

Paulette's home is on the second floor of an apartment, on the fringe of the Chinese section of Shanghai. Below in the street can be heard the cries of Chinese street vendors, the knick knocking of bamboo boxes and the metallic jinglings and noises characteristic of the Chinese quarter. Occasionally, Chinese, Arabic and European music, played on gramophones can be heard, when the window is open. The chaos of noises become too much for Paulette and she has to close the window.

Although it is an ordinary sitting room of the humble type, built along English lines, yet it has a Russian atmosphere.

There is an elaborate coffee urn and other Russian knick knacks around the room, remembrances saved from the Russian revolution. At the back is a large open window and a door leading out a large balcony. By the window is a table, a working bench where Peter's father works. On the right of same, is a door leading out to the landing that leads to the street.

Peter: Oh, Daddy, how can you stand that awful din. (she closes the window)

Father: Good morning, sweetheart.

Peter: Good morning, darling. (she cups his face in her hands and kisses him)

then scrutinizes him anxiously.)

Peter: Oh, Daddy, your eyes look so strained and tired. I wish you wouldn't work so hard.

F: They bother me a little. I must go to an oculist as soon as I get rich.

P: I wish you'd go now.

F: No, no. You need that for a rainy day. You never can tell what may happen here. A change of government, new taxes, revolution, confiscation—then we'll find ourselves on the street again.

P: Oh, Daddy, you're a calamity [xxx]

F: It happened once. We don't want to happen again. However, one day you may be able to leave Shanghai and then you'll need all your money to pay your fare.

P: I shall never leave Shanghai without you.

That will be along time to come. Besides, I'm getting old now. I'd be an encumbrance and be in your way. You deserve all the freedom you can get. God knows you can't get it here.