

# Who Flung *the* Beauty's \$30,000 Necklace Overboard?

*A Deep-Sea Mystery of Just What Happened After the Gay Little Midnight Party*



Miss Egels, Snapped When She Sailed on "La France." The Camera Caught a Glimpse of the Necklace, Peeping Out from Her Sables.



Louise Groody, the Dancer, Who Consoled the Fair Owner When the Diamonds Disappeared.

The Steamship "La France." Its Promenade Deck Was the Scene of the Mystery.



Jeanne Egels—at the Threshold of Her Artistic Career.

(C) Thomas Payton.

WHEN fascinating Jeanne Egels, all kinds of a star, tripped down the gangplank of a transatlantic liner, ship news reporters gave her an appreciative squint, noted the latest cut in Paris skirts, and then asked one another why Miss Egels somehow seemed "different."

It wasn't her face—pink and pliant as ever. It wasn't her manner—she bubbled about her wonderful time abroad. Nor her chic frock nor her dashing hat. But she did lack something—oh! the ship news slouts observed that Miss Egels, famous for her taste in shimmering jewelry, wore not a single bauble. A slight omission, but—there might be a story in it. For when Miss Egels sailed for Europe a few weeks before, she had rather dazzled the boys by her gorgeous diamond rings and her \$30,000 rope of diamonds.

"My necklace? Oh, behave!"

But keen eyes caught a flush on Miss Egels' cheeks, and casual inquiry at the Customs revealed no necklace, taxed or exempted.

"There were some platinum rings," remarked the inspector, "that is, wrecks of rings. All crushed up like a steam-roller hit them. She said it was somebody's feet—musta been big feet, I'll tell the world. No duty—it happened when she went over. You're welcome, boys."

And there the story might have died if the notion of those crushed rings and the missing necklace hadn't persistently piqued the curiosity of the ship news gang. And when the ship news gang began to interview a few of the people who crossed to France with Jeanne Egels, they unearthed a sea mystery as baffling as the story of the Flying Dutchman or any other ocean legends, and much more romantic. They loved the necklace—after a fashion.

It is somewhere at the oozy bottom of the Atlantic or adorning a mermaid, or reposing in the lining of some fish not too choosy about his diet. And they confirmed what happened to the rings. It was feet—feet furiously jumping up and down—that cracked them and crushed them and ground them into the promenade deck of the steamship La France.

But what the ship news reporters can't find out—and what a lot of Broadway gossipers would like to know—is whose hand plucked the necklace from Miss Egels' slim throat and flung it forty fathoms deep, and whose feet performed the clog on Miss Egels' other sparklers?

More a mystery than a mystery still, what could possibly have been the idea of making anyone mad enough to fling a fortune to the fishes and cut his patent-leather pumps all up, kicking diamonds around?

Miss Egels, it is established, was the center of a gay little group aboard La France. There was Clifton Webb, the dancer, and Clifton Webb's mother, and Louise Groody, another Broadway star. And there also was sailing at the last minute, Jimmy Auditors, New York's "millionaire stevedore," as bluff and democratic as when he used to shove banana crates along the East River docks, before he built a fortune out of the business.

Much of the gaiety, say observing passengers, was contributed by Mr. Auditors, who was an old friend of Miss Egels and who had a spacious stateroom and a phonograph and a pleasant habit of inviting everybody to a party after the steamer got well out to sea. It was early one morning after such a merrymaking that Miss Egels decided to take a stroll.

Just what happened above decks then, only the stars and the sea know. Unless you count Miss Egels and the mysterious

owner of the hands and feet that did such dreadful things to all her Tiffany pretties. But, below decks a few minutes later, this did happen, according to passengers on "La France."

Louise Groody, in silky negligee, was stifling a yawn and adjusting her boudoir cap before the mirror of her stateroom, when a rush of feathery footsteps sounded in the passage and some one hammered wildly at her door.

Miss Groody leisurely turned the key, opened the door, and uttered a little

shriek of surprise. For there stood Jeanne Egels, a picture—hair streaming, cheeks burning, eyes blazing, lips moving but saying nothing.

"Is it a wreck?" gasped Miss Groody.

But it wasn't a wreck—of ships, anyway. Occupants of neighbor staterooms, awakened and more than eagerly interested, heard what they later described as "a mean monologue." It went, they say, something like this:

"The brute—the brute! He grabbed me

like I was a sack of something and jerked the necklace right off my neck and threw it overboard! He threw it overboard—my diamond necklace! Oh, dear—the brute! And he jerked my rings off my fingers and threw them on the deck and stamped on them and stamped on them."

The slam of a door muffled the monologue just when it was getting most interesting, and though Miss Groody's neighbors almost split their ears a-straining, they got nothing after that but a low mur-

mur. And that was all the ship news reporters got, too, when they began their little investigation.

So the fair Jeanne is mourning the loss of her glittering trinkets right now, though not mourning very hard, apparently, for diamonds or no diamonds she is making bewildering social appearances in New York as though nothing had happened to mar the serenity of her young life.

At the Sixty Club dances in the Ritz, into which the story of the far-flung necklace has trickled, nobody bothers even to express sympathies, for Miss Egels is the most admired of the beautiful women there, and her slender neck is attractive enough without any trimmings.

Miss Groody, who recently got her divorce and announced her engagement to a Wall Street broker, giggles when asked about the maritime episode, and says she never talks for publication.

Miss Egels, with a pretty frown, says it is deplorable that a girl can't be associated with the stage without becoming the subject of all sorts of wild rumors.

So the ship news reporters went to see the private detective force of the line that operates the La France. No complaint had been entered of any injury to Miss Egels—not even to her feelings. Yes, one of the ship's officers had turned in a verbal recital of the necklace story, as it was buzzed about on board ship, but no official cognizance had been taken of it.

And there the story rests, up in the air, while there the necklace rests, at the bottom of the sea.

Miss Egels' most recent New York engagement was in "The Night Watch," in which she was the heroine of a sea melodrama on board an ocean ship at midnight. None of the ship news reporters remembered that, which shows that even ship news reporters aren't infallible.