

17a

Well, you're in a nice fix. There's nothing we can do about it now.

But why didn't you tell me? We could have called her bluff?

What do you mean?

Oh, it's too late now. You should have told me when I first came into the cabin.

All I want her to do is to keep me out of it. If she doesn't mention my name. I'll give her twenty thousand dollars.

You may have to go a little stronger.

Well, we'll see. Let's go.

(Dissolve)

(Paulette's in the sitting room reading. A knock at the door makes her turn.)

Ogden: It's all right. It's me.

Paulette goes and cautiously opens the door.

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(Enter H and O)

(H fairly cheerfully): Good afternoon. Lovely weather we're having.

O: Better close those portholes. It's quite rough outside.

H: Well, I understand you're going to be with us.

P: Yes.

H: Yes. When are you going to America?

P: America?

O: Well, let's get to business.

H: Now wait a minute, O.

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H: (talking to P) You know he is good. You mustn't mind him. He's a little ??

P: No wonder, after what ?? he's been through.

That's the spirit. (turning to O) I told you P was not as bad as you think.

I don't blame him for thinking me bad.

No that's what I call being broad-minded. I told you she'd listen to reason.

Of course. I'll do anything to cooperate.

What did I tell you? Now, listen, honey. This whole thing has been misunderstood. Ogden has an idea that you wan to blackmail him.

I have no intention.

That's what I told him.

All I want to do is to get to America.

Yes, yes, but that's going to be difficult.

So far we've gotten away with it.

Yes, but eventually you're bound to be found out.

I don't see why. One day is like another.

Oh, you haven't a chance. That's what we want to talk to you about. At Yokohama, we are getting off and taking another boat.

P (concerned): You are?

H (smugly triumphant): Yes. Now we want to do the right thing. We don't want to leave you stranded on this boat. We want to help you and see that you get back to Shanghai.

But I want to go to America.

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Well, we can do that, too. We'll give you a little money and then you can pay your own fare to America.

That's no use.

I'd be found out.

Even so, if we give you a sufficient amount of money, you wouldn't. Wouldn't it be worthwhile?

But I don't want money. I want to get away from Shanghai.

Supposing we give you five let's say.

H: Ten thousand dollars. You wouldn't care if you ever saw America, would you?

P: Not for fifty thousand dollars.

Og: How much do you want?

P: I don't want your money.

Og: A hundred thousand dollars.

H: Go easy. Go easy.

P: I want nothing. I am not a blackmailer.

Og: Then what are you?

I am a lady.

H (to P) Don't lose your temper.

P: I am perfectly calm. I am determined to go to America and nothing will stop me.

H: I am afraid you're mistaken. We are taking another boat at Yokohama.

P: That's right. So we are.

H: It's getting a little close in here.

Og: What do you mean "we?"

P: You don't think you are going to rid of me as easily as that?

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P: Where you go, I go.

Og: In Yokohama, I'll turn you over to the police.

P: Before you do, I'll turn you over to the captain and charge you with assault and kidnapping.

H: It's getting awful close in here.

If you leave this boat, I'll go with you.

You contemptible little wench. I've a good mind to...

H: Ogden! Don't get excited.

(H. separates O and P. As he holds them apart he leaves)

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and rushes to the porthole. Paulette see this and goes to H and holds his head.)

P: If you were only calm and saw the situation in the proper light, you would have no cause to worry. I have no intention of blackmailing you. I am determined to go to America, and there is no reason to be found out. If you just be reasonable, nothing will come of it. I promise, the moment we land, you will never hear of me again.

Og: You don't expect to land here without being found out?

P: And if I am, I promise I'll not involve you.

Og: A lot your promise is worth.

P: You'll have to take my word for it.

(H has recovered himself and goes to Ogden)

H: You'll have to excuse me. (He exits.)

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Og: I shall also have to lie down. (He gets up and staggers to the bedroom.)

Dissolve

Clark: Well, so far, so good. What on earth she'll do when we arrive, I don't know.

Og: The whole thing is like a nightmare.

Harry's the only one that's enjoying it. He's never out of her cabin.

He's far too familiar with her.

As a matter of fact, I think she captivated him.

She's done something. He hasn't touched a drink for the last three days.

Have you talked to her much?

Hardly a word since we left Yokohama.

H: Hallo, Ogden! Clark. Are you going in for a swim? The sun will be down soon.

Clark: You're getting very energetic lately.

I've taken off seven pounds. It's that girl that's done it.

What are you training for?

You'd be surprised. (He drops a parcel which reveals silken thread)

Clark: What's that?

Silken thread for the girl. Poor kid. She's got to do something shut in that cabin all day.

You're developing a compassion for her.

Why not make the best of a bad job.

It wouldn't be a bad idea, Odgen, if you make up to her a little bit. When you know her, she's not a bad sort.

So she has [xxx]

Well, you can catch more flies with honey than you can with poison.

I don't want to catch anything.

After all the poor kid is alone all day. It wouldn't be a bad idea if you spoke to her once in a while.

What do you want me to talk to her about?

Nothing. Yet, it might be a good idea to make a friend of her, instead of an enemy.

Make a friend of a blackmailer?

She isn't out to blackmail.

You don't think so, after what's happened?

I believe her story. She wants to get to America, that's all.

And then what?

Nothing. She told me you will never hear of her again.

You're putting up a good defense of the girl.

I admire her.

H: I think she has a lot of courage, staying in that cabin and facing you every evening.

I've done nothing. I've never spoken to the girl.

That's just it. A little kindness would go a long way, especially if she's caught. If you have been nice to her, she might not involve you.

C: There's a good deal in what H says.

What do expect me to do, make love to her?

No, but she's in that cabin dining every evening alone. Why not sit down with her some evening and find out what she has on her mind.

Dissolve

(P is ready to dine alone. Og enters.)

Og: Good evening.

Oh, good evening.

Do you mind if I dine here this evening?

No, sir. I can go in the other room.

It isn't necessary. We can dine together.

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P: What meaning?

Nothing, why?

Oh, I thought that perhaps you wanted to... Well, I don't know.

~~{xxx}~~

I suppose I represent trouble to you.

I know I do to you.

O: No. I gave up trying to persuade you to do anything at all. My hope is that you get away with it.

P: You may as well make the best of a bad bargain.

O: What do you intend to do when you arrive in America.

P: Harvey tells me that the boat docks in San Francisco for a few days. The immigration officers are not on checking all the time.

O: You mean you'll get off the boat when the coast is clear?

P: Yes.

That's not as easy as you think.

I know it isn't, but I shall try.

And if you fail?

I don't intend to fail.

O: Hudson, bring me the same. I am dining up here. (Turning to P) unless, of course, you want to be alone?

It's immaterial.

I suppose you naturally bear me a certain amount of malice?

When you've seen the amount of unnecessary suffering in the world, as I have, you loose faith in the future.

It wouldn't do for all of us to think as you do.

Oh, yes, but I'm wondering what I can wear.

O is taking a world trip. He is the son of a wealthy capitalist. His father is a pious, religious type, like John D. Rockefeller.

O has had a scandal. A breach of promise suit brought against him by his [xxx]. That is why he is taking a world voyage. It is to appease his father and to avoid a scandal. He is one of the partner's of his father's firm.

On the trip are his friends H. and C.

Clark is an old friend of his father and also a partner of the firm.

On arriving in Shanghai, O has to attend a Rotary Club dinner. But he would sooner go with H, his friend, and do the town.

He arranges with H to meet him after the dinner.

June 10th, 64

Ogden

So you are a virgin?

Girl

What's that?

Ogden (hesitates)

Oh, a dubious enterprise. Something new, that's not secondhand, is its value.

Some secondhand goods are better than new ones, like a new car. It needs mileage.

Ogden

That friend of yours has a roving eye.

Girl

She is just looking for security. That's all.

Harvey

That's what I dislike about the poor. They have no taste.

Harvey (sighs)

Time marches on.

Ogden

No. It creeps.

Dissolve to Ogden Reed suite

There is a knock at the door.

Come in.

Wireless, sir.

O takes it and tears it open and reads. There is another knock at the door.

O: Who is it?

Ogden

Oh, Clark. Come in. Well, the case has been dropped.

(C sympathetically taking Ogden by the hand.)

C: Congratulations, old man.

O: Why?

Well, don't you think it's all for the best?

For the best interest of Ogden Reed and Company.

Come now. You wouldn't want to go against your father's wishes. We must all at times make sacrifices.

Sacrifices for what? To protect the dignity and the business name of Ogden Reed.

H: Hello, P. It looks as though it's going to be rough.

P: Yes, there's a change in the weather.

O: Let's get to business.

H: Don't be in such a hurry. (To P.) You mustn't mind O. He's nervous and irritable. That's just his way, but he doesn't mean it.

P: I don't blame him. In his position, I'd be the same way.

H: There you are, you see. Paulette's willing to cooperate. Now the trouble with both of you is there's been a misunderstanding. You've both been excited and saying things you never meant. Now, from what I know of you, if I'm any judge of character, you're mostly good and want to do what's right, and we want to help you. (to O:) am I right?

O: Yes, yes.

H: Now, we're getting off the boat at Yokohama.

P: Yokohama?

H: Yes, we are staying over and taking the next boat, but we want to help you out now. If you'll get off at Yokohama without any scandal, we'll give you five - ten thousand dollars.

P: But I'd be arrested there and sent back to Shanghai.

H: Well, if you have \$10,000, what do you care?

P: But that isn't enough. I want to go to America.

O: I told you it isn't enough.

H: How much do you want?

P: I don't want money.

H: We'll give you twenty-five thousand dollars.

P: I don't want your money. I want to go to America

That's all a bluff. You're a little crook.

H: Now, don't lose your temper.

O: Lose my temper? At Yokohama, I'll see you go to jail for this.

P: Then you'll go with me. (H gradually being affected by sea sickness)

H: It's getting close in here.

(O is also affected. He puts his hand to his head and lies on the sofa.)

H: Now let's be reasonable about this. You know we could leave you flat on the boat and get off at Yokohama without giving you anything.

P: If you did, then it'd be an awful scandal.

H: We've done nothing. You came of your own volition.

O: You deliberately hid yourself in my cabin and lied to blackmail me.

H: Now don't get excited.

P: You kidnapped me and attacked me.

O: You have a witness to your name?

P: Oh, yes. I have the steward that brought the purse.