

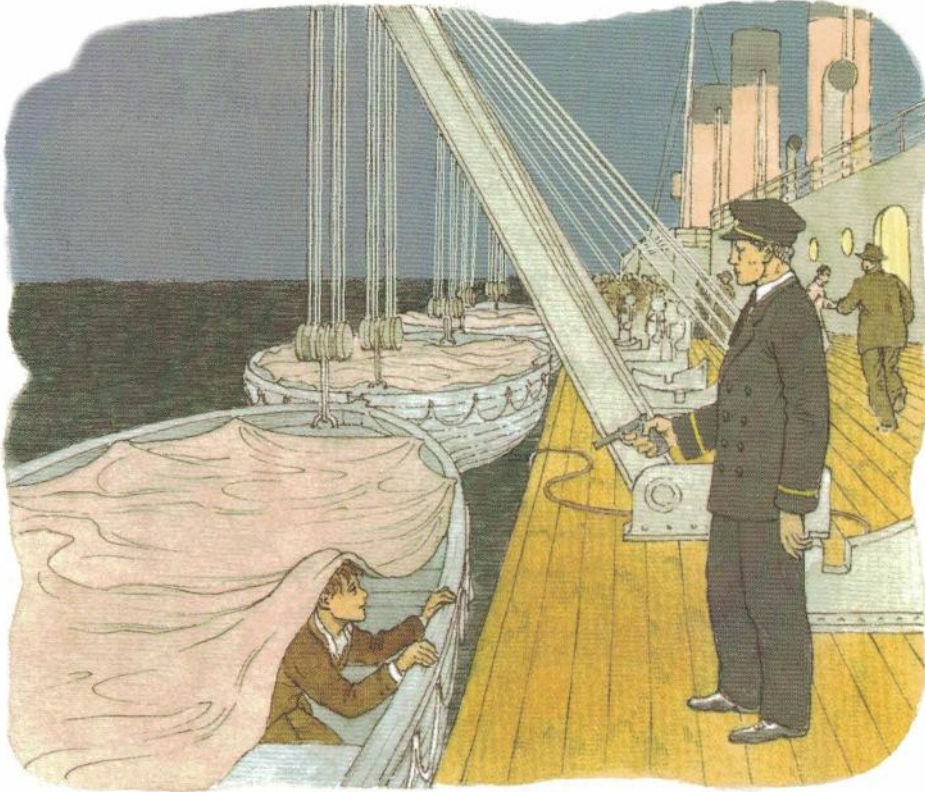
The Sinking Ship

*Suddenly, the front of the ship moved more quickly down into the water.
A big wave began to move up the boat deck.*

● "Well, boys, do your best!"

After one o'clock on the morning of April 15, the *Titanic's* front end was sinking fast. The band still played and the lights were on. But everyone knew what was happening. And there were few lifeboats left.

- A fourteen- or fifteen-year-old boy tried to hide on a lifeboat. The ship's officer pointed a gun at him. "Be a man," he said. The boy left the lifeboat.

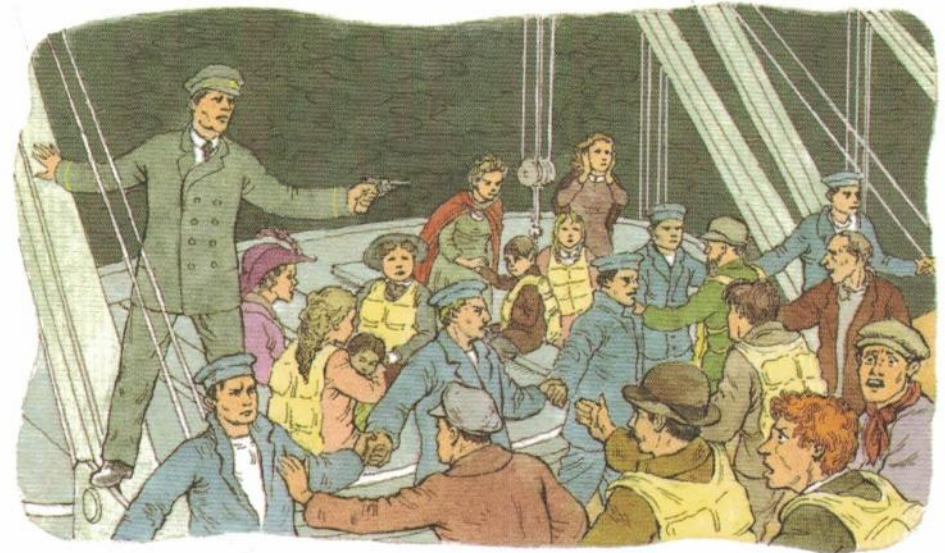


- When one lifeboat hit the water, its ropes were still joined to the ship. Before it could get away, another lifeboat began to come down on top of it. Luckily, a crewman cut the ropes with a knife in time.

● Was it true?

Many people believe that the third-class passengers were kept away from the boat decks. It is true that many of these passengers lost their lives.

Some of the crew did try to help the third-class passengers to the boats. The job wasn't easy. Passengers had to go up the ship's many decks. Many of them didn't speak English. They didn't understand the danger. Some refused to follow the crew and stayed on their deck.



Some doors were locked by the crew. Nobody really knows why. Were they following orders? Were they just afraid? But women and children from third class *were* sent to the boat deck. The most crowded lifeboat left at 1:25 A.M. with seventy people in it. Most of them were women and children from third class. But the men were still kept away from the boat deck. When they reached it at last, it was too late. Almost all the lifeboats were gone.

By two o'clock, the water was just below the boat deck. When the crew were preparing the next lifeboat, a crowd tried to climb into it. Second Officer Lightoller stopped them by waving his gun. The crew made a wall with their bodies while women and children got into the boat.

Now only two small lifeboats were left. Each boat could hold forty-seven people. They were still tied to a roof on the deck.

While the crew tried to free these last boats Captain Smith shouted to them, "Well, boys, do your best for the women and children!" Then he told them to save themselves.