

# PROMENADE DECK.

by Isabel Ross

## ELEVENTH INSTALMENT

The girl had passed from frenzy to maudlin collapse. She was shivering as her protector dragged her firmly through the door. Down the companionway and along the corridors they staggered, the older woman moving with intent and decisive steps. At last they reached Joan's cabin and the girl flopped on her bed. Miss Mudge bent down and drew off her slippers and stockings. She made her sit up while she pulled her flowered chiffon frock over her head. Blushing vaguely when she saw how little she wore, she gingerly drew off the scrap of lace that seemed to be all of her under-clothing. How lovely she was! Miss Mudge went into her wardrobe and found a nightdress—of silk so soft that she could crush it in one hand. It was fragrant and sweet as acacia blossom.

"Comfy now?" she asked. Joan's reply was an incoherent whisper.

Miss Mudge kissed her and tucked her up, dimly touched by her helpless state. Then she found her way to her own bed in the darkness, for she could not bear the light just then. Her numbness was slowly passing and she was coming out of a fog, aware at last that something terrible had happened to her in the captain's quarters. In a full blaze of consciousness, she buried her face in her hands, and sobbed. Miss Foster, wild and drunk and beautiful, had told the truth and stripped her to shreds, right down to the awful foundation of her cotton nightgown and her crimped fringe. Miss Mudge was seeing things as they were, and she felt alone and

afraid, in a vast hall that stretched to infinity, a hall lined with flashing mirrors that reflected over and over again the cheapness of all her belongings. A week ago she had felt so chic. And the kiss from Mr. Charlton—an act of pity! That had been cheap, too. Her face was drained of life. For hours she lay on her bed without moving.

The cocktail party went on, with the guests making feverish efforts to cover up the disappearance of Miss Mudge and Joan. Only Dick went out, after catching the eye of the captain. Angela shook herself clear of the horror she had gone through.

Captain Baring took out his violin and settled it tenderly under his chin. He played for them, softly, Greig and Bach. Angela sat entranced—not so much by the music as by the strange man who spent lonely night on the bridge and could wring such feeling from his violin. When he had finished, he was still remote, as if his playing was a form of self-indulgence that he did not care to share with others. He listened to their compliments absent-mindedly and left them without a word.

Miss Mudge left the Marenia at San Francisco. She was pale and wore her glasses. Her fringe was straight and she had given her Spanish shawl to her stewardess. All of her vanities had been laid aside, for her mind worked clearly now. After her tips had been paid, she had eight dollars and her railway ticket to Ohonto. That was that! She had traveled forty thousand miles but had failed to see the world. She had spent her life's savings and would have to begin all over again. Another twenty years with Agatha before it was time for them to retire on their pensions. Her dull life lay over her like a shade. Bravely she stepped down the gangplank, knowing that glamour was only an empty word. She was sure at last that there was only one sphere in which she could move. Hereafter she would keep her wings clipped to her surroundings, and her thoughts close to the ground.

She had avoided Dick since the cocktail party. He had sent her a note, kind and detached, telling her that she must forget every word Miss Foster had said. It was now among her souvenirs—a red balloon, a swizzle-stick, a cheap little Tanagra from Athens, a small carved god, her Jordan water, some gala favours, her autographed menus, a snapshot of him at Kandy. That was all. It was good-bye. The people with whom she had chatted on deck and at table, exchanging addresses and promising lifelong friendship, had been too

busy with their own affairs to notice her undistinguished departure. There were two exceptions. Mrs. Wynant had been cordial, inviting her to visit her home in England, and Miss Arundel had kissed her warmly, promising to send her some wedding cake. Miss Mudge fluttered along the pier. She had to get through the customs, but pain was fogging her vision, and the dragging weight deep in her inside, was getting worse each minute. For twenty years she had looked forward to her trip around the world. Now it was over, and she had nothing. She stumbled against a trunk and wiped the tears from her eyes.

It was too late for her to see that Dick was watching her as she wandered with uncertain steps among the packing cases on the warf. His glance was kind, but he was thinking that it was far, far better for Miss Mudge to be stepping back into her lustreless frame at Ohonto, Wisconsin. He had avoided Miss Mudge since the cocktail party, but



Captain Baring took out his violin and settled it under his chin.

only because she seemed to be keeping deliberately out of his way, and he had taken his cue from her. There was nothing he could say to her, nothing at all.

The orchestra was playing. It's languid notes came drifting up from the ballroom. Patty's hand stole through Jimmy's arm. He squeezed it hard.

"Good kid" he whispered, and kissed the tip of her ear.

Patty sighed. "I love the swish of the sea in my ears. Life will seem so quiet, Johnny, when we're on land again.

"Life is just opening up for Patty," said Angela, watching her affectionately.

"I hope there's something in Johnny, for Patty is a fine girl," Macduff declared.

"I think there is, Macduff. You're a little hard on the young." "Intolerable puppies, all cheek and ignorance!"

Angela laughed. "I've got rather fond of those two. I shall always wonder about them. When you're thrown together on a trip like this, and share the sort of things that we have shared, you get more attached to people than you would in thirty years at home."

"I wonder what's happened to the Langford woman," said Macduff, irrelevantly.

"She's probably not with Rumford by now, but she did all the damage she could while she was on the boat. She comes from New York, doesn't she. You may run into her some time."

"Angela," Macduff bent over, "would you ever want to live in New York?"

"Never."

Dick Charlton took off his jacket and put on his dressing-gown, he lighted his pipe and sat down at his desk to read. A knock at the door. He opened it wide, and found Joan standing outside, the strap of her satin frock slipping down over her arm, and her wild green eyes ablaze with light. Dick grew pale but controlled himself. He couldn't forget what this devilish girl had done to Miss Mudge.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"I want to speak to you, Dick. I want to tell you I'm sorry. I swear I didn't mean to hurt her—or you. I swear I didn't."

"Joan, I hope never to see you again as long as I live," said Dick, in a voice that stung like a lash.

"Oh, oh, Dick, you can't mean it! You can't have forgotten our night together."

"I've forgotten everything except

your unkindness."

The door moved in her face.

"No, no, Dick, don't do that."

She was looking at the closed door. He had meant it, then. It was all over with Dick, who had seemed for a brief space to find her desirable. She knocked at the door again. There was no response. She would go to the bar.

An hour later Joan was on her way to the top deck again, with the vague idea of having a plunge to cool herself off. That idiot Macduff was standing at the top, staring down at her. Now would be as good an occasion as any to tell him what she thought of him. There were times when Joan burned to express her true opinion of some of her fellow passengers and here was a good chance.

"Looking for Mrs. Wynant?" she enquired, reeling up against him.

He pushed her off. "No," he said.

"That's funny." She laughed on a piercing note. Macduff regarded her with disgust.

"I don't like your looks," said Joan, "and I don't like the way you're staring at me now. Who do you think you are anyway. You're scarcely human."

She prodded him in the ribs. Macduff did not move.

"But I like the way you can drink." She drew confidential. "Let's have a brandy together. Come to my room."

"No, thanks."

"All right, big boy. Joan's going to have a swim."

She made a gamine gesture and followed a twisting course to the pool. Macduff watched her, wondering if she weren't tipsy enough to drown. What an appalling girl! Even before she had reached the door she stooped down, caught her frock at the hem and began to pull it over her head. He could see her long, slim legs. The pool was dark, except for the green light in the far corner. Her dress came off and was flung to the floor; then she spread her arms for a dive. He caught a glimpse of her gleaming back in the second before she jumped. He waited for the splash, hoping that it would sober her up. It was his duty to see that she didn't drown.

But no splash came. Only a dull crash that sickened Macduff and hurried his footsteps through the door that Joan had entered. God in Heaven, the tank was drained! For a moment he shut his eyes, then leaned over the edge to look. The green light spread its sickly suffusion, and there, on the tiles, lay Joan. She was naked except for beads, garters, stockings and sandals. One of the stockings was half way down. Her arms were spread like wings. Her face he could not see. It was crushed on the tiles. Slowly he realized that the girl must be dead. Through a mist he saw her dress lying on the floor beside him, flame red, still warm from her body. There was no other trace of her, not a scrap

ing. No one could know that he was standing here alone, guarding a lifeless form. He must do something about it. He must start the horrible chain of machinery moving. Two girls dead across his path! Jenny in the China Sea and the click of her heel on his wall, Joan with her brains dashed out before his eyes. He had sworn to avoid all human contact, yet fate had caught him twice in the orbit of death. Was it punishment for vowing that he would travel alone and apart? Were people not intended to avoid one another and the burden of mutual care? Had he been ducking life and had Angela touched his sensibilities at last? Was there something else that one must heed besides the inviolability of a glass of whiskey? Macduff's strong Highland sense of superstition was aroused. Sweat stood on his brow. Thoughts flowed through his mind in molten masses. The numbness of forty years was wearing off, and each nerve was a red-hot needle, coming to life and pricking his flesh. But the moments were flying.

(CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE)

## Catawba Negative Defeats Univ. Of Dayton Debaters

(From The Pioneer)

The negative debating team of Catawba College, composed of Harold Wolfinger and Edward Stull defeated the affirmative team of the University of Dayton on Friday night, March 13, in a highly interesting debate in the recital hall of the music building by the decision of three judges.

The debate started at eight o'clock before a fair-sized group of college students and faculty members. Herbert L. Stoolman, chairman of the debate, announced that the query was, "Resolved: That congress should be authorized by a two-thirds majority to override a decision of the supreme court declaring an act of congress unconstitutional," and then presented the respective speakers.

Both sides presented convincing arguments, but the Catawba team used a bit of strategy that caught the Dayton team unprepared and won the debate for them. All four participants presented smashing rebuttals but in this department the Catawba boys again excelled. Three prominent citizens of Salisbury, Rev. G. Fitz, Mr. Carl K. Ramsey, and Mr. Clifford Beck, acting as judges, gave the Catawba team the decision by a wide margin. This debate concluded the negative side's schedule for this season.

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## Juniors Plan Minstrel On 29th

(From The Pioneer)

The committees for the colossal Minstrel Show to be presented by the Junior Class in the Catawba auditorium on March 29 have been appointed by the class president. The minstrel will include leading performers and "talente extraordinaire" of Catawba and Salisbury. Besides the four end men, Gehring, Caldwell, Carolus, and Carpenter, the blackface chorus will include Dr. Dearborn, Vincent Haag, Paul Wright, Richard Myers, and Hartman Keener with "Al" Shenberger as interlocutor. The purpose of the class is to make money with which to present the finest Junior-Senior Banquet that has ever been held. Herbert Stoolman has been appointed General Director and the General Committee is made up of Messrs. Gehring, Carolus, Shenberger, and Stoolman. In his interview with the press, Mr. Carolus said, "The Minstrel will certainly be fine; we want your support. And the price will be reasonable."

## Glee Club Takes 43 On Northern Trip

(From The Pioneer)

With the usual excitement of a last minute rush the Glee Club members were finally assembled together to leave on their northern trip. The bus left the campus at eight o'clock on Saturday morning, March 14. They made their first stop at Harrisonburg, Virginia, where they sang on Saturday evening. The trip came as a reward for the long practices which the Glee Club members had attended. Those fortunate enough to be able to go on the trip were: Eleanor Barber, Edna Bowman, Genevieve Boysworth, Mrs. Carbaugh, Annie Marie Chandler, Leonie Fowler, Dorothy Gordon, DeLette Honeycutt, Ruth Krider, Margaret Kirk, Mildred Lloyd, Daisy Lytle, Elizabeth Miller, Amanda Myers, Ethel Myers, Alta Ruth Martin, Mary K. Plyler, Mary K. Porter, Cora Lee Propst, Naomi Rendleman, Rebecca Safrit, Eleanor Smith, Edith Smith, Camille Templeton, Margaret Warlick, Marguerite Woodson, Virginia Wyand, Carlton Brodbeck, Keith Borland, Albert Carpenter, Donald Cunningham, Dr. Dearborn, John Fox, Leon Godshaw, Ralph Frantz, Vincent Haag, Albert Henshaw, Emerson Keener, Laurence Leonard, Richard Myers, David Schneley, Carl Tolbert, and Patrick Wiley.

A promising student should be given sufficient funds to enable him to complete his higher education. . . . "This trying to earn a living" at the same time results only in distraction." President James Bryant Conant of Harvard blasts an ancient theory.

"The chance is exceedingly remote." Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of the Howard Observatory, doesn't believe the newly-discovered "Delporte Object," smallest (one-third mile in diameter) of the heavenly bodies, will ever collide with the earth.

## Former Student Dies

(From The Pioneer)

It was with deep regret that the students and faculty of Catawba College learned of the death of Mrs. Harry Boyde, who before her marriage four weeks ago, was Miss Frances Dyer. She had been ill with pneumonia in the Greensboro hospital and passed away Thursday night, March 12. Miss Dyer graduated from Catawba College in 1935 and was one of the outstanding members of the class. The memory of her ever ready smile and constant cheerfulness will remain in the thoughts of all who knew her, and the students of the college offer their heartfelt sympathy to Frances' parents and husband.

"The 'new social order' is a myth." Dr. James S. Thomas, Clarkson College president, warns against the intelligensia.

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The ship was heaving gently, rocking her white body. of underwear. She had died as recklessly as she had lived.

The ship was heaving gently, rocking her white body. On every deck people were packing for land-

## Lady's Painful Trouble Helped By Cardui

Why do so many women take Cardui for the relief of functional pains at monthly times? The answer is that they want results such as Mrs. Herbert W. Hunt, of Halleville, Texas, describes. She writes: "My health wasn't good. I suffered from cramping. My pain would be so intense it would nauseate me. I would just drag around, so sluggish and 'do-less.' My mother decided to give me Cardui. I began to mend. That tired, sluggish feeling was gone and the pains disappeared. I can't praise Cardui too highly because I know it helped me." . . . If Cardui does not help YOU, consult a physician.

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