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Slow Boat From Marseilles

By Michael Hastings

continued

OLIVER INVESTIGATES

Vanya Milany looked up into John Oliver's face. There was a pleading expression in her grey eyes. And more than a suspicion of trouble there.

"I feel so sorry for him," she said. "He is so distressed. And he blames himself bitterly. He does talk a bit wildly, I know; but I feel that he's so sincere. He is most eager to talk to you about it; but he feels that he cannot come along to your cabin. Will you see him? I promised him that I would ask you."

Oliver smiled at her.

"Of course I'll see him," he said. "Mind you, I don't think that I can help in any way. I know that it must have happened during my watch; but I had no time to spare for what might be taking place on deck. The fog demanded all my attention. I'd decided to take the wheel myself."

"Dr. Prinz told us a little about it," said Vanya. A sparkle came into her eyes. "You saved us, didn't you? It was your calmness."

"I happened to be on duty — that was all there was to it. I did no more than anybody else would have done."

"Didn't it look — almost frightening?"

"Yes. It was like a phantom ship. Until she was near and I could distinguish some detail. Then I knew at once what she was. She'd most probably been abandoned in a storm. One mast had gone, and the other had crashed upon the deck. We'd an emergency light rigged up in the bows, and the wreck looked more ghostly because of the yellow beams of light and wisps of fog which drifted past."

"I think I should have been frightened to have done anything," the girl said.

"That's training," said Oliver, with a smile. "It makes all the difference when you know that you have a job to do. It's not having a job — or not knowing what's its all about that scares one."

A VITAL CONVERSATION

"Steady," Oliver cautioned. "We must do nothing rash. We must think about this—very carefully."

"Yes," said Jan. "For even if you are with me—we are two against a ship!"

"Exactly. I want you to promise me something."

"Anything," said Jan eagerly. "Anything that you say."

"We both have suspicions—ugly suspicions. The only way that we can arrive at the truth is by confiding in each other. But wherever our suspicions lead, we must be careful. We must give no sign."

"Yes," said Jan. "I understand that."

"Very well. You perhaps know that I was on duty at the time. We were still in the fog—and I decided to take over the wheel myself. Very soon after I had stopped the engines and gone astern in order to avoid collision with the derelict which appeared in our path the captain came up to the bridge. The light was not good; but I could see that he was in a distressed state. His face was white, and he had great difficulty in keeping his voice steady. While I explained to him about sighting the wreck, I thought I heard a splash. I could not leave the wheel, and he assured me that I was mistaken."

Zakas looked worried. This was the decision which he had been dreading. Almost, it made him regret that he had gone to Prinz with

Contract Let For 360-Mile Railway

TIMMINS, Oct. 31—(CP)—J. R. Timmins president of Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway Co., announced yesterday that a contract for the completion of a railway from Seven Islands to the Labrador Quebec sets produced a distance of 360 miles, has been let to a group of contractors.

The contractors are headed by the Canadian firms of Carlier Construction Co. Ltd., of Montreal, MacNamara Construction Co. Ltd., of Toronto, the Fred Mannix Co., of Calgary, with participation by the Morrison Knudsen Co. of Canada, Ltd.

Equipment already is being moved in and construction will be started before winter sets in. It is expected to complete the railway in 1954 and start the shipment of iron ore across the line in 1955. Ore shipments are expected to reach 10,000,000 a year shortly thereafter.

Scots Electors Favor Separate Parliament

GLASGOW, Oct. 26—(Reuters)—An unofficial plebiscite among Scottish electors tonight produced a thumping majority in favor of setting up a separate Scottish parliament.

The Scottish National Covenant Committee, organization pressing for Scottish home rule, conducted the plebiscite by sending voting cards to the 48,000 electors in the Scots division of Glasgow, which has just voted in a by-election for the House of Commons in London.

More than 25,000 voted in the unofficial additional polled those in favor of a Scottish parliament totalled 20,800; those against 4,227; 57 papers were invalidated.

The question on which they were asked to vote was: "Are you in favor of the getting up as soon as possible of a Scottish parliament to deal with Scottish affairs: it being understood that matters relating to the Crown, defence, foreign and imperial policy, customs and excise, will remain under the control of the United Kingdom Parliament in which Scotland will still have its members?"

his story. Yet that was something which had to be done. He felt trapped. There had been murder already—and he was leading to another. Would there be no end to it? These men, Prinz and Rutter, were ruthless.

"That's not going to be easy," he said timidly.

"On the contrary," said Prinz calmly. "It will be a simple matter. It shall happen to-night, while Lacoste is on duty."

"Can we not leave it for a day or so?" asked Zakas, clinging weakly to the idea of delaying the crisis as long as possible.

"And give him further opportunities of making our own position more precarious?" Prinz asked scornfully. "Zakas! You're a weakling." His voice became harder more like that of an automaton.

"It shall be done to-night. That is the order given by Dr. Rutter. Am I to tell him that you disobey?" Zakas cringed.

"Of course not, doctor," he said quickly. "You know that I have always done my best to carry out instructions."

"Then let there be no further nonsense," said Prinz curtly. "I will explain to you the plan. Listen carefully. I have already told the passengers that there will be a little entertainment in the saloon to-night."

Zakas looked puzzled.

"Simpleton!" snapped Prinz. "Do you not understand that they are

uneasy about the man who vanished overboard? For the moment it suits our purpose to keep them docile. Later"—he jerked his shoulders—"their feelings will be of no account. The entertainment will take their minds from the tragedy, will reassure them. Also, it will keep them down below. That gives you a clear field for dealing with Oliver."

for a drink."

"If he refuses?"

"Are you captain—or not?" demanded Prinz irritably. "Have you no idea of how to use your authority?"

"But if I order him to do it—will he not be suspicious? He is that already, you know."

To be continued

Canadian Dollar

NEW YORK, Oct. 31—(CP)—The Canadian dollar was down 1-8 of a cent at a discount of 4 5-8 per cent in terms of United States funds in closing foreign exchange dealings today. The pound sterling was unchanged at \$2.80 1-8.

MONTREAL, Oct. 30—(CP)—Offices of the Combined Jewish Appeal were broken into by thieves during the week-end and an estimated \$8,000 was stolen.



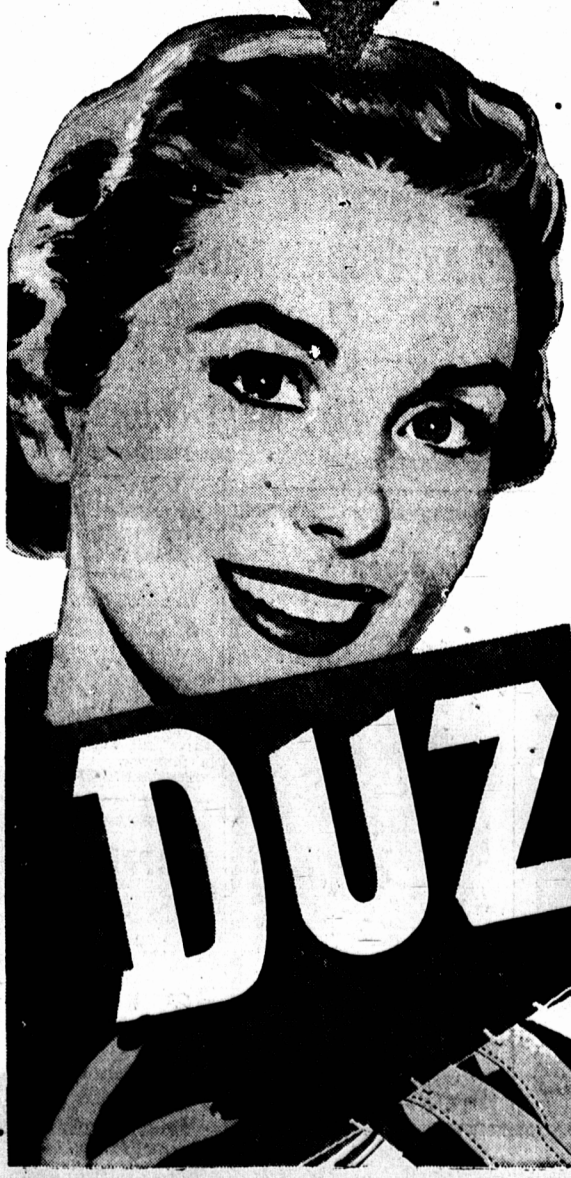
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The Neighbors

By George Clark



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