

Start here.

The Enamoured Lady tilted gently with the swell of the ocean. A crisp salty scent permeated the ship and the murmurs of the ship's passengers combined with the spray of the ocean created a kind of full silence. Like white noise. I sat in the most lady like position I could muster, I only succeeded in falling off the lounge, petticoat askew. I glanced across the galley and spotted the lady Orlando in the dim candle light. She was pining away, obviously in deep thought and fixated on her knee, constantly staring at it.

I emulated her posture as best I could and cursed my luck. No, I didn't want to jinx myself. Luck had nothing to do with it. It was my own irresponsibility. I thought losing my fare money was pain enough, but a man has not truly known pain until he has spent the week on a woman.

My wig itched. My feet hurt. My corset ~~was~~ suffocating me.

I sighed.

Within moments a man stood before me. "Tribbled, m'lady? Perhaps I could fetch you some water."

"S-sure." I responded, startled.

I glanced around the galley once more. Men played cards, women sat pointedly, laughing at the jokes of the pompous fools saturated in a cloud of their own self importance. The ocean's white noise had set in again.

I waited.

I sighed.

All men, ~~unattended~~ attended by a woman or not gazed in my direction. Those seated by themselves seemed to have the intent to move. Few seconds had passed ~~until~~ ^{until} one of them did. Captain Nicholas strolled in my direction, boots resounding the entire room with soft thumps.

"Miss Clark, can I be of any assistance? A glass of water perhaps. The red in your cheek suggests you are flustered. I cannot blame you milady, such long trips are not suitable for such dainty women."

No. The red in my cheek suggests I am allergic to this damned make-up and I happen to be the

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Best sailor in my small town.

"Oh, no that's quite alright captain. A gentleman is fetching me a glass as we speak."

Right on cue, the boat arrived with my beverage.

"Ah, Adam you know Miss Clark as well?"

"Well not quite. I saw she was unattended and when I thought she was troubled I offered my assistance"

I was given the glass and then once again talked about me while they stood over me.

"Well, not quite unattended" Nicholas chuckled.

"She's my guest as I am paying her fare"

"Oh I see." Adam said, nodding in my direction.

"So, a lady friend of yours, then"

Lord, no.

"Actually, I happened across her after coming into the docks. Poor woman was penniless -"

Pissed it all away...

"and drugged -"

Blind drunk

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Start here.

"- and all she had to her name was her dress and an unintelligible note pinned to the front"

Well that's what happens when you get drunk, wear a dress on a belt and your bested friend pins an I.O.U to your lovely new attire instead of paying up.

"Quite the mystery, isn't it Miss Clark?"

"Oh yes, I'm just ever so glad you rescued me" I swooned with a fake voice I had become disturbingly competent at.

"You gentlemen don't make a fuss over me, though". I batted my eyes in their direction.

"Nonsense Madam, you are our highest priority".

As they continued to talk I had already begun forging the newest plans of my dilemma-turned-con. A little swoon here, a sigh there and I am waited on hand and foot. I could let the wig itch, as long as I have an army of gentlemen ready to massage it better.

Was I really ok with this, though? Flirting with other men. Well, could it be that wrong? I've acted like a woman for a week now and will have to maintain

the charade for the remaining month. I was wondering if talking the talk will make me walk the walk. After all, Captain Nicholas is quite handsome.

Wait, what?

Mindful later, I was in my own quarters. The lady in the mirror stared back at me. Miss Clark so she had become known. My quarters are the one place I could be myself.

So why wasn't I taking the wig off?

A knock at my door disrupted my worried thoughts.

A young man greeted me with a smile.

"Miss Clark, is it? The captain sends a note for you."

After thanking him and once again convincing myself to my quarters I read the note. A single question, requesting my presence at a private dinner with the captain.

I sat, flustered for real this time.

"I'm taking this lady thing way too seriously." I told myself, at least I told the man version of myself, wherever he was. However it was dinner with the captain as a woman or being thrown overboard as a

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man.

This should've been a hard decision. Perhaps it
would have been for Clark Smith. But I'm
Miss Clark now.

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