

Chapter 10 The Storm

A journey of 800 miles on a ship of this sort was not without danger. The China Seas are generally rough, particularly at this time of year. As the captain was being paid by the day, he would certainly have earned more money by going to Yokohama. But the journey to Shanghai was already dangerous enough.

During the last hours of the day, the *Tankadere* made its way through the narrow stretches of water to the north of Hong Kong.

'I hardly need tell you, Captain,' said Phileas Fogg, as the boat reached the open sea, 'how important it is to go as fast as possible.'

'Trust me,' answered John Bunsby. 'We are carrying as much sail as the wind will allow us.'

'It's your business, Captain, and not mine. I put my trust in you.'

Phileas Fogg, standing up straight like a sailor, fearlessly watched the rough waves. The young woman, seated near him, was looking, too, at the dark green water as it rushed by, thinking, no doubt, of her future. Above them floated the white sails, and the ship flew forward as a bird flies through the air.

Night came. The moon was in its first quarter, and clouds from the east had already covered a good part of the sky.

Fix was in the front part of the ship. He kept away from the others, knowing that Fogg disliked talking. Besides, he did not want to talk to the man from whom he had accepted so much kindness. He, too, was thinking of the future. He felt certain that

Fogg would not stop at Yokohama, but would immediately take the San Francisco boat for America, where he would be safe. Fogg's plan seemed to be a good one.

Instead of travelling directly from England to America, as most people in his position would have done, he preferred to sail round three-quarters of the earth to reach America more safely. There, having successfully escaped from the police, he would spend the money that he had stolen. But what would Fix do when they reached America? Would he give up the chase? No, a hundred times no! He would follow him until he caught him. It was his duty, and he would do his duty to the end. In any case, one fortunate thing had happened. Passepartout was no longer with his master, and after what Fix had said to him, it was important that master and servant should meet no more.

Phileas Fogg, too, was thinking about his servant, who had disappeared in such a strange way. Perhaps he had, after all, managed to sail on the *Carnatic*. Aouda also thought it possible. She was very sorry to lose the honest Frenchman to whom she owed her life. They might, though, find him at Yokohama, and it should not be difficult to discover whether the *Carnatic* had taken him there or not.

At about ten o'clock the wind grew stronger. At midnight Phileas Fogg and Aouda went down to the cabin. Fix was already there and asleep. The captain and his men stayed on deck all night.

By the next day, 8th November, the boat had gone more than a hundred miles. Its speed was between eight and nine miles an hour. There was plenty of wind in the sails, and at this rate the boat had every chance of achieving the distance in good time. The *Tankadere* kept close to the coast, and the sea was running in the right direction.

Mr Fogg and the young woman, neither of whom suffered from seasickness, enjoyed a good meal. Fix was asked to join them, and had to accept, but once again he was not happy about

the situation. For Fogg to pay for his journey and his meals seemed too much – it was not really quite fair. All the same he had his meal.

But at the end of the meal he thought it his duty to take Mr Fogg to one side and, although he did not like addressing a thief as 'sir', he said: 'Sir, you have been kind enough to offer me transport on this boat. I am not rich enough to pay as much as I would like, but let me—'

'We will not speak of that, sir,' answered Mr Fogg.

'But, please—'

'No, sir,' said Fogg. 'I count it as part of the cost of my journey.' Fix did not say another word for the rest of the day.

The ship sailed well. John Bunsby had high hopes. More than once he said to Mr Fogg that they would get to Shanghai in time. Mr Fogg simply answered that he depended on it. Thinking of the rich reward they would receive, the sailors worked hard, and by that evening they were 200 miles from Hong Kong.

Early in the morning the *Tankadere* was sailing between the island of Formosa and the coast of China. The sea was very rough and the movements of the ship were so violent that the travellers had some difficulty in standing up. When the sun rose, the wind blew more strongly and the sky was covered with black clouds.

The captain looked at the sky. He was feeling anxious.

'Do you mind if I tell you the truth?' he asked Fogg.

'Tell me everything,' answered Fogg.

'Well, we are going to have a storm.'

'Is it coming from the south or north?'

'From the south.'

'That is good news, then, since it will blow us in the right direction,' said Mr Fogg.

'If that is your opinion on the matter, I have nothing more to say,' answered the captain.

John Bunsby was right, and storms in the China Sea at this

time of the year are severe. All the sails except one were taken down. All the doors and other openings were tied shut so that no water could come in. They waited.

John Bunsby begged his passengers to go down below, but it would not have been pleasant to be shut up in the cabin, where there was little air. Mr Fogg and Aouda, and even Mr Fix, refused to leave the deck.

At about eight o'clock the storm broke. Rain poured down. Even with one sail the ship flew over the water. All that day waves poured over the sides. When evening came the wind changed direction and began to blow from the north-west. The waves struck the side of the ship and made it roll terribly. It was fortunate that the *Tankadere* was so solidly built.

As night came, the storm grew more violent. John Bunsby and his men were very worried. The captain went up to Mr Fogg and said: 'I think, sir, that we had better try to find a port.'

'I think so, too,' answered Phileas Fogg.

'But which one?'

'I only know of one.'

'And which is that?'

'Shanghai.'

It took the captain a few moments to understand what this answer meant. Then he said: 'Very well, sir, you are right. Let us go to Shanghai.'

And so the *Tankadere* kept on its way to the north, but more slowly. It was a terrible night. It was a wonder that the ship did not sink. More than once Mr Fogg had to rush to protect Aouda from the waves.

At last daylight came. The storm was still violent, but the wind changed to the south-east. This was better, and the ship flew forward again. Sometimes the coast of China could be seen, but there was not a ship in sight. The *Tankadere* was alone on the sea.

At midday the sea was a little calmer, and when the sun went

down the wind blew less violently. The travellers were now able to take a little food and to rest.

The night was fairly calm, so the captain put up more sails and the ship moved at a good speed. The next morning, the morning of the 11th, John Bunsby was able to say that they were not more than a hundred miles from Shanghai.

A hundred miles, and there was only this one day in which to sail the distance. If they were to catch the steamer for Yokohama, they must reach Shanghai that same evening. Without the storm, during which they had lost several hours, they would now have been only thirty miles away.

The wind blew much less strongly, and the sea grew calmer at the same time. All the sails were put up. At midday the *Tankadere* was not more than forty-five miles from Shanghai, but only six hours were left in which to catch the boat. All those on the ship feared that the time was too short. It was necessary to sail at the speed of nine miles an hour, but the wind was weakening all the time. The ship was light and fast though, and the sails picked up the little wind there was. So at six o'clock John Bunsby found himself about ten miles from the mouth of the Shanghai River – the town itself is twelve miles further up the river.

At seven o'clock they were three miles away. The captain swore – he was certainly going to lose his reward of two hundred pounds. He looked at Mr Fogg. Mr Fogg was perfectly calm, in spite of the fact that his whole fortune was in danger.

At that moment a long black chimney came into sight, with black smoke pouring out of it. It was the American steamer sailing from Shanghai at its usual time.

'Signal to them,' said Phileas Fogg.

A small cannon on deck was used to send signals during bad weather. John Bunsby filled it with gunpowder.

'Fire!' said Mr Fogg.

And the cannon roared.