seventy-ton palace with a rudder. It is a vessel he uses every once in a while, say twice a year, or every seventeenth weekend or the second Thursday of each month, weather permitting, from five to six PM. The point is that his relationship with the boat is a casual one. The craft is a toy that he plays with when it suits his convenience.

The second type is the "yachtie". The yachtie cannot afford to keep a house, and a car, and a family, and a boat, but he can combine some of his requirements and own a boat instead of a house. He may be following a career or simply doing odd jobs to make ends meet, but he is intimately involved with his boat. He may remain moored to some post for years at a time, or he may cruise his own or international waters but, if he is sailing, he is doing it on a shoestring.

What underlies the difference between the yachtsman and the yachtie is basically the amount of money available to each. I grant that this is a distinction difficult to pinpoint. How much money a yachtie must have to become a yachtsman is a question I will not attempt to answer, but I suggest that every yachtie knows he is not a yachtsman and would like the rest of the world to know it, too. Yet I am sure many a young couple (or individual) has regretted admitting ownership of a forty-foot sloop to people whose reaction was, "My! Wonder how they (he) got rich so fast?" The answer is that they didn't. They had merely decided to adopt a life style somewhat different from the norm.

Although hard to define, the difference between a yachtsman and a yachtie can often be determined by examining the boats involved. On the yachtie's craft the self-steering if there is one, will be a wired vane while the yachtsman has an electronic autopilot. The yachtie will not have radar or a Loran, but the yachtsman will. Sail covers can help one distinguish and you will know into which category the owners fit when you see tires hanging against the topsides of one boat and matching fenders on the other. Even the

dinghy can help. The guy sculling out his boat in a beat-up little pram is the yachtie, while the character in the large inflatable with the powerful outboard on the stern is the yachtsman.

Two extreme examples could be mentioned. The yachtsman met in Brazil was English. His boat was a fifty-foot GRP ketch as sailed by a paid skipper and crew, including a chef. There were plush armchairs in the salon and a galley to rival the kitchen of the latest model home. There was radar on the mizzen mast and there were aerials for VHF and TV. The dinghy, pushed by an outboard, was large enough for eight people without over crowding. Departure had been delayed because of the autopilot. It was not working very well, so the yachtsman and his crew were waiting for an electronics expert to fly out from London with a spare part to install. The owner called Great Britain on the telephone every afternoon to see that his business interests were receiving proper attention.

The junk I saw in Durban was very different. She was sailed by her owner, his wife, and their two young daughters. Her mast and boom were trees hastily trimmed of branches with an ax. The sails were linen. On the bow another short piece of tree with a cross attached to one end served as a winch, the only one on the craft, as all the hemp sheets and halyards were pulled up by hand. The lady cooked on a cheap primus hot plate and the head was a bucket. There were no cabins below, only a large piece space with pipe stretchers to sleep on boxes lashed to the stringers to hold stores and equipment.

Both the yachtsman and the yachtie were doing the same thing – sailing around the world. But the way in which they were doing it makes them as vastly different as the hitch-hiker and the man in the back seat of a Rolls Royce. If I were to make a personal value judgment, it would be that neither Yachtsman nor yachtie was going about it the right way. The one was too cluttered up with “aids”, too trapped by luxury, and the other too Spartan to be enjoyable or safe. But that is only an opinion prompted by my experience and prejudice. In fact, the old British gentleman should be admired both for amassing his millions and for the way in which he was enjoying them, while his counterpart in the junk should be admired for doing the same thing without the millions, thousands or even hundreds.

My situation in 1978 was somewhere in between. I was either a poor yachtsman or a yachtie without his boat, because late in 1976, my family and I and two crew had sailed in our forty-five foot ketch, Tina, from Durban, South Africa, for Titusville, Florida, U.S.A. We arrived in May of 1977. It was a glorious trip with fair trade winds and, aside from a few hundred small problems, what could be called an easy sail.

We returned home to South Africa by air in December, 1977, because of the death of my father-in-law. We had to leave Tina in Florida where she sat in the water of the marina far from those who could look after her and use her, and where she cost us not the inconsiderable rental for the slip she was occupying. It was an expensive and unsatisfactory situation. I could not afford to keep an idle Tina and she was too far away to permit compensatory use.

Also, there was the back of my mind the nagging ambition to change the basis of our association. “Would it not be nice,” I asked myself, “to stop pouring money into her and to arrange for her to earn a bit for me?” This is the age of woman’s lib, after all. Working wives are as common as kidnappers in Sicily and the expensively “kept”

woman is an extinct species. Why shouldn't Tina conform to the world's pattern and earn my daily bread? Why shouldn't she become a fishing boat?

Scoffers may weep tears of laughter at the idea of turning a yacht into a fishing boat until they consider the price of diesel in South Africa -- about \$2.00 a gallon in 1978 and still rising. I could see no reason why a sailboat should not be a viable proposition) especially if the boat were as tough and reliable as Tina. Add to that consideration the price of fish and it was plain that not only would she begin to pay for herself, she would make me rich as well.

But first, we had to reunite ourselves with Tina. The obvious solution was for me to fly to Florida and sail her back to South Africa

CHAPTER I. PREPARATIONS

Sailing from Florida to South Africa would not pose any problems for me. I had sailed Tina over to the U.S.A., hadn't I? I was a teal Old Salty Dog, wasn't I? Tina had proved herself seaworthy on her maiden voyage, had she not? She had broken everything that was going to break on the way over and all the essential items had been repaired, hadn't they? In fact, the trip would be a breeze in a well-found ship with an experienced skipper wouldn't it?

The only difficulty would be a feeling of longing for my family that began some thirty-seven seconds after I left them at Cape Town's DF Malan Airport. We had not been separated before and I heartily wished that we could make the trip together, but kids are entitled to an education whether they like it or not, and Ouma, my mother-in-law, was living with us permanently. She was eighty-five years old and in full possession of her faculties, but she could not be left alone after the passing of her husband. So, my wife, Walda, and the children, Karin and Philip, would bet on with the business of schooling and Ouma sitting, and I would sail Tina from Florida to Cape Town.

There are two ways to get from Florida to the Cape of Good Hope: through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific and Indian oceans, or via the Atlantic. The former is very much the longer route, but there is the advantage that it is with the trade winds and would be easy, if lengthy, sailing. The latter is against both the northeast and the southeast trades, which would mean a long beat to windward until one was far enough south to pick up the westerlies. It was because the Pacific route could not be completed in under six months that I chose the more difficult journey across the Atlantic. That, I estimated could be done in four months, if we were lucky. Without good luck, it would take five months,

From Florida we would sail east until we got in a position that would allow us to reach the little island of Fernando de Noronha. That would be the toughest leg of the trip because we could expect the wind to come from the east to the northeast, but if we could find a north wind, we would be able to head straight across the Atlantic. And why shouldn't there be a north wind? If we thought positively and prayed hard, a north wind was not out of the question.

From Fernando to Rio de Janeiro would be the second and easier leg. We would still be beating, but there would be room to angle off towards the south-southwest. The trick was to get around the bulge of South America and Fernando presented a good point from which to do so.

Rio to Cape Town would be a piece of cake. We would go south until we reached the westerlies and then simply bomb across. It is true that we would be right in the middle of the southern winter and could expect some pretty hairy weather, especially if we had to go as far south as the roaring forties, but Tina is strong and very seaworthy and I felt we could trust ourselves to her.

I have been saying "we" but there was no "we". There was only me when I arrived in Florida and checked in at my mother's house in Titusville. That was one of those things that would have to take care of itself. I would need a crew, two or three characters to pull on ropes and watch out for ships at night. Finding them would call for some more positive thinking and prayers. What I wanted was a diesel mechanic who had

just completed his MD part-time while working in an auto electrical Shop where he did all the welding and whose hobby was cooking, but I knew I would settle for anybody with a leg, an arm and an eye. An IQ above seventy-three would be a recommendation but was not essential.

Tina looked pretty good when I first saw her after a year's absence. There were a few things that needed to be done before she could be considered seaworthy; she needed anti-fouling, new standing rigging, a new battery, or two, some woodwork had to be done, the electrical wiring needed attention and the fuel tank had to be patched where it was leaking. That was the list of things I knew about before I arrived and I thought I could get through it in six weeks. That would leave me some time to assemble a crew and shop for food and I would leave around the end of January, 1919. If I found a crew in time, they could help with the chores and I could cut the time down a bit and put to sea earlier.

Obviously, I had it all organized. The jobs were arranged in order of priority, the time allocated and things generally set to move forward which just shows how easily over optimism can cloud one's judgment. I had forgotten how all things connected with a boat always take much longer than would be the ease with anything else. It may take half an hour to put up a shelf at home, but on a boat, where nothing is square, the wood will have to be shaped to fit the oddest curves and the supporting pieces will be without suitable anchorages, so you may find yourself driving a screw into thin air or through the hull, to the astonishment of the animal life in the water around your boat. Therefore, it may require several hours to attach a simple shelf. When planning time for boat work, a safe guide is to estimate the number of hours needed and square it. Then, if one works efficiently, the project may be completed on schedule.

A good example of this was the little task of putting Tina back together again. Before I left her, I had removed all the loose bits and pieces and stowed them in safe places below. This was both to protect them from weather and to prevent theft. It is amazing how easily a shackle can disappear if it is not being used to hold up something essential, like a mast. Therefore, all my iron was sitting in buckets of oil and all the rope was coiled neatly in the bathtub. Special equipment -- the radios, sails, auxiliary generator, sight reduction tables, sextants -- was all stored at my mother's house where she entertained herself by tripping regularly over the life raft when she tried to do the washing or climbing over sail bags when she wanted a book from the shelf in front of which they are stored. All this equipment had to be assembled on board and placed in its proper niche, and I had allocated a couple of days to do so, but I was still at it a week later, mainly because I had to re-familiarize myself with each piece of equipment, "Now, how was the mizzen sheet set up?" or "This block is for the staysail halyard -- or is it the jib sheet?"

Some jobs took longer than planned because I developed cases of ineptitude; reeving the forestaysail halyard, for instance. First of all, it took me hours to find the right piece of rope. I employed a process of elimination; if the line was too short for the main, it would fit the mizzen, the mizzen staysail or the forestaysail. If it was too short for the mizzen, it would fit the mizzen staysail or the forestaysail. If it was too long for the mizzen staysail, it was, Eureka! the forestaysail halyard.

Once I had the right piece of rope, I decided that it would be a simple matter to climb up the mast, push the line through the block and congratulate myself on a job well

done. The block was, after all, only as high as the crosstrees, a mere twenty-five feet above the deck. So I put one end of the halyard between my teeth and started to shinny up the mast. Some six feet from the cross-trees, I nearly extracted two incisors because the trailing end of the rope was wrapped around something on the deck. Down I climbed to undo the tangle, and then up again to the block where I hung on with one hand while I pushed the halyard through with the other. Now that there was a line to hold onto, the return journey was much easier and a good thing it was, too, because I was no longer in the shape I had been and the arms were getting tired. So, I slid slowly down the halyard I had just fitted. About halfway down I noticed that one end of the rope was going with me towards the deck and the other was snaking up towards the crosstrees. I continued my descent and watched, actually watched, one end of the rope go through my hands and zip up towards the block. I did not watch it go through the block because I was too busy falling the last eight so feet to the deck, but I know it did go through because the whole rope landed on me a second after I found myself flat on my arse with one foot held high in the air because my leg was jammed in the main halyard cleat. There was no damage done to the deck and very little to me but I had spent the better part of a day trying to complete that simple task, and there I was, bruised and scratched and entangled by the halyard that should have been safely in its block several hours before.

Even getting Tina pulled out of the water took two days, instead of the 40 minutes it should have required. There was a strong wind blowing on the morning I arranged to have her pulled, I asked two of the yachties at the marina to give me a hand. The engine started promptly and I put her in reverse. Nothing happened, I increased the revs and Tina, with the help of the co-opted crew pulling on lines, inched out of her mooring, caught the wind and drifted across the lagoon away from where the machine was waiting to lift her out. She was stopped by some pilings to which I tied her to wait for the wind to drop. It was plain that either the prop had fallen off during the past year, or it was too encrusted with growth to function properly. There was only one way to find out ... go down and have a look.

Florida calls itself "The Sunshine State" and many people in the northern reached of the S.A. dream of spending their winters basking on the beaches while their overcoats rot in storage, but Florida in January can get cold with a capital "K" and while the Indian River may receive some warmth in places where the Gulf Stream leaks into it, it still has been known to ice up around the edges. That very morning I had toyed with the idea of skating on some of the puddles that had frozen on Tina's deck during the night. I did not fancy having a swim just then, but Tina needed mobility so I walked across the street, bought a cheap face mask, came back, and climbed into an old pair of shorts.

It took FED ten minutes to get into water, partly because I am chicken where physical discomfort is concerned and partly because I like to have my heart attacks slowly. My first dive solved the mystery. The prop was an unrecognizable blob of crustaceous growth. All that the engine could do was stir up the water and make the barnacles dizzy. I attacked them vigorously with a scraper, to the delight of several fish that nibbled 'at, the shells as they sank to the bottom. The following day Tina was controllable again and we lifted her out of the water.

I gave my attention to the problem of crew between bouts with the various Jobs on the boat. Most of the people I knew in Titusville would have liked nothing better than the quick sail down to Rio and over to Cape Town. There was a great appeal in the idea of

going to South Africa in a yacht, a romantic adventure of the first order, but they were all tied down by jobs, or families, or both. I could understand a man's unwillingness to leave his family. I was suffering from such a separation myself. But why should let a career interfere with some good sailing is a question I find hard to answer.

One fish that came into my net was a certain Edwin Blackburn, a friend I had met the previous year who had then described himself as "an ignorant hillbilly" and who now appeared dockside wearing a large leather hat and a drooping moustache. He certainly looked as though he should have been gunning down the revenue men in the hills somewhere. He expressed interest in Tina, "Gawdaym, gawdaym, Watt-lee, these arn tub is straw-aw-aw-ong"-- and in the trip itself -- "Ah shore wood lyke to see Afry-ka." But Ed did not make any immediate commitment. He would come down to the marina where I was working, give me a hand with whatever was in progress at the time, and then go about his business. After a few weeks it was understood that he was engaged as crew, but I do not know when the decision was made. It simply developed that way. He was an interested observer who became a participant and the transition was so gradual that it passed unnoticed.

As part of my recruitment campaign I had written to my two brothers, Kevin and Brian, in Minnesota and offered them berths, but neither was available. Kevin was planning a trip to Greece with his girl friend and nothing would induce him to change his plans and bring her along as cook. Besides, Kevin pointed out, he handled all the culinary chores in their ménage. I suggested that in that case he could be the cook. We would hide the top of the young lady's bikini and use her as a figurehead, but not even that inducement persuaded him to join us.

Brian still had to complete his degree at the college he was attending. and so he, too, was unavailable, but one of his friends, Pat Hamilton, 'phoned me one evening to hear firsthand the details of the proposed voyage. I explained that he would need a plane ticket from South Africa to anywhere in the U.S.A., two or three hundred dollars for his share of the food on the boat, whatever money he could lay his hands on for personal expenses in stops along the way and in South Africa, a visa for the Republic and at least four months free time in which to complete the voyage. I must, in all fairness to myself state that the four months was a minimum that I clearly emphasized as such. I even intimated that the trip might take a bit longer.

A few days later Pat 'phoned again to say that he was coming, and would I pick him up at Orlando.

On the day Tina came out of the water to have her bottom cleaned, Ed and I went up to Orlando to fetch Pat and to place the order for the new standing rigging. We made contact with Pat without difficulty and repaired to a pub to have a beer and to get to know one another. Now that there were three of us, we were a crew rather than a couple of guys with a half-witted project in hand. Neither Ed nor Pat had done any blue water sailing before, but Ed had owned a thirty six footer and Pat had sailed in dinghies, so they were not as inexperienced as they thought they were. We had a fine time discussing the beauties of life at sea and I told stories that grew taller with every pitcher of beer. We also reached a unanimous conclusion that Tina needed a nubile lady aboard to take over the galley and to serve as a decoration for the deck. There were no ulterior motives stimulating this decision, but only the thought that feminine company would elevate the tone of the voyage. I suggested Farrah Fawcett, who, I was sure, would join us if we

wrote to her, but Ed and Pat did not want to elevate the tone that much so they determined to try for someone less famous. Since Pat is a better-looking fellow than Ed or me, he was to be used, in Ed's words, "fer trollin." From that moment on Pat became a dedicated interviewer of prospective cooks. No suitably developed female escaped his efforts the barmaid at the pub to the girl shucking the oysters we ate that evening, to a bevy of topless go-go dancers in a club we later entered, he moved with growing assurance. "How would you like to go to Rio on a yacht?" has got to be the best opening line ever employed by a lecher anywhere, but it is surprising how many girls shaking their boobs in a dark dump of a place are unwilling to allow themselves to be taken away from all that. Perhaps they are afraid of sunburn.

It was in the early hours of the morning that we left Orlando, still cookless, to return to Titusville. We stopped once on a deserted stretch of road to answer the call of nature and then continued on our way. Several miles along I made a wrong turn and came to a dead-end. While reversing to turn the car around, I happened to notice that Pat was not in the back seat where Ed and I had thought him asleep. "Check the ashtray," said Ed, but Pat wasn't there either. He had left the club with us, so he could only have vanished at the comfort stop, back the road in the middle of a swamp. We re-traced our route and found the forlorn figure on the verge, listening to the snakes and alligators crawling about a few feet away from him. He described his situation as "scary".

The next morning Pat and I went down to the good ship Tina, sitting high and dry on the hard, and started the business of anti-fouling. Ed was unable to help us, but he brought Ray along to take his place. Ray was a gentleman of the road whom Ed had picked up on one of his forays and had brought home to bathe and feed, in return for which Ray did as he was told. He was, in short, a slave, so long as he wanted to eat at Ed's expense. Ed asked me what needed doing and I told him that the underside of the keel had to be scraped.

"Ray, yew kleen that ther key-eel guh-uh-uh-ud, ore ah'll key-ick your as-ess to Pittsburgh an' bay-ack." Ed can get more syllables out of a single word than anybody I have ever met.

But he seemed to have communicated a degree of urgency to Ray who took a scraper and lay on his back to chip away unremittingly for the entire day. In fact, he was still chipping away when Pat and I started to paint on the first coat of anti-fouling and was almost finished when Pat took the scraper away from him and did the last bit, which would have taken Ray several hours, in six minutes.

Ray was left to help us on some other occasions as well. Once Ed told him to clean up the salon and Ray spent the afternoon telling me that he needed a "vakum". If he had a "vakum" he would "vakum" the entire boat, but, without a "vakum", there wasn't much sense in doing anything.

Another time Ray climbed on board just as Pat had finished painting the side decks. With supreme confidence he stepped onto the wet paint with both feet, stood for a moment on the newly varnished seat of the cockpit and strode over the salon carpets to the forecabin where he sat reading a Playboy for an hour or so. He certainly wasn't hiding. His trail was there for everybody to see.

And then there was the fuel tank. I had cut out an inspection plate and patched the leak, but I was not convinced that the gasket would be leak-proof when I replaced the plate so I decided to watch it closely while we filled the tank. I crawled into the hold and

sat under the filler pipe while Ray operated the pump. The tank filled slowly and I was just about to pronounce the plate secure when I saw a thin stream of diesel running out through one of the screws that held the plate.

“Stop!” I shouted to Ray, who immediately removed the muzzle, but he continued to hold the trigger fully depressed and I was thoroughly drenched with expensive diesel oil. That made me a devotee of any and all emancipation philosophies. Slave labor was an anathema for the soundest of reasons: it is expensive and inefficient. From then on, Ray was allowed to help only if he stayed far away from the boat. He was never under consideration as a possible crew member.

Because his friend, Pat, was on the crew list, my brother Brian had had second thoughts about the voyage. A few days after Tina was back in the water, he called to say that he would soon be arriving in Orlando. I felt then that the matter of crew was fully resolved.

How many crew members one should take on a boat will always be a subject for debate. A number of variables are involved: the size of the boat; the purpose for which it is used; and the quality of the crew itself.

The first consideration is important because of the Newton’s law. No two bodies can occupy the same space at the same time. While twenty-five footer may float with fifteen people on board, it will not do anything else. The larger the boat, the more likely it is that additional crew will be needed to handle sails. Modern equipment, however, makes it possible to manage with fewer hands than would have been considered necessary a few years ago.

But the number of crew also depends on the second consideration – the use to which the boat is put. Yachts have three basic functions – racing, pottering, and cruising. A competitive sailor will want to drop the spinnaker, raise the genoa and sheet in the main simultaneously, and will need enough hands to do so. When I see the mass of bodies on some of the boats going out to race, I often wonder which of the crew is responsible for tying the skipper’s right shoelace and which his left.

If the boat is simply a potterer, the crew may vary from one to so many that the waterline is submerged. The largest craft can usually fool around single handed and the smallest always has room for somebody’s girl friend or auntie.

But if the vessel is to be a blue water cruiser, the crew must be limited to the minimum consistent with the safe handling of the boat. The operative words are “minimum” and “safe”. Too few will mean that people will become exhausted and easily subject to accident through fatigue. Too many promotes a feeling of claustrophobia and disharmony and will not only ruin the enjoyment of the cruise, but can also prove dangerous in an emergency.

The third variable, the quality of the crew, is, perhaps, the most important and like all human considerations, highly complex. As a general rule I would suggest that a good hand is worth five mediocre ones and a bad hand can be a positive, active danger to the boat and all who sail in her. But "good" in this context is as hard to define as the hand is to find. It certainly does not depend on sailing expertise, which can be acquired, or on physical strength or courage or stamina, all of which are as useful at sea as they are anywhere else and will be possessed by the good hand as a matter of course. What it really boils down to is the attitude of the crew member. He must like sailing. If he does,

all the rest will fall into place naturally. If he does not, he can be the strongest, bravest, most enduring expert in the fleet, and he still won't be worth a damn. This is because anyone who does not like the sport and still participates has to be a nut of a different genus from the crackpot who does like sails

While the business of blue water cruising is to get from 'A' to 'B' it should be remembered that the whole purpose of the exercise is the getting there, not the being there. It is wise, nevertheless, to choose as pleasant a destination as possible. One will, after all, be spending some time there. But if being there is the object, it will be easier and cheaper to select some other form of conveyance because from some sailing is undoubtedly the most uncomfortable method of transportation yet devised, with the possible exception of being dragged naked across rough ground by a panicky horse. For the person who wants to meet the challenge sailing presents, however, the discomfort is transformed into something beautiful. For one, the movement of the boat is a maddening antagonist that throws him against every sharp edge on the vessel and, for another, is a gentle rocking that lulls him to sleep after his watch. For one, a gale is a horrifying manifestation of angry natural forces bent on destruction and, for another, an exciting of the boat and the people aboard. The open sea can be an endless desert, both boring by its monotony and frightening because of its immensity, or it can be a constantly changing world, full of life that seems to be waiting to be noticed, a succession of events in which even single waves gain an individuality. In short, it is how one views the realities of sailing that determines the degree of pleasure or displeasure one derives from the sport and a hand with the "right" attitude will automatically develop the skills that will make him a good crew member,

The personalities of the individual crew members are important factors, but it is difficult to control that aspect when selecting hands. The pal you have been hanging around with all your life may be the only person in the world you know you can count on, and you may have been involved in any number of hairy situations together to back up your claim that you are compatible. But if you have not been sailing together, you will not know how you will get along at sea. Conversely, the man you have never particularly liked may turn out to be the ideal companion on a long cruise. I would say that the only generalization one can make with any degree of certainty is that the character you actively dislike ashore will become a person you positively hate at sea.

Since Edwin Pat and Brian did not fit into this last category I was happy with the crew situation. We had enough people to handle the boat and there was enough space aboard so that we would not get in each other's way all the time. We would be able to sit three hour watches without any problem, thus assuring a good sleep for each, and we could alternate the duties of cook so that our diet would be varied. For, in spite of Pat's efforts, no nubile young lady was willing to join us.

We collected Brian and the new wire for the rigging in Orlando and repeated what was becoming an initiation ceremony for new additions to the crew; a beer, some "erstes" and more cook interviews at a topless go-go joint, and returned to Titusville without signing on a cook or leaving Pat by the roadside. Early the next morning we would re-rig Tina. There were only eighteen pieces of wire to replace. It should not take more than a day.

It took us three-and-a-half days. The system was to be a one-at-a-time procedure. I would go up the mast, unscrew the shackle pin, let the old wire down to the deck and

put on the new end which Pat and Brian had set up below. They would measure, snip off the right length of new wire, prepare the lower end and pull it up tight before I started to remove the next shroud or stay. In that way, only one support would be missing at a time and I would be secure at the top, positive that the stick was not about to drop me into the water. That was the plan but the practice was more complicated.

First of all, the shackle had to be cut with a hacksaw more often than submitting to my efforts to unscrew the pin. That took a long time and was very hard work. Secondly, the wire refused to measure properly and what looked like just enough was either too short and we had to add some chain, or too long and we had to remove the clamps and eye we had just fitted, snip off a bit and re-do the end. Then Brian, busy cutting wire on the bow, slipped and sent the cutters over the side, thereby earning the title of Super Nerd. At sea, all objects of this sort are tied to some immovable fixture, but this precaution had not seemed mandatory at dockside. It took two days of diving, poking the bottom with long poles, and fishing with a magnet to recover the cutters and in the meantime we used the hacksaw to cut off the lengths of wire, which is by far the sloppiest and most frustrating method of doing the job.

Finally the rigging was up and tuned and very beautiful it was, too. It looks strong and imparts confidence. It even feels nice to run one's hand over a new shroud gleaming in the sunlight.

There are a number of ways of dealing with the problem of food for an extended cruise. One is to leave it all to your wife and later complain like mad if the meals are not exactly to your taste. 'Why didn't you buy more chocolate cookies? You know I told you to get plenty of chocolate cookies. I wish we had had more chocolate cookies aboard.'

Another method is to estimate the number of days and then work out a series of menus. As a refinement, you can even pack each day's groceries separately so that they can be brought out when needed. The problem with this system is that the meals take on a sameness -... "Oh, hell. It's Thursday. Beans" – and there may be arguments – "Who served Thursday's mixed vegetable on Sunday?" It is wise to remember too, that after a few days at sea the crew will be like a bunch of pregnant women with cravings for exotic delicacies -- "Wow. Try one of these pickles with peanut butter on it. They're really good." Therefore the system will have to be so elastic as to be no system at all.

The method I adopted was to take a pocketful of money into a discount supermarket and buy lots of whatever looked good. All the crew assured me that they could eat anything and added a few special requests, so I had as free a hand as could be desired. I bought cases of canned meat, vegetables, beans; sacks of flour, rice, pancake mix; boxes of cheese; cooking oil, pasta, syrup, dishwashing soap, toilet paper, salt, mustard, and so on until I had filled four or five carts far beyond their capacity. My efforts were somewhat hampered by my never having tried many of the goods I was buying and so did not know the quality of the merchandise, but there were many thrifty house-wives of both sexes who were more than willing to help me, some times to their consternation.

When asked one very sweet little old lady if the string beans she was buying were any good, she grew very enthusiastic and explained that they were delicious. She always bought "lots and lots" when she was shopping, she said, putting five or six cans into her cart. That was good enough for me, so I pulled about fifty cans off the shelf while she watched in amazement, growing more and more concerned with my unquestioned

acceptance of her recommendation. It was obvious that she felt responsible when she said, "Well, I like them," and moved down the aisle.

Since Tina carries no refrigeration, the greater part of our food had to be in cans. There were some items, however that are usually kept in the fridge at home but will survive nicely if left in a cool place on board. Bacon in a vacuum pack will hold for several weeks and cheese does not go off. It gets ripe. Some people like to cut off the mold, but I believe they are throwing away the best part. Eggs coated with Vaseline will hold for several months if they have not been refrigerated before coating. Therefore, do not buy eggs from a cooler. Get them from a freezer, if you can, or from a super market that keeps them on the shelf. Salami, if hung in a cool place, will remain good as long as you want it to. Onions, potatoes, cabbage, and squash need air to breathe and will stay fresh for ages. Margarine, as long as it doesn't actually melt, is good for a month at least and can be used for cooking even if it does melt. Bananas should be green when purchased and then kept in a dark corner. They will still ripen at the same, but if they are stored in the sunlight, they will go from green to black. All citrus fruit is delicate, but will keep well if not washed about too much. The trick is to find unwashed fruit and not rinse it off until just before you use it. That is not easy because most growers wash their oranges, grapefruit and lemons before they market them. This makes the fruit attractive on the shelf, but it also hastens the ripening process.

Many of the victualling problems can be averted if the boat has a deepfreeze on board. Then you can keep fresh meat and vegetables and ice can be made to cool the daily supplies. The only trouble with that is that a freezer is more than likely to malfunction. I have never seen or heard of one on a boat that did not give at least some trouble and most end up as sail bins while the machinery rusts. Also, if you are going to gear your supplies to a freezer, it must be big enough to carry enough supplies for however long you will be at sea. Even a small freezer takes up a lot of space that is wasted after you have consumed the chicken and three hamburgers it holds, but a large freezer will use proportionately less boat and can hold a month's food supply.

Therefore, the only sensible way is to install a large freezer and pack it full before your cruise. But what happens if it breaks down? Can you fix it? Have you brought along all the spare parts you are likely to need? Or do you have to head for the nearest port and send an urgent call to the manufacturers? Perhaps you have been very clever and anticipated the breakdown and have stocked enough canned foods in addition to the frozen. If that is the case you have carried twice as much as you need and the freezer has become a very expensive blessing indeed.

When we had assembled what looked like an immense amount of supplies on the floor of my mother's living room, we spent an evening and better part of the night wrapping and packing.

Every can was put into its own plastic bag to protect against the damp. This is necessary even if the boat has watertight lockers because the air alone is capable of making a can rust through in a very short time. Alternatively, one can varnish each tin, but that is a long and messy process. The labels must be removed and the contents marked, and then the cans must be dipped in varnish and allowed to dry. Even ten cases, which is a lot less than it sounds means two hundred and forty cans dripping varnish all over the garage floor or sticking to the rack on which they are drying. If the coating of varnish is scratched, the tin will still rust and its contents become inedible.

Other items usually subject to dampness -- flour, rice, sugar -- were decanted into plastic bottles, and the vegetables were put into bags through which air could flow. Thirty dozen eggs were individually coated with Vaseline. Only one of them slipped through greasy fingers and cracked.

The medicine chest was one of my mother's contributions to the voyage. This is an important part of a ship's stores, but there are imitations. In the first place, unless you are a doctor, there may be problems of diagnosis -- "It's either a hangover or bubonic plague," and, secondly, for complications that can be diagnosed, there may be difficulties in the treatment -- "Any of you guys know how to whip out an appendix?" Because of this, it is best to equip yourself with medicines you can handle to treat what you can recognize. The main thing to remember is that you don't get sick at sea. You are breathing fresh air, eating and sleeping well, getting plenty of exercise and floating on billions of gallons of disinfectant, so that the only germs around are the ones you bring with you and they are probably weakened by seasickness. What you are most likely to need the first aid box for are minor cuts, bruises and burns. These are common on board because of the motion and the need to work in awkward places with tools to which you are often unaccustomed. I, for one, graze my knuckles by looking at a wrench, so I carry plenty of salves and ointments and an assortment of plasters.

For more serious injuries I confess I make little provision and would have to improvise should one occur. A large cut I would sew up with an ordinary needle and thread. A broken bone I would splint with a spare batten or any piece of wood that was suitable. A bad burn I would coat with a bicarb paste to ease the pain. Against these eventualities I stock a broad spectrum of antibiotics and plenty of aspirins. I also carry polysporin for eye infections and a gum to fill the cavity in a tooth if a filling is lost.

The most common health problem at sea is the salt-water boil which can be very painful and very resistant to treatment. It is best not to bother having one at all, and this can be done by making sure you stay as dry as possible and get plenty of sun. To spend a couple of days in spray-soaked jeans is a sure method of developing a whole patch of boils and once you have them, they are there for the duration, like the mother-in-law who came for weekend three years ago and still hasn't booked her return ticket. At least the boils won't make remarks about your personal habits.

To round off the medicine chest I include lip-ice; some vile tasting muck for runny tummies; invariable brought on by excesses ashore; lots of Vitamin C and seasick tablets which only have value if they are never taken. If one gets sick enough to warrant a pill, it won't help, but having them there seems to be psychologically beneficial.

The buying of stores is an occupation that can continue forever if you allow it to. There is always one more concoction that would be nice during your watch or between breakfast and lunch; one more book that you have been meaning to read; one gadget you could not possibly do without, but which was not on your list of essentials. We arrived at this stage of our outfitting towards the end of January and spent some days gathering together odd bits and pieces. A few hundred books came on board, stolen from my mother's Shelves and bought from the flea-market down the road which also produced Pat's guitar and Ed's flute, both instruments to be mastered at sea; an enormous pile of Playboys; some knives to chop all the fish we were going to catch, and enough whetstones to grind those knives to powder.

There were games too, for the expected endless hours of leisure. Brian brought a chess set and a cribbage board and Ed's Backgammon set arrived. My bank manager gave me a total of eight packs of cards, two for each hand. I was beginning to wonder if we would have any free time for sailing.

It was clear that if we went on accumulating things, we would be the boat with the most varied list of equipment at the marina. We would be resting on the bottom, under thirteen feet of water because of excess weight, but we would have plenty of stores, tools and toys. We were already a week past my self-imposed deadline when I glanced at Tina's waterline, what I could see of it through the ripples above it, and pronounced us ready for sea.

"Tomorrow we buy beer and go," I said.

Tomorrow came. We bought the beer, a case of Scotch, another donation from my mother, then, and paid the yard bill. We were ready. Then Brian dropped a filling out of his tooth.

The closest entrance to the sea from Titusville is Port Canaveral, down the Indian River, across the lower end of Merritt Island via a canal, into the Banana River and through a lock that isolates the waterway from the tidal influence of the Atlantic. It was only a twenty-mile run but I wanted to allow enough time to clear customs, a formality conducted at Pore Canaveral, so the plan was to spend Wednesday night there and leave Thursday morning. That stopover would allow time for Brian to have his tooth repaired without delaying the start of the voyage and he could join the ship at Canaveral.

On the run down to the Port Pat and I were aided by a friend, Joe Phillips; his son, Joey; and Ed's son, Andy. Ed himself was to joining us at Canaveral Thursday morning. For me it was a glorious time, back behind Tina's wheel, putt putting through the drawbridge and down the open stretches of the river. Part of the exhilaration came from the knowledge that we were heading for the open sea, but most of it stemmed from the fact of actually being on board and moving. Boats are inherently fun, but for me there are few experiences more enjoyable than being on a boat that is moving.

It was late in the afternoon of Wednesday, February 7th, when we arrived at the lock that separated us from Port Canaveral. We moored lightly to the wall next to the bell one rings to alert the lock-keeper, but before we could push the button he appeared to tell us that the lock was out of order and would not be in service until Monday.

"We may get her going sooner," he said, "but I don't guarantee it before then."

We were, I pointed out to the crew, "locked in", which annoyed me more than my pun did them. They all groaned, so I told them that I didn't "lock" their attitude. They groaned again. When I mentioned the "locklihood" of the thing being fixed earlier, they turned their backs. "Lockwise, I'm sure," I said, and turned my back on them.

After dinner at one of Port Canaveral's good restaurants to which my mother had chauffeured Brian whose tooth was now repaired, we spent the night tied up to the lock wall. Early in the morning, we retreated across the river to a small ring we had passed on the way down. There I decided to wait, hoping the lock would be in operation before Monday. I told the crew to think positively.

There were more odd jobs to do the next day -- stowing away the last-minute acquisitions, installing Ed and his belongings on board and generally cleaning up the deck. We proceeded casually, taking more breaks than actually working, and that evening

strolled over to a pub to reward ourselves for our labors. I have never agreed with the philosophy that only achievement should be rewarded. It seems to me that effort merits its own recompense, while even futile attempts produce an even greater need for gratification.

At the pub Pat spotted a slim young lovely named Melissa waiting on tables and immediately interviewed her for the still vacant position of cook on Tina. She was unavailable but interested in the voyage and offered to lend us her car so we could go carousing -- my pun and more groans from the boys -- while she worked. When I gratefully vetoed the idea, she laughed and said, "Oh, you old poker!" much to the delight of Pat and Brian who, although showing great facility in forgetting everything else, always remembered that undignified appellation and made it a part of the ship's vocabulary

When we returned that evening we were told that the lock would be operational to in the morning thanks to all the positive thinking, and we would be able to move on.

CHAPTER II FIRST ZIG-ZAG

Great was the excitement among the crew who were anxious to start on the big adventure and the skipper, who was having to pay a large fee to a small marina, shared in their jubilation. It's not that I'm tight with money. I'm merely frugal.

Great, too, was the excitement the next morning when we cast off the shore lines and put Tina's engine in reverse to pull away from our berth at the small marina. But the supply of water in the canal was in keeping with the smallness of the marina and we were aground. I should have realized that some body up there did not want us to put to sea that day. Brian filling, the broken lock and the boat aground were indications that the timing was unpropitious, but, as everyone knows, such warnings are heeded only by the superstitious. It was the 9th of February 1979. It was also, although I did not realize it then because my concern was to get going, a Friday. Sailors should not leave port on a Friday. That is a superstition I would not have ignored ordinarily.

But we were keyed up and ready and worked off some of our excitement pushing and shoving while the engine roared at full revs until Tina popped out, trailing a good supply of mud. We were on our way through the repaired lock and cleared by customs without any further delay. One weeping wife had said goodbye to her crew-member husband, Edwin; my mother had come and then gone home; and, as we putt putted out of the harbor, Pat and Brian were still debating whether or not to take precautionary anti-seasickness pills.

It could be argued that one of the things the skipper of the yacht should be required to know is what day it is, but I was in a cruising mood and considered myself already at sea where one does not really need that information. One needs to know the date in order to up the relevant figures in the Nautical Almanac for navigational purposes. The actual day of the week is only important ashore where Mondays and Fridays have significance because of jobs and Thursday is important because M*A*S*R* is on TV that evening.

Actually, things looked pretty good for our departure. We had been delayed by the lock to be sure, but it had been opened earlier than we had expected. Brian had lost a filling, but it had been replaced. The boat had been aground but we had gotten her off. Most important, there was a beautiful wind blowing, eighteen to twenty knots, out of the west and over little three-or-four-foot seas. It was just what we needed to push us across the Gulf Stream and as we motored out of the harbor I could be heard praying that it would hold.

"Give us a month of this," I pleaded visualizing us tearing across the Atlantic to arrive at Fernando in record time. "Give us two weeks," I begged more reasonably, somewhat worried that my earlier request might have seemed too greedy. "Ten days would certainly be a help," I compromised. When you are bargaining with the elements, it never pays to ask too little.

"Fifteen-fahve daze to Rio," shouted Edwin at the wheel and I told him to shut up. Optimism and positive thinking are great at sea, but schedules are never acceptable.

When we had cleared the port, I gave Pat and Brian their first lesson in sail handling. This is the main halyard. Main Halyard, this is Pat and Brian. The function of the main halyard is to raise the mainsail. If you pull on it, the sail will go up. You pull it

as quickly as you can and make it as tight as you can. Then you winch it up even tighter with the main halyard winch, the handle of which is kept in this pocket on the mast where it must be replaced when you have finished using the winch." That is the information I wished to convey, but both boys lined that my instructions were more concise: "Pull that rope, crank her up and put the bloody handle back."

Edwin turned Tina into the wind and held her there while the three of us went from sail to sail, raising the main, the forestaysail, the mizzen. Then he pointed her onto the course I had set and we opened the self-furling jib, trimmed sheets and switched off the engine. We were sailing. The voyage had begun.

I immediately went below to check on the stowage. No matter how nicely things are tucked away in port, the first few good shakes and twists experienced when one puts to sea will inevitably send so many things flying around the cabin and usually that something is the most delicate and essential item on board, such as the sextant. Once you have stowed things away at sea, they usually stay where they are put so long as the weather does not become exceptionally rough.

It was while I was below that our first breakage occurred, perhaps forty-seven seconds after the true start of the voyage. I had just captured a few cans of beer that were rolling around on the cabin sole and had decided that it would be easier to drink than to stow them, when I heard Edwin shouting from the cockpit, "I gahd a say-el en the warder": and rushed on deck to see the jib having a bath in the Gulf Stream. The boys and I pulled her in and examined her to see what had caused her to drop. A frayed bit of halyard wire gave us the answer. It was the only piece of wire on the boat that had not been replaced and it had broken at the first hint of strain. It had not been replaced because I had forgotten about it. One can't remember everything. It wasn't all that important I assured the crew. We could rig a rope in a few minutes to replace the wire. I had remembered to buy some spare line for halyards. I had remembered lots of things, I pointed out. I still had my passport, didn't I? There were fuel, water and food, weren't there? I knew where we were going, didn't I?

"Where are we going?" asked Brian to test me.

"Over there," I answered, pointing towards the bow of the boat "Oh," he said, reassured.

Although it would take only a few minutes to rig a new halyard, those few minutes would have to be spent at the top of the mast and I did not feel like climbing on the first day of the trip, so we packed the jib away and raised the genoa on its own halyard which, unfortunately, does not serve for the jib.

That first afternoon was spent getting used to the motion of the boat, packing away bits and pieces of equipment, and teaching Brian how to steer a compass course. He was the only one who had never been on a sail boat before and so he had a few tiring hours at the wheel until he developed sufficient competence to be left on his own.

By then it was time to introduce the crew to the "Tina Tot." This was a ritual evolved on an earlier cruise and consisted of a coffee cup full of rum taken at 5 PM exactly. Since we had put to sea without any rum, I had to improvise and substituted Scotch. No one felt in the least cheated.

The watch system was also a carry-over from the first cruise. We would sit only at night because the days were too pleasant to spend below and whoever was on deck could keep an eye on the compass. When the sun went down, however, the danger of being run

down by a tanker became worth thinking about, so we divided the night into four three-hour shifts and rotated them. If you had the first watch, from seven until ten today you would draw the second tomorrow and the third the following day. That meant at least six hours of uninterrupted sleep under normal conditions and nine hours if you were lucky enough to have the first or fourth watch. Of course, any development that called for all hands on deck was a valid reason to roust everybody out of bed.

While arranging watches, I emphasized that anyone who spotted a ship was to call me no matter how far away it appeared or how obviously it was going to miss us. Reading the running lights of ships at sea is a tricky business and requires practice. I wanted the crew to learn under my direct supervision so I could point out what to look for. "That red light means that we are looking at his port side. See the two white lights, one slightly lower than the other? The low one is his forward mast and the other is up over his bridge. The long string of white lights are his portholes and the greenish light over the red shows that the door to the radio room has been left open. The flashing orange just below the forward white light is the crew shooting craps on the foredeck with a flashlight that needs new batteries."

It is because of the profusion of lights on many ships at sea that I make it a practice to ignore The Rules of the Road, that carefully devised system of lights which looks so uncompromisingly clear in the books but which makes little sense if the third mate is having a smoke in front of the starboard running light or a short circuit has blown the forward masthead light. The most basic rule, that power gives way to sail, is the most dangerous simply because many of the ships today do not have the maneuverability necessary to obey it. A supertanker might require a couple of hours to execute a turn and five or six days to stop. And that is assuming that the watch on the tanker has been alert and has seen your little red or green light which is invisible at least half the time because it is blocked by seas and which, if it is seen, tells very little about the direction in which the sailing ship is traveling. Whatever comfort yachties gain from the idea of expensive radar installations on the tanker must always be tempered by the thought that there is probably nobody watching the screen, and even if there is he is looking at an area fifteen or twenty miles beyond you. If he has seen you and realized that you are on a collision course, he has changed direction long before you could notice him, but that is a foolish assumption to make. Therefore my personal Rule of the Road is to avoid any and all ships at sea.

Our first night was shipless, but taught the crew one of the basic facts of sailing: It gets cold at night. That is not necessarily a bad thing. Brisk weather keeps the watch awake and there is nothing like the comfort of climbing into a warm bunk after three hours huddled in oilskins in the cockpit. A cold night is also useful because it teaches one the value of staying dry, a very important lesson indeed because it often seems that the entire raison d'etre of a yacht is to splash water on you, only a slight bother on a nice sunny day, but very uncomfortable at 2 AM with the wind blowing out of the northwest. Once one has learned that it is important to stay dry, one can devote some thought as to how this can be accomplished. The most obvious solution - do not get wet - is impossible to put into practice. It takes very little water to soak a sock and you can be sure that during that trip to the rail you have been putting off until the need became too pressing to ignore you will be splashed by a tiny wave that normally would have been unable to reach the deck but which now throws itself over the coachroof with a malice that seems

personal in intent. Once wet, the sock will not dry properly until it is rinsed in a rain shower and then held well above the spray for two sunny days. Providing that it does not receive any more salt water, it may stay dry until you put it on again and step in a puddle when you are reaching for your shoes.

To my mind, there is only one way to deal with this problem, and that is to wear as little as possible and to guard your dry clothes carefully. If you are going to get dressed, get dressed properly with seaboots, oilskins and the works. If you are uncomfortable in full gear, take off as much as you can, starting with your feet and removing upwards. If your legs and feet are bare and you are wearing only a light pair of shorts, you will usually only get skin wet and the shorts will dry on your body faster than on the safety lines where they are splashed every thirteen seconds. So will that pair of socks, so keep them under your shirt when you are not wearing them and sleep on them at night.

An advantage inherent in this system is that you soon discover your feet are useful appendages. After years of stepping on them, kicking with them, tripping over them and sticking them, in your mouth, you suddenly find yourself holding onto a halyard end five feet above the deck while the shackle pin you have just dropped threatens to roll over the side. You cannot let go of the halyard and you cannot reach the shackle pin. You must not let it roll over the side because it is invariably the only pin that will fit the only shackle on the boat that can do that particular job and the danger of losing it is increasing with every wave that comes by. What to do? Reach out and grasp it firmly with your toes and place it in your free hand. A little practice and some concentration will soon develop your skills. Is the only secure corner for your coffee cup right across the cockpit from your favorite seat? Do not get up. Simply stretch over a leg and pick it up with your toes. Use your toes as a bookmark when you want both hands to roll a cigarette or to keep the thread tight when you are sewing sails. The possibilities are endless and only one word of caution seems necessary: pick up a lighted cigarette with your toes very carefully.

Mornings at sea are grand and our first sunrise was no exception, but the beauty was in no way propitious. The sun rose upon what was to be a work day, prompted by an entire series of breakages which initiated the crew into the joys of sailing. We were, so busy throughout the day that our discussions later led us to itemize a scale of catastrophes which, in keeping with academic procedure, put the various events into their proper niches, but otherwise had no practical value at all.

Class A

Into this category falls any breakage that immediately results in the sinking of the vessel. It does not encompass an emergency in which the crew merely thinks the ship is going down. That is a false Class A which occurs more often than a true one and should not be included in this scale. The way to tell the difference is that in a true Class A you watch the boat fill with water before you abandon ship and climb into your life raft. Then you watch the boat sink. You know you are in a false Class A when the rescue boat that pulls you from your life raft is also towing your still unsunk craft and the captain is too busy calculating how much money he can get for salvage to say "hello" to you.

Class B

This is a breakage that causes a permanent stop to the ship's progress. The mast or the sails burn up and there is little to do but wait until you drift into a continent or something or stop a passing ship.

Class C

This involves a partial stop to the voyage. The sails are torn and must be repaired. The rigging has fallen onto the deck. The rudder has become loose.

Class D

Applies to any breakage that does not stop the boat, but which requires a lot of effort to repair. The hatch cover falls over the side and you must make a new one. The wiring has to be renewed. The engine's exhaust pipe falls off in six pieces.

Class E

Encompasses the easily fixable breaks and such general maintenance as must be constantly carried out. Lubricating a squeaky block, re-lashing the spare anchor, doing the laundry.

Class F

Refers to breaks in equipment that one can or must do without. The log cable breaks off, the chimney for the oil lamp shatters, the next-to-last spare fork goes over the side with the dirty dishwasher.

An interesting thing to remember is that none of these classes is rigid and a Class E catastrophe can move up the scale if it is neglected or overlooked, often very quickly. Because you failed to notice the chaffing on 'the backstay (Class E), it broke (Class D) and before you could rig a replacement, the mast twisted (Class C), snapped off the belts that held it to the deck and fell over the side (Class B), cracking the hull so that the boat filled with water and (Class A) sank.

Our first lovely morning at sea gave us a Class E that turned into a D; a standard C and a C with a potential B. The first was a blocked bilge pump. This will often happen and it is usually a simple matter to repair because a blockage can occur in only two places -- in the pipe or in the pump itself. If it is in the pipe, it can generally be cleared by blowing down one end and collecting the muck at the other before it is sucked back into the pipe. When in the pump, one simply strips the mechanism, washes out the junk and reassembles. That morning, however, involved both the pipe and the pump and the former was blocked in its most inaccessible part and would not blow out so I had to remove the entire pipe, clear and replace it. That was an easy job that turned into penal servitude.

I was no sooner finished with the bilge pump than I noticed a small tear in the mainsail, so we dropped her, stopping the boat and therefore enjoying our first Class C catastrophe while I gave the crew a quick practical course in sewing sails. When it was nicely repaired, we checked the whole sail, spotted a batten pocket that was coming off and started on that. It was while Edwin was sewing that I happened to look up and see

that the starboard crosstree was fractured near the mast. That was a Class C with a strong potential for Class B.

The function of the crosstree is to keep the mast stiff. If there are no crosstrees, the stick will have a tendency to bend in the middle, but if there is only one crosstree, that bend is guaranteed and the mast can be counted on to break. It was clear that the crosstree would have to be fixed before we put up the main. That required a good deal of thought. What would we use to replace the broken tree? I scrounged around in the lazarete and among the odd sticks of timber lashed on deck until I found a short round piece of wood that looked as though it might work. Then we sent Edwin up the mast in the boson's chair to measure and to remove the broken stick, not an easy job since the trees are held to the mast in steel sockets and although Edwin hammered away with a chisel, he could not remove the stump from the socket. Nor could I when I went up to give it a try. When I descended, I looked at my watch, saw that it was tot time, and declared the working day ended. That was the system on Tina. If we are not winning, we stop and think it over until we can work out a way that may get the job done. Although we were stopped without the main up, it was really no bar to our progress since the wind had died early in the afternoon and we would not have been moving if we had had a dozen mainsails up. Every once in a while a puff would come along and fill the forestaysail and mizzen and we would ghost along for a few feet, but it was hardly what one could call sailing. A pan-handling gull who landed off the stern and whom we fed some crackers and other garbage had no trouble keeping up with us until the sun went down. When you are passed by a swimming gull, you know your progress is slow.

It was still flat calm the next morning when we set to work on the crosstree. The piece of wood that looked like it might fit had been measured and declared just what the doctor ordered. We cut a notch on one end to receive the shroud, drilled a hole and put through a bolt to prevent the wire from working into the wood and tightened a clamp just inboard of the belt to stop the stick from splitting. A long piece of wire spliced to my electric drill led to the Honda generator and up went Edwin to clean out the socket with power that made our futile efforts with the chisel seem silly childish games. In half an hour the socket was cleared, the improvised stick fitted and the shroud tightened up. We were back in business. Since it was a calm day and the boson's chair was handy, I even went so far as to spend a few minutes at the top of the mast in order to reeve a new halyard for the jib so that we could use that sail if we got any wind later.

We did not get any wind that day and the following was a repeat. I introduced the crew to the pleasure of swimming in the open sea by explaining to them that sharks rarely attack people who have lived clean, moral lives. I had been swimming dozens of times and no shark had so much as sniffed my toe. "Sharks like nice, clear water," I explained. (They don't. They like murky water). "You can see how cloudy this water is", I said, pointing over the side into water so clean that one could watch for twenty seconds the progress of a dime as it sank. "And besides, they feed at noon and it's only 11:15 now." (Sharks feed at any hour, but their favorite times are early morning and late evening.)

"Don't worry about a thing", I said. "I'll stay on deck and keep an eye open while you're in the water."

In spite of my assurances there was some reluctance to enter the domain of the great white, but Pat finally dove off the rail to frantic cries of "Shark! Shark!" when he was in mid air, and soon we were all having a swim with a bath with soap we used to

wash the dishes. It turned out to be what Edwin called a "Yaddie" day, with nothing to do and no need to mind the becalmed boat. It was one of the bonuses of sailing, a day off that was thoroughly appreciated by all hands. And, just when the sun was going down and we were enjoying tot time in the cockpit, a breeze came up out of the northeast and we began to move, which made everything perfect because one day off is enough. The object of the exercise is, after all, getting there.

When I gave the watch to Brian early the next morning, there was a good strong breeze blowing and I had had a wild ride for three hours with the unusual accompaniment of good direction. Two hours later, while still asleep, I heard Brian's frantic "Bruce! Bruce! The jenny's torn "and I tumbled out of my berth, climbed into the cockpit, woke up, and raced forward to drop what was left of the sail. "Torn" was not the word for the genoa condition. "Shredded" would have been a more accurate description and I muttered "Gawdaym-gawdaym" to myself, which shows how far Edwin's influence had penetrated. As I was lashing the bagged remains of the sail to the rail, Brian's voice reached me again. "There goes the mizzen!" and I pulled the final knot tight and rushed aft to help him get that sail down. I did not need to blow out all my sails before I was convinced that the wind had strengthened considerably, so we put a reef in the main and raised the fore-staysail. Under that rig we moved along well and the beat was much more comfortable. That was a good thing because we had to spend a lengthy period below sewing the mizzen and it is not pleasant below with either too much sail or too little.

But the wind, disappointed I supposed, at having blown only two sails, died as we sewed in the salon and soon we dropped the main to stop it from flapping. There is nothing more nerve-wracking than the irregular slap-bang of a large sail on a windless sea when the action of the boat sends the boom flopping over the few feet its vang allows, grabbing a handful of air and then slamming back as the boat rolls. It is also very damaging to equipment. The leach of the sail is whipped back and forth, the slides on the mast break, and sheets and vangs are subject to instants of immense strain. It is far better to hand the sails and wait for a steady wind. I is also a great deal quieter.

With the noise of the main stopped, we were able to listen without distraction to the thunderous pounding of the fuel tank. On Tina this is a large, rectangular steel box under the cockpit and has certain inherent disadvantages. In the first place, the design is wrong. A fuel tank should incorporate a conspicuous low point, preferably a "V" bottom, in which all the muck and water can be trapped so that only clean fuel gets to the engine. The bottom of Tina's tank is flat and the fuel line leads from underneath so that it must clog every couple of hours.

In the second place, the tank had been installed before the cockpit was built so that there was no way of taking it out to clean or repair it. To remove it one would have to cut it up with a hacksaw, unless one was particularly fond of attacking boxes full of fumes with a cutting torch, and taking it out piecemeal. This was too much work for time available before the start of the voyage and I had decided to live with my big box.

The first disadvantage was easily overcome. A twenty-gallon plastic bottle became the fuel tank into which the fuel line was led in such a manner as to leave three or four inches beneath its end for the water and muck. The steel box acted as a holding tank from which I could pump diesel into the plastic bottle when needed. Thus I was able to tell visitors that we carried only twenty gallons of fuel, but held a hundred and thirty in reserve, which struck me as an interesting reversal of the usual order of things.

In this tank had been built two baffles, dividers whose function was to slow the fuel down when it was rushing back and forth as the boat rolled. One had come adrift on the trip to the U.S.A., tearing out the spot welds that attached it and leaving a couple of small holes in the bottom. I had removed the offending baffle and patched the holes, but it was now clear that the remaining baffle had been pulled out as well. As the boat rolled, the fuel would push the baffle across with an ominous rumble and then bash it against the end of the tank which acted as a sounding board so that no one aboard was unaware that the tank had a problem. Not that the noise was really necessary. We could tell there was a problem by the constant stink of diesel in the bilges and the rainbow-colored patches in the sea when we pumped. I decided that this was a Class F catastrophe and when we had filled every available container on the boat with fuel, I tried not to listen to the rumble-rumble, boom-boom in the tank and not to smell the dollar-a-gallon in the bilges. When the tank finally emptied itself we had some peace. We also had about fifty gallons saved, about a third of the capacity with which we had left Port Canaveral and this meant that our passage through the doldrums would have to be completed very quickly, due to a narrow belt of calms through which we would motor, or it would take a very long time if we had to flap our way through under sail. I instructed the crew to pray for a very narrow belt.

As it turned out, I need not have worried about the possible fuel shortage at all because the engine refused to start a few days after the tank stopped leaking. At first I thought that the batteries were not fully charged, so I got out the Honda generator, gave them a good charge, and pressed the button again. Nothing. So I charged some more. Still nothing. Then I tried to hot-wire the starter, and found that the batteries had enough power to be used for welding but the starter motor was still not turning the engine.

Must be the solenoid," I said, greatly impressing the crew who had no idea what a solenoid is or does. I knew what a solenoid is and does, but I did not know how it does it, so I took it apart and looked at it, put all the pieces in a box and stowed them away and then tried to start the engine by touching likely-looking places on the starter meter with live wires. I got some beautiful sparks and flattened the batteries but I did not turn the engine over.

There are two ways to stop a diesel engine -- either by choking, which decompresses the cylinders, or a fuel shut-off. If a choke is fitted, one can pull it and thereby make it easier to turn the engine by hand because there is less resistance in the cylinders. On Tina, however, the cut-off is affected by stopping the fuel, so there was no way of easing the compression. What we needed was a crank with a long handle that would give us plenty of mechanical advantage.

"Pat," I said, "make us a crank with a long handle."

Patrick worked for three days on his crank, making an end to fit the free a piece of quarter-inch steel plate and bolt it to a long pipe he sawed off the genoa's pole. This was no longer needed because we no longer had a genoa. On the other end he fitted an old winch handle. There can be no doubt about the force this crank was able to produce. With it Pat and Brian were able to bend the piece of quarter inch plate. They were not, however, able to start the engine.

Our battle with the engine lasted for about a week and was interrupted by our first gale which blew out the reefed mainsail. We repaired it and raised it only to watch it blow again. So we repaired it again. Otherwise it was a perfectly normal gale and Tina

coped with it beautifully; riding the big seas benignly and only taking a few buckets of water over the bow. This was a useful storm for the crew as well because it showed beyond doubt that the boat was safe. I had explained repeatedly that no one need worry about gales so long as we had sea room, but I am afraid the boys considered my remarks as more of the Old Poker's exaggerations and only experiencing some large seas could give them genuine confidence in the boat. We kept the staysail up to give us some control, listened to the banging of the tank, smelled the diesel in the bilges, sewed on the main in two-hour shifts, and spent a good deal of time in the cockpit watching the seas. It was almost as good as a day off, at least partly because Edwin appeared in the cockpit with a gallon of wine he had smuggled aboard and which he had thought, quite rightly, would be welcome when partaken with the gale. Edwin had also smuggled a bottle of vodka on board, but that had been stowed carelessly and had joined the fuel in the bilges. "Gawdaym-gawdaym."

To avoid giving a false impression, I must point out that the catastrophes listed above occurred over a period of about two weeks so we were not, as it may seem, working desperately all the time. Life on board was, in fact, pretty good. We sat our watches at night, read, played cribbage, backgammon and chess during the day, and worked when it was necessary. What bothered us more than the breakages was the direction of the wind. It was constantly out of the east right where we wanted to go, so we were tacking back and forth across the ocean only making a few miles go on each tack. The first gale closely followed by the second, and the days without the mainsail, actually cost us sea miles, putting us west of where we had been before they hit us. There was also the need to stay well away from the islands to the south of us. They represented a broken but massive lee shore that I made every effort to avoid. With no engine and sails manifestly prepared to blow out at the slightest provocation, I wanted at least a hundred miles between us and any land.

Because the engine was a useless lump of iron, it was necessary to charge the batteries every day with the Honda so that we would have running lights at night to slum to any tanker that might have been keeping a watch. This was not a matter of hooking up a few wires, pulling a cord and letting the machine get on with the job. The Honda displayed a balkiness of disposition that soon earned it the title of "Nipponese Twit." Some days it would run smoothly for four hours and others it would cut out every ten minutes. I stripped and cleaned the carburetor, fuel lines and fuel tank so many times that Edwin announced to the boys, "What-ley nose erer'thin' 'bout that ma-chine 'cept how t'e mayke it go." It certainly seemed to be the case. On some days it would not run unless I sat next to it and patted it on the head every few minutes. At least I thought it was its head.

As the days went by it became more clear that our main problem was the sails. I had checked them out before the start of the trip, pulling and tugging on any spot that might conceal a weakness, trying to force a potential tear to show itself, but they had held and I assumed they were good enough. That is not the way to test sails, a lesson I was learning at sea. If there are no obvious rips, the method to use is simple and enlightening; stick a needle in the sail. If it goes through with a brittle pop you need new sails. Do not even consider repairs. They will not help. The material is too old, has seen too much sun, your patches will not hold. That was our problem. We would sew for three days, carefully and neatly, raise the sail, and then watch the patches pull themselves away

from the parent material so that we would have to drop the sail again and repair our repairs until we had patches on patches. It was disheartening, especially in light winds, to have to stop everything for a quick sewing session, an exercise we performed daily after the first two rips in the main. On days when there was only sufficient wind to fill the sails we escape a patch job and the log would be filled with sarcastic remarks, "Eleven hours and no sewing!" Or, "I don't know what to do with myself. The main has held for whole day!"

Related to this was a difficulty caused by the shape of the sails. No sail is ever quite the same after a tear and a large rip. On our main the rip was about eight feet long, changing the cut even more drastically. Our two large rips meant that we were carrying a different sail altogether. Because of this the battens were inadequate and the leach vibrated madly, aggravating the propensity to tear. Thus Tina never a particularly high-pointing boat, could only come to within sixty degrees of the wind, a drawback that meant we had to sail further and take longer than normally. This was not serious problem in itself until I went below towards the end of my watch one evening to fill the water bottles we kept in the cockpit. It was standard procedure to leave full bottles for the next watch, but when I leaned on the pump, I got only air.

Tina's water tanks consist of two banks of five twenty gallon plastic bottles on each side of the boat. All the bottles are interconnected and the banks are joined by a pipe with a valve amidships so that they can be isolated from each other. The starboard bank serves the foot pump in the galley from which the drinking water is drawn. When the water in the starboard bank is finished, the normal procedure is to open the valve and allow the port bank's water to fill the empty bottles on the other side of the ship. Since there was no way that the four of us could have consumed a hundred gallons of water in two weeks, it was obvious that the starboard bank had developed a leak, a conclusion that helped to explain all the water we had been pumping over the side with the fuel leaking from its tank.

While I was quite willing to continue on towards Fernando de Noronha with an improvised crosstree, with sails that had to be worked on daily, and with an engine that refused to start I objected strongly to the idea of dying of thirst on the way. It occurred to me that it might be a good idea to put in somewhere and repair the tank, the sails and the engine, but the question was where? I had no large scale charts for the Caribbean and I did not the thought of exploring some huge island republic, looking for a suitable port. I had, however, been to Antigua and knew how to find English Harbor safely. It was still a long way off, but the water in the port bank would last for a month at least if it, too, did not develop a leak, and I knew that any thing I wanted would be available there. I took a couple of days to think it over and then announced to the crew that we were going to Antigua. There were loud cheers immediately and then much talk about brown skinned girls and cold beer.

"This is a work stop," I said sternly.

The crew chuckled in unison and made remarks about the Old Poker.

Getting to Antigua was a long process. The wind either blew too hard from the wrong direction or too lightly from the wrong direction, but there wasn't much to do about it except keep hammering on. Navigation classes were instituted when I wasn't holding hands with the Honda and soon he whole crew was taking turns, first working out my sights and then taking their own. The main stumbling block was the fact that there are

ten tenths to a minute of arc and sixty minutes to a degree. Some of the early solutions would give us a latitude of twenty-three degrees, eighty-one point six minutes, which was a trifle awkward to plot on the chart. Once the addition was mastered, however, we could navigate with reasonable confidence.

One especially interesting noon sight took place on the twenty sixth of February when there was a partial eclipse of the sun. It was listed in the Nautical Almanac but I had not expected it because I had not consulted the list and was surprised to look in my sextant and see a crescent sun. The shaded area was on the side so that the bottom edge was still available to give me my sight. I thought it very considerate of the moon to give us the show and still not interfere with the navigation.

We had our share of "yaddie" days, too, when we would swim, or put over the dinghy for a row and to take some pictures of Tina from fifty yards away, lie in the sun, and generally take it easy. The morale on board was excellent and the catastrophes either became routine -- "It's your day to do the dishes and mine to sew up the mainsail" -- or simply went away. When all the fuel had been pumped over the side, we were spared that banging rumble we had gotten used to, and when all the water had leaked out of the starboard bank, we no longer had to pump. It is true that the log did not work because the cable had broken, but who needed a log anyway? And when the box that covered the engine and served as a salon table broke into pieces, we made such a sturdy repair that it was improved by the experience. Even the knowledge that "Hermann" the self-steering device, was on strike permanently did not bother us and, in fact, made us better sailors because we had to find a way to make Tina sail herself, if we did not want someone holding on to the wheel all the time, so we played with the sheets until she could be left alone for hours at a stretch.

The ocean did its best to entertain us, too. Porpoises would visit every once in a while, usually when we were moving too slowly to be of much interest to them, but they would dive around the bow and show off for us while we cheered them. Three big humpback whales came up on one occasion moving with stately dignity through the water, and one of them spent several minutes right under the boat, his long white flippers extending out on either side as he enjoyed, presumably, the shade.

We even caught a few fish. The first of the voyage was a nice dorado of about twenty pounds, just the right size and caught just in time for dinner. As I led him to the side of the boat, Pat stood ready with the gaff and when the fish was alongside I shouted "Hit him!"

Pat seemed to be looking for a special marking on the fish as a place to aim the gaff; perhaps a bull's-eye with "gaff only here" stenciled next to it.

"Where?" he asked.

"Any bloody where," I explained. And so Pat hit the fish on the nose with the gaff. He did not hook him. He merely clubbed him once or twice which, I am sure, confused the poor fellow more than finding a hook in the flying fish that had looked so delicious.

"Hook him," I cried and Pat got the idea and brought our dinner over the rail. Later we caught a couple of his brothers and a small shark which we fried up and found as tender and tasty as could be desired, but the best fish of all was the dorado, fresh out of the water.

There were other moments of unintentional comedy as well. Brian on Watch one night saw a light and immediately called "Bruce! Bruce! A ship!" with such urgency that it was 4n the cock pit in an instant, expecting to be run down before we could change course, but the horizon was clear and it was only later that Brian admitted that he had seen only the rising moon. Edwin rode him unmercifully about that error for several days until he, too, mistook the moon for a ship.

Patrick decided that he would improve the laundry system. No more dragging clothes on a line behind the boat for him. At the first sign of a shower, he brought his washing on deck, dumped it in a pile, and blocked a scupper so that he soon had a little dam of rainwater in which the clothes were immersed sprayed with soap, and stepped on until they were "clean." He had to wait for another shower to rinse them, so they sat on deck for a week or so until those that were not blown over the side or rotten from sitting in a damp lump were hung on the safety lines where they absorbed enough salt water to start their own ocean. Pat was convinced that his system was an improvement. He even used some of his dammed rainwater to fill a bottle and was highly offended when I complained that it tasted both salty and soapy.

In fact, the only thing to disrupt the pleasure of the cruise once the decision to head for Antigua had been made was Edwin's tooth. It began to ache slightly, was treated with aspirin which relieved it for a couple of days, and then started up in earnest, making him as miserable as only a toothache can. We all joined in the treatment of that tooth with various suggestions, some of which actually worked for short periods of time. Raw garlic cloves, swallowed whole, stopped the pain for a day or so, as did a course of antibiotics; but it was only a massive dose of vitamin C that gave any lasting relief and even that was not a permanent cure. The possibility of finding a good dentist at Antigua gave the island special significance for Edwin.

But not even a toothache can change the weather and we progressed very slowly towards Antigua in a series of tacks in which eighty miles was a very good day's run and forty miles the norm. Often we were only drifting for the best part of a day. Then, at dawn on the morning of our thirty-ninth day out of Port Canaveral, Pat called me from my berth because we were "getting close" to an island which he thought was Antigua. "Getting close" was the under-statement of the year. When I got on deck, it looked as though I could spit onto the flat little lump of land past which we were drifting on an oily sea. I disillusioned Pat by telling him that his island was Barbuda and pointed into the distance where we could just discern a very hazy Antigua. Without any wind to speak of the only thing to do was to hope we would not drift any closer to Barbuda, where we would be wrecked in the surf. While I was busy with some heavy hoping, Pat stuck his head over the rail and then called to say "Hey, look at the pretty shells." I froze in terror and then jumped to the rail to see nothing but deep blue water over the side. He thought it was very funny and chuckled away to himself until Brian came up to be told how Pat had fooled the skipper, how "his face went white" and "he moved faster than a speeding bullet." When Edwin came up, he had to be told the entire story, with embellishments. By that time I was considering sending Pat for a swim with the spare anchor. It wasn't a very good anchor, anyway.

It took two days of inching along on that windless sea, looking all the time at the island, before a light puff of air finally allowed us to sail into English Harbor, which was crowded with boats for the annual Race Week. I hope I never have to do that again. The

harbor entry is a narrow "S" bend and the crowd of boats made navigation tricky in the extreme. Most of the yachts were light plastic toys that would have sunk if bumped by heavy, solid, steel Tina. I was very glad to get the hook down and holding.

It was just five PM when I got ashore to clear into the island and the man at the police station told me to come back in the morning. He said we could all come ashore for a meal and a shower, but we were not to leave the dockyard.

Tina's crew ashore that evening achieved a kind of fame when word got around among the other sailors that we were forty days making the twelve to thirteen hundred miles from Port Canaveral. I explained that we had actually sailed well over two thousand miles to make that distance good, but this failed to quell the amazement of people who had come clear across the Atlantic in less than thirty days. Forty days from Florida had to be a record. Should we write to the Guinness people?

At eight the following morning I took Edwin ashore with me to clear into the island so that he could begin his search for a dentist as soon as possible. There were two policemen in the office, one in uniform and one plainclothes officer. Very plainclothes. He wore a pair of ragged jeans and a T-shirt on which was printed a topless young lady seated on a rock by a waterfall.

The uniformed officer immediately chewed me out for bringing Edwin ashore before the boat had been cleared. When I told him we had all been ashore the previous evening with the permission of the police, he insisted that that had been merely a favor and that I had taken advantage of their kindness. He then demanded a crew list and details of the boat in duplicate. And not just on any piece of paper, but a clean piece of paper. A clean, white piece of paper. In ink. These instructions were delivered with a surly rudeness that had nothing to do with my South African passport, which he had not yet seen but I had seen him before. He did not remember but he had cleared me in on my previous visit to Antigua, and with the same surly rudeness. Who says that we live changing world? This guy was as constant as a rock and about as intelligent. I was glad to note that he had not been promoted during the two years since our last meeting.

Edwin and I went off in search of a clean piece of white paper and when we returned found ourselves in the hands of the plainclothes officer. He took one look at Tina's South African registration and said that he thought that he would not be able to clear us in. He would have to check with his superiors. That was the first inkling I had that we might not be welcome to Antigua and it is interesting to note that the objection was to the boat, not the person. Had I taken the trouble to lie and tell him that Tina was registered in the U.S.A., or France, or Iceland for that matter, we would have had no trouble at all. And it would have been an easy lie too, because no ship's papers were required. The only source of information available to that policeman was the clean white piece of paper on which I had written "South Africa" in ink,

The possibility that we would be rejected from Antigua was, at that stage, a mild annoyance. I reasoned that once the authorities realized that we had very little water, no engine, and sails in bad need of repair, they would allow us a few days to get seaworthy. We would lose some time while they made up their minds, but would eventually do what we had to do.

Edwin was given permission to go into town for his dental work, but the rest of the crew was to remain at the dockyard while Corporal Philips and the topless lady on his T-shirt checked with the superiors.

While we were waiting for official permission to be where we were, Pat, Brian and I started on the jobs that needed doing. I left them on board to fix the water tank and took the genoa ashore in the hope that the sail makers would be able to salvage it, No dice. The material was too badly torn and too old to save. They would be quite willing to make a new one for me if I could wait a month or so while they took care of the work already in hand. Since I did not know if I had a day, let alone a month, I did not order the sail.

"If your other sails are as brittle as this one," said Ms. Knight, the lady in charge, "don't let them get near sewing machine. Glue them with contact adhesive."

This was a procedure I had not heard of before and one which struck me as dubious at best. Any do-it-yourself homemaker knows about contact adhesive. It is a good, fast glue that takes care of a number of jobs, like sticking the sole back onto a child's shoe or a new Formica top onto a kitchen cupboard, but I was doubtful if it would hold on the constantly moving surface of a sail. I decided to think about it for a while.

That evening, when the police station closed, Corporal Philips came out to Tina in his launch, standing in the bow where the wind made the lass on his T-Shirt dance seductively as he roared at twenty-five miles per hour past signs saying that the speed limit was four knots. We could not stay, he said. "Y must go now."

"We can't go," I answered. "We have no water, no sails and no engine. If we pull in the anchor, we will drift into all those other boats."

"You must go."

"Look," I said. "We are a vessel in distress. Do your superiors know that we have no water?"

"No."

"Did you tell them anything about our condition?"

"No."

"Will you call them again and tell them, please?"

"They gone home,"

Eventually he agreed to call again in the morning. But he must have had second thoughts in the night. When I saw him at the police station the next morning, he did not want to bother his bosses. He had his instructions and, "the only thing I doing is clear you out." I did not point out that that was impossible because he had not cleared me in. What I did do was spend the best part of an hour persuading him to allow me to go into town and talk to his superiors myself. I was still convinced that once they knew all the circumstances they would give us time to make repairs.

At the new police station in town I explained my problem to a neatly uniformed policewoman who took me up some stairs to an office where I was introduced to two corpulent officers wearing gold-rimmed glasses, gold rings and playing with a gold pen apiece. Once more explained the situation (I had done so so many times that it was becoming a mini-speech) and emphasized that I was not a tourist. I was in trouble.

"But you are asking me to break the laws of my country," was the reply to my request for a few days.

"Oh, no" I said. "I am asking you to conform to the internationally accepted practice of assisting vessels in distress. If I put to sea in my present condition, there is a very good chance that all four of us will die of thirst, assuming I am able to get out of English Harbor without wrecking my boat, which I strongly doubt."

"But you can have water."

"Only if you give me time to fix my engine so that I can get to the pump."

After much cogitation, it was decided that "higher authority" would have to be consulted: I was to wait downstairs.

I realized that the most difficult thing in the universe for a bureaucrat to do is to make a decision on his own. His life involves the implementation of decisions that have already been made, usually some decades earlier, and most of the hard work he complains about (he always complains about hard work) is the tailoring of situations to fit the existing decisions. That is what his training is all about. His is one of the few professions in which the novice begins as a specialist and works his way up to a general practice. It is only after he has thoroughly mastered decision "A" that he is introduced to decision "B" and it requires years of dedication to get through even a quarter of the alphabet. Such vegetables are amazingly hardy and seem to remain "on the job" for ages, but they are also very delicate in some respects and will retreat behind closed doors to avoid even the mildest of winds. All that will issue forth is a frightened negative.

Such was the behavior of the two corpulent officers. They sent word via the policeman that I had to go. They would discuss the matter no further. The "higher authority" had spoken.

It took me about three hours to get back to English Harbor because I stopped in town to call my mother in the U.S.A. and my wife in South Africa to tell them that we were still alive. I got through easily to the States, but the call to South Africa was a failure because I spoke only to Ouma (my mother-in-law) who told me in English and Afrikaans that she was sorry but she was a bit deaf and could take no messages. That was the cherry on the sundae. It was one of those days and I was thoroughly depressed for the first part of the bus trip back to the boat.

In the second stage of my reaction I indulged a fantasy about arming the crew of Tina with belaying pins and taking over the island. My first action as President of the Revolutionary Government would be to confiscate two gold pens and reduce the corpulent officials to File Clerk, grade twenty-seven B. Unfortunately, I did not have any belaying pins.

Then I had to decide what to do. We were ordered to go, but we could not. I honestly felt I had played the game according to the rules and deserved better treatment than I had received. "Okay," says I. "I'll go when I'm ready. T'ell with 'em. I'll ignore them."

And ignore them I did. Studiously I stalked past the police post at the entrance to the harbor and then rowed out to Tina where Pat and Brian had fixed the water tank. I removed the starter and took it to a mechanic who thought he could fix it in the morning. I stomped into the chandlers and bought some new wire rope for the jib halyard, and some battens for the mainsail. I decided to give Ms. Knight's glue a try and bought what seemed like a lot of contact adhesive -- four pints. And I scowled at each and every Antigua I met. It was, after all, their government that was giving me a hard time.

The result of my behavior was that the natives suddenly became friendly. Usually in Antigua the visitor is given monosyllabic answers, or grunts, to civil questions and it is difficult to establish a friendly relationship. But now, word of my problem was spreading through the dockyard and sympathies were rained on me. Workmen downed tools to console me, which does not really reflect the magnitude of their concern since they will

down tools at the slightest provocation, but it was gratifying, nonetheless. Loafers gathered around and gave advice that ranged from consultation with a practitioner of Voodoo to bearding in his den the Prime Minister who was reportedly friendly with the brother-in-law of a taxi driver's third cousin, People from the other yachts also expressed concern and wondered what we were going to do.

More to the point was what the police were going to do. My main worry at the time was the possibility that they would confiscate the boat and deport the crew, but I assumed that this would take time and some legal maneuver that I could contest. If they were to toss me in the local clink, they would be contradicting themselves. You can hardly expect a person to leave if you lock him up. Either of these alternatives was preferable to putting to sea without water, and if they tried to tow me out of the harbor I would refuse. I doubted if they had a vessel capable of moving an uncooperative Tina.

Another unknown quantity was a certain Sergeant King, the terror of the dockyard. Most of the locals assumed that he was behind the insistence that we leave and the yachties all agreed that he was the baddest man on the island. I had not met him, but I felt that as long as I was ignoring the rest of the police, I could ignore him as well. Also, I confess that I was very angry with Antiguan officialdom and decided that if the terrible Sergeant King gave me any trouble, I would thump him one. Luckily for me it never came to that.

That evening, shortly after five o'clock, Corporal Philips, still wearing his pin-up T-shirt (either he had two of them in exactly the same state of faded glory, or he got very good mileage out of the one) came roaring out to Tina.

"Why you still here? You must go."

"I can't go. My starter motor is being repaired."

"When it finished?"

"Tomorrow."

"You must go." And away he roared, satisfied that he had done his duty. He had told us to go.

I reflected that things were looking up. Ignoring the orders of the police was easier than I had thought and the system seemed to work. I was still anchored safely in the harbor.

The next morning the Harbor Master, filling in for Corporal Philips, came putt-putting out to Tina in his launch and told us to leave.

"I can't leave. Got no engine."

"You must go." And he, too, departed with a virtuous expression, convinced that he had successfully completed his mission. Being a less powerful official than the police, he was even easier to ignore. Besides the practice was giving me expertise and I felt that I could ignore the Army and Navy, if the island boasted such bodies, as well as the Department of Immigration, the Police and the Harbor Master.

Around eleven that morning I took the starter motor back to Tina and bolted it in place. The engine gave a groan and two coughs and then sputtered into life to tick over smoothly in neutral. We had power. We could get water at English Harbor" fuel, water and kerosene are sold from a service jetty on a first-come, first-served basis. That afternoon we had to wait quite a long time because there was already a yacht at the jetty and she had to wait for the electricity to be reconnected to work the pump. That is one of the facts of life in Antigua. The power cuts off several times a day and businesses that

require constant electricity keep their own generators as back-up systems. Businesses that can afford to stand idle for odd periods, like the service jetty, simply wait for the juice to come on again, presumably assuming that such is the way things are normally.

When our turn at the jetty came up, we filled our water tanks and every container I could find was requisitioned to carry fuel. While we were doing this, the surly, rude, uniformed policeman came over from the other side of the harbor in his launch. He climbed onto the jetty, stood about twenty-five yards away, and shouted at me:

"Hey. When you leaving?"

I finished filling the last bottle before I walked over to where he was at the edge of the jetty, resisting the urge to kick him into the harbor.

"I am leaving when I finish taking on water," I said.

"How long?"

"That depends on the electricity. Half an hour if it doesn't cut out."

"Sergeant King wants to see you." And he climbed into his launch. This final remark was uttered with such evident pleasure that I knew he expected nothing less than my imminent decapitation.

With full water tanks we pulled away from the jetty and anchored in a bit of open water with the engine still running, as though for a fast getaway but in reality because I was unwilling to switch it off for fear it would not start again. The crew stayed on board while I went ashore to collect our passports and to confront the dreaded Sergeant King. I was ready for him. With full tanks and the engine going I was ready for any bureaucrat on the island. Let him say one untoward word to me, and I would climb down his throat with both feet, dirty toenails included. I did not have a chip on my shoulder. It was more like a log.

When I entered the Police Station, I was met by a neatly dressed, middle-aged man who asked politely if he could help me.

"I'm Whiteley, off the South African yacht. Sergeant King wants to see me."

"I'm Sergeant King, Captain," he said. "Are you ready to leave?"

"Yes."

"'Captain' no less," I thought with amazement. "What's going on around here? This guy is acting just like a human being."

"Give the Captain his passports," Sergeant King said to his rude and surly subordinate, who was so disappointed that the room was not already bespattered with my gore that he was unable to hand the documents directly to me but gave them to Sergeant King who passed them to me.

"I'm sorry about all the trouble," said the terror of English Harbor. "Politics is a stupid business, isn't it?" and he shook my hand and led me cordially from the office.

It was in a state of mild shock that I walked across the dockyard and rowed out to Tina. The official circles of the island did enclose a gentleman, after all. I wondered where he had been hiding all the time.

We motored out of English Harbor and once more pointed our bow towards Fernando de Noronha. It had not been a good stop, but we had water and we had an engine, so we were better off than we had been. Perhaps we had also worked off the bad luck caused by our Friday departure from Port Canaveral. Who could tell?

CHAPTER III

It was nearly six in the evening when we left Antigua, so there was only a touch of daylight remaining as we cleared the island. For me it was grand to be back at sea again, especially because I was leaving behind the uncertainty caused by the officials of the island. It is all very well to ignore the police, but sooner or later they would have had to take some action if only to assert themselves and that could have complicated our lives. It was comforting to have the engine and enough water to get us to Fernando, but the main pleasure was to be on our way again. Even the crew was glad to be going. The stop had been a disappointment for them, too. No brown-skinned girls and no sightseeing. Edwin had not even had his tooth fixed, but the pain had miraculously disappeared when he put his feet on solid ground in front of a rum bottle and he assumed that was a sign that the dental problem had been solved. Pat and Brian had gone into town once, sneaking past the police like thieves, and had called their parents, bought a few items, and returned to the dockyard. Massive tomes of literature that had been composed during the forty days of our approach to Antigua had been sent to girl friends and wives, the laundry had been done, and four cases of rum had been acquired at a price that made them the cheapest DT's that side of the Atlantic. There was also a new second-hand mainsail that I had purchased out of desperation, an emergency measure to be used if the old sail fell apart completely. The new sail had a 36' luff, slightly longer than that of the existing main, and a ten-foot boom, a third shorter than Tina's boom. I had taken the sail in the hope that we could fit it by adjusting the bracket holding the main boom gooseneck.

We still had a lot of work to do, but we now had the wherewithal with which to do it. All we really needed was a north-east trade to get us going in the right direction, but that was unavailable. The wind came out of the east, and then only tentatively, with many long periods of calm.

One of the first jobs we tackled in these calm conditions was the new-wire rope for the jib halyard. The ordinary rope that we had been using was excellent stuff and had not shown the least sign of stretch, but it had a chaffing problem at the block. The tack of the jib is attached to a steel drum around which a line is wound when the sail is pulled open. The head is shackled to a swivel so that the built-in stay will turn smoothly when the line is pulled. When the halyard is pulled up tight, we used a billy and all available hands. stay in the sail is like a bar, but there is still a bit of room for lateral movement when the sail fills. This means that the halyard is rubbing against the side of the block and it does not take long to break. We had found that it was necessary to replace the halyard at least once a day and often got only a few hours out of it before it broke. If there was any wind blowing above, say, seven or eight knots, it was impossible to raise the sail unless it was carefully furled by hand on the deck and even then there were difficulties that were sometimes insurmountable so we would have to wait for the wind to drop before pulling up the sail. It was discouraging to waste a good breeze when wind was so scarce and I was looking forward to having a jib halyard that would not drop the sail on the deck every few hours.

The next job was the experiment with contact adhesive on the main and mizzen. I put a large patch over the two tears on the main and stuck on a permanent batten so that the leach would not shake so fiercely. It took me about four hours to do both sails, sticking large patches on both sides of the tears. It would have been at least a three-day

job with a needle and when we put the sails up they filled quietly and there was no longer any need to repair our repairs. From then on I was a firm believer in glue for sail repairs, but, in keeping with most religious conversions, I had to accept my new god on faith because the four pints of adhesive, which had seemed so much in Antigua, were now all on the sails and there would be no more for further rips. I determined to buy plenty of the stuff when we reached Fernando.

Not that it at first appeared that we would find ourselves on Fernando in the immediate future. The wind was fitful and very weakened, when it did settle down, from the east. What had happened to the north-east trades? Was it ordained that we tack about in the Caribbean forever? It certainly seemed so. Five days out of Antigua saw us a mere one hundred and eighty miles away from Corporal Philips and the lass on his T-shirt, and that distance had a good deal more southing in it than I liked. Just below us was the coast of South America and what I knew was a veritable trap for sailing vessels. A glance at a map will explain the situation. There is South America, with its northern coast pushing diagonally across the equator to the northwest, forming a kind of funnel where both the northeast and southeast trades meet. There, too, the southern equatorial current and its northern counterpart join to form a very strong influence that can push a piece of driftwood westward seventy or eighty miles a day. The result is that any boat wishing to go eastwards will find both current and wind against her and the amount of ground made good against these will be minimal. I suppose one could get around to Fernando if one had a couple of years in which to do so.

Obviously, I wanted to stay well away from this area, but the problem was that I also wanted to get to Fernando as quickly as possible and the course led me right into the trap. What seemed to be the solution at the time was to get as much easting as we could and, when we got too close to the coast of South America, take a leg north for a couple of days. It seemed like a good enough strategy then, but what I had neglected to take into account was a precise definition of "too close", an omission that was to cost us time and miles.

But, although we were still beating constantly and never getting a really good day's run, life on board was pleasant. The glued sails held together and freed us from the daily sewing lesson and the batten I had stuck in stopped the rumbling of the leach as we had a much quieter boat. She was made quieter still by the silence of the Honda. Since we had an engine we no longer needed to have that machine rattling away on deck for five or six hours a day. It was to be only a temporary respite, but it was certainly enjoyable while it lasted and, by careful adjustment of the sails, we had Tina sailing herself most of the time without the aid of our recalcitrant steering device, Hermann. That made the night watches very easy indeed. All we had to do was keep an eye open for shipping and glance at the compass every half hour.

As we proceeded south and east, three problems asserted themselves. The first of these was Edwin's tooth. In Antigua he had gotten so far as to make an appointment with a dentist which seemed to affect a miraculous cure and make the keeping of the appointment unnecessary. Or perhaps the prodigious quantities of rum he consumed was the influential factor. Whatever the cause, the tooth healed itself while we were ashore and only began to ache again when we were well out to sea. The treatment of antibiotics, vitamin C and a codeine mixture he had picked up while making his appointment gave relief for short periods of time, but every once in a while Edwin would appear in the

cockpit with a groan and we were all aware that the tooth was acting up again. At one point there was a near mutiny when Edwin plopped himself down and said, "Watt-lee, ah wanna go t' Barbados."

Now I realize that a toothache is a most annoying and demoralizing ailment, and I sympathized with Edwin's predicament, but I had heard about Barbados while we were on Antigua. That was an even more rabidly anti-South African island that had reportedly forced one of our yachts to leave in the teeth of a fifty-knot gale. Add to that the fact that Barbados was well to the west of us and going there would have meant losing the ground we had worked so hard to win. Too, the start of the hurricane season was only a month or so off. Nothing short of a serious illness or injury could induce me to head for Barbados.

Edwin took my decision with very bad grace. Did I not know that his tooth was "poy-sonin" his body? Was I aware that only a "god-daym ayes-hole" would present such a feeble excuse as the hurricane season? Did I realize that he did not "gey-uv a god daym shey-ut" about going backwards and losing two or three weeks just to regain the position we were now in?

But Edwin's ire, however vituperatively expressed, was short-lived and soon he was back to his usual pursuit in the salon with dictionary and notebook. For he had, I suspect, decided that having an English teacher for a skipper on an extended voyage might as well be put to good use and that he, Edwin, would Expand His Vocabulary and Improve His Spelling. His method consisted of three different exercises. Whatever he read he read with a pen in hand and underlined any words he could not define. These he would then look up in the dictionary and transcribe on to a list, complete with the phonetic spelling and all meanings. This is a system I had attempted to instill in the minds of my students for ten years with little success, mainly because it is a very laborious way of reading, but Edwin followed his course with remarkable devotion and soon had pages of definitions scattered around the boat and would occasionally pop up from the salon to astound us with his latest gem which often involved a dubious philosophical concept: "wimmen shud be sub-sur-vee-ent wi' oud bein' of-see-que-shous." Sometimes this would provoke a long and entertaining discussion. Some times merely a correction of his pronunciation! "That's obsequious, Ed."

One result of this exercise was that reading any book after Edwin had finished with it automatically became a kind of vocabulary test with three or four words clearly underlined on each page which made one pause, define the word mentally, and then read on. I confess that I never looked up the words that stumped me. I was too interested in the story and, besides, Edwin was using the dictionary.

Edwin extended his studies to the writing of English. This took the form of his own personal log, presented as a long letter to his wife, Judy. Naturally I never read any of this private document, but I would get glimpses of its content from some of the questions shouted up to me from the salon. "Watt-lee! How di yub spell man-der" I would puzzle for a while, ask what he wanted to express, and give an answer: m-e-a-n-d-e-r and I would know that Edwin was describing our erratic tacking about the ocean.

The final aspect of Edwin's education involved the translation of several Shakespearean sonnets and portions of the great soliloquies from Elizabethan English into Modern Hillbilly. This was accomplished by memorizing and then reciting the pieces during the lonely hours of his watch. Often I was awakened in the early morning by the loudly expressed question concerning the morality of the urge "t' tayke up harms a-against a

see-uh troubles an' by-uh possin' aynd 'em." But the loss of sleep was more than repaid by the entertainment of the recitation and soon Edwin had half a dozen sonnets under his belt, as well as the complete "Tew bee ore not 'tbee." I remember reflecting that this scholarship taking place at sea and with a toothache certainly demonstrated an admirable dedication.

Our second problem on this leg of the voyage concerned the four cases of rum we had acquired in Antigua. It was very good rum, and that, in a nut shell was the problem. Our usual "Tina Tot", in itself a hefty jolt of booze, became "a tot and tad" and then "a tot and a tad and a tad", which often meant that the cook never got around to preparing the dinner until well into the first watch and the watch itself was what we shall call less than fully alert. Our solution to this dilemma was to elect Brian "Rum Bearer." His job was to hide the bottle and only produce it at five PM, "tot time", and then return it to its cache when he had given the ration. In this way Edwin, Pat and I were relieved of the responsibility of controlling our urge to overindulge and had the added advantage of giving us someone to vilify when he refused us an extra "tad" after the most ingenious coaxing.

"Come on, Bri. Just a tad."

"No."

"Come on. To celebrate. I earned it. I climbed the mast, didn't I?"

"No."

"Stingy bastard."

"No tot for you tomorrow."

"Only kidding, Brian. I apologize. Let s have a short one. Just to cement the renewal of our friendship."

"No."

And so on. Brian turned into an admirable custodian, steadfastly resisting pleas and entreaties and consistently finding new and ingenious hiding places for the bottle.

He also took care of the empties. These were saved until there were several rattling around in a niche of the cockpit and then he and Pat wrote short notes giving Tina's position, and their addresses in Minnesota. These were posted over the side, sealed in the bottles. I suppose some fifteen such messages were tossed into the sea and one was actually found and answered by a gentleman from St. Kitts many months later. If one considers the variables involved, -- will the bottle reach land, will it be found, will the finder bother to respond-- then I think we were very lucky.

Our third problem was again the engine. Our normal procedure was to run it for an hour and a half every two days, to charge the batteries and to reassure ourselves that everything was in order. All went well for a week or so. The machine coughed into life at the touch of the button and sputtered away happily for its allotted time making us all feel confident. Then, one afternoon, I pushed the starter button and was rewarded by a prolonged period of silence. After a few moments of ranting, raving and raging, I took off the starter motor, found a washer that should have been fixed but was loose, put a pin through it and reassembled the works. The engine started and while it charged the batteries I explained to Patrick at great length that he was very lucky to have such a genius on board. Then I tried to con Brian out of an extra tad, an exercise in futility.

The engine responded quickly the next few times we started it and then refused its services again, so I took off the starter motor again, found nothing I could see was wrong,

and put it back. It still did not start, I took the solenoid apart, replaced a cerclip that had come adrift, and reassembled. Again we had an engine for a few days and again it went on strike. Off came the starter motor to be cleaned up and replaced. Out came the Honda to charge the batteries while I cleaned up the terminals and checked the wiring and the next day, after several hours of charging, we had an engine.

There were small repairs to do as well. With the glue finished, we were reduced to a needle and thread, which took time, but fortunately there was the mainsail, to keep us going while we sewed a seven-foot tear in one. Raising that new sail was an involved process. The main boom had to be removed from the gooseneck, the bracket unbolted from the mast and lowered two and a half feet, re-bolted in its new location, the gooseneck re-fitted, and then we were ready to bend on the sail. It was far too small to be efficient, and did little more than steady the boat, but it did maintain the balance so Tina could sail herself without having a driver constantly at the helm.

When the old main was repaired, the process was reversed so that any major repairs on the main meant at least an hour of extra work just getting the rig adjusted for either sail.

But we were approaching Fernando, albeit very slowly, in weather that was often squally which disturbed the balance of the sails and made it necessary to undertake the unheard-of task of sitting daylight watches. Not only did we need someone to keep an eye on the wheel, but the nearly constant rain drove everyone below to the relative comfort of the salon. I say relative comfort, because no matter how water-tight the decks of a boat may be, prolonged periods of rain at sea will sooner or later make everything wet simply because there is no way to keep the moisture-laden air out of the cabin. Bedding and clothing absorb the humidity until everything is damp and not even the most carefully protected items are safe from the great dripping mass of the man who comes to call you for your watch with gallons of liquid pouring from his oilskins and his sea boots squishing with every step. A day of rain is great because it cleanses the boat and crew of salt, but four or five days of rain are at best uncomfortable as you develop dishpan hands, and feet, and spend your time in wet clothing, and at worst dangerous because the conditions aggravate any tendency toward illness that may be present. Luckily for us, this squally period was interspersed with moments, even hours, of sunshine when we could open up the hatches and portholes and dry things off a bit.

A slight change in our routine developed during these days. Edwin contracted to undertake the cooking duties in exchange for which he was to be awarded the coveted fourth watch on a permanent basis. From his point of view it was an attractive proposition because he was guaranteed a full night's sleep every night and the rest of us were glad to accept to escape from the fag of galley duties and the unpleasant experience of having to eat Brian's meals which, although improving, were still so what below the abysmal we standards we maintained. When it became necessary to sit daylight watches, however, Edwin balked on the grounds that, as full-time cook, he was exempt. That called for a captain's decision and ruled that the fourth watch was ample recompense and Edwin was to be included in the daylight 'roster.

"They-en Ah'll be god daymed eff Ah'll be cuck." And we were back to the old rotation system.

Another slight change that developed was in the daily dishwashing duties. One of the often-imposed rules on cruising yachts is that the cook does not do the washing up,

which seems a sensible method of spreading the load and which we had been following since the beginning of our cruise. But that rule, only really works if there is one person doing all the cooking. In such a case, it is not fair that he should also have to clean up. If all are cooking, it doesn't make much difference in the actual performance of duties if you are cleaning up your own pots and pans or someone else's one day out of every four. There is a psychological reluctance, however, to confront a massive batch of encrusted cooking utensils and a galley besmeared with grease and oil about which someone else surely could have taken more care. "Daym, Padrick, you shore ahr a slob." Or, "Brian, did you really need three pots, a pan and a pressure cooker to warm up that mess you gave us last night?" To avoid such recriminations we voted in the system whereby each cook would assume duties in a spotless galley on the evening of his allotted day. After dinner the dishes would be tossed into a large plastic drum on the afterdeck where they could slosh around in seawater during the night. The same cook would prepare breakfast and add those dishes to the drum in the morning. Lunch was a catch as catch can affair. Perhaps some biscuits and a can of sardines would be brought up by whoever was hungry and shared with anyone who wanted to join in. Or a batch of popcorn would appear and disappear with astonishing rapidity. Or a jar of pickles and a few chocolate bars, a combination I personally found particularly disgusting but was able to partake of one or the other.

Sometime in the afternoon, the cook would wash up all the dishes in the drum and return the galley to its pristine glory so that the next cook could begin with, literally, a clean slate.

Sailing into an easterly wind that was never steady, blowing hard in squally, rainy bursts and then dying to a few knots above a flat calm, coupled with steep seas whether it blew or not, meant that our progress was very slow because a good deal of our forward motion was lost every time Tina would bash into a wave and often there was a perceptible backwards thrust when the seas had gathered a little extra for, Daily runs of eighty-five miles, seventy miles, sixty five miles became the disappointing norm after days of hard sailing when one could look over the side and watch the water rushing past and think, "Hey, we are moving right along" and later realize that while the water was dashing past us, we were in fact only inching over the ground at the bottom of the sea.

Our daily position fixes on the chart in the main salon did nothing to alleviate this feeling of frustration. To see one little "X" nearly on top of another hardly adds to one's sense of motion and we were only able to fool ourselves into believing that we were progressing when the overcast skies made a sight impossible one day and the following day our position would be a hundred and thirty miles from the last little "X" on the chart. Then it looked like we were getting there until we reminded ourselves that that total was actually two daily runs of sixty-five miles.

On the plus side, our direction was good, albeit a touch too southerly, and Tina, was sailing herself most of the time, except when squalls hit us and it was necessary to take over the wheel to compensate for the increase in wind. Life on board continued in a manner that we came to consider normal. Sails would tear and be repaired. The engine would start or not start. Edwin pursued his studies. Pat and Brian played cribbage. I patted the Honda on the head. Pat's laundry system, aided by the heavy rains we were experiencing, reached the epitome of perfection when half of his wardrobe was washed over the side as it lay soaking in a two-gallon dam of rain water on the side decks. Pat

also added to the general felicity of the vessel when I caught a small shark which we ate with great appreciation. He decided that the strip of cartilage that served as its backbone would make an interesting souvenir of the voyage and reasoned that it could be preserved in an empty rum bottle filled with sea water.

It started to ferment after about three days and eventually burst the cap of its bottle so that it could permeate the entire ship with a most vile odor. We endured that stink for several days before tossing Pat's souvenir over the side.

It was about three weeks out of Antigua that we fell into the trap presented by the currents rushing along the north coast of South America. With the compass pointing directly on our desired course to Fernando de Noronha we had a noon position that showed our progress well to the south. The wind allowed us to compensate for that drift, so we headed almost due east, one of the very few times we had been able to do so on voyage so far. The next day our noon position put us due south of where we had been, in spite of having gone east for twenty-four hours. We were some thirty miles off the coast of French Guiana. It was obviously time to turn north. The wind that had allowed us to head where we wanted to go persisted, but on the opposite tack it forced us to the northwest, in precisely the wrong direction. But there was nothing to do but to continue and hope that the breeze would allow us to save some of the ground we had made until we got far enough to the north to escape the clutches of the current that had turned our easterly headway into a southerly drift. And that is what occurred. We sailed northwest for a day or two, then north-north-west and finally made short daily runs due north. The distance to Fernando increased from a bit over a thousand miles to twelve hundred to fifteen hundred and then Brian came into the cockpit one afternoon and informed me that we had only twenty-three cans of in the lockers, about ten pounds of rice and a few boxes of pasta. There were a few cans of sardines and some biscuits, but very little else.

Under normal circumstances that would have been enough food for fifteen hundred miles, but these were not normal circumstances. We would have to continue away from our goal for another four days before we could resume the southeast tack and would probably have to come about again to put us in a position from which to reach Fernando. That meant we would be sailing about three thousand or four thousand miles, which was thirty or forty days at a hundred miles per day, a distance we achieved only rarely. It was one of those cases in which the most optimistic estimate, say thirty days, did not give any more comfort than the more realistic estimate of forty to forty-five days. In the former case we would be dead about a week before we arrived and in the latter about three weeks, a difference that did not strike me as significant.

We had to get some stores somewhere, but the question was where. Antigua was out of the question, as was Barbados. They and some of the smaller islands were too rabidly anti-South Africa to be considered and in any case, they were too far west for my liking, with the exception of Antigua. In the end I decided to head for Guadeloupe, a French island that I hoped would accept us and allow us to spend some foreign exchange in the local shops. So we turned towards Guadeloupe.

When we turned, we were a bit over three hundred miles from Guadeloupe and the life on board changed immediately. Suddenly we were reaching, with the seas that had been on the nose nicely on the quarter and the motion of the boat was much easier. And we were churning out the miles, a statement that is relative in its import. One hundred and twenty miles per day is only "churning" when you are used to sixty.

It was during the few days of our approach to Guadeloupe that Brian told me that he was thinking of leaving the ship and flying home. This presented certain moral problems to his mind; did he owe me continued service? Did he owe himself the satisfaction of completing the voyage? Would he be a 'quitter' if he left? Would his leaving cause any bitterness in my mind? To my way of thinking, there is only one reason for going sailing: because you like it. Without that central consideration all others are irrelevant. If Brian had discovered that he was not enjoying the trip, I could see no reason why he should continue it. He owed me nothing and while I valued him as a crew member, I would manage without him. So Brian decided to leave at Guadeloupe.

Two other, relatively minor problems developed as we approached the island. The first was where we were to go. I had no large scale charts of any of the West Indies and no previous knowledge of Guadeloupe. I studied the only chart I had of the area which showed the islands in little more than outline, and tried to determine where I would build a port or a city if I were going to settle there. On the chart I was looking at the two main islands of Guadeloupe looked like a couple of bananas tied loosely at one end to form a rough inverted "V". With east to northeast as the prevailing wind direction I decided that it would be logical to build a port where the two bananas seemed to join, a location that would be protected from any but a southerly wind. We would head for that spot when we sighted the island and hope that it was not a swamp or a reef-infested area, or a cliff surrounded by wrecked yachts whose skippers had used the same logic I had employed.

The second problem that presented itself at this time was far more serious. We ran out of smokes. Our first reaction to this was a long discussion about how good it was that the shortage had occurred. In a couple of days we all would have kicked the habit. We were rational beings not to be enslaved by a mere weed. Our health would improve substantially. On a quick reckoning, each of us would save some five thousand dollars over the next twenty years instead of enriching the tobacco companies. It was great not to have to worry about cancer anymore. But forty minutes later a full ashtray in the salon was raided for its butts and early next morning Patrick and I were rolling the contents of Lipton tea bag into a very unsatisfactory cigarette that got only tasted vile, filled the mouth with finely chopped tea and fell apart in our hands, but also did nothing to relieve the craving for tobacco. Guadeloupe was becoming mere attractive every moment.

On the day before we reached Guadeloupe my fishing came to an end when I hooked into either a whale or a submarine, my usual procedure for angling was to trail a line at all times with either bait, if I found a flying fish on deck, or a lure, usually home-made. My fishing rod was permanently stuck in a piece of plastic pipe lashed to the rail and the reel was arranged to make a noise if the bait was taken. While this system had done nothing to endanger any fishy species, I had caught a couple of small sharks and three or four dorado, which had been welcome additions to our diet. Then, one evening at tot time, while we were sitting in the cockpit wishing we had something to smoke, the rattle of the reel made me leap to the rail in time to see the rod bend almost double and, as I reached for it, the butt snapped and the whole works went over the side. That must have been some fish. I still wonder how he likes swimming around, dragging three hundred yards of eighty pound nylon and an eight-foot rod with reel.

It took us two and a half days to cover the three hundred miles to Guadeloupe, but our arrival and the sunset coincided, so we sailed around during the night and in the morning eased our way in, keeping close to the shore so we could find a port if there was

one. All day we inched along the beautiful beaches in clear clean water. We spotted one small settlement with an enclosed harbor which we approached with great care until I noticed a fisherman standing waist deep in the middle of the basin, tossing a net. Tina (only draws five feet) but that place was obviously designed for even smaller craft.

Our progress was very slow indeed, under main and staysail, in light winds. The engine had refused to start and the Honda was rattling away to charge the batteries, the normal remedy that seemed even more ineffectual than usual. There was no sign of any habitation in the place where I would have built a town, only a low island and a seemingly unbroken line of surf and I was reluctant to go in for a closer look because once in we would be on a lee shore and might not be able to get out again. I was beginning to think we would have to circle the entire island, but, as dusk fell, determined to stand off and on during the night and have another look in the morning.

It was a nerve-wracking night for me. I don't like to sail around land in the best of times and finding myself in a strange area without adequate charts on a dark night did nothing to ease my apprehension. But we got through the night without incident and morning found us still exploring in the inverted "V" of the two bananas, propelled by a half knot of wind that came up for thirteen seconds every twenty five minutes. I explained to the crew that we were enjoying one of the normal ironies of sailing. Two and a half days to go over three hundred miles and one and a half, likely to be at least two days, to find a port in a thirty mile stretch of coast. That is why a cruising boat should always reckon about a week for every port -- a day to find it, a day to enter it, a few days in it, a day to leave it, and a day to get back to where you were before you decided to stop there in the first place. We made little progress most of the morning, but did see some hopeful signs indicating that the guess I had made as to the whereabouts of a port might not have been as erroneous as it had appeared the previous day. There were channel markers leading somewhere in the direction leading somewhere in the direction of the inverted "V" and there seemed to be a bit of boating activity taking place behind the low island. It was still a lee shore and I was still chicken about getting in too close, so I sat with the bonds while the rest of the crew took turns with the binoculars through which they saw and reported everything from the Sahara Desert to the Empire State Building. While I was waiting for Brian to tell me that there was an iceberg coming up on the port bow, I decided to give the engine yet another try, hit the button, and she started promptly. Edwin's "Raigh oh-oh-oh-on" expressed my sentiments exactly and we headed into that lee shore with confidence, because whatever failings that engine had, once started she would go until she was switched off.

It turned out that the French colonists had built their port right where they should have, in a nicely sheltered bay were a small river separated the two legs of the inverted "V". It was named Point-o-Pitre and was quite a large undertaking, capable of docking liners bringing tourists, as well as the smaller craft that ply between the islands. We tied up to the customs dock during the lunch (two) hours and had to wait to be cleared in, during which time I popped across the street and bought some smokes which were instantly seized by all who had been so glad to get rid of the demon seed. We also had a celebratory nip of rum, and a tad, and a tad, and a tad, in honor of the great achievement. I forbore mentioning the true nature of what we had accomplished. What we had done was to sail for thirty one days and one thousand miles to a point some sixty or so miles from where we had started. Forty days from Florida to Antigua was nothing compared to

the thirty-one days from Antigua to Guadeloupe. That, as Patrick pointed out, was an average of somewhat less than two miles per day, but insisted that the entire distance be considered, not just the last leg. Then, using the round figure of fourteen hundred miles for the distance from Florida to Guadeloupe, our average soared up to almost twenty miles per day. "Day-em, Wattlee, Ah cud wouk further'n 'at bayr fud ovah brok'n glay - ess," was Edwin's comment.

The formalities at Guadeloupe presented no problems for the South African boat or citizen and I was relieved of the anxiety that had been troubling me on that score. It was nice to be welcome and having received permission to tie up to the customs quay for night we secured the boat, switched off the engine, and headed for the nearest cold beer with full intentions of helping Edwin cure his toothache. We found the beer easily enough, but experienced some difficulty in finding the boat afterwards, mainly because I had forgotten to bring my sextant along and therefore led the crew on an unscheduled tour that involved several miles of walking and two taxi rides that brought us finally to a restaurant that served steak, chips, and salad a few hundred yards from the port.

During dinner, Pat informed me that he would be leaving the ship with Brian. He gave no reason, but simply said that he had decided to go home.

The following morning found us charging the batteries with the Honda because the engine would not start and wishing the little generator would not make so much noise in the vicinity of such delicate heads. That morning also found us chatting to Enoch and Henry, two young men who had illegally immigrated from Dominica where there was no work and were making a kind of a living in Guadeloupe where Enoch drove a truck when he was not on strike, as that morning, and Henry peddled marijuana that he grew himself on a very small scale. As soon as I got the engine going and we pulled away from the quay, these two young men guided us to a safe place to ride while we began restocking operations and repairs.

There are two places for yachts in Point-a-Pitre; the marina, which is very modern and has all of the conveniences associated with its counterparts in the United States – water and light supplied to the boat directly, showers nearby, restaurant, and appropriate charges. And La Carrenage, an area where one can put down an anchor and lie for nothing I chose the latter. It was quiet, sheltered and private and close enough to the marina so that we could walk over for a Shower when we felt like it. It was also a bit closer to town, a consideration that was mildly important, because we had things to buy and work to get done.

The first project was the alternator on the engine. Would it not be pleasant, I reasoned, to have full batteries that were capable of starting the engine at any time? So we pulled off the alternator and took it to a character who explained at length to me exactly what was wrong with it, about fifty per cent of which explanation I understood because my French was very rusty, and proceeded to fix it. That cost about twenty-five dollars and had absolutely no effect on the efficiency of the machine. When I took it back to him he had gone on vacation, or skipped the country, or evaporated. I am not sure which, but he was certainly unavailable, so I spent the next two days with Enoch as a guide and interpreter searching the town for somebody who would undertake the repairs and finally found an individual who seemed to know what he was doing.. He cost another six five dollars, but when we started the engine we put some juice into the batteries and I considered the problem solved.

While I was chasing around Point-a-Pitre, Brian and Pat were making arrangements for their return to the U. S. and about the time the alternator was able to charge the batteries, we had to discharge them. I was very sorry to see them climb into the cab that was to take them to the airport after we had had a parting beer at a little pub in the town. They had been good lads, each valuable in his own way, but they were both big boys and whatever decisions they made about their lives had to be respected, so we parted friends.

Edwin, however took their departure badly. One of the ways to deal with a strong disappointment is to become angry. It doesn't do much good, but I suppose hostility is better than sorrow. In any case, Edwin called them "ah pair'ah god-dayem pypms. God-dayem quidders. Ayse-hoells." and I had to intervene to prevent a brawl. Then Edwin disappeared for three days only to turn up with a massive hangover and an empty belly.

We stayed in Guadeloupe for ten days, mostly waiting money to arrive from the United States and I used the time to repair the sails with contact adhesive, of which I bought seven liters, and in general boat maintenance. When the funds did arrive, we spent a day getting rid of them and stocking the boat with food, fuel and water. And getting to know Farid, our new crew member.

Farid was a young man who had approached me one morning as I came ashore. He had heard that we were going to Fernando d Noronha and asked me in very broken English if he could come along. Then he switched to even more broken Spanish and asked about the requirements of the voyage, how much it would cost him, how long it would take, and when would be leaving. After a week on the island, my French had returned and was immediately better than his Spanish or English, but he was determined to speak to me in a foreign language, so our conversation was lengthy and full of confusion.

We each took a day to consider the matter and then agreed to sign Farid on. Getting to know him became easier when he decided to trust my French, but there was still the necessity of translating for Edwin who speaks only hillbilly.

It turned out that Farid was busy seeing the world. He was a lad of medium height and dark complexion, of mixed French and Arab parentage, and had been pronounced "sharp" by Edwin. His method of seeing the world entailed stowing away on ships that looked as though they might be going to interesting ports. Thus he had gone from France, where he lived with his mother, to Africa, where he lived with whoever had a pot of rice to share. And thus he had come to Guadeloupe, where he got a job in a little boatyard. How he determined which ship was going to an interesting port was a secret he never divulged.

According to Farid, stowing away is a very pleasant way to travel. He would find a secure nook on board and hide there for a couple of days until the ship was well out to sea. Then he would allow himself to be discovered. What to do about him became, at this point, the Captain's problem. Farid could not be tossed in the brig, because few modern ships have a brig. He could not be put to work, because the merchant navy is unionized and there would be a strike if some unqualified, none union yo-yo were given a job, even to work his passage. For humane considerations, he could not be left to starve or tossed over the side. He could not be forced to pay his fare because he had no money. The solution to this impasse was a beneficial arrangement by which Farid was given a cabin in return for which he signed a bit of paper saying that he would pay the company his fare

"someday," Naturally, he ate with the crew, and very well, too. Once discovered, he had the run of the ship and could spend his time chatting with the crew and generally enjoying himself.

Therefore, the sail to Fernando de Noronha was to be a double first for Farid. Not only was it his first voyage in a sailboat, but also the first time he had paid his fare, assuming that he looked upon his one-third of the costs of stores in such a light. We had no fears about the actual sailing, but when he asked me how long it would take, my very optimistic estimate of three weeks seemed a long time to him. I was not really lying. It is only about twenty-one hundred miles from Guadeloupe to Fernando and most boats can average a hundred miles a day. Tina can average a hundred miles a day. On a nice reach. Why shouldn't our luck change? Think positively, I told myself. But I took enough food for six weeks.

At Guadeloupe the east wind usually Ins around 9 A.M., and can blow quite strongly for the better part of the day. To avoid some of this wind Tina pulled away an hour before dawn and motored out into the bay formed by the two main islands, bound once again for Fernando de Noronha. Surely this would be a case of third-time-lucky. At least we would not become entrapped in that current north of South America again. I was determined to head as far north as I had to find the right wind to take us where I wanted to go.

CHAPTER IV OFF TO FERNANDO, AGAIN

The strategy of leaving Guadeloupe before the east wind came up turned out to be unnecessarily subtle because no wind came up on the morning of our departure. We putt-putted for nine hours with Farid at the wheel much of the time so that he could learn about the compass and only switched off when we had cleared Desirade, the easternmost island of the group. We put up the sails in about five knots of easterly wind and headed north-north-east very slowly. It was good to be on our way again, and, although we missed Brian and Pat, we did not regret having the space they had vacated. Even on a boat as big as Tina the tendency to use all the room available had made living conditions crowded. Four bodies were not merely four bodies. Each has an assortment of paraphernalia spread about in varying degrees of confusion and as time passes the spread continues until there is a general clutter that has developed unnoticed. The maxim "a place for everything and everything in its place" was never ignored, but the things and the places for them had simply spread all over the boat until the point was reached where, in order to get at the engine under the table, one had to stow Edwin's dictionary, word list, and copy of Shakespeare; Brian's cribbage set; the twenty three pages of Pat's latest letter to his girl friend; the chart and navigational equipment; two ashtrays; and a half-finished bowl of popcorn. These items would be ordinarily placed on a berth containing one sleeping bag, perhaps with a body in it, a pillow, half a pair of sea boots, a crumpled copy of Playboy, two empty rum bottles awaiting posting over the side, a sweater to be used as soon as the sun went down, and a sack containing six grapefruit that had fallen from its hook above the berth.

With Farid replacing Pat and Brian, we were reduced by one body and a great deal of personal gear because Farid traveled light. He brought with him a sleeping bag, a rain coat, two shirts, a pair of shorts, and a toothbrush. It seemed as though we had a lot of space on board.

The wind freshened during that first night out of Guadeloupe and our sight the next day at noon put us a hundred and five miles northeast of Point-a Pitre, which seemed to augur well for this leg of the voyage. The day was bright and clear, the wind at about ten knots, the larder was full, the sails all repaired, and six liters of contact adhesive were stowed in the locker with the box of patching material, daring any sail to rip. With all that glue, I could have a ten-foot tear fixed and the sail up and pulling in two hours.

To add to the already high morale of that second day at sea, Farid caught a fifteen-pound dorado on a lure he had fashioned out of a quarter of grapefruit rind. It struck as a highly efficient utilization of materials. First you eat the grapefruit, then you catch a fish with the rind, then you eat the fish. Farid was very proud of this feat and spent a good deal of time boasting to Edwin. "You want feesh, Mister? Voila! Ees feesh."

The idyllic weather and the sense of progress were not to last. The daily runs fell to eighty-five, sixty-five, fifty-five miles and the clear skies were often obscured by squalls so that sights were often impossible, a fact that did not bother me because we were moving into the middle of a big ocean with nothing in it to bump into. If we could not fix our position one day, we'd get it the next or the following.

Our course gave us a touch of easting so that we were, in fact, describing an arc with Fernando de Noronha as roughly the center, but the radius was expanding slowly so

that the distance between us and the island became gradually greater. There was no sign of the northeast trades, which was not surprising since we were soon well above their northern limit. But they were not down where they should have been, either, so it seemed reasonable to keep on looking for them. When Farid's three weeks were up, we were still heading away from Fernando and were on the same latitude as Bermuda. We no longer had twenty one hundred miles to go. Now the distance was more like twenty five hundred. Farid, no more the keen fisherman making lures from any bit of scrap he could find on the boat, now spent his sitting in the salon with the chart in front of him, staring morosely at the ever-widening expanse of water until he was thoroughly depressed. Then he would lie on one of the berths and pull his sleeping bag over his head. He would remain in that position for several hours and I often felt the need to poke him, just to see whether or not he had smothered himself.

During this time I had our usual problems with the sails. The jib blew a nice long tear across its widest portion, and the main, in a spirit, of competition, decided to show what it was capable of and blasted an eight-foot tear along its foot. The six liters of glue that had seemed so ample were soon finished and we were once again back to the needle and thread. We did a lot of praying during this period. That erratic east wind, with its many alterations of calm and short gales, was not only pushing us away from where we wanted to go, it was also very hard on the sails. We needed a nice steady trade wind of about fifteen knots which would ease the pressure on the equipment, and we continually asked for such a breeze.

Three weeks and a day after leaving Guadeloupe found us sitting on a flat ocean in airs that would not blow out a candle. I had handed all sails to stop the flapping and Edwin and I had a swim and a good bath. We were waiting for a wind, afraid to use the engine for fear of running out of fuel later when we would have to cross the doldrums under power. Then the sea showed a slight ripple, and a breeze fanned my neck. "It couldn't be," I thought, assuming that it was merely another isolated puff wandering around, looking for some friends so that they could join forces and have a party that would become either a squall or a gale. But the breeze steadied and became a light wind. I rushed to the halyards to put up the sails and soon we were moving gently across the water. It was a northeast wind and we were on our way to Fernando. "We could be there in three weeks," I told Farid,, who had come out from under his sleeping bag to see what was going on. He went below to look at the chart.

It was not what one could call a good wind, alternating as it did with lengthy periods of calm and short squalls. in fact, it was soon christened a "British wind" because it only worked half a day. But the direction was satisfactory and we were east-bound and down, sails all up and pulling most of the time. And there were a few good days when we made a hundred and thirty miles, and some very good days when we made a hundred and fifty miles, but these were the exceptions. Many days saw us a mere forty or fifty miles on our way and a week after we had found the northeast winds I told Farid that it was possible that we would be in Fernando in three weeks.

About this time we noticed that the larder was beginning to approach the state of Old Mother Hubbard's cupboard. We had finished all of the bully beef and most of the beans. Of course, all the potatoes and fresh vegetables had been consumed, as well as the fruit and the rum. There were still a couple of dozen tins of vegetables and what looked like a good supply of rice and flour. Our meals, up to this point, had been generous as far

as quantity was concerned. Since we still rotated the duties of chef, the quality was what one could call, variable, which would include the entire range from "bloody Awful" to "damn good." I must confess that among the "bloody awful" meals mine were without doubt the worst. I had picked up a small barrel of pickled beef in Guadeloupe which turned out to be the toughest, stringiest, saltiest pot of decomposing leather ever packaged. The first batch was almost inedible and subsequent attempts to soak out some of the salt and soften the fibers by boiling were only partially successful.

With a food shortage imminent, we reduced the quantity of our meals; one cup of flour for the vetkoek breakfast in the morning and one tin of veg with one cup of rice for the evening meal. The biscuits, cheese and popcorn lasted until they were finished and then we did without.

This does not sound like much with which to feed three grown men, mainly because it isn't much, but it was adequate. A cup of rice cooks up into a decent mess of mush if it is over boiled in too much water and served without rinsing so that one consumes all the rice has to offer. And if you add a couple of tins of water to a can of veg, you can stretch the juices far enough to give the illusion of "enough."

We had some pancake mix on board that we added to the flour, as well as a couple of boxes of dried milk, which made the vetkoek particularly tasty, but we stuck to the one-cup ration and the two small cakes we each had every morning were hardly satisfying. I found that drinking plenty of water, however, and tea and coffee during the day quelled the hunger pangs and I did not mind dipping into the reserve supply of sustenance I was carrying around my waist. It had cost a lot of money to put paunch on me and I was glad to get some use out of it.

At the end of the second three weeks I made a more realistic estimate as to the time it would take us to reach Fernando. No longer as I calculating on the basis of what we could do. Now I worked on the distances that we were actually doing and called down to Farid, "Hey! Cheer up. We could be there in three weeks." A muffled groan emerged from under the sleeping bag in the salon.

As we moved slowly to the southeast, we spent a good deal our time talking about food and imagining the damage we were going to do to the domestic economy of Fernando da Noronha. The island would have to call in the Red Cross for famine relief after we arrived. I also especially enjoyed a fantasy which involved the discovery of an abandoned ship in the middle of the ocean. On board would be a freezer, still operating, full of steaks, several sacks of potatoes in easily accessible places, some lettuce growing in the Captain's cabin, a case of Scotch under the mate's berth, and five gallons of glue, in quart cans, lashed on deck.

Several times we searched the boat for anything edible that might have been overlooked or gotten lost. Farid found a box of pancake mix in the bathtub, under some junk, and Edwin discovered a plastic container full of whole wheat spaghetti, left over from the voyage from Cape Town to Florida. It was two years old, but very well preserved and it gave us three of the most satisfying meals of the period.

All this time we were towing anywhere from two to five lures in the hope of catching some fish, but the pickings were very slim indeed. We pulled in two snake mackerel, odd looking creatures about a yard long and an inch or so wide, made up almost entirely of bones, and two small, unidentifiable fish whose combined weight would not have fed a family of one. Other fish teased me. Four or five good-looking

dorado Swam around the boat for days. They would dash up to a lure, sniff it, and turn away. We made a harpoon out of Edwin's spear gun but only succeeded in amusing them, so inaccurate were our throws.

It is my experience that the best bait is a flying fish. A few of these landed on our decks and were picked up in the early morning but like the improvident Irishman who ate his seed potatoes we ate our bait. All the fish had the blazes boiled out of them and were made into a soup that was delicious to us but which would have made any restaurant that served it bankrupt in record time.

Some two weeks into the third three week span we crossed into the area of the southeast trades, having motored through the short dividing gap that served for the doldrums. Now I was willing to inform Farid that we were "less than three weeks" from Fernando, but I was not happy. We had not gone as far east as we needed to go and it was going to be a close shave to make the island. The wind was more south and than east and we would have to pinch very close to hold the easting we had worked so hard for. I checked the fuel situation and estimated that we had enough for about twenty-five hours, which would give us from eighty to one hundred and forty miles depending on the 'wind and seas. I drew a circle with a one-hundred mile radius around Fernando and determined to switch on as soon as we touched the edge. By then we were four hundred and fifty miles from the island and were living on what we laughingly called soup. Take a cup of prepared mustard, add two cups of water, a dash of cooking oil, some dried parsley and a handful of pepper. Bring to a boil and serve . The result may not have much nourishment, but at least it tastes terrible. Luckily we ran out of mustard within a couple of days.

Just as I was thinking we would make it to the edge of my circle, we were hit by a squall that blew out the jib again, and the main again, paused to catch its breath, and turned into a proper gale. We sewed frantically for two days while the gale blew itself out and finished the repair job in time to raise the main in the dying wind and watch it tear again. Another two days sewing fixed that up, but the gale in conjunction with the current was pushing us westwards and Fernando do Noronha was beginning to seem an impossible destination again. A day later there was no doubt about it. Only an abrupt and complete change in the wind patterns of the world would allow us to sail eastwards and it was plain that even the hundred mile circle was beyond our capabilities. I decided to head for Fortaleza, on the northern coast of Brazil. I also decided to put up the "C" and "D" distress flags in the hope that some ship with food on board would stop. We hadn't seen a ship during the daylight hours for several weeks, but it seemed worth a chance.

It was easier sailing to Fortaleza, but just to make sure we did not start taking things for granted the jib tore itself off its wire stay late one evening. We were badly impeded without that sail, so I decided to motor sail but the engine refused to start. It had been erratic about starting for the past several weeks, sometimes catching on the first touch of the button, sometimes requiring a ten-minute wait before firing, and sometimes not starting until the batteries were charged for several hours. I tried to charge the batteries, but the generator wouldn't start either. By then it was dark and impossible to work on either machine so I did the only sensible thing to do. I went to bed.

Early the next morning we were a mile off the Brazilian beach. Before I began to work on the generator to charge the batteries to start the engine, hit the starter button one last powerful lick and she started. We had been driven past Fortaleza during the night, so we turned and began motor sailing into steep seas and a brisk breeze. Our progress was

very slow and at 1700 that evening there was still no sign of Fortaleza. But there was a fishing village in what might be called a bay if one used the term in the most liberal sense. It really was only a shallow dent in the coast with a bare amount of protection from the prevailing wind and current afforded by a low spit of sand and a couple of rocks. Normally I would not have thought twice about avoiding such an exposed anchorage, but this was a special circumstance. We were hungry. I did not fancy motoring along a strange coast in the dark, and, to top it all off, I had smoked my last cigarette that morning, a foul abortion fashioned from the stompies of thrice re-cycled butts. We took down the sails and went in to drop the hook behind some small fishing boats.

At that point we were sixty-three days out of Guadeloupe. Of those days about twenty-five had been on short rations and for the last five we had eaten nothing at all, I suppose it would be appropriate to say something to the effect that: "Weak from our ordeal we staggered ashore, fell on our knees to kiss the land, and then crawled to the nearest hospital," That, however, was not the case. Both Edwin and I were in better shape physically than we had been when we started the voyage and Fared, although appreciably thinner, was full of pep. Perhaps because he had been asleep for nearly two months. We had gone into our starvation diet very gradually and so had not suffered unduly from hunger. When one is living on a cup of mustard soup a day, the change to nothing at all is barely noticeable. We had taken plenty of water and a thousand milligrams of vitamin C every day, so there was no dehydration and our resistance to germs was high. In fact the only real problem occurred when I dressed to go ashore that evening. My pants kept falling down because of the reduction in my waistline.

Besides, anybody who falls on his knees and kisses a Brazilian beach needs his head read. All you get is a mouth full of sand, the sanitation of which is highly questionable.

The village was called Pecem Beach and a very quaint little place it was, with cobbled streets kept clean by a pair of sows and their multitudinous offspring, their efforts supplemented by several goats who roamed at will through the alleys. I managed to cash a traveler's check at a ruinous rate of exchange and we bought some bread, beer and smokes, ordered a dinner, and sat on bench to enjoy ourselves surrounded by what must have been every child under thirteen years of age that the village had to offer. We were at the center of a mob copper faces under tousled black hair through which stared with wonder and astonishment dozens of pairs of eyes. I was beginning to wish we had a tent and a ticket booth. Even a modest price of admission would have realized a considerable sum.

One of the things that most appeals about sailing is the idea of freedom it seems to present. The world is yours. You can go where the wind blows and visit rare places that would otherwise be inaccessible. This is only partly true. As can be seen from our voyage, weather conditions present their own disciplines and sailing is only truly free when the desired course falls within the limits established by wind patterns and currents. But these restrictions are nothing compared to the limitations imposed by man. That inaccessible island you are sailing to will have its own rules and regulations, most of which will seem completely irrelevant to the yachtie.

One of these is the business of entering a foreign country. It is necessary to report to all of the departments that may be interested in your presence and to fill in forms that you are sure will be lost, or, at best, filed away with millions of others that have no

bearing on anything. If you do not speak the language of the country you are visiting you will probably end up answering the question, "Has any person died on board the vessel since leaving the last port?" by listing your house and business addresses, including telephone numbers. It will not make any difference because the clerk in charge will not bother to read what you have written and would not understand it if he did. As long as the blank spaces on the form have some writing on them he's happy.

The forms, filing cabinets, rubber stamps and the people who deal with them have to be housed in government buildings, which are expensive and are therefore only established in the major centers. And that is why all countries have what they call "Ports of Entry". All sailors must first go to one of these and fill in the forms to be lost or filed so that the government of the land will not collapse into anarchy. The ostensible reason for the laws is to control illegal activities, such as smuggling, and for health considerations. But how many smugglers, wonder, declare themselves and how often is an epidemic averted because someone wanting entry has said, "Yes, I am suffering from a mild case of bubonic plague"?

Pecem Beach was obviously not a port of entry. There was no customs, no immigration, no Port Captain, mainly because there wasn't any port. There was one cop, but he was off fishing when we arrived. We had broken international law in coming ashore, but I felt our situation was exceptional and warranted exceptional measures, I asked repeatedly of the natives to be taken to somebody in authority but was repeatedly told to take it easy and finish my beer. These communications were delivered in Spanish from my side and Portuguese from theirs. There repetitions of question and answer, but we got by.

I was eventually taken to the most prominent citizen of Pecem Beach, a certain Juan Padrone Montero, an expatriate of the Canaries who spoke Spanish and who was the chief honcho of the fishing business on that part of the coast. He was seated behind his scale, weighing the latest load of fish that had come ashore when we were introduced to him and his lovely wife. His reaction to my tale showed that he was a man with the right priorities; he ordered towels for us and pointed to the showers, telling us he would see us after we had eaten.

Our dinner that evening was fish – fried, boiled, pickled – mounds of rice, spaghetti and potatoes, salads, veg, wine and some tasty cakes made from I know not what. It was not Cordon Bleu but there was more than we could handle, and not only because our stomachs were shrunken but also because the ladies in the kitchen regarded the meal as a contest and were determined to provide more than we could eat.

When the bill arrived I saw that I would have to cash another traveler's check and was ruefully considering the usurious rate of exchange when Juan came into the cafe. He promptly paid the bill and explained that we would have to take the bus into Fortaleza the next morning to visit the Port Captain. There was one bus per day, leaving at 0700.

We rowed ashore early the next morning, pulled the dinghy onto the beach above the high.-water mark, and wandered into the village to buy our tickets for the bus and to have a breakfast of coffee and those tasty cakes we had enjoyed the previous evening. At a conference over more coffee with Juan it was emphasized that we must go straight to the Port Captain and, when I mentioned that I would like to go to the bank first, Juan handed me a fistful of cruzeiros. His generosity was to continue and by the time we left

Pecem Beach I owed him about a hundred dollars in money terms and an incalculable amount for his friendship, support and hospitality.

The Port Captain's office in Fortaleza was on a standard with its counterparts throughout the world, but the people were friendly and interested in our voyage. The Federal Police, to whom they sent me, were another matter. In that office was a young man who employed the universal system of the none-too bright when dealing with a language problem: "If 'e don' unnerstan', shout at 'im." By the time he was hoarse, I understood the problem. Neither Edwin with his U.S. passport, nor I with my South African, had visas for Brazil. We were not allowed in the country. Farid, who carried a French passport, did not need a visa. He could travel at will. It just shows you. Of the three of us, the only one who could be considered a bum, likely to become a problem for the state, was Farid. He had no money and the sum total of his luggage was his sleeping bag and a toothbrush. Edwin and I had a boat that would take us out of the country, and the official hair, and while we only needed a couple of weeks to set things right, Farid planned to wander over the country for several months, perhaps work illegally, and would probably leave as a stowaway. Yet, we had a problem and he did not.

That problem was too much for the shouting policeman. He told me to come back later when his "chief" was there, an order we obeyed with pleasure because it gave us a few hours in town. We raced to the commercial center and then dashed around in circles until we found a bank that would cash our traveler's checks. Then it was straight to the telephone exchange to call the U.S. and South Africa to tell them all that we were still kicking. Speaking to the family was like a tonic.

We took the wrong bus trying to get back to the port that afternoon and ended up not in the office of our hoarse friend, but at the central headquarters where a Mr. de Sousa, who spoke English, translated the remarks of his "chief" for us. We did not have visas. Visas are not issued in Brazil but had to be obtained in the country of origin. Without visas we could not enter Brazil. If we entered Brazil without visas, we could be deported, or thrown in jail, or both, 'though I am sure I do not see how that could be done.

"But," said Mr. de Sousa, "We are Brazilians and we will work something out."

"Good," says I. "Because I'd rather go to jail than put to sea without food."

Mr. de Sousa that was very funny and gleefully translated it for his "chief" who laughed heartily. We all laughed heartily, though I did not see what was so funny about it. Jail and deportation almost certainly meant the loss of Tina and it seemed a helluva way to end the voyage.

It took about an hour of discussion for the policemen to reach the point where they would allow us to remain in Brazil for ten days. Then each of us had to sign a statement in Portuguese to the effect that we were there for an emergency only and that we risked deportation, if we stayed longer than ten days. Each statement, typed individually by a young lady working overtime, was signed, a process that was not completed until after 8 P.M. Why Farid had to sign such a document I do not know. All I knew at the time was that it was the sixth of July; I had to be on my way on the sixteenth and that Tina, was still forty miles away from where we could begin to work on her. Pecem Beach was not the place to fit out a yacht.

We said goodbye to Farid and left him in the company of some students celebrating the end of their exams. Nothing would induce him to return and have another session with the chart.

Returning to Pecem was in keeping with the sea voyage. It took a long time and everything went wrong. We went by bus to the end of the line and there waited for another bus that was supposed to come along but which never showed up. Then I tried to hitch a ride, but there does not seem to be much of that sort of thing going on in Brazil. Two or three stopped to ask what I was doing with my thumb sticking out and the rest zoomed on their way. Finally a taxi stopped and looked at the address I had in my hand. We haggled for a while and then agreed on four hundred cruzeiros for the ride to the beach.

Our taxi only took us to a village some twenty kilometers from Pecem, however. There he decided that he had gone far enough. He was not sure of the route. It was getting late (we had gotten into his cab at 2 A. M., and I could not see how 3 A. M. was much later). We would run out of petrol.

"Look," I said, in my slowest and best Spanish. "Either you take us to the beach, or we get out here.. If we get out here, I will pay you nothing. If you take us to the beach, you get your four hundred cruzeiros."

This brought a groan to our driver's lips and he drove around the village square a few times, pretending that he was looking for the road to the beach. Then he stopped next to a parked bus and spoke to the driver who was sleeping on the pavement in front of a church. The Portuguese was rapid and mumbled so I understood nothing, but the bus driver soon climbed into the cab and we drove around the square again to stop in front of a private house. The bus driver climbed out and knocked at a shuttered window, but got no response so he crawled back into the cab and we drove around the square again, down some alleys, and stopped at another building where he again climbed out and knocked at a door. Again there was no response. Back into the cab and once more around the square we went, to the first house where the bus driver made a more determined effort at the same shuttered window. He was finally rewarded by the appearance of a large man in a dressing gown who turned out to be the local police sergeant.

Moments later in the office that he unlocked for us the policeman asked our cabby what the agreed fare had been. Gone were all thoughts of four hundred cruzeiros. Now the fare was six hundred, and very reasonable it was, too. It was very late. We would have to go back to Fortaleza empty. Petrol was expensive.

All this was uttered with an expression of such injured innocence, such complete disregard for the truth, that I blew my cool. Like most people, I hate to be ripped off in small matters. I started to curse him in Spanish, but found my vocabulary inadequate and switched to French, tossing in a few choice words in German when I found myself stuck for anything stronger than merde. It was only when I let go in Afrikaans that results were observable. The cabby did not understand a word, but it was immensely satisfying to me.

The policeman, acting as mediator, finally suggested that I pay five hundred cruzeiros. No, the sergeant would take Edwin and me to the boat. It was late. I was tired and Tina was riding her anchor on that open beach. And one of our precious ten days was passing. I paid the five hundred cruzeiros under protest.

The policeman was as good as his word. Better, in fact. He took us to the beach and demanded a further five hundred cruzeiros for the twenty kilometers. One doesn't need taxi drivers to rip one off in Brazil. The police do an even better job. I paid him as well.

There was a strong wind blowing that morning. It was very dark so we could barely see Tina leaping about in the surf, but we could see her, and her chain seemed to be holding. There was no sign of the dinghy, however, and so we could not go on board. We decided to wait the few hours until dawn and then discover what had happened to the dink.

I waited in the lee of a wall and even got a few minutes sleep after I had pulled a palm frond over me to keep out the cold. When I awoke, Edwin was gone and I assumed he was wandering around somewhere. I lit a smoke and watched the surf until I was accosted by a man with a flashlight who said a few words which I did not understand and one I did: "coffee." I was glad to follow him.

He took me into one of the houses lining the beach. It was a structure made by planting poles in the sand and tying woven palm fronds between the poles to form walls. The roof was of the same construction and I could see stars through the various gaps. The house served very well as a windbreak, but I wondered what the inhabitants did when it rained. Got wet, I presumed. Inside there was no floor, only the sand of the beach, which certainly solved the sweeping problem.

We entered the kitchen and closed a door made of palm fronds. To the left was a bedroom with hammocks hanging across the corners. To the right the lady of the house was working at a gas stove in one corner and indicated with smiles that I was welcome and should please sit at the table under a naked electric light bulb hanging from one of the poles that supported the roof. She gave me a lovely cup of that excellent Brazilian coffee, brewed as usual with sugar and served with more sugar, just in case it is not sweet enough. Out of pure politeness and a desire not to offend her, I drank three cups.

When I had finished the last of the coffee, my guide mumbled something about sleeping and led me between some houses down an alley or two, and into a room where Edwin was lying in a hammock while a man in uniform was busy hanging another for me. He said that he had found the dinghy. Some one had put it into a room and locked the door. We could fetch it in the morning. Then I asked where we were, and he told me that this was the jail.

But we had not been arrested. We were guests and after a couple of hours of sleep, we walked out into the village looking for breakfast, which we found at Juan's. He listened to my tale of woe in regard to the taxi and the cop and then told me that there was a further complication; someone wanted to talk to me. He would be at Juan's very shortly.

"Someone" turned out to be a certain Senior Pedro Bragga, a crooked-faced Indio whose parents were, I am convinced, much more closely related previous to their marriage than is usually acceptable in modern society. He displayed most of the characteristics one associates with inbreeding.

Senior Pedro Bra a was the president of the society of fishermen for district ten, an area that included Pecem Beach and the few miles of sand on either side of the villa. It was an elective position, but it automatically made him the local representative of the Port Captain in Fortaleza, a post that carried no salary but which gave the incumbent some authority when dealing with disputes concerning local matters fishy which, since Tina was the first yacht to anchor at Pecem in living memory, were the only matters ever to concern the village, aside from births, deaths, marriages, and the antics of a couple of

adolescent hookers who, it was said, were doing very well for themselves, surprising as it may seem in such a small place.

But overnight Pecem Beach had become an international port of call and the representative of the Port Captain had manfully to shoulder the burden of great responsibility. Tina could not leave Pecem Beach until he, Pedro Bragga, received notification from the Capitan dos Ports that we were allowed to leave. Not only that, nobody was to board Tina until Senior Bragga had in his possession the ship's papers, which were safely tucked away in the locker next to my berth. It was a real Catch-22 situation: we couldn't leave and we couldn't stay; we couldn't go on board until we produced the papers which were on board.

With hindsight I know what I should have done at that point. I should have spit in Senior Bragga's left eye, kicked open the door to the shack where he had locked up my dinghy, and set off for Fortaleza the next morning when the wind dropped. But Senior Bragga had been accompanied by a cop in uniform with a gun on his hip and I gave him credit for more authority than was his due. I eventually persuaded him to allow me to row out to Tina and fetch the papers so that Edwin and I would have a place to sleep while we arranged something about the notification from the Fort Captain. Bragga sent a young man with me, I suppose to prevent my pulling up the tattered sails and running away, leaving Edwin and my passport in Juan's living room.

We found the key to the shack and pulled the dinghy onto the beach where I was horrified to see that Tina had dragged anchor several hundred yards and was busily making her way toward the beach. I prayed that the engine would start as I into the launched the dink into the surf and pulled out to the yacht. We were soaked and the dinghy was half full of water when we got there, but I leapt aboard, unlocked the main hatch and hit the starter button in almost one dripping, squishing movement. "Thank you, dankie, merci, danke schon, obrigado, gracias, and lankthay ouyaay'," I muttered as the engine caught immediately and ticked over reassuringly. Disaster was averted and the young man and I motored into the wind and pulled up the chain.

Tina had not dragged her anchor. The anchor had broken off its flukes and she had been held by the remaining lump of iron and the weight of the chain. I put out the spare anchor and she was secure enough for the moment, Later I was given another anchor, the type the Brazilian fishermen use. It consists of a rock in a wooden frame roughly hewn from a tree. We named it Alice and put it out to help the spare anchor.

Senior Pedro Bragga was quite satisfied to gain possession of Tina's ship's papers, an expired registration from Durban for 1976, the bill of sale I was given when I bought the boat, my clearance certificate from Port Canaveral, and a very impressive document with a golden seal that said I had already won a prize and had a good chance of winning another if I subscribed to The Reader's Digest. He spent several wonderful hours displaying these evidences of his importance for the edification of his friends.

These events occurred on a Saturday and it was well into the afternoon before I regained possession of my boat. The Port Captain's office was closed by then and there was no way of obtaining the required permission to leave Pecem Beach. I would have to wait until Monday before I could return to Fortaleza and I would not be able to get underway until Tuesday morning. Work on the boat could not begin until Wednesday morning. With a single attack of unauthorized bureaucratic frenzy, Senior Pedro Bragga had wiped out five of my ten days.

Monday morning found us in the Port Captain's office, surrounded by puzzled officials who could not understand what Senior Bragga wanted and what he had to do with them, us, or anything else. They passed the buck to the Federal Police who were equally puzzled and for the same reasons. Finally the Sergeant, a quiet man who spoke good Spanish and who therefore included me in the conversation, typed out a letter to the effect that Senior Pedro Bragga, President of the Society of Fishermen at Pecem Beach, Zone Ten of the State of Cerra, Brazil, was not responsible for the yacht Tina or its crew. He filled the sheet of paper up with plenty of official stamps and handed it to a gratified Pedro Bragga. We were free at last.

We motored from Pecem to Fortaleza without incident the following morning and checked in with the police and the Port Captain again, just to let them know that we were no longer on the beach and to fill a few of the forms they had lying around. Then I ran about in circles buying food and goodies for the boat.

The shopping in Fortaleza was surprisingly good. The supermarket was well-stocked and the prices reasonable, if you were careful to check those on the goods you wanted. The rate of inflation was so high that the cost of the merchandise rose faster than the goods were sold and one could find appreciable differences in price by digging out last week's supply from the back of the shelf. With the rigors of starvation still fresh in my mind, I bought plenty of dried beans, which were cheap and good, plenty of rice, flour, biscuits, several slabs of smoked bacon, assorted tins of meat and vegetables, butter, syrup, and a couple of dozen bottles of the local rot gut, a very rough spirit distilled from sugar cane that I was sure could be used to power the Honda if we ran out of gasoline.

For the boat my main concern was glue for the sails, some material to use for patches, various odds and ends like shackles, nuts and bolts, rope, spares for the Honda, fuel, and water. The glue was discovered after much searching and I loaded thirty liters on board. The patching material was a fairly thin linen bought at a draper's because there did not seem to be any Dacron in the city. The other items were acquired in a manner in keeping with the age old rule of fitting out a yacht: if two things are needed for a boat, they will be found as far apart as possible, consistent with their being in the same geographical location. Therefore, if you need a snap shackle and a galvanized bolt, find the one and then look for the part of the city the furthest away for the other. It is not even helpful to ask about item A in item B's location. The people there will not have the faintest idea of what you are talking about. Simply get on a bus and run to the other side of town.

Even the fuel and water was only obtainable at a distance from the yacht club and the business of arranging to take on both was protracted. The fuel was not taken from a pump but was brought to the commercial quay in a small trailer tank. It was necessary to obtain a permit to bring Tina alongside, to pay for the water, and the trailer tank charged a fee in addition to its price for the fuel. All this made bunkers an expensive proposition, but time was running out.

Officially, I had five days, but I thought I could stretch them to six because the last was a Sunday and the office would be closed and unable to clear me. There was no question of getting the ship ready in that time. All I hoped to do was to gather together the things I needed so that I could do the actual repairs at sea. This I almost managed by the end of my ten days, and while "almost" is not really satisfactory, it can suffice.

At the Federal Police office that Monday I spoke to the quiet sergeant in the hope of getting a few more days out of him. We weren't ready. We were awaiting funds. I had been ill. Edwin's toothache was bothering him. The sky was falling, Chicken Little.

The Sergeant opened his file, checked a few papers and then pointed out that as far as he was concerned we had arrived in Brazil on the 10th, the day we had come to Fortaleza, and did not have to leave until the 20th. We had four more days.

That was enough time. With the pressure off I was able to work much more efficiently than when I had been rushed and by the time the 20th came around, we were ready. That was a Friday, however, and sailors never, ever, put to sea on a Friday, so we left early Saturday morning. We had been kicked out of Antigua and Brazil but Tina was in good shape and loaded with food and it wasn't far to Fernando de Noronha. All we needed was a fair wind and we could be there in a few days. At the very worst, it wouldn't take more than three weeks

CHAPTER V

We motored out of Fortaleza into the same brisk breeze and choppy seas we had encountered all along the coast of Brazil. Navigation was complicated by innumerable small fishing boats clustered around the many areas of shoal water. These craft, from fourteen to twenty feet long, powered by a linen sail on a lateen rig, are little more than enlarged surf boards with a slightly "veed" bottom and a dagger board, very similar to the dabchick design but much more sturdy, built as they are of one inch planks. They carry crews of one to four and are very fast, but there is no doubt that the sailors are hardy men because there is no protection from the elements. The fishermen stand on a deck that is constantly awash and use hand lines that they jerk up and down, presumably to attract fish, which, if hooked, will find themselves in a basket lashed to the deck and containing a bottle or two of fresh water, a piece of damp bread, and some bait. Larger fish that do not fit in the basket are also lashed to the deck, sometimes crowding the crew. I saw one fisherman heading for home carrying a shark that was so huge that he occupied the entire deck and dragged his tail in the water astern. All that weight meant that the boat was skimming along a few inches under the surface of the water, so the crew kept reasonably dry by sitting on their catch.

Because there were so many of these craft about and because we were reduced to only two hands, I decided to make a dash out to sea before heading east, hoping to get beyond the reefs that attracted the fishermen. Since the land sloped off to the southeast, we were able to head northeast and build up some sea room, but it took us twenty-eight hours of motor sailing to do so. Luckily, by keeping the jib furled and proceeding under forestaysail, main and mizzen, we found a balance and Tina held her course with no one at the helm so all the watch had to do was keep an eye open for shipping.

But because Tina was making it easy for us in one respect did not mean that she intended to let us loaf. I noticed that we were taking some water and then found the bilge pump out of action. That piece of equipment had to be removed, stripped, and the pipe cleared before we could pump and then the leak had to be traced. Naturally, I ignored the most obvious source and spent hours crawling around in the bilges checking the skin fittings before I looked at the stern tube gland which I found to be weeping copiously. I pulled it up and greased it well and that solved that.

It soon became apparent that our main problem was still to be the sails. They had been repaired so many times that the shape of each had been greatly altered and the highest Tina could point was about sixty-five degrees. That meant in effect that we were reduced to only two points of sailing -- a close reach and a broad reach. Since the wind was east or southeast, our direction was generally somewhat north of east. We were getting nearer to Fernando, but we would have to pass the island and come back to it if we were going to reach it, an eventuality that began to seem more and more remote. I was beginning to ponder the possibility that Fernando de Noronha was a natural freak with a strong antimagnetic force that repelled Tina's steel hull. We would struggle eastwards and the distance to the island would be reduced daily until we reached the magic point of two hundred and ninety miles from our destination. Then we were taken northeastwards inscribing again a radius with the island at the center and, again, the radius was expanding slowly making the distance to be sailed climb at a rate of about ten miles per day. When the radius achieved a length of three hundred and twenty miles, the magnetic

field lost its influence and we were able to sail eastwards and other options opened up for us.

The further east we moved, the more apparent it became that we might be able to come about and head for Recife, on the mainland of Brazil and well around the bulge of South America. That seemed an attractive alternative for a few days until an even better possibility raised itself. About a week out of Fortaleza we were six hundred and ninety miles from Recife, four hundred and seventy from Fernando and only twelve hundred from the island of Ascension. That looked very good for two reasons, In the first place, Ascension was not Brazil. We had been kicked out of there once, in a most gentlemanly manner, to be sure, and only because we failed to conform to their laws on visas, and I wondered how they would react if we turned up on their territory a few weeks later. I was willing to risk the official ire but could well have done without that complication. In the second place, Ascension was on the right side of the ocean for us. From there it would be possible to reach St. Helena, a mere seventeen hundred miles from Cape Town, and a nice place to vista. As I described to Edwin the delights of American hamburgers, pizza, and steak, crisp salads, and yankee ice cream, all available on Ascension, and the charm of the people of St. Helena, that route struck us as most appropriate. All we had to do was pinch a bit to the southeast and our troubles would be over.

Not that we were experiencing anything that could really be called troubles. Sailing a big ketch with only two hands on board was far easier than we had expected. There was plenty of living space and plenty of food and the boat was sailing herself all the time. Our watches at night lasted longer, it is true, but the weather was balmy and we could cat-nap in the cockpit because there was almost no shipping. Even the fishing was good. I pulled in one dorado of about twenty pounds and the next day two lures were taken simultaneously. One fish I got on deck, but he flipped himself over the side while I was trying to beat the other which managed to break the line before I could gaff him. If you are used to trailing five lines for three weeks and catching nothing, losing two fish in three minutes means that the fishing is good. It was very good a few days later when I hooked and boated a marlin of about sixty pounds. I tossed him in the cockpit and Edwin and I watched him flapping around for a minute or so before I picked him up and returned him to the water. He was too big for us to eat but a small portion and too beautiful to kill unnecessarily. I half expected some objection from Edwin, who likes his fish dinners, but he was in full agree went with me. "Ah'm glayed yew done that What-lee," was all he said and returned to his dictionary.

Sail repairs were made easier because we had plenty of glue and major tears could be fixed in a few hours so that we did not have too much time wallowing while the sail was in the salon. The jib, however, was becoming more and more of a nuisance. In theory a self furling jib is a wonderful invention, It rolls up instantly and sits neatly out of the way on its stay until it is needed again. If one wants to shorten sail, one can pull up half or three quarters without even pausing and continue on one's way without a break in speed. But in fact Tina's jib had always been less than satisfactory, never rolling up instantly and always giving some trouble except in the lightest of winds. After three or four large tears it was impossible to roll it up in anything stronger than a flat calm, which negated the advantage of the theory since the time to furl is when it is blowing. We were thus faced with the option of taking a chance and leaving the jib up in squally weather, or dropping it altogether. In most cases, leaving it up meant blowing it, so it had to come

down anyway for repairs. Once down it was almost impossible to raise it in anything above a few knots of wind. We would roll it up by hand on deck and by the time it was halfway up the swivel the head would be flapping madly, twisting itself around the forestay, perhaps tearing again, so we would wait for a calm day, losing the pulling power of the sail and the miles it would give us.

We lived with this problem, which developed from unsatisfactory to an absolute abortion, and then devised a unique system with a shackle, a rope and a piece of wire. The shackle was put on the forestay where it could slide freely up and down. The wire was put through the shackle and then through the sail's swivel, bent as a springing "Vee". Then the rope was tied to the wire. When we raised the sail, the swivel was held to the forestay and could not wrap around the cable. Once the sail was up and tight on its own stay, the rope pulled the wire out and the shackle slid down the forestay. It sounds like a veritable Heath-Robinson affair because it was, and, like most such improvisations, most satisfying to the inventor to see it work.

Another problem in connection with the jib was the halyard block. Even with the jib pulled up bar tight there was some slight lateral movement that often caused the halyard to jam and eventually broke the block into several distinct pieces. Since the halyard was a steel cable, the block had to have a steel gully, which meant that most of the spares I carried were unsuitable because they were nylon. There were a few old blocks with steel pulleys that I had not thrown away, not because they were any good but because I rarely throw away anything when cruising. By cannibalizing the bits and pieces of three blocks I managed to manufacture one fairly decent one, but it was still subject to the lateral stress and had to be doctored every few days. Since this doctored entailed climbing the mast, it was an arrangement I could happily have done without.

Some other cannibalization involved my sextant. The instrument I carry is a cheap plastic one that I have found to be completely satisfactory. It is tough and light and accurate enough for any cruising yacht. The only disadvantage is that the adjustment screws are operated by tiny brass nuts which are set into the plastic. As the sextant is exposed to the weather, corrosion builds up and the screws become tighter until an attempt at adjustment forces the nut to break the surrounding plastic and the mirror simply remains in an inaccurate position. This is what happened to my sextant, but fortunately Edwin had brought along an identical instrument. We had not used it because the mirrors were almost completely de-silvered and some of the clips holding the mirrors were gone. So, my mirrors and clips went into Edwin's sextant and we were once again in business.

As we moved eastwards toward Ascension, the variety of wind increased. What had been a fairly stable southeast trade began to move all over the eastern side of the compass and we found ourselves tacking back and forth, crossing and re-crossing the equator and sometimes losing ground. We had several milestones that we aimed for as marks of our progress: the equator, the various time zones, a particular crease in the chart. Passing one of these called for a celebration and re-passing called for some sorrow-drowning, with the result that we were soon out of booze. That was unfortunate because we did have one occasion that required a toast but had to be deferred due to the lack of Brazilian cane. That was the day that Tina covered one hundred and eighty miles in twenty-four hours. Now Tina had never, ever, sailed that far in a day and I confess I was very skeptical. I assumed that I had made a mistake in my navigation, though why I

should suddenly have made such a huge error after months of accurate shooting of the sun I could not explain. I checked the figures and got the same result and then decided to take another sight that afternoon to verify the position. When the sun was obscured that afternoon, I had to wait until the next day and then our position was another hundred and ten miles down the road so I had to assume that the previous day's sight had been right. It is easy enough to think you have made some stupid mistake in navigation one day, but if the following day's position makes sense, the only thing to do is to accept that of the previous day. I did so and then spent some time trying to explain the impossible day's run. The only answer I could come up with was that we had been caught in one of the eddies of the equatorial current and been pushed rapidly to the east.

It was soon obvious that we were out of the eddies' influence when the daily runs dropped below a hundred nautical miles and then below fifty. More important than the slowness of our progress was the direction. We wanted to go south but could only move to the east. It was just the opposite of the situation when we were north of South America. Then we wanted an easterly course and could only go south. We pushed on until we had passed Ascension's longitude and continued until our noon position put us a hundred and eighty miles from Liberia and it was clear that we were likely to ram either that country or the Ivory Coast sometime in the next couple of days. Having experienced what was really mild official antagonism in Antigua, I was more than unwilling to suffer the same in any African country. I was scared stiff. Surely the faintest whiff of a South African flag would bring out the gunboats, blazing away, and Edwin and I would spend the next forty years in some African slammer, awaiting trial as spies. There was only one thing to do. We turned around and headed back the way we had come.

That was somewhat discouraging, but a more telling blow was to come a week later when our position was fifteen miles south of where we had been twelve days previously. "God-daym, What-lee. We cain't jest keep go-in' bayeck an' foreth acrost the year ocean."

But there was little else we could do. Our hopes of reaching Ascension had been abandoned. We were right on the east side of the Atlantic and could revert with some hope of success to the original strategy. We only had to get some southing and we would be able to reach Rio. The equatorial current was with us and the southeast trade winds would show up when we reached the middle of the ocean and allow us to sail southwest. All we had to do was hang in there.

So, in we hung, and went due west for several days until the trades took over and we began to head more and more to the south. We still had the same problems with sails that tore, blocks that broke, and an engine that only started when it felt like it. The Honda was as recalcitrant as it had been before the repairs effected at Fortaleza. The filter blocked, the starter rope broke, the spring malfunctioned, and the Nip Twit required as much attention as a spoiled child. That soon came to an end, however, because the supply of gasoline was getting low. The Honda could run all day on two quarts of fuel, but it required a full day's run to give the batteries enough juice to start the engine and I wanted to save what I could for the time when the engine would be necessary.

There came a time when certain important milestones were passed. About twelve days after we had turned we had indeed picked up the southeast trades and were making good direction toward Rio. We crossed the equator, again, and even moved onto the chart of the South Atlantic, which emphasized the fact that we were in new water. We were

still moving very slowly, making less than a hundred miles on most days and less than sixty on many, but we were getting there.

Then we discovered that the water was getting low. Not only was the starboard bank of tanks nearly exhausted, but the portside bank, which had been isolated from the other and should have been full, was only half full. That was disquieting. Either we had a leak or the tanks had not been properly filled in Fortaleza. But there was no evidence of a leak. What little water there was in the bilges came from the stern tube gland that produced half a gallon every two days, an amount we were used to and which did not vary. Where the water had gone was a less important consideration than how much we had left and how long it would last. We filled what bottles were available as an emergency supply and then had a good look at the chart. It was obvious that we would be very thirsty if and when we reached Rio, so we chose Salvador as an alternative. It would mean another confrontation with the Brazilian authorities, but we had been away for six weeks and I reasoned that they would consider our plight with their usual cooperation. We were going to face them in Rio, anyway, so why not Salvador. We Turned west.

Forty-seven days out of Fortaleza and about a hundred and fifty miles from Salvador found us enjoying the usual series of catastrophes that accompanied all our approaches to ports. At two in the morning the wind, which had been a steady eight to ten knots, suddenly blew a heavy thirty to thirty-three and shredded the jib, a prank that it seemed to enjoy so thoroughly that it continued with the entertainment and chopped a twelve foot tear across the main and a six footer out of the mizzen. That would have been a real problem if we had not had a good supply of glue, As it was, the main was repaired early the next afternoon and the mizzen started. When it was done, I was free to worry about our position. There had been no sun and hence no sight, but I assumed that we had not gone too far with only the little sail driving us. That was an assumption I was to revise at three the next morning when the ship I had been watching, puzzled by the great mass of white lights and the dark smudge on the horizon was not just a cloud but unmistakably Brazil. I roused Edwin out of bed and we put up the main with difficulty because there was no way Tina would luff under forestaysail alone. Then we gibed and headed away from the land.

At six that morning, when the sun gave us some light, we gibed again, heading back towards the land in bright green water. The engine refused to start and the Honda had to be stripped and cleaned before it would run steadily, but I did manage to get it going while we tacked about off the seemingly deserted beach. We charged for ten hours and used all but about a pint of our gas supply before the engine consented to start. I determined to keep the thing going until the hook was down.

We motor-sailed for forty-eight hours, looking for Salvador and nervously watching the dwindling supply of diesel. There was no sun on either of the mornings, which struck me as the unkindest cut of all because the only time I could shoot the sun was in the mornings. In the afternoon the horizon was blocked by the land and it was frustrating to spend the early part of the day sitting in the cockpit with my sextant in my hand and watching the overcast sky for a glimpse of the sun that never materialized until it was right over the coast, where it shone brightly until sunset.

But, even though we could not pinpoint or position, we did have the radio direction finder and could follow the beacon toward Salvador. We were again proceeding without a large-scale chart and had no idea of the hazards that to be found, so it was

necessary to keep a good watch not only on the land but the sea around it as well. One of the hazards was Edwin's propensity to pull in very close to the shore, to have a good look for a nice place to anchor. At one point, when I had gone below for a nap, I emerged to find that we were in a large bay with what could only be Salvador on the shore. Edwin had found observation through binoculars unsatisfactory and had moved in to look for the yacht club. When I glanced seaward I was greatly alarmed and had to explain to him that when the boat is between the beach and the breaking seas, it is in too close.

It was at six-thirty that evening, as the sun was setting, that we dropped anchor off the yacht club at Salvador. There was another African yacht lying at a mooring, Force 8, from what was then Rhodesia, and we dropped the hook near her and let out all our chain. We had been at sea for fifty days, had crossed the Atlantic twice and had made about six hundred miles good on our voyage. We had run the engine for two full days and the batteries were too flat to light up the cabin, There was only one consoling factor: we were around the bulge of South America. That fact made the rest seem insignificant.

Edwin went ashore that evening and brought back a cold beer which would have been more appreciated had I not been exhausted, but was good anyway. We chatted for a while and then fell into our berths only to be awakened an hour later by excited cries emerging from the skipper of Force 8. We came on deck to find that Tina, had dragged her anchor and was about to sink the Rhodesian boat by bashing in her sides. We hurriedly explained that we had no engine and began to bend on our nylon rope to give us more scope on the chain, but Force 8's skipper elected to move to another anchorage, raised his genoa, collided with Tina's bowsprit which ripped off one of his stanchions, and sailed off. It was with feelings of relief and a touch of guilt that I appropriated his mooring. Relief to be securely moored and guilt at having driven him away, I rationalized that it had been his choice. I went back to bed and allowed the relief to dominate my emotions.

The next morning Edwin and I went ashore to have a shower and to check in with the authorities. The same gale that had blasted all of Tina's sails had destroyed the yacht club's landing platform, so we had to climb over the ruins and then drag the dinghy to where the considerable surf could not affect it. We carried with us the five-gallon plastic bottle that had held the gasoline for the Honda and were planning to have it filled at the nearest station but we immediately ran into our first frustration. It is against the law to fill small bottles with gas in Brazil. They were quite willing to sell me a twenty-five gallon drum and to fill it, but no little plastic bottles were to be used. Since twenty-five gallons would keep the Honda running continuously for five months and since it would be next to impossible to get the drum on board, where it would be little less than a bomb, I decided that we would have to think up another plan.

Our progress to the authorities was delayed by frequent stops along the way. We had to pause for a beer in several quaint little cafes; some ice cream demanded to be consumed; the bank was open and we cashed a traveler's check or two; my glasses, which had been bothering me for several weeks, had to be fixed at a friendly optometrist's shop; the telephone company had to be found and calls put through to South Africa and the U.S.; and sundry other details interfered with the achievement of our goal. So much so that we never got to the authorities that first day. That was naughty of us, I know, but we managed to think up a good excuse: We had been looking for the Port Captain, but couldn't find him. We would go the first thing in the morning.

First thing in the morning found Edwin and me in the offices of the federal police where I explained to a Spanish speaking official that we were once more mariners in distress. We needed water, fuel, and time to make repairs. Could we not stay for two weeks? No was the answer. We could have ten days and then would have to go or be thrown in the pokey. Edwin and I were elated. That was plenty of time and the permission had been granted so easily and in so friendly manner -- even the threat of imprisonment was made with a smile -- that we felt welcome, even valued. We left the police and sauntered over to register with the Port Captain and were soon legally enjoying the delights of Salvador.

My method of enjoying the delights was to scurry back to the boat, remove the alternator and regulator, and then try to find someone who could test them. I found plenty of people who were willing to gaze knowingly at the machines and mutter technical details in Portuguese, but it took two days of searching to find a man with the equipment to run a bench test. He pronounced everything to be in order, which did nothing to explain why the batteries were not getting a charge, and then made a slight adjustment to the regulator. I was to try the engine again and come back to him if the batteries remained flat.

But there was no way to try the engine until the batteries had enough power to start it and no way to charge the batteries without gas for the Honda. It was a nasty circle out of which I could not have broken without the help of the yacht Club.

The club at Salvador, like its counterpart in Fortaleza was really an elite social organization, rather than a sailing club. The only boat at the moorings was Tina and those craft stored in the sheds by the main building were mainly small power launches. There had been a Hobie regatta a week before we arrived, but that was the only evidence of sailing we had seen. Of the membership, those who were to be seen regularly in the evenings were eight or ten young men who gathered to play chess, drink a beer, or simply while away the evening. One of their number, Bob, the son of a U.S. citizen who had married a Brazilian girl and made a home in Salvador, adopted us. He organized some gasoline which, we siphoned out of a friend's car and introduced me to a man who owned a trickle charger to which we connected one of Tina's batteries for two days while I sat with the Nip Twit charging the other. When both were full of juice, we had an engine again and it appeared that the alternator was working well.

Bob and several of his friends were willing hands when we decided to motor down the bay to take on diesel. They swarmed all over Tina enthusiastically examining the equipment and demanding to be put to work. So I put them to work, winching up the anchor, which turned out to be too much for them because the chain was hopelessly entangled with the mooring lines. When I went over the side with a face mask for a look, I could see a knot of chain from which was suspended the anchor and one of the concrete blocks that held the mooring down, so knew that the boys had really been working. What amazed me was that the old winch was capable of lifting all that weight. I tied our nylon warp onto the anchor, the crew hauled it up, and we putt-putted down the bay to the pumps. All the plastic bottles were filled with diesel and, after much persuasion, a fresh water pipe was passed on board and we filled those tanks as well. When we got back to the yacht club, all the absolutely essential requirements had been met. What remained to be done could be tackled in a leisurely manner.

The next afternoon we acquired a lodger. Solange was a petite blond in her late twenties who had come up from Rio on a bus, looking for a boy friend on a yacht that was due in Salvador within a few days. The boys at the club were much taken with her and, in order to save her the cost of hotel accommodations, as well as to keep her around the club, asked me if she could sleep on Tina. I immediately enquired if she could cook and how would she like to visit South Africa, but she was in love with the absent yachtie and only wanted a place to sleep. Since she was very decorative, I graciously allowed her a blanket and a berth in the salon.

We had a very pleasant stay in Salvador. During the daytime there was work to be done and things to be bought for the boat.

After much searching, I found a suitable block for the jib halyard and bought two of them just in case. Nuts and bolts were found in a specialist shop right on the other side of town and an assortment of shackles turned up in, believe it or not, the back room of a cafe. Rope, fishing line, a courtesy flag, and some turnbuckles were acquired in a little shop near the yacht club that I had overlooked a number of times on my forays to find just those articles.

Tina's bottom was foul and was scrubbed in stages with the help of the boys from the club. The mizzen boom, which had been busy disassociating itself from its gooseneck, was glued and re-bolted. The shredded jib was a job that required three liters of glue and yards of material. I pinned the strips of Dacron, some only of finger width, to the table in the salon and then glued the linen on both sides. It was a long, messy and finicky job that was actually a remake of the sail, but at least we had a jib rolled on its stay when I finished. How satisfactory a jib would be seen later when we put it into some wind.

Our evenings were spent with Solange, Bob and one or two of the boys either in Bob's flat, where his lovely mother, Estella, made us magnificent feasts and entertained us graciously, or in one of the pizzerias that were scattered all over the area. Neither Edwin nor I are capable of denying-ourselves those good, cheap pies.

It was just as well that our stay in Salvador was limited by the official ten days because the temptation to remain there would have been hard to resist. But we still had a lot of miles to cover and so the day came when we made a final trip to the supermarket to buy food, loaded it on Tina, and announced to the boys that we would be leaving in the morning. That sparked off a farewell party that set the club rocking to the beat of innumerable drums produced from somewhere and aided by improvised percussion instruments ranging from two sticks knocked together to a xylophone made of beer bottles filled to various levels. The festivities lasted the entire night, but I did not, I retired in the early hours and came ashore in the morning to find a glassy-eyed Edwin who would be ready to go as soon as he finished a letter to his wife, the composition of which was interrupted often because he kept falling asleep with the pen in his hand. When the epistle was finally completed, it was absolutely necessary for him to dash into town and spend the last of his cruzeiros. He returned with a warm bottle of orange squash, liberally laced with cane spirits and undoubtedly the most vile tasting concoction yet invented. I think it was the first mouthful of that muck that finally persuaded him it was time to go. We shook hands with Bob and the boys, persuaded Solange to part with a picture of herself, duly signed, received a chaste kiss on the cheek from her, and rowed out to Tina. We loaded on the dinghy, started the engine, cast off the borrowed mooring

and headed out of the bay. It was the fifth time we had set out and was different from the others in one very important aspect: It was the first time we were not setting course for Fernando de Noronha. Now we were going to Cape Town

CHAPTER VI

Hanging around the South Atlantic Ocean, like a mugger working the New York City Times Square area, is a high-pressure system waiting to catch the unwary sailboat and hold her there for a month or two in conditions of erratic or no wind. Where this villain is can be anybody's guess because he shifts about with demented cunning and unless one has access to satellite photos, one must assume he is about where he had been in previous years -- information that is available on the pilot charts. Since the air around a high-pressure cell moves anti clockwise in the southern hemisphere, a boat sailing from west to east must first proceed south around the edge at the South Atlantic high and then head east when the winds begin to steady in from the west. This was our strategy on leaving Salvador. We motored out of the harbor, raised the sails and headed due east all night to get clear of the land and then turned south, a course we were to hold for more than a week while we were looking for the westerlies. These I had hoped to find around thirty degrees south which would have meant a reasonably warm crossing, but that was the same kind of foolish optimism that had allowed me to hope for a north wind when leaving Port Canaveral. Some people never learn.

So we continued to push south, sometimes beating a few degrees east of south, sometimes a few degrees west, and occasionally getting a reach that allowed us to head due south, where we wanted to go, an experience we enjoyed mainly because of the novelty it afforded. But although our daily runs showed an erratic movement, general direction was south and within a week we were eight hundred miles east of Rio, the last port of call as originally planned and I remarked to Edwin that at least our voyage was consistent in that we had gone to none of the places we had proposed to visit while we were in Florida. He hoped that Cape Town would prove the exception and I asked him what he had against seeing Australia.

The further south we got the colder the weather became and the more rain we experienced. Often the sky was overcast for days at a time, making navigation impossible, and at times I was afraid that we had slipped into the influence of the South Atlantic high because we seemed to be sitting in our own private patch of fog without a breath of wind, but the weather would change and we would continue on our way, nursing the sails so effectively that I did not have to repair one for two weeks, an unheard of occurrence on this voyage. Then the jib halyard broke while I was taking a nap and the next day the main tore across near the head, a slight annoyance that only required one can of glue, an hour of my time and a bottle of the Brazilian cane with which Edwin was willing to help me. It was a race to see which would be finished first, the cane or the main, and I am glad to report that the main won by a short head. That meant that there was still enough cane left for a celebratory nip to reward us for our labors.

We crossed the thirtieth parallel still looking for those westerlies that were supposed to be hanging around in the area but the wind was still from everywhere on the east side of the compass, northeast, southeast, and various points in between. There were days that we could pinch a bit to the east, and others when we actually had to head southwest because the alternative had too much northing in it and we had to avoid that high-pressure system at all costs. And all the time it grew colder. There came a night when I found myself sitting in the cockpit wearing so much clothing that its weight made moving an immense chore. I watched the rain pour down so heavily that the scuppers

gurgled as though we were shipping green water. The fog made it impossible to see the jib thirty feet in front of me and I suddenly asked myself what I was doing there. Keeping watch, of course, but what was I watching? If there were a ship ten feet in front of the bow I would not be able to see her because of the fog and the rain and we had not sighted a ship for two weeks anyway. Tina was sailing herself under all sail in wind gusting to about thirty knots and the seas, while sizeable, were not throwing her around, so a hand was not needed at the wheel. "T' hell with this," I said, and 'went to bed.

That evening marked the end of organized watches on Tina. From then on we would climb into our berths early in the evening and enjoy a full night's sleep while she did all the work on her own and almost eighty per cent of the time I would look at the compass in the morning and find her right on course. If the wind shifted during the night she would be off course when I got up, but even then she usually selected the course I would have put her on had I been at the helm when the conditions changed. On rare occasions when the wind was too fitful for her to handle, we sat watch in the salon, using a spare compass that Edwin had brought along surrounded by the steel hull and coach roof, that instrument had no real idea of where we were headed, but it was consistent in its error so we could tell when we were pushed in the wrong direction and hop up to the cockpit to make the necessary correction. But these were exceptional nights and Edwin's confused compass was not called upon more than three or four times.

I must confess that 5aiUng without a witch gave me, at first, a feeling of uneasiness only a few degrees short of outright panic. In the middle of an ocean in a well-found boat the only real danger is the presence of other craft bent on running one down. This concerned me -- not anything on Tina, because I could feel it when something went wrong with our equipment. If, for example, a sail blew, I would hear it flapping and the motion of the boat would change immediately, waking me from the soundest sleep. A significant change in the weather would have the same effect and I would be up and doing whatever had to be done and then climb back into my berth. But a tanker as long as a football field thumping along at sixteen knots was another matter altogether. I rationalized, however, that a tanker as long as a football field had no business down where we were and assumed that a fishing boat as long as a tennis court, although no less dangerous to us, was even less likely to be encountered. I was also consoled by the thought that single-handed sailors undoubtedly sleep sometimes and they seem to avoid collisions. At least those that arrive at their destinations do. In a conversation I had with one such hardy soul I asked what he did at night and he told me he put up a bright white light and went to bed. Since a single white light at sea can only be a stern light, and since the rules of the road demand that a vessel overtaking another stay clear of her, the idea was to make the single handed yacht appear stern to from all directions so that if he was run down it would not be his fault and he could sink righteously.

I had also heard that some sailors set an alarm to wake them every two hours during the night so they can take a look around. That seemed to me an almost completely useless precaution. If you can see a ship five miles off from the deck of a yacht, I would suggest that you are unusually alert and the conditions of weather and sea are exceptionally good. If the ship and yacht are moving towards each other at twenty and five knots respectively, they will cover that five miles in twelve minutes, which means that the look-around every two hours is effective for only ten per cent of the time and for that kind of comfort it hardly seems worthwhile to set the alarm. It does not make much

difference if the ship is coming up astern of the yacht. Then the distance will decrease at fifteen knots and the five miles will be covered in twenty minutes. If the two meet at right angles, it will take fifteen minutes from sighting to sinking.

Since we did not have a bright white light on Tina, nor an alarm clock, for that matter, our precautions consisted in some heavy hoping that there were no other ships around and Edwin's smoky old kerosene lamp hung in the salon under the hatch so that it could throw some light through the Perspex onto the mainsail. It was not much light, but it was something and allowed us to deceive our selves into thinking we were not being totally irresponsible. Later we replaced the lamp with a candle which gave off about three times as much light but which only burned a couple of hours, so we were "safe " from eight to ten and then later if one of us happened to wake up and replace the candle.

The candles had arrived on board in Florida with numerous other articles Edwin had acquired in his mother's general store, such as twenty-five pairs of shoe laces, a box of paper filters for a coffee pot we did not have on board, and a whole gross of pens that didn't write. As the weather grew colder and damper, we took to lighting a candle or two in the salon for warmth and to slow down condensation. That was an amazingly effective procedure and on especially cold days and most evenings we had four or five candles burning away and making the salon almost cozy. Those meant for fondue heaters proved to burn the longest and to give the most heat, but we used the normal candles for light.

Keeping warm became one of our chief preoccupations. When we charged the batteries with the engine, Edwin and I sat side by side with our stocking feet on the heat exchanger, wriggling our toes with enjoyment. The job of cooking, which had been a positive chore at the beginning of the voyage and had later turned into a light annoyance, was now a real pleasure for one could stand in front of the stove for as long as it took to boil the rice or heat up the beans, On sunny days it was glorious to lie on the side decks in the sunshine on the lee side of the coachroof, boots off and socks pretending to dry.

Keeping warm and keeping dry were synonymous most of the time and we were never wholly successful at either. The damp was everywhere and it was obvious that unless great care was taken we would be thoroughly miserable and very possibly sick. We soon learned that it was essential to make one's bed as soon as one got out of it. Leave it open for an hour and it would be wet when next you climbed in. Never go to bed dressed in more than underclothing or you will freeze when you get up. Take the least damp of your clothes into bed with you so they do not soak up moisture while you are sleeping. Your socks will almost dry out if you keep them next to your body when you are not wearing them and it is a good idea to keep a spare pair between you and your undershirt all the time. Try to move just enough to warm yourself, but avoid working up a sweat."

With the failure of anything to get dry, the laundry became a problem and Edwin and I were reduced from searching our laundry bags for a clean pair of dirty socks to looking for a pair that was only dirty, not filthy, and finally selecting a pair on the basis of a nose test that became more unpleasant every day. But that was a minor discomfort because we were usually pretty ripe ourselves when whatever impulses towards cleanliness had been overcome by the reluctance to pour that cold, cold water over bodies shivering in an even colder wind. We did bathe, but hardly on a regular basis.

Some three weeks out of Salvador I was called out of bed at four in the morning by the sound of the jib flapping. I pulled an oilskin over my underwear and ran forward to

where the sail was disintegrating, got it down with difficulty and tossed it into the salon for repairs when the sun came up. When I had a good look at the damage, however, I decided it would take too much glue to fix and stuffed it into its bag in tatters. We still had the forestaysail, the mizzen and the main and I wanted to be sure we had enough glue to keep them pulling. And a good thing it was I did so because four days later the main ripped in half just above the foot, establishing a record as the longest tear of the trip. Before that was repaired, the mizzen was shattered.

I fixed the main and decided to leave the mizzen for the next day, but awoke in the morning to hear Edwin shouting with frustrated anguish "gaw-daym, gaw-daym, gaw-daym." The main had torn again, just above the latest patch. Edwin had seen a small rip start at the leach, and as the sail flapped in the light breeze, the tear slowly extended itself across the width of the sail before he could even get close to the halyard to lower it. So we wallowed with the forestaysail flapping while I repaired the tear and then put patches on both sides of the entire length of the leach, a forty-three foot double patch. There were only three cans of glue left when that job was finished, so the mizzen joined the jib, Tina became a sloop and, although we were very much under powered, two advantages accrued: it was even easier to balance her far self-steering and we acquired a new winch to replace the one on the main halyard that had fallen apart a few days earlier because being jibless meant no need for sheet winches. We had to go as far south as thirty-nine degrees before we found our westerly winds. One degree more and we would have been in what is called "the roaring forties," a name derived from days of the big sailing vessels and descriptive of the sound of the wind in the rigging. But we soon decided that we were in the roaring thirties because the wind made so much noise. The interesting thing was that it was not a roar from the rigging but a sound from within the wind itself a deep, throaty growl which we could hear coming up astern and intensifying as the wind gusted. At first it was eerie sitting in the cockpit listening to a distant lion complaining in the middle of the ocean, but we soon became accustomed to the sound and learned to anticipate gusts by the noise of their approach.

The seas in this area ranged from what we would call moderate in lower latitudes but which here appeared almost flat, to those great, rolling hills, not particularly steep but perhaps forty feet from crest to trough and a hundred yards across at the base. They moved inexorably, majestically, over the surface, coming up to dwarf Tina raise her slowly, and gradually change the level of her decks from horizontal to forty-five degrees. At the crest she was given a push on her way and then had her plane restored. They were impressive to watch, stretching across to the horizon in distinct lines, and helpful to the progress of the voyage thanks to the gentle shoves they gave on each crest. On many occasions I would sit on the bench at the stern and watch as we rode up to the crest and then look down to see an albatross flying three feet above the water but fifteen feet directly under Tina's stern. You have to go to the southern ocean if you want to look down on the back of a flying albatross.

Albatross watching was one of our favorite pastimes. They were magnificent birds with wingspans up to eight feet. They soared among the seas with such effortless grace and absolute control that they never ceased to amaze. They could skim across the face of a rushing sea only inches from the water and never so much as touch a wing tip, and then shoot a hundred yards into the air without a flap to dive again in a long

swooping curve that enabled them to inspect more ocean in a day than a squadron of spy planes could manage in a week.

When not in the air they seemed like fussy old ladies wearing the wrong clothes at a tea party to which they had not been invited. They would come down to within a few inches of the water, brake and hover for a second or two and then lower their big, flat feet, heels first, and come to a skidding halt to sit and arrange feathers and look around as though they did not know that the landing was in complete contrast to the grace of their flight. Getting airborne again was even more disconcerting. Being heavy birds who depend on gliding for their movement, they need plenty of ground speed to effect a takeoff and they get this by running along the surface of the sea with their wings spread and their necks at full stretch, looking like overweight dowagers running against a heavy wind across a large puddle, holding voluminous skirts aloft and wearing oversized flippers. Flap-flap-flap-splash-splash-splash.

But the height of ridiculousness was reached when the birds decided that the lure we were trailing was something for them to eat. I think their primary diet is the small squid that abound in the area and the albatrosses that went after our Lure expected it to act like a squid. The bird would go through the landing procedure -- hover, gear down, heels in, skid, and settle. Then it was necessary to attend to the feathers in a pre dinner toilet, in which time the lure had moved several feet ahead and the bird would look around with an expression of consummate stupidity. Then he would either go through the takeoff rigmarole, flap-flap splash-splash, and land again to find that his dinner had run off again, or he would decide to chase the lure, pecking at it as he ran so that it appeared that the overweight dowager was repeatedly falling on her face. At first I was worried that we might catch one of the birds and pulled in the line to avoid having to do battle with a creature that might very well have been capable of beating me up, but after watching them for a few days I realized that the lure was perfectly safe and left the line trailing until one albatross swooped in too close and tangled his wing. I pulled him in and managed to free him without difficulty, and left him unhurt but much offended at his loss of dignity. To avoid a repetition of that accident and because we had not caught a fish in three weeks and did not expect to in the next three, I pulled in the line and stowed it away.

Having found our westerly winds we began to work our way across the ocean and were absolutely astonished to suddenly become aware that we were, after all those miles, finally approaching our destination. For the first time in the voyage our bow was pointed towards Cape Town, What is significant is the fact that our mental attitude had reached the point where our destination had ceased to be a reality. Oh, we were headed for Cape Town, to be sure, but Cape Town had stayed so far away for so long a time that it had become a phrase one wrote in the block marked "destination" on the form at the Port Captain's office in Salvador, Fortaleza, Guadeloupe, a vague goal that fulfilled the necessity to be going somewhere while the fact of the city itself and the possibility of arriving there had long since become as fuzzy as a pension is to an eighteen-year-old. The voyage had become a way of life on its own -- a profession whose termination we could not visualize. It was disquieting to realize that we were approaching our goal because the life at sea had been interesting and fun, but also exciting because we had a chance of completing what we had set out to do, and, for me, because the reunion with my family was within the measurable future.

Driving eastwards gave us plenty of landmarks, too. We passed a line of longitude every day, the time zones were crossed with comparative rapidity, and the miles to go decreased with satisfying regularity as the boat sailed herself in steady winds, leaving Edwin and me plenty of time to amuse ourselves. Edwin taught me how to play Backgammon with his usual degree of patience: "Gaw-daym,, Watt-lee, haow kin yoo be so gaw-daym stupid!" Then, when I graduated from absolute incompetence to become merely a terrible player, we held a tournament every day which usually ended with Edwin leaning back and saying with great satisfaction, "Ah whoamped yoo Watt-lee! Ah whoamped yoo!" I found that if I threw seventeen double sixes in a row I could win which meant that we had to spend half an hour searching for the dice that Edwin, in his frustration, had thrown the length of the boat.

Our diet at this time consisted largely of those good Brazilian beans we had loaded on at both Fortaleza and Salvador. We found the first time they were served that, either through a desire to increase the weight or an imperfection in the harvesting machinery, there were twenty or thirty rocks in the packet. They were small, brown rocks in amongst the small brown beans and after the first almost-broken tooth we had to spend time in the salon sorting the beans from the rocks. It was not merely a question of picking out a few rocks and then throwing a handful of beans into the pot. The camouflage was so effective that it was necessary to examine each individual bean to determine that it was not a rock, a process that was both time-consuming and a strain on the eyes, But, once sorted, the dish was tasty and satisfying. We would boil up enough for two days at once, in the big pressure cooker, with a hefty slice of smoked bacon rind and plenty of spices. Then we would slop great ladlefuls over rice or pasta and engorge the mess as quickly as we could because it cooled rapidly.

Our breakfast was invariably vetkoek, but a variation evolved from the requirements of the trip. No longer were they the dainty little cakes the original recipe calls for. Our vetkoek were pan-sized loaves an inch and a half thick and we always made enough in the morning to insure a few leftovers for an afternoon snack. We devoured them with pots of Brazilian coffee which we made by adding fresh coffee to the grounds left over from the last pot and boiling the lot. Every week or so we would throw out all the grounds and start a new batch. It usually took three or four days to get the coffee up to standard after a pot cleaning. Then it was thick and strong and you had to chew it.

Having found the westerlies down at thirty-nine degrees we were able to bring them up with us to thirty-six where the air was a trifle less frigid and the seas at least half a foot smaller. This move was made with a view to stopping at the island of Tristan da Cunha, a volcanic rock sticking out of the water about fourteen hundred miles from Cape Town, occupied by a few islanders and administered by Great Britain. I had heard about the friendliness and hospitality of the inhabitants and it was such an isolated place that it would be worth seeing if only for satisfying curiosity. The only problem was that I thought we were again without a large-scale chart and I had no idea of what the area was like. But some dormant memory caused me to search through the pile of charts under my mattress and I discovered that my chart of St. Helena also represented Tristan da Cunha. That was a major win and we could proceed with confidence.

At eight-thirty in the morning of October twenty-sixth I finished my fourth cup of coffee and informed Edwin that I was going up to look for Tristan. The first glance over the bows was disappointing and alarming. We were in the middle of a fog that seemed

determined to hide everything on the ocean, not the kind of a fog that shuts off the world completely, but an extensive mist in which it is difficult to judge distances or pick out details. You think you are looking at the horizon, but it is really only the thick end of the mist. You see half an island and then bump into the hidden other half. You sit back confidently certain that the sea around you is free of shipping and suddenly there comes the QE II tearing down at you, doing thirty knots. Under those conditions the trick is to take plenty of time and study the area carefully. So I took plenty of time, staring out to where Tristan should have been, and saw only mist. But slightly to the right I thought I could pick out an outline and in a few minutes there was the unmistakable profile of an island. It did not look like the outline on the chart, and it was obviously a long way off because Tristan is over a mile high and this rock was low on the horizon which meant that we were thirty of forty miles away. And it was not on the bow, as it should have been if our navigation was right, but off to the right. After a thorough inspection of the horizon revealed nothing, I had to assume that we had passed Tristan and so jibed and headed for the low rock. An hour later the mist slowly began to lift and there on our left emerged from the sea a mountain like a huge rugby ball as seen by an ant. That looked like the profile on the chart and that had been right on our bow before we had turned. That was Tristan da Cunha. The other was "Inaccessible Island". It was frightening to think that we had been five miles away from the huge rock, headed straight towards it, and had seen not a trace of it. We jibed again, tearing the main in the process, started the engine and began to look for the settlement on the north shore.

Tristan appeared a forbidding place on that morning. Sheer cliffs rising from the sea presented no vegetation, mainly because there did not seem to be any soil, only hostile-looking lava, and the breakers were tossing spray high into the air. We closed with the western shore and then moved around to the north shore from about a mile off, using the binoculars to search for signs of habitation. There were a few houses in a valley that appeared to have been formed by a rush of lava to the sea and a hint of green in the gloomy murk. We passed this settlement and then decided that it must be the town and turned, heading in for a closer look. Edwin had the little Danforth anchor out and hanging ready at the bow and the sails were down and secured as we approached, jumping all over the place in a very choppy sea. The wind was blowing about twenty-five knots and the closer we got to the anchorage the less I liked the look of it. When we were within three hundreds yards of the landing place, it was plain that this would never do. Even with good holding ground, which I doubted existed there since the bottom would probably prove to be more lava, like the shore, the light anchor would be inadequate in that wind and sea combination and Alice would be no help at all. If we put down the hook and she dragged, Tina would be blown right onto the rocks because it was a lee shore and Edwin and I would find ourselves guests of the islanders for six months, waiting for the next supply ship. It was with regret that I decided to turn around and continue on to Cape Town.

But my regret was nothing compared to Edwin's. Re had never heard of anything "so gaw-daym stoopid" as my reason for leaving the island. "No prober Grou' tackle! Ah'm gonna call yoo 'Prober" Watt-lee frum now on!" And so on until he went below to express his disappointment at various intervals with a truly astonishing inventiveness adding luster to a command of profanity unequalled in my experience. He even refused to pull in and stow the anchor. "Ah ain gonna do nothin'. Ahm'm jest gonna set hear on ma

gawdaym ayess." That was downright mutiny and I am glad to say that I dealt with it in the true tradition of the sea. I stowed the anchor myself. Then I pulled up the forestaysail and we motored away from the island, I waited half an hour for Edwin to apologize and then dug out the last bottle of cane ,which I had hidden with the idea of saving it for our entrance to Table Bay. We used it to drown our sorrows instead of celebrating with it.

The next morning I fixed the torn mainsail and by evening we were moving along nicely, watching the sun go down and still able to see the top of Tristan, now eighty miles off. And we had missed it from a distance of five miles!

After Tristan we experienced a variety of weather conditions from bright and sunny to heavy rain. The wind came from all directions, including right on the nose, but generally from the western half of the compass. There were days when we made a hundred and ten miles followed by days of only thirty miles, but the usual was around eighty, which was not bad considering we only had the main and forestaysail pulling. At least that was what we told ourselves when the wind dropped to seven or eight knots and left us wallowing. When such conditions occurred on a sunny day, it was officially declared bath time. We would dive off the bowsprit and surface to grab a tire hanging near the stern so we could get out of that cold water as quickly as possible. Soaping up as we walked forward, we would repeat the dive to rinse off and we were "clean." The whole business of ablution required about a minute and a half, and that included drying off.

Oh one such day I was washing the dishes and tossed a coffee cup into the basin of clean dishes waiting to be carried below. The cup caught the edge of the basin and bounced over the side where it floated an inch or two below the surface. Normally I would have written off one coffee cup, but I was planning to bathe anyway and we were moving so slowly that the cup appeared to be an appendage of the boat, staying right with us, so I stripped down and dove over the side. I surfaced with the cup in my hand and turned to see the retreating transom of the boat and experienced a mild dose of panic. I was only seven or eight feet away and caught up easily with a couple of strokes, but for a moment there I knew what it was like to be overboard, watching my ship move away while the only person able to help me was sitting in the salon, engrossed in his dictionary and completely unaware that we had parted company. I reflected as I climbed aboard that if a gust had come along, I would have had about thirty seconds to catch the boat. Longer than that would have meant that she was sailing faster than I could swim and the distance between us would only increase. The only consolation would be that I would not have had very long to watch the boat leaving. I doubt if a human could live in that water for more than about an hour.

Forty-seven days out of Salvador found us four hundred and fifty-eight miles from Cape Town, a figure that was significant because it was exactly nine months from our departure from Port Canaveral. It was also significant because it was under the five-hundred mile mark, the penultimate milestone we had marked on the chart. We had been ticking off the miles in units of five hundred, but the last was further divided into one-hundred-mile stretches. While we were prophesying an arrival in under a week, the wind died and in the next four days we covered less than one of those hundred-mile subdivisions. It was frustrating, but perhaps we needed the delay because the engine was refusing its services again and the batteries required plenty of time with the Honda to get them fully charged. I knew that we would not be able to sail into Cape Town Harbor, so I

sat with the Nip Twit for hours at a time, checked the wiring repeatedly, and cleaned up the starter motor until it functioned more smoothly than ever before. Then the engine might start, if it felt like it, or it might not. If it did start within a hundred and fifty miles of Cape Town, it was going to keep going until we tied up at the Yacht Club.

Some two hundred and fifty miles from Table Bay I took over the navigation from Edwin who had been doing it all the way from Salvador, except for the couple of days of our approach to Tristan. I had no doubts as to the accuracy of his positions, but landfalls were my responsibility. It may be interesting to note that throughout the voyage we had been relying on equal angles to determine longitude and noon observation for latitude, a system that is not supposed to work in high latitudes but which does. I doubt if we took ten position lines during the trip and then only because the sun was obscured at noon and we were near land. If we couldn't get a sight at noon when there was plenty of ocean around us, we would leave it for the next day, or the next

About a hundred and forty miles from Cape Town the direction finder picked up the radio beacons from Cape Point, Robbin Island and Dassin Island and we were able to listen to South Africa's Radio Five on the AM. That really made us aware that we were getting there. At six the next morning, I pressed the starter button and wonder of wonders, the machine ticked over immediately and ran smoothly. We motored through the day and the following night and dawn found us in Table Bay putt-putting through a dead calm as the sun came up over Table Mountain. The yellow duster was at the cross trees, the South African flag, at the stern, and the canvas name boards in place, Edwin had cleaned up the salon and I had made the galley and forecabin presentable. We were ready for company.

That morning was our two hundred and eighty-first day out of Port Canaveral. Of that time, two hundred and forty days had been at sea, the trip from Salvador having taken fifty-six days. We had covered in excess of fifteen thousand nautical miles and had crossed the Atlantic three times, if our near brush with Africa can be called a crossing. We had consumed eight hundred and fifty gallons of water, fifteen cases of beer, a case of Scotch, about fifty bottles of cane, six cases of rum, innumerable kilos of beans, tins of vegetables, bully beef, butter, a mountain of pasta, five hundred eggs and about fifteen fish. We had burned up about fifty candles and five hundred and twenty gallons of diesel, aside from what we pumped over the side. Of the twenty-six liters of glue I had taken on board at Fortaleza, half of one tin, remained. The mainsail had had nine major tears, major being at least six feet long and innumerable smaller ones, including three new batten pockets. The forestaysail was patched the length of the leach, luff, and four places in the body of the sail. For patches I had used three sail bags, about a hundred square feet of the material purchased in Fortaleza, the entire awning, say a hundred and twenty square feet, some of the genoa before it went over the side, several handkerchiefs, the legs of my blue jeans when they became cut-offs, and all the sail covers. We had lost over the side or broken eleven plastic buckets, five thermos flasks, six flashlights, one knife, three forks, four plates and a pot, the helmsman's chair, one oar, one fishing rod and reel, one oil lamp, several bits of clothing, one tattered sail and three scrub brushes. We had met dozens of good people and had learned to get along with each other which was not the least of our accomplishments.

We motored into the basin of the Royal Cape Yacht Club and tied up. Customs and immigration came within a few minutes and the formalities were rapidly concluded.

One point that had bothered me was Edwin's lack of a visa for South Africa. I need not have worried. As long as he was signed on as crew, he was free to stay in the country.

I dug deep into my briefcase and found the South African change I had been saving for the telephone call to my wife in Hermanus, a village some eighty miles from Cape Town. Then I went to the phone booth. It was to be a dramatic moment fraught with the emotion engendered by our imminent reunion after ten months of separation while I endured the perils of the deep. I was going to keep it simple. I would say "Lampie, I'm home" while she went faint with surprise and joy. I dialed the number. The line was busy. It remained so for fifteen minutes and when I did get through she knew all about our arrival. She had called the yacht club on impulse that morning to ask if there 'was any news of Tina and had been told that we had just come in.

So much for dramatic moments!

~~~~~ The End ~~~~~

## Some Newspaper Clippings About This Adventure

1. From *The Argus*, Friday April 27, 1979

### **Damaged SA yacht reaches safety in W Indies**

Argus Correspondent

HERMANUS – The South African yacht, Tina, which was drifting at sea for 35 days has reached Guadeloupe in the West Indies with her four-man crew safe, but the yacht is in bad shape.

Mrs. Walda Whiteley, wife of the skipper of the 13.7 m ketch, Bruce Whiteley, received a telephone call from her in-laws in the US in the early hours today, telling her the yacht and its four-man crew were safe.

Mrs. Whiteley had become desperately worried about the Tina and her crew after they were refused entry to the port of Antigua, 35 days ago, although the yacht was in urgent need of repairs.

All shipping and ports were alerted to look out for Tina.

Her husband said he would make for Guadeloupe in the crippled yacht and in normal conditions should have made the port within a day or two.

Mrs. Whiteley said she was enormously relieved that her husband was safe and she was trying to contact him to him to sell the yacht in Guadeloupe.

### **Crew Left**

“Two of his crew left the yacht in Guadeloupe, my in-laws say, and intend returning to the US. He cannot sail the yacht with a one man crew, particularly with the hurricane season approaching”, she said.

Mr. Whiteley had been trying to telephone his wife in Hermanus throughout the night but was unable to get through.

He asked his parents to tell his wife where he was and said he would be writing to her as soon as possible.

## **2. Alert for SA yacht**

Argus Correspondent

HERMANUS – All ports and shipping in the Atlantic Ocean have been alerted to keep watch for a South African yacht, the 13.7 steel ketch, Tina, adrift off the coast of northern South America for 28 days with four men on board.

Shipping and ports were alerted yesterday by Silvermine after Mrs. Whiteley of Hermanus, wife of the skipper made a desperate appeal to them.

## **3. SA yacht missing**

A HERMANUS woman, Walda Whiteley, is waiting desperately for news of her husband who is on board a yacht believed to be drifting off the coast of America. She fears her husband, Bruce, and the rest of the crew may be dead.

The crew of the 13.7 m ketch Tina were forced to leave the South American port of Antigua where they tried to dock for repairs 29 days ago. Nothing has been heard from them since.

The yacht was hit by a storm soon after leaving Cape Canaveral in America on February 9 and was severely damaged.