

# Kathleen and the Great Secret

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The American Weekly

Section of the Washington Times, Sunday, December 19, 1920

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## No. 7—In Which the Lovers Face New Dangers.

WITH no control, the great junk, drifting in the eddies and tides, rolling in a lazy southern sea, went ashore, grounding at a sharp list on a sandy shoal. Jim and Kathleen rowed away from her colorful side, her quiet decks, her tall masts, her pennants lazily fluttering in the yellow air, to a shore yellow and brown, barren, inhospitable.

Where they landed they found no sign of life; only dismal reaches of rocks and sand. They struck straight inland, and at dusk, when Kathleen was near to whimpering and clung tight to Jim's hand with weariness, they saw the dim wink of a fire. They struggled to its brightening glare, and stumbled into the midst of a caravan at camp around the warming blaze. There were strange figures in caps with ear-flaps, in loose jackets, with fur about the necks that Kathleen eyed enviously in the deep chill of the desert night. There were drivers and resting camels, and a shaggy

pony or two, and great bales of goods, and broad tents sprawling wide like outstretched wings. Overhead a deep sky powdered with stars, and all about the waves of the sand-sea rolling away into the desert.

The old merchant chief welcomed them kindly to his fire and tents. He clothed Kathleen in the jacket, trousers and shoes of his Mongolian people; he gave Jim, shivering in his thin shirt, half ribbons, a big cloak like his own, padded and furred. With brave show of sincerity he promised to lead them back to civilization, but in his heart this crafty, cold-hearted old man was determined at the first good time to sell these two comely young strangers who came out of nowhere in the twilight as slaves.

—NELLY BRINKLEY

(To Be Continued Next Sunday)