

At approx. 20:50 on August 11th, 2024, captain, crew and self simultaneously noticed smoke coming from the engine room as we were preparing to haul back. The captain went down to the entrance of the engine room and saw orange flames and black acrid smoke. Captain Robbie the proceeded to make the MAYDAY call initially to the Princess Lauren and then to Channel 16. He determined that the fire was too great to fight and that we were to abandon ship. First Mate, Steve proceeded to rush down to the engine room to grab as many immersion suits as he could carry while I followed to grab my own personal suit. We both brought the suits and rallied the rest of the crew to the muster station right outside the wheelhouse where the EPIRB and Life Raft were.

After we all congregated at the muster station, we determined that the smoke was too thick at our current position to stay and decided to reposition to the back of the boat by the portside net reel. The captain grabbed the EPIRB and we detached the Life Raft and hoisted it down to the ship deck. As this was happening the vessel was still moving forward under power but the deck lights and all power inside the boat had turned off. The darkness and smoke made it difficult to travel and breathe but we managed to successfully bring the raft, suits and crew to the back of the boat. At the back of the boat, I and the crew proceeded to don the immersion suits and realized that we were missing a suit. The captain elected not to wear a suit and we determined to stay at the back of the boat as long as possible before deploying the life raft and entering the water. At this time, I activated my own personal PLB and helped the two newer members of the crew don their immersion suits.

After about 15 minutes since the initial MAYDAY call, we noticed the flames start to grow and engulf the entirety of the wheelhouse. The smoke grew in intensity and thickness and forced us all to the port side of the vessel to breathe. Once the smoke started to impair vision, we made the call to deploy and inflate the life raft on the deck of the boat. We had the captain enter the raft first (as well as CC the female crewmember due to her immersion suit being too big for her) and I instructed the rest of the crew to grab onto the painter line so no one would be separated once we entered the water. We pushed the inflated raft successfully down the trawl ramp and disconnected the painter line from the vessel. I and the crew proceeded to slide down the ramp and we all entered the water.

I entered the life raft next and successfully climbed in while the captain was opening and examining the survival gear. The rest of the crew climbed into the 6-person life raft and we determined that everyone was safe and uninjured. At this point the captain asked for the paddles to ensure that we could avoid the vessel in case it was to turn back around in our direction. He, Steve, and Rich were positioned by the door with paddles, while Jake, CC and I were positioned by the back wall of the life raft. We ensured that the EPIRB was on and I instructed the captain to place it in the water and attach it to the life raft using the string that came with it. My PLB was activated the entire time and I made sure to keep it on hand and emitting. After around 40 minutes we began to see the Coast Guard Plane, the coast guard helicopter as well as 3 ships on the horizon heading in our direction, a few minutes later the Princess Lauren was on site.

After captain Robbie determined that their vessel did not have the means to safely conduct a rescue, we instructed the crew of the Princess Lauren to give our raft space. The wind began picking up at this point and the ship came dangerously close to capsizing the raft. The vessel then backed off and a few minutes later the Coast Guard Cutter arrived. The captain was picked up first, followed by me and CC. The transfer from the life raft to the small rescue vessel was quick and easy. We then road to the larger vessel and could still see the THREE GIRLS burning on the horizon in the distance. The transfer from the smaller

rescue vessel to the cutter was a bit more treacherous as the seas began to pick up significantly but there were no injuries and I climbed the ladder onto the cutter without incident.

We were instructed inside the USCGC William Chadwick at 23:40 and were given a change of clothes and socks, as well as food and coffee. We explained the situation to the XO on board and were told that we would dock in Portland in 12 hours. I instructed the officers to inform my provider that I was safe and where we would be docking. In 12 hours, Danielle Kane of Fathom Resources picked me up and drove me back to my apartment in Boston.