



PRISONER IN MAJORCA BENTLEY RIDGE

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PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

ROGER KENT: Young, ambitious private secretary to E. C. Smallbridge, a business magnate.

KITTY SMALLBRIDGE: Daughter of Roger Kent's employer. She is somewhat spoiled, and very obstinate, but charming in her more rational moments.

GEOFFREY PAISH: Kitty's cousin and accomplice in rash exploits.

CAPTAIN CULLEN: Master of E. C. Smallbridge's yacht, "Glorious Kat."

"CHARLIE": Cullen's 17-year-old assistant.

Synopsis of Previous Chapters

Roger Kent is summoned urgently from London to St. Raphael, where E. C. Smallbridge is taking the sun. Smallbridge tells Roger that Kitty has taken motoryacht without permission and has gone off with her cousin Geoffrey to rescue a British prisoner in Majorca, a man interned for his part in the war in Spain.

Roger is instructed to fly to Marseilles and recover the yacht. Smallbridge gives him a note to the Captain, who is on the yacht, authorizing Roger to take charge.

With typical efficiency Roger succeeds in overtaking the yacht, and boards her.

His reception by Kitty Smallbridge is extremely cold. At the end of a brief conversation on the deck of the yacht, she pushes him into the sea.

Roger succeeds in getting aboard again, and finds Cullen remonstrating with Kitty. Roger thereupon produces his authority to take charge of the vessel. Cullen accepts it, and tells Kitty he can no longer take orders from her.

The yacht is taken into Marseilles, here Geoffrey and Kitty go ashore, the girl declaring that she will not return to her father. Roger contrives, by force, to get her back to the ship, and to lock her in her cabin.

As the gang plank is being raised for the return to St. Raphael, Geoffrey returns in quest of Kitty. He tries to intimidate Roger, but in the end agrees to accompany the yacht to St. Raphael.

Kitty proves very turbulent and when released for a meal, she rages at Roger and smacks his face. When calmer, she apologizes, and Roger tells her that she has misunderstood his character and his purpose.

(Now Read On)

Kitty's personality makes a strong appeal to Roger, in spite of their quarrels. Consequently, when she makes an appeal to him to join in the rescue of the prisoner and divert the yacht to Majorca, he falls under Kitty's inspirations, and joins enthusiastically in the plan.

As they near the shore of the island with lights screened, Roger finds out the name of the prisoner they are to rescue. On hearing it, he starts. The man, named Erdhart, was at school with him, and they met casually in the street just before Roger left London. Erdhart, who was bandaged and Roger had returned from the Spanish war a month earlier.

Before the party can adjust their plans to this surprising news a launch is seen approaching the yacht. It contains armed men, who compel the occupants of the yacht to board the launch.

(Now Read On)

CHAPTER VI

TO AN UNKNOWN COAST

Twilight, calm, silence—the Marjoran mountain tops rose in dark outline against the last glimmer of the day.

So quietly they appear, before the swift approach of the "Glorious Kate" that the whole scene had a dream-like quality to the tense watchers on the yacht. Whatever the wartime activities of the east coast this south-western corner, steeped in sleep and darkness looked peaceful enough.

Geoffrey had spread the chart they had been given in Marseilles by the emissary of "Captain Rubero" on the salon table. Traced in ink on a piece of thin notepaper it consisted of a few lines showing the headland of San Antonio and the coast north-west of it, as far as the harbour of the fishing village of Manreal.

A star off the headland was marked "Phare de St. Antoine". Another light north-east evidently marked a shoal; and was appended with the words "Occulte neuf seconde". The western head of Manreal harbour was marked with a star and the word "Rose" in different writing, and in English just below the star: "Six one kilometre east of Manreal light and burn three flares."

"The light we can see now is the St. Antoine light," Roger said. "Then what we have to do is to follow the coast eastward until we come to a light occulting every nine seconds," added Kitty. "And then make for the Manreal light from there."

"Have you a stop watch?" she asked Geoffrey.

"Do I look like a village sports

referee?" said Geoffrey coldly.

"Cullen will have one, of course," said Roger.

"Is it necessary to bring Cullen into it?" said Geoffrey.

"Why not?"

"The fewer people who are in on this the better," said Geoffrey solemnly.

"If you want to be independent of Cullen," Roger pointed out mildly, "you could have sacrificed your pride in not resembling a village sports referee and brought a stop watch. You can't check an light at sea accurately without one."

Geoffrey pulled some air down his big nose in indication of his superiority to such things.

"They went on deck to find night completely fallen; dead ahead on the compass a white light flashed out like a star sweeping its beam across the night, died into darkness and flashed again.

North-east, very distant another light occulted faintly, low down at sea.

Roger went quickly forward to the wheel house.

"We're off San Antonio head, sir," Cullen said, turning an impassive face in the yellow-lit interior.

"We'll follow the coast eastward as far as the Manreal light," Roger said.

"Is it marked on your chart?"

"Keep her head on that lighthouse, sir. I'll look it up," he surrendered the wheel to Roger.

When Cullen had found the Manreal light on his chart, Roger explained to him: "We're in foreign territorial waters, Cullen in a part of the world where we might be unpopular. We don't want to be held up, because it might mean trouble. I want all lights out on the yacht."

"All lights out!" echoed Cullen. "You're not meaning navigation lights, too?"

"There seems to be no other shipping about, so the risk would be very small."

The look on Cullen's face indicated that he had always suspected his employers were mad and now he was sure of it.

"If you or Miss Kitty want to cruise without lights you'll have to take over," he said patiently. "I resign my job see? You've Mr. Smallbridge's authority to do anything you like with me. But I can't sail contrary to navigation regulations, I've got my master's certificate to think about."

For a moment while the mildly outraged Cullen held grimly to the wheel Roger was started into a sense of his own wild folly. What was he doing here, crisscrossing on this small ship in the darkness under the heights of an unknown coast? Those years climbing to the top of the hardware import industry—what had become of them? They were as much use now as if he had thrown them overboard.

At that moment the wheel house door opened and Kitty slipped inside. Her slim, straight figure was tense, her face the picture of cool bravery above the brown fur coat buttoned close under her chin. Her eyes glowed at him.

IN EXTREME TENSION

Kitty's voice with a breathless shake in it exclaimed softly in the darkness: "Well we've done our bit; now we must wait!"

"If no one is on the look out we'll be nicely had," said Geoffrey.

"In that case we'll wait an hour and try again," said Roger.

They composed themselves to wait as best they could for the sound they could not expect to hear—perhaps for hours—the splash of oars of an approaching boat.

"We'd better keep a look out until something happens—if it ever does," said Geoffrey.

Geoffrey said he wanted to stay on deck and would watch. Kitty went below. Roger having left his cigarettes in the salon, followed her. In the salon they stumbled round pulling the curtains more closely over the port holes and the blinds over the skylight. Roger tied a dark handkerchief over the light above the table, and Kitty turned it on.

wind was blowing. The patch of light in the cockpit of the launch served only to show them a ready aimed rifle holding them helpless there on the trembling jetty which lurched to every slap of the sea.

Another instant and the launch crew had cast off; with a burst of chugging it drew away, the man with the rifle dropped it, took down the lantern on the cabin roof and extinguished it. All lights, out the launch turned tail and headed for sea, and a moment later its white painted shape was lost in the night.

The chug of the engine came more and more faintly, and the wind carrying it away, drowned it altogether in the hubbub of the water round the jetty.

Cullen was the first to speak.

"That's that! And what comes next?"

Kitty didn't say a word; Roger felt blindly for a cigarette.

Time passed as they sat there in the dim light at the saloon table, waiting in an extremity of tension, Roger's mind was almost entirely occupied with thoughts of Kitty. He had climbed to her level, personally already in proving himself capable of independent thought and fearless action. If he could do that he felt a smouldering certainty that he could he would overcome the rest.

He had spread a map of Majorca on the table he noticed the warm tan of her slender hand as she played with an exquisite carved jade paperweight she had placed on the map to keep it down. She interrupted his train of thought to ask him the time.

He glanced at his watch. "Seven minutes past midnight." She gazed at him then bent her head. The effect of her look so held him that for a moment he didn't listen when she began to speak.

"But I think I should tell you," she was saying as he controlled his attention. "In case anything should happen. And there's no real reason for keeping it from you. In a few minutes you may meet him; or if anything goes wrong and you don't then I think you should know."

"Should know what?"

"The name of the prisoner. The name of the man we're waiting for."

"Oh."

He waited to hear, with interest, not with any great curiosity; it didn't seem particularly relevant.

"His people are old friends of my father. He was just down from Cambridge when he joined the International's. Erdhart is his name—Gavin Erdhart."

Roger stared at her. The cabin, the night outside, Majorca, all rhyme and reason in the circumstances of their errand seemed to explode into fantastic nothingness.

"Erdhart?" he said harshly. "Gavin Erdhart?"

"Yes."

"They live at Dorking?"

"Yes, why?"

In her anxiety she let the jade paperweight slip and jumped at the crash that it made on the table.

"I think you've been misinformed," said Roger slowly, and drily. "I was at school with Gavin Erdhart. He's not in Majorca. I met him in London three days ago, on the morning before I left."

Kitty stared. Her face coloured.

"You couldn't have!"

"But I did. I met him in Southampton Row as I said he had been in Spain, and had been back a month. There must be some mistake."

"None on my side!"

Roger rose, his face drawn, and suddenly seeming years older.

Kitty rose too.

"But they said again and again that the prisoner was Gavin Erdhart. One of them said he had met the Brigadier-General—Gavin's father," she hesitated. "But then—then that on earth does all this mean?"

Whitefaced Roger gazed at her. He didn't know what it meant. He couldn't guess. He only knew that for some thirty hours he had been blind. He had been blind to everything but the extraordinary impression she had made on him. Deceived by it, victim of a joke or a hoax of some sort, he had brought the yacht to Majorca he had betrayed Smallbridge's trust he had thrown away years of effort!

"It's some mistake, perhaps," he said, but hardly heard his own words, so utterly was he sunk in disillusion.

She cried sharply.

"What's that?"

They heard Geoffrey's voice hailing them softly; and even as he did so, another sound—the faint chug-chug of a motor boat engine.

Kitty was out of the saloon like an arrow from a bow. Roger caught her up on the companion ladder, where she was telling Geoffrey urgently as he stood above her on the deck.

"Geoff, it's wrong—it's a hoax or something. Mr. Kent saw Gavin in London four days ago. There's something wrong. He isn't here; there's some mistake."

Geoffrey was silent for a moment, except to say feebly:

"What?"

CHAPTER MAROONED

Eight, perhaps ten minutes later, the launch began to lose speed. A dark humped shape had appeared ahead of them, outlined against the stars; as Roger peered over the side he could make out a faint pale line across the bows of the launch. He felt a sudden relief.

"We're running ashore!" he told Geoffrey, who was sitting next to him.

Away in the distance still astern, the Manreal light glowed considerably smaller, was still watching them with its steady red eye.

Dropping to half speed the launch

Members of the Junior C. W. L. will have to accustom themselves to a new meeting date . . . for the past several years, the League has been meeting on Thursday evenings, but due to the change of Hollinger pay night to that date (requiring that many of the members work later), the meetings will take place on Tuesday evening in 1941.

One of the members remarked that she'd probably find herself "trotting to the basement of the Church of Nativity on the first Thursday evening of the month, and wondering what had happened to all the other members."

One little Timmins girl is quite firm about her "best Christmas present" . . . on Christmas night she saw her Daddy in her dreams and "he was just like real" . . . says the little lady "he told me to take good care of mommy, and then he went away" . . . the little girl's Daddy is serving with His Majesty's forces in England.

Congratulations and best wishes to Dr. and Mrs. David Horwitz, whose marriage was a lovely event on Sunday . . . the groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Horwitz, of Timmins, now a resident physician at Rochester State Hospital, Rochester, N.Y., and the very attractive bride is a Toronto girl . . . a home wedding, the ceremony was a very beautiful one, attended by a large number of the Hebrew population of the district . . . when the couple left on the Northland for their new home, the bride threw her bouquet from the train . . . it was caught by her youngest sister, Miss Rivli Ourin, of Toronto.

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