

322 THE BEACH OF DREAMS

"Oh, my faith," said the old fellow, "you will easily find a crew."

"Yes, but I won't easily find a captain. I want you."

The Captain laughed.

"And how about *La Belle Arlesienne*?" asked he.

"You must leave her behind you to be sold. In my service money is no object. Now as to this boat, who is the agent from whom I can buy her?"

"Latour and Company," replied the old fellow, for the first time in his life in the powerful grip of wealth and not knowing exactly whether the great golden hand was holding him heels or head up.

"How far is Latour's from here?"

"Not far."

The girl stood for a moment looking round her at the white deck, the masts, the rigging, and as she looked some hand seemed to draw aside a veil revealing the stupid immovable houses of the land filled with stupid immovable people bound and tied up by soul-killing conventions — and on the other hand the old mystery of ships, those homes of Freedom on the road that has no boundaries.

Then she turned to Bontemps.

"Come," said she, "let us go to Latour's."

.

"Cléo," said the distracted Madame de Brie, writing to a friend, "Cléo must always have been