

Bourne
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Go Margie, Go

by Sue Hitchcock

“I’ll have to go.”

Margie had been dragged out of the cold North Sea shivering, juddering like one of the fairground motors and Roma had wrapped her in a blanket and urged her below deck to cuddle her warm. Margie felt quite hot after a while but the juddering didn’t stop.

“You’re not still cold, surely, Margie?”

“No, it’s not that.”

“What’s up, then, Lovey?”

“ I’ve killed him, haven’t I?”

“You’re not a murderer. Anyway we don’t know. He’s a strong swimmer. He probably just swam for shore. Good riddance, I say.”

“I was holding an awl. Where is that? I must have stabbed him.”

“We didn’t see any blood. What on earth did he think he was doing. He knew I never wanted to see him again.”

Roma hugged Margie close and lay the girl’s head on her shoulder. The trembling continued, so Roma got up, “I’ll go and check again with Declan. Maybe he has seen something.”

Alone Margie felt no reassurance, and moreover she doubted her own feelings. For a moment, up the mast, she had looked down on the two men wrestling, Declan intent on throwing the intruder overboard, while the other, Roma's tormentor, wanted to claim her and her ship. Margie had always felt the love between her and Roma was exclusive, with no room for men at all. Declan was helping her to achieve happiness and she believed her brother was unselfish, keeping his distance from Roma, until last week. She had found Declan with his ear on Roma's belly. Why had she thought Roma was merely putting on weight? She was obviously pregnant.

For one second, as Margie fell from the mast, she wasn't sure which man she wanted to be rid of. Was it a last minute decision to grab Len rather than her brother? There was no alternative - she would have to go, but where? Away from Britain there was only one person she knew and she had no idea whether he would remember her, or if he did, would he help her?

After changing her wet clothes, Margie retrieved her phone from its usual place in her bunk alongside the mattress. Dino's number was long and added to that the ringing went on for ages, all the while Margie's heart was racing anxiously,

"Dino, pronto?"

"Hello, Dino. Do you remember me, Margie, from Twydall Academy?"

"Are you the long-jump girl?"

"Yeah, that's me."

"Are you ok? How are things at school?"

"I haven't been there since the Covid started. I have been living on a boat with a friend since then. Look, I need your help. Can I come to see you? I don't know if there's some work I could do, where you live, but I've done something terrible. I might have to change my name and never go back to England."

"What could be that terrible?"

"Will you help me? I can't talk now. Please, Dino, please."

"Ok, come."