

PROMENADE DECK

by Ishbel Ross

NINTH INSTALLMENT

"I've been wondering about you this morning, Jenny. I came back to your door last night, but your room was quiet and the lights were on. I thought everything must be all right," said Angela.

"Perhaps it is," said Jenny, shyly. "I don't know. Peter's..."

"Jenny darling, do sit down and drink some tea with me. Have you had your breakfast yet?" Angela rang the bell for her stewardess. "Breakfast?" repeated Jenny, aimlessly.

"Yes, breakfast. You look exhausted. Did you sleep at all?"

"All night, like a dog. I think I must have fainted when I found Peter wasn't there. I scarcely remember the night at all. Wouldn't it be funny, Angela, if I never saw you again?"

"Don't talk rot. You're shivering. Throw that dressing-gown over your shoulders."

"Jenny darling" said Angela, frowning swiftly to the point, "I've some bad news for you."

Jenny rtracted her head, wary of the coming of a blow.

"Your husband's left the boat with Mrs. Langford."

"Peter—oh no!" Jenny's voice was a cry of pain. "Angela, there isn't any doubt in your mind."

"Mr. Charlton thinks they caught the boat to Singapore yesterday."

"While we were watching the Polish dancers! But his things—how did he get them off?"

"He came back and packed, and he and Mrs. Langford got a steward to take off their bags."

Jenny was staring at the floor. You know I'm not his wife."

Angela accepted her announcement with no change of expression.

"In fact, I left my husband and our months-old baby to run away with Peter."

"Your baby? Oh, Jenny darling!" Angela's voice halted in mid-stream. So this was the story. She looked pityingly at the girl on the bed. "You must have loved him very much."

"I did. I do. But, you see one must pay for a thing like that"

"How long have you been with him altogether?"

"About ten weeks. Such a little time. I thought it would last for years. I thought it would last forever. But ten weeks! Funny, isn't it? M'm repeating history. My mother did exactly the same thing when I was a little girl."

"But didn't you feel that anything was wrong, Jenny?"

"I saw him go into her stateroom the other day, but I closed my eyes to reality. I couldn't believe it. There was no change in his manner."

She lapsed into silence again. Angela could see her fingers twisting and untwisting, and the flow of thoughts over her face.

"Angela, I want to be left to myself," said Jenny, suddenly.

"Of course, my dear child, but I shall come back, and if there is anything I can do—" she bent down and kissed her forehead.

"You're very kind. There's nothing that anybody can do."

Angela went upstairs, to find that the boat was seething with gossip. She decided to go down to Jenny's suite again and see if she were asleep. No, she was lying exactly as she had left her. When the door opened she threw an eager glance toward it, but her face clouded as soon as she saw that it was only Angela.

"Jenny, are you all right?"

"Yes." She spoke in the faded voice of the very ill.

"Have you slept?"

Smiling feebly, she shook her head.

"You'll send for me if there is anything I can do, won't you?"

"Rather!" She smiled piteously at Angela—a lost face, drowning in its own bewilderment.

The last trace of Peter's occupancy—a few odds and ends of paper—had disappeared. A white and blue envelope lay on the table. It was a message from him. The letters danced before her eyes—foolish, jumbled letters, all capitals and no punctuation. It had come in dots and dashes direct from her lover on his way to Singapore.

On my way to Singapore. Writing at once to explain everything and arrange financial matters.

Jenny looked in the flowered bag that had gone with her to the wats of Bangkok. Opening her purse, she found that she had five pounds ten shillings in the world.

Pattering down the adjoining alley, the steward, too old for any duty at sea but that of night watchman, arrived at Jenny's stateroom, which was next to Macduff's. He saw a ribbon of light under her door and assumed that she was still awake. He knocked and a faint voice answered, "Come in."

"Sorry to disturb you, madam. I have orders to close the deadlight. Captain's orders, madam."

"Leave it as it is now, steward," she said. "I shall ring for you later. My head is splitting and I must have air."

Harry stood at the door, wondering what he should do. "It's captain's orders, madam," he repeated. "It's a bad night and the water will come in."

Jenny's voice was imperative; "Leave it to me. I shall ring in a little while."

The old man went grunting off. He had plenty of others to attend to, and he supposed the lady knew what she was about. Senseless of her, though. He shuffled down the next alley; no doubt she would ring. Soon he had forgotten her existence.

The storm was now at its peak. Jenny could see the green-black mountains racing past with squirming foam-crest. In her ears were thundering cries of anguish—the requiem of the sea. She dashed across the cabin and slapped her hands in aimless frenzy against the panel. "He couldn't, he couldn't, he couldn't!" she screamed, but her voice was a whisper in the mad crescendo of the gale. She covered her eyes with her arm. She must be going mad. But the water would wash the fever from her brain, would lap her in peace and security.

She reached the porthole, was standing below it. She stretched up her arms and the tips of her fingers touched the rim, finding it cold and wet. Her ears were filled with the roar of the sea. Nothing must stop her now. At last she worked her slender shoulders through the rim of the porthole. Turning her head, she saw that the deadlights must all be down, for the ship was as dark as a whale. She was working with frenzy now, pushing her slim body farther and farther out. The waves dashed into her face, stinging her to a sharp knowledge that she was close to death, beyond aid and love. Her only fear was that they might push her back. She dreaded the moment of quiet, the lull between the waves, when her thoughts washed back to the life she was leaving. One arm reached into the night and the water raced through her fingers. It was black and icy-cold. The water was a void from which one plunged into light. Slowly she wormed her way through the black circle—her breasts, and now her waist. If only her hips would slip through the porthole! Jenny's head swooped down toward the water. A thousand echoes thundered in her ears and her thoughts were splintered to fragments. Her baby would never know her—better that she would die. Peter would never love her—better that she should...

With one last tug she pulled herself clear. There was a tiny splash. A huge wave roared along the side of the ship and, finding an open porthole, rushed in. Two peach

slippers rode like boats for a split second and then, as the water eddied with the lurching of the Marenia, were stranded limply in a corner. Macduff, restless in the adjoining cabin, heard a metallic click during a moment's lull, the crash of a slipper heel against the partition.

Angela found a letter from Lovat waiting for her at Peking.

My dear Angela (he wrote): Many things have happened since you left, and I'm afraid I'm going to hurt you a great deal with what I have to say. You must have realized for ages that things could not continue the way they have been between us. I had an idea, when you started off on this trip, that the situation might right itself, but I've fallen in love, and not a passing fancy this time.

I shall furnish evidence when you return, if you feel you want to divorce me, Angela, and of course, I shall make it all as easy as possible. I want you to believe that our love, while it lasted, was something separate, apart and wonderful; that I have never known a woman I admire as much as you. But I'm afraid I should continue to hurt you, and things would only get worse, as you must realize. I could not bear your reproachful eyes at Cairo, although you said so little. Wouldn't it be better if we went our separate ways? I have already left your home and am living at my club. Jock is with me, but I shall return him as soon as you get back. Forgive me, Angela, and I hope we shall always be the best of friends.

Yours,
Lovat.

P. S.— Would you please get me a very fine jade bracelet in Chica? The Kitten wants one.

The letter dropped from Angela's hand and she started after it as it fell. She had feared it all along. Of course, she would let him have his divorce, though it would be beastly—all of it! The tears went sliding down Angela's cheeks. She had not thought that he would slip completely out of her life as soon as she turned her back. There would be no use opposing him now, and why try to hold him when he had already passed from her life?

She took out her writing things and sat down to reply to his letter. Darling Lovat:

I waited and waited for a letter, and then when I got to Peking I learned that there wasn't anything more to look forward to. Of course, you shall have your divorce. I shouldn't dream of standing in your way. Make any arrangements you like and as soon as I get back I shall talk things over with you. I hope you're sure you love the girl, Lovat. I'm going out to look for the bracelet tonight. It will be my wedding gift to your new bride, and I hope you will both be happy. I blame myself for marrying you, ever; but I love you still, and always shall, I'm afraid.

Angela.

Macduff might go with her on her quest. He would have no idea that she was buying a gift for her successor, and was certainly obtuse enough not to know that she was hurt. Angela changed into her grayest gown, like Jenny with her flowered frock at Bangkok. At last she went down to the lounge and found Macduff with whiskey before him.

"I'm going on an expedition to night, Macduff, and I'd like you to come with me."

"Where?"

"I've been commissioned to buy a jade bracelet," she exclaimed, lightly. "I want to find the loveliest one in China. We'll scour the city until we get it."

"It sounds like a foolish idea to me but I shall come."

"Good! I can always depend on you."

(Continued Next Week)

CARD OF THANKS

We wish to thank our friends and neighbors for their kindness and sympathy during the illness and death of our wife and mother, Mrs. A. C. Chastain.

A. C. CHASTAIN AND FAMILY

(Adv.—1tp)

Bringing HOME the FACTS

by BARBARA DALY

THERE seems to be nothing the young bride can't do nowadays and still keep within the tenets of good taste laid down by Mrs. Grundy. She can be married in pink. She can march to the altar decked in diaphanous green. She can be unconventional in white cotton. And she can go completely modern in a wedding dress of sheerest wool. No longer is ivory brocade an edict which the well-dressed bride must follow. It is her privilege and duty to be beautifully gowned. The bars have been lifted.

Whether you would set back the clock, if you had it to do over again and veer away from an ivory wedding gown, is beside the point right now. The interesting factor in this revolutionary trend in fabrics, is that cotton can be so lovely and wool so sheer that it can be draped to fit the majesty of a wedding gown.

You have been offered transparent wrappings and transparent sippers for imbibing soft drinks. One of the newer members of the ubiquitous clan that looks like glass and is as light as air, is a line of doilies and runner sets that are made of fishnet fabric of slit cellulose. The runners are obligingly washable and lend a smart note to any table setting.

Does the factory threaten to usurp kitchen rites? A practical study comparison was made of commercial prepared food mixtures, gingerbread, muffins, biscuits, chocolate pudding and gelatin, with the homemade products. Time value was rated at 30 cents an hour. In no instance did the commercial product exceed in price, the homemade, by more than eleven cents. Ease of preparation was in favor of the ready-to-mix. Texture and palatability received comparable rating and in some instances, the commercial rated higher than the homemade product.

Looking ahead to Spring and Summer you can be selecting the material and colors that will be

new and high fashion for Spring suits, dresses and sweaters. Fabric industries have been working top speed to bring you new colors in light-weight fabrics and yarns.

Color to wear with tweed: soft leaf green, brown, Oxford mixtures and beige. A black suit or skirt is set off to advantage with the pastels, dust pink, Blue Bonnet Blue and corn yellow. Grey which Paris predicts as a strong fashion note, is strictly a Leap Year style when it is combined with the popular new shade of rust.

Friday, or any fish night, try Salmon Souffle: Combine 1½ cups flaked, canned salmon, 6 crumbled soda crackers, 2 cups of hot milk, 1 finely minced onion, 2 egg yolks and ½ teaspoon of salt. Mix all together lightly and fold in 2 egg whites whipped stiff. Pile into an oiled casserole and bake 40 minutes in a slow oven at 325 degrees F.

A place for everything and everything in place is a fine household maxim, but how many of us live up to it. Two dollars and a tour of your favorite houseware stores, will, I guarantee, provide at least four extra cubic feet of kitchen space. Items I have purchased—you may find others more suitable to your need: one dozen wire-spring cup holders; one metal radiator cover (20 cents); two wooden cutlery boxes; one knife and gadget wall rack; one unpainted corner shelf; one mesh fruit basket; one metal vegetable bin.

Old King Salmon has marched steadily to top place in the nutrition calendar. Nutritionists in charge of Relief menus in all parts of the world recognize the meat of salmon as one of the finest food sources of protein, the tissue-builder, of fat that is easily digested and sparkling with valuable vitamins, A, The mucous membrane protector, and D, the sunshine vitamin. While equally important are the minerals, calcium, phosphorous and iodine, which are to be found abundantly in salmon.

BARGAIN DAYS AT Polly's

Frankly we are overstocked with new seasonable merchandise which we offer to you at unbelievably reduced prices.

These Bargains Speak for Themselves

- Silk Dresses in all colors, sizes and styles
- Ladies' \$2.95 Silk Dresses **\$1.50**
- reduced to
- Ladies' \$4.95 Silk Dresses **\$2.95**
- reduced to
- Ladies' \$6.95 Silk Dresses **\$3.95**
- reduced to
- Ladies' Wool Knitted Prints **\$3.95** and **\$4.95**
- and Boucle Suits reduced to ..
- Men's \$1.00 Overalls **79c**
- reduced to
- 40 Inches Wide 80 x 80 sq. Sheeting **10c yd.**
- reduced to
- 15c Yard Wide Prints **9c yd.**
- reduced to
- 25c Yard Wide, Fast Color, **15c yd.**
- 80 x 80 sq. Prints **89c**
- Ladies' Oxfords **89c**
- reduced to
- Ladies' \$2.95 Oxfords and Dress Slippers in Brown, Black, White and Blue in high **\$1.95 pr.**
- and medium heels reduced to
- Men's \$1.98 Work Shoes **\$1.39**
- reduced to
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- reduced to
- Men's \$2.95 Dress Oxfords **\$1.95**
- reduced to
- All Men's and Boys' Boots greatly reduced.

A complete line of Men's Suits in all new colors and styles from \$6.95 up. Also a full line of Boys' Suits \$2.95 up.

We have just received another shipment of new Spring Coats and Suits in all the newest colors and styles, including the new plaids.

These are just a few of the bargains. Lack of space prevents our mentioning all of them. You must come in and see these bargains for yourself.

Don't Miss Bargain Days

POLLY'S

"SELLS FOR LESS"