



"This is the life for me," Alberta said. "If I were a man, I'd be a sailor."

ALOHA MEANS GOOD-BY

By Robert Carson

ILLUSTRATED BY BEN STAHL

THE telephone on the night stand rang and Ricky woke almost without movement in the warm darkness and picked it up and said, "Hello."

"It's nine o'clock, Mr. Leland," the hotel operator said.

"Thanks. Send somebody up to get my bags." Ricky sat up and switched on the night-stand lamp. His shoes were waiting beside the bed. He slipped his feet into them and tied the laces. Then he rose and stretched, yawning and tucking his rumpled shirt into his pants.

Ricky splashed cold water on his face in the bathroom and knotted his loosened tie and ran five fin-

gers through his hair. His toilet was complete when he rescued his coat from the back of a chair and his overcoat from the closet. He had no hat.

The bellboy came and they went downstairs. Ricky paid his bill at the cashier's window. The night clerk was staring out across the tall, empty, gloomy lobby. Ricky turned to look.

There was a bellboy struggling under too many, very new bags. Behind him walked a girl—a small girl with slim, competent shoulders, a straight back and long, quick legs. The hair that fluffed around the edges of her white knitted skullcap seemed yellow as ripe corn in the yellow light from the remote lobby chandeliers. She wore white sharkskin slacks and a jacket of the same material, with a little short white coat thrown over her shoulders. On her feet were wedged-soled play shoes, apparently of canvas.

It was winter in Vancouver, and cold. Ricky glanced at the clerk.

"Canada's a wonderful place," he remarked.

"I've been here six years," the clerk said, "and I've never seen exactly that before, even in the summertime."

"Probably where she's going," Ricky said, "it's always spring."

They grinned at each other; the clerk because he knew there was no such place, and Ricky because he knew there was. He wished that he could have seen her face. That kind of a figure would undoubtedly have something special to go with it.

He stopped to buy cigarettes and then followed his luggage outside. The night was raw and dank and windless. The taxi came up. He handed the bellboy a coin and climbed into the car.

"Know where the Genoa Maru is?" he asked the driver.

"Pier A," the driver said.

Ricky opened one of the windows made steamy by the car heater and looked out. His after-dinner nap had set him up. He felt fine.

They rolled on the pier and crept through a warehouse lit by glaring, unshaded bulbs. The cab stopped and Ricky got out. He stooped over for his bags, breathing the exhaust gases of the departing car.

A small brown man, hatless, in a thick overcoat tightly buttoned, walked up to him. He bowed with a quick motion of his head and inhaled sharply and respectfully.

"Passenger?" he said.

"Yes."

"Bags," the small brown man said, taking them. "Should be."

"When do we sail?"

"Soon. Half an hour. Hour. Should be."

"Should," Ricky agreed, and watched the brown man depart with his bags.

He lit a cigarette, a faraway, indecisive expression on his lean, tanned face that was deceptive. His thinking was general, fast and accurate, but once he recalled the girl in white in the hotel lobby and grinned faintly. Seeing things like that somehow made life easier. She must be on a train at this very instant, bound—God bless her—for Hollywood.

He headed for the boat.

A floodlight shone down on the foremast of the Genoa Maru, and they were still loading lead and zinc pigs. A short officer without an overcoat stood forward directing operations. Ricky saw the gangplank.

An officer waited by the rail as he came aboard—another little brown man who looked at him incuriously and did not speak. Ricky moved aft, picking his way through the deck litter that freighters always develop when they're in port. Entering a doorway, he smelled the greasy rankness of a galley near at hand. He glanced down an empty alley and decided these were officers' staterooms. On his right was a large, gloomy brown room, evidently the saloon. He poked his head inside. Not a soul was about. A companionway led up to the boat deck. He climbed it.

At the top was the man who had taken his bags, out of his overcoat now and wearing a white jacket. He bowed jerkily. "Steward," he said, and consulted a slip. "Leland Richard?"

"Richard Leland."

The man smiled, exhibiting large white teeth. "Should be."

Ricky followed him into a narrow white stateroom. There was a single bed, a washstand with a mirror above it, and a chest of drawers. One porthole was forward, another on the side. Ricky's bags were already open and part of his things in the chest. The little man resumed working on them.

Ricky watched him for a moment and then sat on the bed, which was hard. The steward was slow at his job, which, Ricky noted, gave him time to get a good look at each article. Finally he finished and turned around.

"Bed hard," he said cheerfully.

"Very hard."

"My name Sugi."

"I'll call you Should Be," Ricky decided.

"Do you mind?"

"Should be," Sugi assented. "Anything else?"

Ricky shook his head and Sugi bowed again and left. The foremast floodlight had been shut off and the noise of the steam winch had stopped. There was the banging of a hatch being battened down. Ricky rose, took a sheaf of papers from the upper drawer of the chest where Sugi had placed them, and put them in his pocket. From the direction of the stern came the throbbing of a tug. A man shouted.

Ricky walked into the alley and, not seeing Sugi, halted for an examination. All the doors were open. There were three single staterooms and one double, the latter evidently having been converted from the ship's hospital to passenger accommodations. The rest had obviously been officers' quarters before conversion. At the aft end of the alley was the bathroom. One of the singles was stacked with new-looking airplane luggage.

The Genoa Maru's siren hooted twice. The tug answered. A hawser stretching off into the fog from the stern grew taut.

Something in white was leaning on the port rail, and it wasn't a ghost. Ricky altered his course abruptly. The rail felt wet and cold to his hands.

"Spring will never come to me again nor the earth be painted green by the vernal equinox," Ricky said, "but that I think of you in your white pants. I saw you in the hotel."

The girl turned her head and glanced up at him. He still couldn't tell what her face was

like, except that it was oval and appeared reasonably human. She was shivering.

"Wouldn't it have been better," Ricky asked, "if you'd taken the train?"

"I couldn't take a train where I'm going."

Hawaii, Ricky thought, and grew very pleased. It was a nice voice, low and with a good accent; not a voice belonging to the kind of ladies who sometimes went cheaply to Hawaii and returned later with fortunes. Ricky never got really discouraged or worried, but occasionally he wondered vaguely if things couldn't be better. They were getting better now, fast.

"I've dreamed of this," he said happily. "I, too, have wished the gods would love me. So has every other man. But it rarely happens."

"What?"

"I only know of one man it happened to, and he was on a short voyage. Down to the Canal or something, I think. Besides, she was married. By the time they got to Colón, he found out she loved him—her husband, I mean."

"I hope they were very happy," the girl said.

"To get on a boat at night expecting to spend a

He was just one degree from being a bum in appearance.



A small brown

dull time with a bunch of Orientals, resigned to your fate, hopeless—and then discover a pretty girl. A pretty girl on a boat with no college boys, handsome officers or bachelors with honorable intentions. How do you think I feel?"

"Drunk," the girl said. "I understand that's customary on sailing. Aren't you?"

"No," Ricky said, "honest. My name's Ricky Leland."

He shook a small, cold hand.

"I'm Alberta Marlow."

"Miss?"

"Yes."

"It's too good to be true," Ricky said. "Do you mind pinching me to see if I'll wake up?"



ss, in a thick overcoat tightly buttoned, walked up to him. He bowed with a quick motion of his head and inhaled sharply and respectfully. "Passenger?" he said.

"I don't know you well enough for that yet."

"Later, then," Ricky agreed magnanimously.

The pier was melting into the fog. Swinging slowly in the oily water with the tug straining on her stern, the Genoa Maru came around. The siren sounded. The noise seemed to run in an endless circle through long halls of fog, constantly coming back. Casting off, the tug moved free. A bell jangled. Diesels thumped deep in the bowels of the Genoa Maru.

"Here we go," Ricky remarked.

"I've never been on a boat before," Alberta said.

"I always thought there was more to it than this."

"There is on liners. But freighters are like ferry-boats. Getting in and out is old stuff to them."

"Have you traveled a lot?"

"Some," Ricky said. "But never so luxuriously before. Would you mind coming inside under a light, so I can see your face? I keep thinking there must be a catch somewhere."

"In a minute," Alberta said. "I don't want to miss anything."

"Neither do I," Ricky told her.

They crept at a snail's pace into the thick, moist Strait of Georgia. A red light and a white masthead

light went by them not far off. A horn hooted. The Genoa Maru hooted in return. Ricky yawned.

"Now you can look," Alberta said.

He trailed her into the alley. She halted under the first bulb.

Her face was small and delicate, with a firm jaw and skin with a faint radiance underneath that made it seem milky. She was blond, but not so blond as she had seemed in the hotel lobby. And her eyes were blue.

"For heaven's sakes!" Ricky said. "On a Japanese freighter!"

She looked seriously at the tall young man with the wide shoulders, mussed hair and shabby clothes. He had an honest face and guileless gray eyes.

"I'm glad you like it," she said. "It looks better when it has more stuff on it, though."

"I'd rather see it first without powder and lipstick," Ricky replied. "You can form a more unbiased opinion that way."

"Good night, Mr. Leland."

"Oh, don't go. Let's sit in the saloon and talk."

"I'm sorry. I'm tired."

"Could you let me have a picture of you?" Ricky asked. "I'll sit up all night and study it."

"You need your sleep," Alberta said. She opened the door of her stateroom. "I hope I'll see you again."

"We'll probably run into each other," Ricky said.

The door closed on this marine vision. Ricky paused irresolutely, yawned again, and went down to the saloon. An officer was standing just inside the door, winding his wrist watch. He introduced himself in passable English: First Officer Miyuma.

"Thick night," Ricky said. "Can't open the liquor stores till you get outside the twelve-mile limit, can you?"

"Yes," Mr. Miyuma said. "That is so."

"Yes," Ricky said. "Silly rule, isn't it?"

"Yes," Mr. Miyuma said.

The Genoa Maru was rolling slightly and still creeping. Mr. Miyuma wound his watch some more. "Excuse, please," he said suddenly, and departed.

By the door was a board with a sheet of paper tacked to it. Ricky stepped closer to read the paper. The sheet was neatly typed and headed, PASSENGER LIST. Underneath were four names:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Dr. Anastacio Barca | Alberta Marlow |
| Richard Leland | T. Oki |

(Continued on Page 93)

he made his elderly guest sleep on the floor, stay outside at mealtimes and walk seven miles with his luggage.

Miscellaneous enterprises and political ambitions may have caused Macfadden to forget now and then that he is primarily a crusader and world fixer, but his idealism usually prevails in the long run. His fundamental character—that of the physical-culture messiah—is always breaking out. The newspaper sellers of New York once tendered a dinner to him in honor of the exceptional profit which he allowed them on each sale of the Graphic. A gathering of newsstand people is usually the signal for maudlin condescension and gush. Macfadden looked from one table to another and saw that his hosts and hostesses were fat. He grew incensed at their multiple chins and globular torsos. Instead of calling them the Corinthian pillars of society and aristocrats of creation, he denounced them as disgusting weaklings, slackers, loafers, traitors to the Body Beautiful; he demanded that they starve themselves forthwith until they recovered some semblance of the human form, and then maintain it by diet and exercise. The corpulent newsboys and newsgirls were first hurt and then pleased. They cheered tumultuously. They felt that Macfadden really cared.

On one of his trips abroad Macfadden had an audience with Mussolini. The publisher would ordinarily have been greatly impressed by the fact that Bernarr, the illiterate Missouri farm hand, was bandying civilities with a great world figure, as Mussolini was then considered. But before the interview, Macfadden had visited an Italian army post, and he took Mussolini sharply to task for misfeeling his soldiers; he offered to show

how to feed them at one half the current cost and make them twice as vigorous. The suggestion was coldly received. Macfadden then imported an assortment of Italian boys, fed them, sent them home greatly improved, and received a decoration from Italy.

A fanatic about physical culture, but a skeptic about other kinds, Macfadden distrusts bookworms. He grieved a good deal because Fulton Oursler, his able lieutenant, read Shakespeare every day. That one of the chiefs of the Macfadden organization should waste his time on poetry when he might be exercising his muscles was a sore affliction to the health prophet. Breaking young men of their weaknesses had been Macfadden's lifelong specialty, and he struggled to induce Oursler to brace up and be a man.

The argument went on for years. One theatrical season when Shakespeare was playing in many theaters on Broadway, Oursler pointed out that the Swan would be the richest man in the world, if he were living today. He would be drawing the author's percentage from the theaters in nearly every part of the globe and getting royalties from nearly every man who reads. That put the matter in a different light. Macfadden yields to nobody in respect for real success. He asked questions about Shakespeare. Finally he turned on the Shakespearean student.

"I know something about Shakespeare that you don't," he said. "To have accomplished all that, he must have kept himself in wonderful physical condition. Shakespeare was a great physical culturist."

Editor's Note—This is the second of two articles by Mr. Johnston.

ALOHA MEANS GOOD-BY

(Continued from Page 11)

Alberta Marlow, Ricky thought. A very calm dame. Very calm. Artillery officers were not generally brushed off by amateurs. The Air Corps had more of a reputation, but the Artillery never got any complaints.

A small fat man stepped into the saloon. He was dressed in a neat blue pin-stripe suit and a hat a size too small for his head, and there was an Elk's tooth on the watch chain lying across his vest. Despite his round body, his face was square and angular, and the coffee-colored skin was stretched tight over his high cheekbones, like all Filipinos'. He looked genial and unimposing, except for his eyes, which were a cold and glinting black.

"Hello," he said to Ricky. "Are you Mr. Leland?"

"That's right," Ricky replied. "I'm Doctor Barca."

They shook hands. Doctor Barca smiled.

"I was down reading the passenger list a while ago," he said. "Not much chance of mistaking your fellow voyagers on the Genoa Maru."

"We don't seem to be awfully crowded," Ricky said.

"Are you bound for the East?"

"No, Hawaii."

"So am I," Doctor Barca said. "To deliver some lectures at the university there." He smiled again. "We educators have to travel economically."

"The same as reformed soldiers," Ricky said. "If there was anything cheaper than a Jap freighter, I'd be on it."

Sugi appeared with a plate of sandwiches and coffee. Doctor Barca spoke to him in Japanese. Sugi replied in the same language. Then he went out.

"I happen to know a little Japanese," Doctor Barca said. "It helps, traveling on one of their boats."

"I imagine it does," Ricky said.

They sat down at the table and Ricky bit into a sandwich. Doctor Barca took charge of the coffee.

"Cream?" he queried. "Sugar?"

"Please."

Ricky drank the coffee slowly, absently massaging one bristly cheek. Doctor Barca ate two sandwiches with great speed and then sat back to enjoy his coffee, sighing and patting his bulging vest. "I enjoy freighters," he said.

"You meet interesting people," Ricky said.

"Are you going to Hawaii for the first time, Mr. Leland?"

"No."

"Vacation?"

"No."

"Have you lived there before?"

Doctor Barca asked patiently.

"I was born there," Ricky said, finishing his sandwich. "Grew up more or less around Kaneohe."

"You're fortunate. I grew up on Mindanao."

"I've been there. You have my sympathies."

Doctor Barca smiled again. A Japanese in a plain dark suit and bow tie came noiselessly in and handed him a cigar case.

"Thank you, Oki," Doctor Barca said.



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The man bowed and went out. Doctor Barca opened the case and extended it to Ricky.

"Will you have one?" he asked. "They're Manila cigars. The best in the world."

"No, thank you," Ricky said. "So that's T. Oki, of the passenger list?"

Doctor Barca smiled his ready smile and held out a lighted match for Ricky's cigarette. "My man. I take him everywhere. The Japanese make great servants."

They puffed their tobacco and listened to the siren sounding regularly above them. The Genoa Maru was picking up speed.

"Are you an American?" Doctor Barca said.

"Yes."

"Then you probably don't share my enthusiasm for the Japanese. We're much closer to Japan in the Philippines, you know."

"As a matter of fact," Ricky said, "I like them very much. One of them was my nurse. She raised me. I suppose that's why I can never understand talk of fighting them. She was the kindest and gentlest woman I've ever known."

"We ought to have more exchanging of nurses," Doctor Barca said. "There might be peace in the world if we had enough of it." He pushed back his chair and rose. "Well, I've got to work off the effect of those sandwiches, Mr. Leland. Do you care to take a turn around the deck with me?"

"Good idea," Ricky said.

They went above to the boat deck and paced briskly to and fro for several minutes.

"I understand," Doctor Barca said, "that we have a charming young lady passenger aboard."

"A beautiful blonde, Doctor Barca," Ricky told him. "I'm a happy, happy man."

"You've seen her?"

"I was up here with her a while ago."

"Usually on a freighter —"

"I know," Ricky said. "But not this one. You couldn't do as well on the Washington."

Through a porthole behind them came Alberta's head. Ricky turned admiringly. "It's a shame you can't see her blue eyes," he said.

"I don't object to your discussing me," Alberta told them, "but would you mind doing it a little farther away? I'm trying to sleep."

Her head disappeared as they moved aft.

"You're fortunate," Doctor Barca said. "Fortunate and young. Occasionally I wish I was young again." He tossed his cigar into the sea and it hissed out of sight. "Good night, Mr. Leland."

"Good night, Doctor Barca," Ricky said.

He undressed hastily in the narrow cabin, blithely dropping his clothing on the floor. He slid into bed, switched off the light and pulled the covers up. In a moment his eyes were accustomed to the semidarkness. He felt quite virtuous and at peace with the world. Only the girl bothered him a little. He was fairly certain she was all right, but he couldn't be sure. Fortunately, business coincided with pleasure in this case. The thing to do was make a big play for her. If she was a Barca plant, he'd find it out sooner or later.

The mirror over the washstand reflected the side porthole, a fact that the Oriental gazing into the porthole ought to have taken into consideration. He didn't, though, and Ricky gazed at the dark, indistinguishable face interest-

edly. It stayed there, a credit to the tenacity of an old race.

Ricky closed his eyes peacefully, reflecting that they did everything for him on the Genoa Maru. They even watched over his slumbers. You probably couldn't get that kind of service on the Manhattan.

II

THERE was light on Ricky's eyelids and a knocking on the door. He sat up in the uncomfortable bed, flexing his arms and shoulders, and called, "Come in."

Sugi entered and bowed. He had a tray with coffee.

"Hello, Should Be," Ricky said. "You're a thoughtful heathen."

"Breakfast here?" Sugi asked. "Should be."

"Should," Ricky agreed. "Anything you say, and don't take too long."

Sugi returned with bacon and eggs, toast and cereal. Ricky ate contentedly and with appetite. Again Sugi appeared, found cigarettes in a pocket of the coat on the floor, and struck a match for him.

"You have a talent for going through pockets," Ricky told him. "If I ever miss anything, you can expect me in the pantry."

"Clean pantry," Sugi said. "Very clean."

He departed with the dishes and Ricky rose, put a dilapidated robe over his pajamas, found his slippers, and shuffled out, on the boat deck.

They were going down the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the breeze was fairly stiff and the sea had a chop to it. Pale sunlight filtered through an overcast sky. The Genoa Maru was hitting a good clip, but, like any freighter with a decent load, she rode beautifully.

Alberta and Doctor Barca sat together on canvas chairs beside a big ventilator.

The girl wore shorts and a tiny fuzzy sweater, and Ricky saw that night didn't help her as it did most women; she looked even better in daylight. He walked over to them.

"Good morning," Doctor Barca said. "Did you have a good night?"

"I don't remember," Ricky replied, "but I must have."

"You missed seeing something by sleeping so late," Alberta said. "We dropped the pilot at Race Rocks a little while ago."

"What I came to see," Ricky said, "I didn't miss. Are your legs always blue like that?"

"They're not blue!"

"Should Be!" Ricky yelled, and presently Sugi came running. "Get me a blanket."

"I want some sunshine," Alberta said, and suddenly her teeth chattered. She added, with difficulty, "I'm not cold."

Ricky took the blanket from Sugi. "Stand up."

She rose unwillingly and Ricky draped the blanket around her. He shoved her down in her chair, where she half reclined like a roll of carpeting with only her head protruding. Sugi brought Ricky a chair.

"Thanks," Alberta said.

"You don't need to thank me," Ricky said. "It's only selfishness on my part. Suppose you caught a bad cold. Then what would happen to our romance?"

"What's going to happen to it anyway," Alberta asked, "if you don't shave?"

Ricky grinned at her. Doctor Barca smiled benignly and lit a long cigar.

"I'm happy we're all bound for Hawaii," he remarked. "I shall enjoy

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listening to you two, if you'll permit me."

"You can referee," Ricky said.

"Relationships between modern young Americans seem most peculiar to a man my age."

"I'm a Canadian," Alberta said.

"That makes it even more peculiar," Ricky said.

Doctor Barca waved his cigar. "Now, children. Can't we talk something safer? You Anglo-Saxons give your love-making an assault-and-battery twist."

"You were talking about Philippine economics before we were interrupted," Alberta reminded him.

"My own field," Doctor Barca said apologetically to Ricky. "Miss Marlow was kind enough to listen to me."

"You people are going to be free in 1946, aren't you?" Ricky said.

"I don't know. Are we?"

"Are you for it?"

"Definitely," Doctor Barca said, "providing America doesn't insist on fighting a war with Japan. But I'm afraid that contingency is going to keep us from ever being free. That and the stupidity and covetousness of some of our people."

"Won't Japan gobble you up?"

"Why, if we're a good neighbor?"

"Aren't there a lot of economic problems involved?" Ricky said.

"We'll lose our preferential privileges in the United States, and that will make some dislocations in our economy. But freedom can't be bought for nothing. As it is, we are now no more than a protectorate, a potential military stronghold in the Far East. The United States probably will never set us free, despite what they say. At the same time, we are not allowed to make any commitments with our greatest friend and nearest customer, Japan. We're between the devil and the deep blue sea."

"Well," Ricky said, "no offense, but Japan, yourselves or anybody else can have you as far as I'm concerned. It's too hot in Manila."

"It might be hotter before long."

"Hot enough to wear shorts?" Alberta said. "That would suit me."

"That's a Canadian for you," Ricky said. "If they can take off their clothes, they're happy." He stood up, conscious that Alberta was glaring at him, and looked around. "Hey, there's a war boat."

Passing on the port side was a Canadian destroyer, traveling fast, hot black smoke billowing from her funnels. She was stained and weatherworn, and her guns weren't under canvas.

"We're inclined to forget," Doctor Barca said, "that most of the world is at war already. And more war to come, perhaps—in the Pacific."

"If it comes," Ricky said, "they'll have to do without me."

"Why? You seem about the right age, Mr. Leland."

"Ever hear of a general court-martial?" Ricky said. "Well, that's what the United States Army gave me before I was kicked out. I don't think they'd want me again."

He turned abruptly and disappeared into the deckhouse.

Doctor Barca and Alberta looked at each other.

"Interesting young man," Doctor Barca said.

"Did you notice," Alberta said grimly, "what he said about Canadians taking their clothes off? I think we ought to invade the United States right now!"

"You're rather busy with Hitler," Doctor Barca said. "Why not wait?"

The master came down to the saloon for lunch. Doctor Barca and Ricky, who were already seated, rose to welcome him. Doctor Barca made the introductions. Captain Higoto was large for a Japanese, with a bland, good-humored face and almost sleepy eyes. He bowed and hissed politely to Alberta and Ricky. They sat down.

Almost immediately they got up again. Chief Engineer Mitsudo had appeared. There were more introductions. The chief engineer wore an immaculate uniform, no tie, and carpet

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slippers. Ricky, who knew something of how engineer chiefs, in any language, feel about passengers and the socialites from the bridge, appreciated this quiet sartorial contempt. Mitsudo lacked a command of English, but he did know how to shake hands. He did it vigorously and then sat at the second table. Oki presently joined him. They talked together in Japanese.

"The chief engineer has no English," Doctor Barca explained to Ricky and Alberta.

"Yes," Captain Higoto said.

"Well," Ricky said, "he's got a good grip."

Doctor Barca and Alberta smiled. Watching them, Captain Higoto smiled too.

"Some joke," he remarked, with an inflection that could only have been memorized.

This time nobody smiled.

"I hope you don't mind my being a sort of master of ceremonies here," Doctor Barca remarked. "I've traveled with Captain Higoto before. He's my favorite mariner."

"Yes," Captain Higoto said pleasantly.

Sugi served them small bowls of very thin soup and put a couple of pots of tea on the table. Reaching for her spoon, Alberta paused. Captain Higoto had his head lowered.

"Itadaki masu," he said.

He began to eat, and Ricky and Alberta followed his example.

Doctor Barca looked at them smilingly. "I don't believe the skipper will mind my explaining his words," he said. "What he said means in English 'permit me to take.' It's something like saying grace before a meal, and it also expresses his thankfulness to his ancestors."

"That is true," Captain Higoto said. He made an apologetic gesture with his hands. "Excuse, please."

"I like your saying it," Alberta told him. "I come from a long line of grace-sayers."

"Many thanks," Captain Higoto replied.

After the soup, Sugi distributed plates and brought a big steaming bowl of food and placed it in the center of the table. Ricky stared, somewhat surprised.

Doctor Barca laughed. "I can't resist telling the skipper's secret vice. He has a great liking for Chinese food!"

They expressed their amusement. Captain Higoto's heavy eyes wrinkled into mere slits as he beamed at them.

"Some joke," he said affably.

"I agree with the skipper," Ricky said. "Some joke. But I've always understood that chop suey was an American invention."

"Chinese beginning to like it," Captain Higoto said.

When he had finished, Captain Higoto inclined his head once more and said, "Gochiso sama deshita."

"Which means," Doctor Barca translated, "it was a nice meal."

Captain Higoto got up. They all rose with him. He bowed to each one jerkily.

"Excuse, please," he said.

Oki and Chief Engineer Mitsudo followed him out. Doctor Barca clipped a Manila cigar and Ricky lit a cigarette.

"I have plans for us this afternoon, Alberta," Ricky said. "First, we'll—"

"I'm sorry," Alberta replied, "but Doctor Barca is going to show me the boat."

"Perhaps you'd like to accompany us, Mr. Leland," Doctor Barca suggested.

"There's no romance climbing up and down ladders," Ricky said.

He left, his hands in his pockets.

"Sometimes," Doctor Barca said, "he strikes me as being a sad young man."

"If you had no better clothes than he has," Alberta said, "you might be sad too."

They were gone a long time, and when they at last returned to the boat deck, Ricky was peacefully asleep in a canvas chair. Doctor Barca excused himself and disappeared. Alberta sat down beside Ricky. She liked the way he slept, shrouded in a blanket, his hair cascading over his forehead and his cheeks flushed and the faintest curl of a smile on his lips, as though his sleep was pleasant. His mouth was closed and he breathed silently through his nose. She knew that was important in a man. But he was just one degree from being a bum in appearance.

She took his wrist and squeezed it gently. He woke with only a flicker of his eyelids and looked steadily at her.

"I'm dreaming," he said. "Don't wake me up. I'm seeing angels."

"I'm serious," Alberta said. "I want to talk."

Ricky groaned. "All right. But answer me a question. Have they declared an embargo on romance in Canada?"

"What difference would that make to me?" Alberta asked. "We're beyond the twelve-mile limit."

"I've never got nowhere with so little effort in my life."

She was wearing slacks, but he rose and tucked the blanket around her. Her smile was thanks.

"This boat is an amazing thing," Alberta said. "It's a little world in itself, floating on another world of liquid."

"I wish the liquid was champagne. There'd be a man overboard."

"She was built," Alberta said, "in 1937, and launched at a place I can't remember or pronounce."

"Nippon?"

"No, it wasn't Nippon."

"All right," Ricky said.

"The engines are Diesel double-acting. They develop eighty-one hundred horsepower. This ship is capable of better than twenty knots at full speed, but the best and most economical cruising speed is about seventeen or eighteen knots. Most liners only do around twenty-two or three."

"If we were on a liner even only doing around twenty-two or three, we'd be having tea and cakes by now. Should Be!"

Sugi came while Alberta was describing the lower masts, which were forty-three feet above the deck. The derricks were of tubular steel construction.

"There is no rig, of course," Alberta said. "The build is in and out strake and she has a cruiser stern."

"Tea and cakes," Ricky ordered. "I'm going to make a liner man of you, Should Be."

"Liners very nice," Sugi said. "Very clean."

He returned with a pot of tea and some rice cakes while the enraptured Alberta was giving Ricky the details of the propeller, a four-bladed solid manganese-bronze affair that was almost twenty feet in diameter and did a hundred and fifty revolutions a minute. Ricky forced tea and cakes on her and eventually got her stopped.

Only once did she reopen the subject, saying, "Four twenty-eight-foot lifeboats, holding forty persons each." He fed her more cakes.

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The hot tea did something to her. Gradually she forgot about the Genoa Maru and him. Ricky noticed her flickering eyelids.

"That's right, angel child," he said. "Get some sleep. I want you bright and sparkling tonight."

"I don't want to sleep!" Alberta replied, rousing herself with an effort. "I've been looking forward to this for three years, and I can't afford to miss anything."

"There's nothing to miss."

"Then the trip's going to be dull."

"No," Ricky said, "it won't be dull. Honest."

III

BEYOND Point Sur the weather turned mean and the Genoa Maru began lunging into big greasy swells. Ricky, Doctor Barca and Alberta had spent two days eating, reading, talking desultorily and playing cards. They had been almost constantly in one another's company, and the strain was beginning to be felt. Unconsciously they brightened up at the prospect of a little excitement.

At noon the coast line of California was blotted out in a sudden deluge of rain. Wind snarled through the upper gear. The ship developed a wicked roll.

Luncheon was gay in the saloon. All the officers stayed topside, and only Oki ate at the second table in Oriental silence. Sugi served the dishes one at a time, balancing to the heave of the floor, and coffee slopped into saucers even when the cups were half full. They ate in snatches and food went awry, sometimes with hilarious results.

Alberta was wearing a yellow dress and a wisp of a sweater and short socks that left her handsome legs bare. Her eyes sparkled with excitement and her hair was tumbled and her cheeks stained with rain from sticking her head out of a companionway to see what was going on. Ricky, who had only been kidding up to now, felt a peculiar sinking sensation in his chest that wasn't connected with the ship's motion when he looked at her.

"It takes a storm," he said, "to bring out the best in a woman."

He had felt like this once or twice before, always with intoxicating and near-matrimonial results. In those dear, dead days of a few months ago when he was a cannoneer with hairy ears such feelings were natural and not contrary to the regulations. That was not the case any longer. But she was so pretty. They could have charm, wit, humor, a philosophy, position, money, education—and still guys like him would take those lovely creatures that walked in beauty, usually without brains, and sprang unheralded from tenements and Canadian prairies. Ricky felt very sorry for himself.

"I hope you're a good sailor, Miss Marlow," Doctor Barca said. "The Genoa Maru has her moments when a blow comes on."

"This is what I've been waiting for," Alberta told him. "I'd have felt cheated if I hadn't had one storm for my money."

Sugi brought bread pudding for dessert. The stuff looked sticky enough to hold together in any kind of weather.

"I'll pass," Ricky said. "More coffee, Should Be."

Doctor Barca contented himself with coffee also. But Alberta ate hers with relish.

"There's something elemental in a storm," Alberta announced. "I suppose they appeal to women more than men. Women are more elemental than men."

"I'm your friend, honey," Ricky said. "I dearly hope so."

"How are you on boats, Mr. Le-land?" Doctor Barca asked.

"You couldn't turn my stomach with a crank," Ricky said. "And you?"

Doctor Barca smiled. "Nothing bothers me."

Except me, Ricky thought.

"I wonder if it'll get really rough," Alberta said.

"This is rough," Ricky replied.

"It's not rough enough," Alberta said. "I want to go through something I can talk about afterwards."

"I'm practically sure you will," Ricky said. "You might not want to talk about it, though."

"I don't suppose I should smoke my cigar right now," Doctor Barca said.

"No," Ricky said; "let her be happy for a little while."

body along his flank. The sinking sensation started again.

The Genoa Maru was digging solidly into huge green combers that came in, rank on rank, tufted with white, from the horizon. They slugged the bows in unending succession hard enough to send repercussions booming down the steel sides of the hull. Curtains of salt spray drifted across the foc'sle deck.

Up here the pitch was much worse. Ricky saw that the waves wouldn't have to get much bigger for the Genoa Maru to be wetting her nose in them. Captain Higoto would be reducing speed before long.

Alberta freed a hand, turned and looked aft. Ricky watched Alberta, her slim legs wide apart, balancing to the roll of the ship, her clothing molded tightly to her body by the wind, her bright hair blowing.

"I wish I had a better suit," Ricky said.

The blue eyes shifted to him. "That doesn't matter. You've got a kind face."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, I do, Ricky."

"That's the first time you've called me Ricky."

"Is it?"

"Yes."

He kissed her, tasting salt on the softness of her lips; bitter sweetness. She closed her eyes. A roll caught them and they banged against the rail. Clutching quickly, Ricky remembered that he had forgotten to hang onto anything but her. It was a nice thought.

"Look," he said huskily, "I didn't mean that."

"I did," Alberta said. "Why didn't you?"

"Well," Rickysaid, "I did, but—"

He stopped, realizing the lovely creature was turning green in his arms.

"Are you getting sick?"

"I don't know. How do they usually act when you kiss them?"

"They don't turn green."

"Then I'm getting sick," Alberta said. "Get me out of here!"

He hurried her down the steps and across the heaving deck. When they reached the boat-deck alley, Alberta halted and grabbed feebly at the wall. Her eyes were glazed and she seemed to be bending in the middle.

"I've been stabbed," she groaned.

"It was so beautiful," Ricky said. "Why did you have to eat that stuff?"

He propelled her ahead of him into her stateroom. Like a wounded animal crawling into its burrow, she crept into a cocoon of blankets on the bed and moaned faintly through a couple of thicknesses of cloth.

Ricky walked out in the alley and yelled, "Should Be!"

Sugi came hurrying up, bouncing from wall to wall. Ricky jerked a thumb at Alberta's room.

"Bread-pudding victim. Do what you can for her."

"Bread pudding," Sugi said cheerfully. "Too bad. Should be."

Ricky walked down to the saloon. It was empty. A deck of cards lay on one of the tables, so he sat down and spread out a game of patience. Sugi hurried through on the way to the galley.

"Hey!" Ricky said. "How is Miss Marlow?"

"Bad," Sugi said. "Very bad. Bread pudding gone. Everything gone."

"Should be," Ricky said.

He began a second game of patience. Sugi popped from the galley with a pot of tea and headed for the boat deck. Ricky yawned and combed his hair with his fingers. The boat was dull without the springtime gal, and he must presently resume with that Philippine educator.

Sugi reappeared. "Miss Marlow dying," he reported simply. "Want to see Ricky?"

"That's me," Ricky said, getting up.

Alberta was almost entirely covered by a blanket, her eyes and nose protruding from one end and her shoes from the other. Ricky sat down beside the bed. "I understand you're dying," he remarked.

"Yes," Alberta said, "and before I go I wanted to tell you that if I've said anything unkind to you in the past, I meant it."

"Do you want to be buried at sea? They have a very nice service."

"No."

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LITTLE LULU

When they returned to the boat deck the rain had stopped, though the sky was still jammed with a heavy scud of clouds. The wind was rising. Doctor Barca excused himself and retired to his stateroom to smoke his cigar. Ricky and Alberta stood in the alley, hanging on.

"You know what I'd like to do?" Alberta said.

"Smoke a cigar too?" Ricky asked. Alberta frowned at him. "I'd like to go up in the bow if I had a man to hang onto."

"Any place," Ricky said. "The crow's-nest, if you'll hang onto me. Let's go."

They saw only one man on the way forward, a small, yellow seaman, bowed down by the weight of oilskins as he hurried for cover. Climbing slippery, wet stairs, they came out on the foc'sle deck. Ricky gripped the rail and Alberta clung to him. He could feel the coolness of her hands on one of his wrists and the soft roundness of her

"What a figurehead you make for a ship," he said.

"See how the stern goes up and down," she said. "It goes so far you'd think it would never come up again. And the masts! Look how they're going!"

"Don't look too long, and keep your eyes off the water right underneath you."

"Oh, rats! I feel wonderful!"

"You are wonderful."

"This is the life for me," Alberta said. "If I were a man, I'd be a sailor."

"Don't let me interrupt you," Ricky said.

"Can women get jobs on boats?"

"You could be a stewardess. I never saw one that looked like you, but I suppose it's possible."

"I think I'll do it," Alberta said.

She held him again with both hands, facing him, her head tilted up at the foremast, eyes wide with childish wonderment and her lips slightly parted.

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"Then I'll have Should Be put you on ice."

"It's quite amusing, isn't it?" Alberta said. "A woman suffering."

"You'll be well by tomorrow. Stop being such a baby."

"Even if I live, I'll never be the same again. You should have seen what happened to me after you left!"

"It happens to everybody. You shouldn't have eaten that bread pudding and looked at the mast."

"The mistake I made," Alberta said somberly, "was kissing you. I was all right till then."

"I resent that."

"Don't ever ask me to kiss you again. I'd sooner kiss a pig."

"We won't argue," Ricky said gently. "You're not well. You don't know what you're saying."

"I do too!"

He grinned at her, rose and started removing her shoes. She jerked her feet convulsively under the covers.

"Stop that!"

"You don't want to lie in bed with your shoes on, do you?"

"I need them on," Alberta said, "for when I have to suddenly run down the hall."

"All right, darling. I'll humor you."

"Humor me!" Alberta said bitterly. "Hah! When you go down to eat your head off tonight, just think of the girl upstairs whose happiness you wrecked."

"Yes, darling."

"I pity the woman you ever marry."

Ricky paused in the doorway and said sadly, "Oh, I'll never marry, the kind of a kisser I am. It wouldn't be fair. So long."

Alberta abruptly sat up in bed. "You're not married, are you, Ricky?"

"No," Ricky said. "Does that make you feel better?"

"You make me sick," Alberta said, "and if you'll hang around, I'll prove it to you!"

Ricky stopped and looked out on the boat deck. Rain was falling again. His own stateroom appeared singularly uninviting, so he continued to the saloon.

Doctor Barca was there, trying a game of patience with the cards. Ricky dropped into a chair across from him. "Can you beat it?" he asked.

"I couldn't."

"No," Doctor Barca said, "and I'm probably as bored as you were by the game. Sugi tells me our charming little traveling companion has a touch of *mal de mer*."

"It was only a matter of time. She speeded things up by watching the masts for a while."

"What a pity."

"Yes," Ricky said. "She doesn't look well with a green face."

"Will you have a drink with me?"

Ricky eyed him innocently. "I'm sorry, but nothing in the alcoholic line seems to agree with me except champagne."

"Perhaps Sugi has some champagne," Doctor Barca said.

"No, really," Ricky said. "I'm strapped right now, and if a friend I'm counting on in Los Angeles doesn't kick through, I'd never be able to repay you."

"That doesn't matter."

"Make it Scotch," Ricky said.

"That's the next best on my list."

Doctor Barca called Sugi, who put a whisky bottle, glasses, ice and soda on the table. Ricky poured himself a stiff drink. Doctor Barca had a very thin one. He was still sipping it when Ricky drained his second glassful.

"Have another," Doctor Barca urged.

"I shouldn't," Ricky said. "Oh, well."

The gray afternoon merged imperceptibly into darkness and in the saloon long black shadows fell across the table.

Doctor Barca did most of the talking, about nothing in particular. He automatically poured Ricky more drinks, without comment. His own stood untouched, the ice melted into water. Finally he got to the point.

"From some remarks you've dropped, Mr. Leland," he said, "I judged you've been a soldier."

Ricky's tongue was getting thick, "Yeah, that's right."

"A very interesting profession."

"Not so interesting."

"Were you stationed in Hawaii?"

"Most of the time."

"What branch of the service were you in?"

"Coast artillery."

"I see," Doctor Barca said. "I hope you don't think I'm too inquisitive, Mr. Leland."

"Not at all," Ricky said. "You're furnishing the whisky."

Doctor Barca smiled. "That's hardly an excuse for asking a man his history."

"I haven't got any history. I was in the Army, I got kicked out, and I went to Canada."

"To Canada? Why?"

"To join the Canadian army. They wouldn't have me."

"I can't understand that," Doctor Barca said. "I should think they'd want all the trained men they could get."

"They do—but not men kicked out of another army."

"You're frank, anyhow. I admire that quality."

"Why shouldn't I be?" Ricky said. "I had a raw deal. I was accused of something unjustly. I'm not apologizing for it. But they ought to."

"Can't you do anything about it?"

"I don't want any part of them. The American Army expects its officers not only to be gentlemen but also Little Lord Fauntleroy. I don't go for that."

Ricky's voice had risen. Doctor Barca said soothingly, "I understand how you feel, but you can't afford to be bitter against your own countrymen. Not in these troubled times."

"Can't I?" Ricky said. "How do you know what I can afford?"

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to intrude."

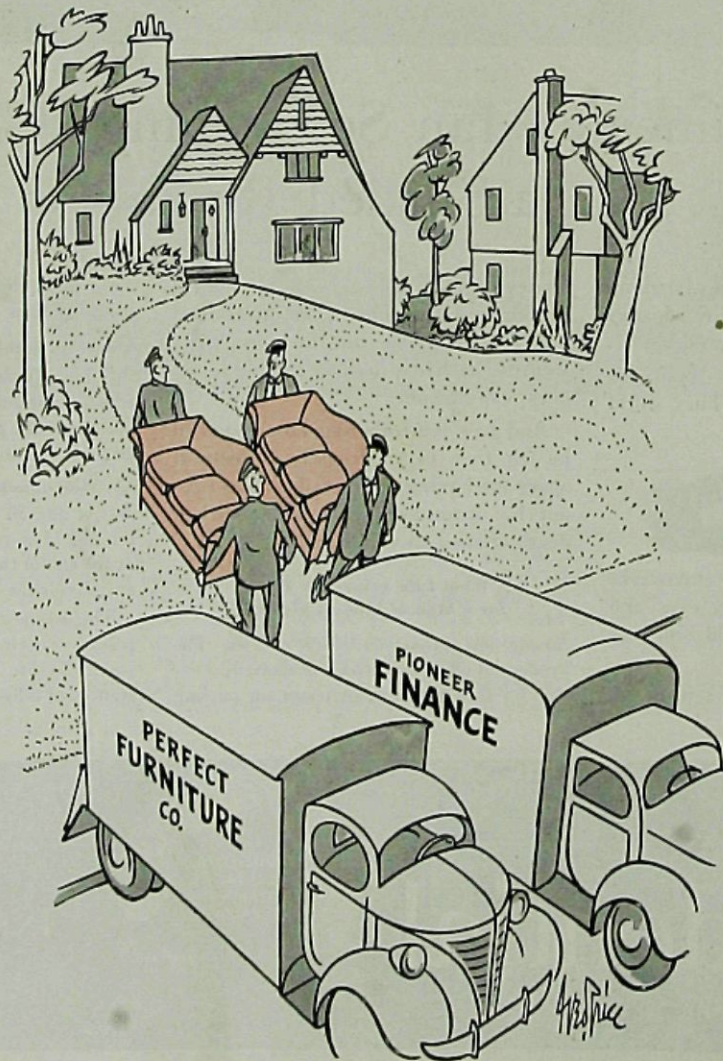
"Okay, doc."

"Was your—ah—difficulty in Hawaii?"

"Uh-huh."

"I'm surprised that you should be going back there."

"It's a good place to live when you're broke," Ricky said. "I have some friends there still—I think. Even if they won't speak to me, they'll help me. All I want to do for a while is get by. I can in the Islands."



"I can't tell you how I sympathize with you," Doctor Barca said. "I suppose you were stationed at Schofield."

"All over the place. Fort Kamehameha, Fort Weaver, Armstrong, De Russy. I was attached to staff."

"Kamehameha and Weaver guard Pearl Harbor, don't they?"

"Yeah," Ricky said. He swallowed hard, a peculiar expression coming on his face. "I'm afraid I've had too much —"

"You're ill?"

Ricky nodded, wetting his lips with his tongue, and rose hastily. He nearly fell over the table when the ship rolled, and Doctor Barca got up and steadied him.

"Can I help you, Mr. Leland?"

"No," Ricky said. "Thanks. Excuse me."

He blundered out, a hand clapped over his mouth.

In his room, Ricky spread himself on the bed and buried his face in his arms. Presently Sugi showed up.

"Sick?" he asked. "Need help?"

"Go away," Ricky told him without lifting his head.

"Tea? Hold head?"

"Beat it!"

"Too much whisky," Sugi said. "Very sick. Should be."

Ricky raised his head and looked at Sugi balefully. The steward left. Dropping his head again, Ricky remained where he was. Someone else stopped in the doorway, hissed sorrowfully, and went on without speaking. That would be Doctor Barca. Ricky groaned loudly and kept his position.

After a few minutes, he heard the doorway receive another occupant. Ricky assumed that Doctor Barca was again with him. He stood it as long as he could and then raised his head.

Alberta leaned against the jamb, white and grim, a dressing gown over her pajamas. She was regarding him with honest pleasure.

"Aw, go back to bed," Ricky said.

"I will," Alberta said. "And I'll feel better when I do. This is the happiest night of my life. Do you feel awful?"

"Yes."

"My prayers have been answered."

"Close the door when you leave."

"I never thought I'd be this lucky," Alberta said in a trembling voice.

"They have a very nice burial at sea."

"I want to die alone," Ricky said.

"Without a friend. Go away."

"You are. Is there anything I can do? Something to make you sicker?"

"Just hang around."

"Keep your shoes on," Alberta said.

"I hope you need them."

She tottered away, closing the door as she did. Ricky waited for a couple of minutes. Then he slipped off the bed and softly shot the bolt on the door. He washed his face in cold water. His head was singing a little from the Scotch, but he wasn't at all muzzy.

He sat down on the edge of the bed. The business in the saloon bothered him. There was no way of telling at the moment if it had been successful. Those things were very hard to time just right. Doctor Barca wasn't exactly a sucker, and he might have overdone his role. On the whole, though, he was pretty well satisfied. The eminent economist seemed to like the bait, and the springtime gal had been made happy.

One other item bothered him. The whisky had given him a violent appetite, and he couldn't eat any dinner that night. He wouldn't even dare to get sandwiches from Should Be later on. And it was a long time till breakfast.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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