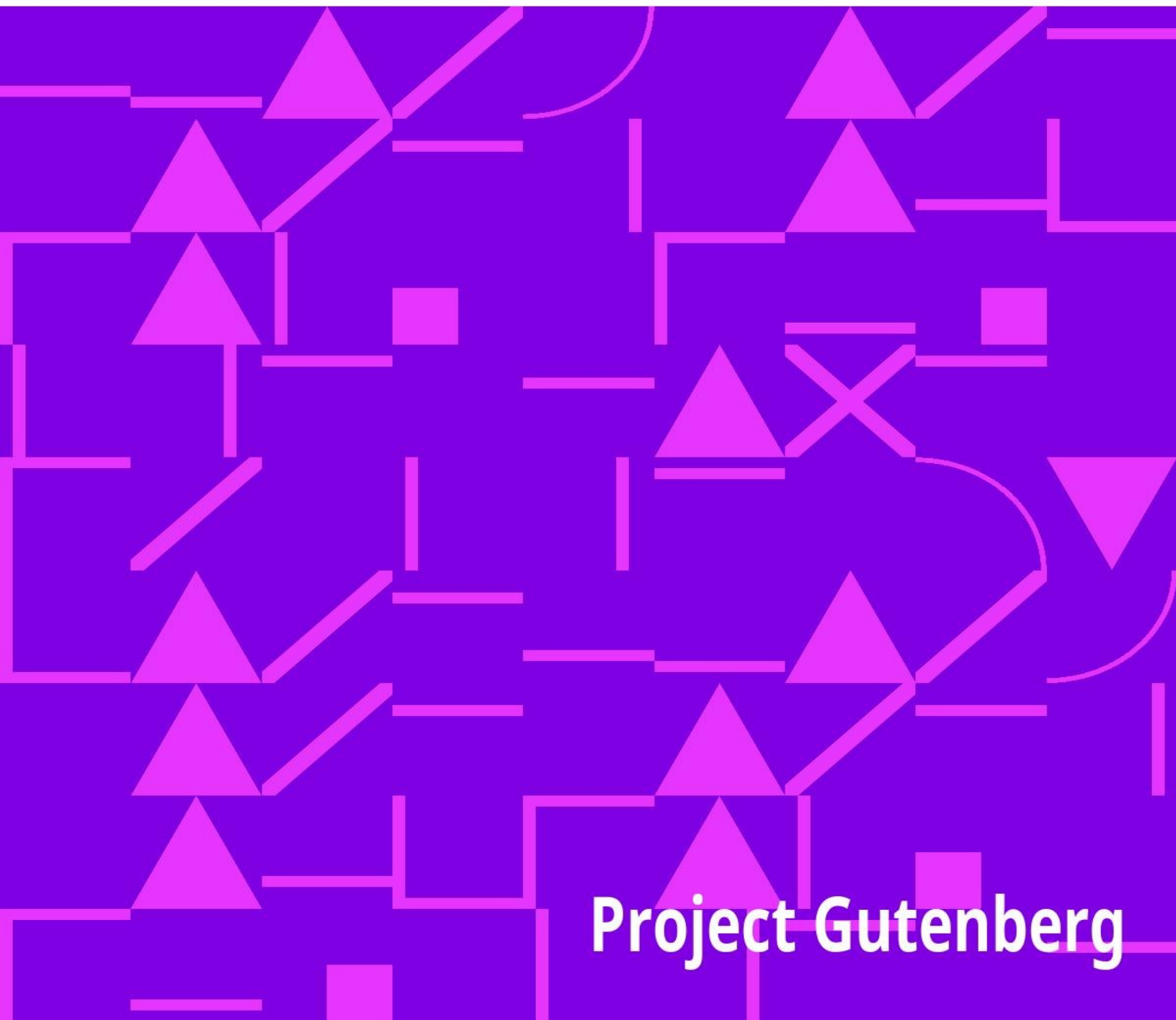


Frank and Andy Afloat; Or, The Cave on the Island

Vance Barnum



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FRANK AND ANDY AFLOAT

Or

The Cave on the Island

by

VANCE BARNUM

Author of "Frank and Andy at Boarding School," "Frank and Andy in a Winter Camp," "The Joe Strong Series."

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FRANK AND ANDY AFLOAT

CHAPTER I

HIT BY A WHALE

"How about a race to the dock, Frank?"

"With whom, Andy?"

"Me, of course. I'll beat you there—loser to stand treat for the ice cream sodas. It's a hot day."

"Yes, almost too warm to do any speeding," and Frank Racer, a lad of fifteen, with a quiet look of determination on his face, rested on the oars of his skiff, and glanced across the slowly-heaving salt waves toward his brother Andy, a year younger.

"Oh, come on!" called Andy, with a laugh rippling over his tanned face.
"You're afraid I'll beat you."

"I am, eh?" and there was a grim tightening of the older lad's lips.
"Well, if you put it that way, here goes! Are you ready?"

"Just a minute," pleaded Andy, and he moved over slightly on his seat in order better to trim the boat. He took a tighter grip on the oars, and nodded toward his brother, still with that tantalizing smile on his face.

"Let her go!" he called a moment later, adding: "I can taste that chocolate soda now, Frank! Yum-yum!"

"Better save your breath for rowing," counseled Frank good-naturedly, as he bent

to the ashen blades with a will.

The two boats—for each of the Racer lads had his own craft—were on a line, and were headed for a long dock that ran out into the quiet inlet of the Atlantic which washed the shores of the little settlement known as Harbor View, a fishing village about thirty miles from New York.

"Wow! Here's where I put it all over you by about six lengths!" boasted Andy Racer, paying no attention to his brother's well-meant advice, and then the two lads got into the swing of the oars, and the skiffs fairly leaped over the waves that rolled in long swells.

Both boys having spent nearly all their summer vacations at the coast resort, which was something of a residence place for summer colonists, as well as a fishing centre, were expert oarsmen, sturdy and capable of long exertion. They were nearly matched in strength, too, in spite of the difference in their ages. They had taken a long, leisurely row that summer morning and were on their way back when Andy proposed the race.

"Row! Row! Why don't you put some speed in your strokes, Frank?" called the younger brother.

"That's all right—you won't want to do any speeding by the time you get to the dock," and Frank glanced over his shoulder to where the public dock stretched out into the bay like some long water-snake. "It's nearly two miles there, and the swell is getting heavier."

Frank spoke quickly, and then relapsed into silence. It was characteristic of him to do whatever he did with all his might, while his more fun-loving brother sometimes started things and then left off, saying it was "too much trouble."

For a time Andy's skiff was in the lead, and then, as he found the exertion too much, he eased up in his strokes, and lessened the number of them.

"I thought you were going it a bit too heavy," remarked Frank, with a smile.

"Oh, you get out!" laughed Andy. "I'll beat you yet. But I like your company, that's why I let you catch up to me."

"Oh, yes!" answered Frank, half sarcastically. "But why don't you stop talking?"

You can't talk and row, I've told you that lots of times. That's the reason you lost that race with Bob Trent last week—you got all out of breath making fun of him."

"I was only trying to get him rattled," protested Andy.

"Well, he got the race just by sticking to it. But go on. I don't care. I'm going to win, but I don't want to take an unfair advantage of you."

"Oh, lobsters! I'm not asking for a handicap. You never can beat me in a thousand years." And, with a jolly laugh Andy began to sing:

"The stormy winds do blow—do blow,
And I a winning race will row—yo ho!
You'll come in last,
Your time is past,
Out on the briny deep, deep, deep!
Out on the briny deep!"

"All right, have your way about it," assented Frank good naturedly. "I can stand it if you can," and with that he increased his strokes by several a minute, until his skiff had shot ahead of his brother's, and was dancing over the waves that, now and then, brilliantly reflected the sun as it came from behind the fast-gathering clouds.

"Oh, so you are really going to race?" called Andy, somewhat surprised by the sudden advantage secured by his brother. "Well, two can play at that game," and he, also, hit up the pace until in front of both boats there was a little smother of foam, while the green, salty water swirled and sparkled around the blades of the broad ashen oars, for the boys did not use the spoon style.

For perhaps two minutes both rowed on in silence, and it was so quiet, not a breath of wind stirring, that each one could hear the labored breathing of the other. The pace was beginning to tell, for, though Frank was not over-anxious to make record time to the dock, he was not going to let his brother beat him, if he could prevent it.

"I shouldn't wonder but what there'd be a storm," spoke Andy again, after a pause. He couldn't keep quiet for very long at a time.

"Um," was all the reply Frank made.

"What's the matter; lost your tongue overboard?" questioned Andy with a chuckle.

Frank did not reply.

"I'm going to pass you," called the younger brother a moment later when, by extreme exertion, he had regained the place he had held, with the bow of his craft in line with Frank's. Then Andy fairly outdid himself, for, though Frank was rowing hard, his brother suddenly shot ahead.

"It's about time you did some rowing," was Frank's quiet remark, and then he showed that he still had some power in reserve, for he caught up to his brother, and held his place there with seeming ease, though Andy did not let up in the furious pace he had set.

"Oh, what's the use of killing yourself?" at length the younger lad fairly panted. "It's—it's farther than I thought."

He began losing distance, but Frank, too, had no liking for the fast clip, so he, likewise, rowed slower until the two boats were on even terms, bobbing over the long ground swell that seemed to be getting heavier rapidly.

From time to time one brother or the other glanced over his shoulder, not so much to set his course, for they could do that over the stern, having previously taken their range, but in order to note the aspect of the fast-gathering clouds which were behind them.

The wind, which had died out shortly after they had started on their row that morning, now sprang up in fitful gusts, with a rather uncanny, moaning sound, as if it was testing its strength before venturing to develop into a howling storm.

"Don't you think it's going to kick up a rumpus?" asked Andy, tired of keeping quiet.

"Um," spoke Frank again, for his breath was needed to keep up his speed in the swells.

"There you go again—old silent-face!" and Andy laughed to take the sting out of

his words. "Your tongue will get so tired being still so long that it won't know how to wiggle when you want it."

Frank smiled, and glanced over his shoulder again. He noted that the dock, which was their goal, was now a little more than half a mile distant. He could see several fishing boats and other craft making for the more sheltered part of the harbor. Frank was calculating the space yet to be covered, to decide when he should begin the final spurt, for, though the race was only a friendly one, such as he and his brother often indulged in, yet he wanted to win it none the less. He decided that it would not do to hit up the pace to the limit just yet.

"It's a heap sight longer than I thought it was," came from Andy, after a bit. "What say we call it off?"

"Not on your life!" exclaimed Frank vigorously. "I'm going to finish whether you do or not—but you have to buy the sodas if I do."

"I will not. I'll finish, too, and I'll beat you."

Once more came a period of silent rowing. Then, whether it was because he pulled more strongly on one oar than on the other, or because of the drift of the current, and the effect of the wind, the younger lad suddenly found himself close to the boat of his brother.

At that moment Frank had once more turned to look at the dock, and Andy could not resist the chance to play a little trick on him. Skillfully judging the distance, he suddenly swept back his left oar, so that the flat blade caught the crest of a long roller and a salty spray flew in a shower over Frank.

"What's that—rain?" Frank cried, turning quickly.

He saw the laughing face of his brother, and guessed what had happened.

"I thought this was a rowing race, not a splashing contest!" he cried good-naturedly.

"It's both," was the answer. Then, though Frank kept on vigorously swinging the oars, Andy paused, rested on the ashen blades, and, holding the handles of both under his left palm for a moment, he pointed out to sea with his right hand, and cried:

"Look! What's that out there, Frank?"

"Oh, ho! No you don't! You don't catch me that way—pretending to show me a sea serpent!" objected the older lad.

"No, really, there's something there—something big and humpy—it's moving, too! Don't you see it? Look, right in line with the Eastern Spit Lighthouse! See!"

Andy stood up in his boat, skillfully balancing himself against the rolling swell, and pointed out to sea. His manner was so earnest that, in spite of the many times he had joked with his brother, Frank ceased rowing and peered to where the extended finger of the younger lad indicated something unusual.

"Smoked star fish! You're right!" agreed Frank, forgetting all about the race now, and standing up in his craft, in order to get a better view.

"What is it?" cried Andy. "A floating wreck?"

"That's no wreck," declared Frank.

"Then what is it?"

"It's a whale, if I'm any judge. A whale, and a big one, too!"

"Dead?"

"I guess so. No—by Jupiter! It's alive, Andy, and it's coming this way!"

"Cracky! If we only had a harpoon or a bomb gun now, that would be the end of Mr. Whale. Let's row out and meet him!"

"Say, are you crazy?" demanded Frank, with some heat.

"Crazy? No; why?"

"Wanting to tackle a whale in these boats! We'd be swamped in a minute! We'd better pull out to one side. Most likely the whale will keep on a straight course, though he'll be stranded if he goes much farther in. The tide's out, and it's shallow here. Pull to one side, Andy—the race is off. Pull out, I tell you!" and Frank swung his skiff around with sudden energy.

"I am not! I'm going to get a nearer view of the whale!" cried Andy. "Maybe he's hurt, or perhaps there's a harpoon with a line fast to it in him. We might get hold of it and—"

"Yes, and go to kingdom come. Nixy! Get out of the way while you've got time. Jinks! He's coming on faster than ever!"

Frank's manner so impressed his brother that the younger lad now began to swing his craft around. They could both see the whale plainly now, even while sitting down, for the great sea animal was nearer.

Then, whether it was some sudden whim, or because he saw the boats and took them for natural enemies, there was a sudden swirling of water and the whale increased his speed, heading straight for the two skiffs that were now almost touching side by side.

"He's coming!" yelled Andy.

"I told you he was!" cried Frank. "Row! Row! Get out of the way!"

This was more easily said than done. In vain did the lads pull frantically on their oars. The whale was now coming on with the speed of an express train. He was headed right for the two boats!

"Pull out! Pull out!" shouted Andy. "He may go between us then!"

It was good advice, and Frank, who was a little the better rower, started to follow it.

But it was too late. On came the monster of the deep, his great head throwing up a huge wave in front of him. Andy was rowing as hard as was his brother until he suddenly jumped his left oar out of the oarlock. In another moment it had gone overboard.

This seemed to attract the attention of the whale to the skiff of the younger lad. The monster might have thought that the occupant of the boat was trying to hurl a harpoon.

Suddenly changing his course, the leviathan, which had been headed for Frank's craft, now turned toward Andy's.

"Look out!" frantically shouted the older lad.

"I can't! He's got me!" screamed Andy.

The next instant there was a splintering, crashing and rending of wood. A shower of spray flew high in the air. Frank's boat rocked on the heavy swell caused by the flukes of the whale, as they went deep into the water after delivering a glancing blow upon the unfortunate Andy's skiff.

Frank had a momentary glance of his brother's boat, with one side smashed down to the water's edge. He saw the green sea pouring in, and he saw Andy standing up, ready to leap overboard. He saw the maddened monster sheering off out to sea again, and then Frank cried:

"I'm coming, Andy! I'm coming! I'll save you! Hold on to your boat! Don't jump!"

The whale disappeared in a smother of foam, as Frank, with desperate energy, bent to his oars and swung his boat in the direction of the sinking one containing his brother.

CHAPTER II

THE WRECKED MOTOR BOAT

"Hold on, Andy! Hold on! You'll float for a while yet!" called Frank, while he threw all his strength upon the oars in the endeavor to reach his brother. He cast anxious eyes about, fearing a return of the whale, but there was no sign of the big creature.

"All right—take your time!" called Andy. "I can keep afloat for quite a while yet. Maybe I won't sink after all."

"I'm not taking any chances," returned Frank, and then he swung his craft up alongside that of his brother. As Andy had said, his skiff was in pretty good condition. This was due to two causes. The blow of the whale's tail had been a glancing one, and the skiff had an unusually high freeboard, so that though it was splintered down to the water edge, not much of the sea had entered.

"I believe she'll float when I'm out of it so she'll ride higher," declared the younger lad. "Take me into your boat, and maybe we can tow mine in and fix it up. It's too good to lose."

"That's right. Wow! But you had a narrow escape!" and Frank looked very grave as he assisted his brother into the undamaged craft. "I thought it was all up with you."

"So did I, when I saw that beast coming for me. But he sheered off just in time. Then I felt sure my boat would fill and sink in an instant, when I saw the water pouring in, after he swiped me, so I got ready to jump. I didn't want to be carried down with it."

"That's right. Say, that's cut through as clean as if done with a knife," and Frank looked at the slash in the side of his brother's boat. It was indeed a sharp cut, and

showed with what awful force the tail of the monster must have descended.

"As much water came pouring in over the side as there did through the hole," went on Andy. "That's what gave me a scare. But did you see the harpoon in that whale?"

"No, was there one?"

"Sure as you're a foot high. There was a short piece of line fast to it, and the whale had a big hole in his side. He's been wounded, probably by a steamer's propeller after he was harpooned up north, or else that's the wound of a bomb gun. I could see it quite plainly."

"Yes, you had a nearer view than I'd want," observed Frank, as he made fast Andy's boat to the stern of his own. As the younger lad had said, his skiff, now that it was higher in the water, because his weight was out of it, took in very little of the sea.

"I guess we can tow it if we bail out," observed Frank. "Are you very wet?"

"Not much—only up to my knees. I was just going to jump in and swim for it when you called to me. Well, here goes for bailing."

"Yes, and if you shift that anchor back to the stern it will raise the bow, and the hole will be so much more out of water. It'll row easier, too."

"Right you are, my hearty. Shiver my timbers! But it's some excitement we've been having!" and Andy laughed.

"Say, I believe you'd joke if your boat was all smashed to pieces, and you were floating around on the back of the whale," observed Frank gravely.

"Of course I would. A miss is as good as a mile and a half. But if I can find my other oar I'll help you row in your boat. It ought to be somewhere around here," and Andy ceased his bailing operations to cast anxious looks over the rolling waves.

"Yes, we'll look for it after we get some of the water out of your craft. I can't get over what a close call you had," and, in spite of the fact that he had been in many dangerous places in his life, Frank could not repress a shudder.

"Oh, forget it!" good-naturedly advised Andy, vigorously tossing water out of his boat with a tin can. "Hello! There's my lost oar out there. Put me over."

"All right," agreed Frank. "I think we've got enough water out so she'll ride high. Now for the dock."

"I guess you'll win the race," observed the younger lad, half regretfully, as he recovered his ashen blade.

"Oh, we'll call it off," said Frank good-naturedly. "We'll have something to tell the folks when we get back to the cottage; eh?"

"I guess. But are you going right home?"

"Why not?"

"Oh, I thought we might row in, and take out our sail boat. I'd like to have another try for that whale. We might get him, and there's money to be made."

"Say, do you mean to tell me you'd take another chance with that whale?" demanded Frank, as he prepared to row.

"Of course I would! It would be safe enough in our catboat. He'd never attack that. We could take our rifles along and maybe plug him. Think of hunting for whales! Cricky! That would be sport!" and Andy sighed regretfully. He seemed to have forgotten the narrow escape he had just experienced. "Come on, let's do it, Frank," he urged. "Don't go up to our cottage at all. If you do mother will be sure to see me all wet. Then she'll want to know how it happened, and the whale will be out of the bag, and we can't go. Let's start right out in the *Gull* as soon as we hit the pier. There won't be any danger, and we might sight the whale. He must be nearly dead by this time."

"I wonder if we could find him," mused Frank.

"Sure!" exclaimed his impulsive brother. "It will be great. There's some grub aboard the *Gull* and we can stay out until nearly dark. Mother doesn't expect us home to dinner, as we said we might go to Seabright. Come on!"

"Well, if you feel able, after—"

"Pshaw! I'm as fit as a fiddle. Let's hit it up, and get to the dock as soon as we can. Think of landing a whale!"

"Or of being lambasted by one," added Frank grimly. Nevertheless, he fell in with his brother's plan, as he usually did. The two boys rowed steadily toward the pier, towing the damaged boat. They were very much in earnest.

In fact, though of different characters, the brothers were very much alike in one trait—they always liked to be doing things. Their name fitted them to perfection; they were "Racers" by title and nature, though Andy was the quicker and more impulsive.

They were the sons of Mr. Richard Racer, a wealthy wholesale silk merchant of New York City. Mr. Racer owned a neat cottage at Harbor View, and his summers were spent there. His wife, Olivia, was a lady fond of society, and when she closed her handsome house in New York, to go to the coast resort for the summer, she transferred her activities there.

While in the metropolis Mrs. Racer spent much time at charitable organizations, and at Harbor View she was a moving spirit in the ladies' tennis and golf clubs.

Mr. Racer traveled back and forth from New York to Harbor View each day during the summer, for his business needed much of his attention. His vacation, however, was an unbroken series of days of pleasure at the coast resort where he and his wife and sons enjoyed life to the utmost.

The two boys had spent so many summers at Harbor View that they were almost as well known there as some of the permanent residents, and they had many friends among the seafaring folk, especially in the lads. They had one or two enemies, as will develop presently, not through any fault of their own, but because certain lads were jealous of our heroes.

"Well, we're here," announced Frank at last, as he swung the boat up alongside the landing stage which rose and fell with the tide.

"And it's a good wind coming up," observed Andy. "We can make good time out in the *Gull*."

"Maybe we'd better beach your boat before we go out, and pull it above high-water mark," suggested Frank. "Some of the seams may have been opened, as

well as this hole being in her, and she might sink."

"Good idea. We'll do it."

As the brothers were ascending the gangway from the float to the pier, preparatory to going out in their sailing craft, they were hailed by an elderly man, whose grizzled, tanned face gave evidence of many days spent on the water under a hot sun.

"Where you boys bound fer now?" the sailor demanded.

"Oh, we're just going out for a little sail, Captain Trent," replied Andy.

"Better not," was the quick advice.

"Why?" Frank wanted to know.

"It's coming on to blow, and it's going to blow hard. Hear that wind?" and the captain, whose son Bob was quite a chum of the Racer boys, inclined his grizzled head toward the quarter whence the breeze came.

"Oh, that's only a cat's paw," declared Andy.

"You'll find it'll turn out to be a reg'lar tomcat 'fore you're through with it," predicted the old salt. "But what happened to your boat, Andy? I see you've got a hole stove in her. Did you run on the rocks?"

"No, something ran into us," replied Frank quickly. "Don't say anything to him about the whale," he remarked to his brother in a low voice.

"What's that about a sail?" demanded the captain, catching some of Frank's words.

"We're going for a sail," spoke Andy quickly. "Come on, Frank."

"Better not!" again cautioned Captain Trent. But our heroes were no different from other boys, and did not heed the warning. Had they done so perhaps this story would not have been written, for the events following their sail that day were unusual, and had a far-reaching effect.

"Come on!" called Andy sharply to his brother, as he saw the captain making ready to start a discussion about the weather. Mr. Trent might also ask more questions about the damaged boat, and neither Andy nor his brother wanted to answer—just yet.

Five minutes later saw the two brothers sailing away from the pier. The breeze was getting stronger every moment, until the rail of their trim boat was under water part of the time.

"Say, it is blowing!" declared Frank.

"Oh, what of it? The *Gull* can stand more than this. Besides we're safe in the harbor, and we may soon sight the whale. Keep a good lookout!"

For some time they sailed on, each one scanning the expanse of the bay, which was now dotted here and there with whitecaps. The boat was heeling over almost too much for comfort.

"Hadn't we better turn back?" asked Frank, after a period of silence, broken only by the swish of the water.

"Of course not," declared the more daring Andy. "It was about here that my boat was stove in. The whale may be around these diggings looking for us."

"Likely—not!" exclaimed Frank decidedly.

There came a fiercer gust of wind, and it fairly howled through the rigging. The waters whitened with spray and foam.

"It's a squall!" yelled Frank. "Better turn back."

"We can't now," shouted Andy at the top of his voice, to make himself heard above the howling of the wind. "We'd better keep on to Seabright. We can lay over there until this blows by. See anything of the whale?"

"No. It's useless to look for him. I'm going to take a reef in the sail."

"That's right. I guess you'd better shorten some of our canvas. I'll hold her as steady as I can while you're doing it. Or shall I lash the helm and help you?"

"No, you stay there. I can manage it."

The storm increased in sudden fury, and it was no easy task to shorten sail with the pressure of the wind on it. But Frank Racer had considerable skill in handling boats, and with his brother at the helm, to ease off when he gave the word, he managed to cast off the throat and peak lines, lower the gaff and sail, and then take a double reef in the canvas.

Even under the smaller spread the *Gull* shot along over the foam-crested waves like some speeding motor boat. Andy was so taken up with watching his brother, and in aiding him as much as he could by shifting the helm as was needful, that he did not look ahead for several minutes. He was recalled to this necessary duty by a sudden, frightened cry from Frank.

"The rocks! Look out for the rocks!" shouted the older lad. "We'll be on 'em in a second! Port your helm! Port!"

Andy desperately threw over the tiller, and with fear-blanced face he looked to where his brother pointed. Amid a smother of white foam, almost dead ahead and scarcely two cable lengths away there showed the black and jagged points of rocks, known locally as the "Shark's Teeth." The *Gull* was headed straight for them.

Anxiously, and with strained eyes, the brothers looked to see if their boat would answer her rudder. For a moment or two she hung in the balance, the howling wind driving her nearer the rocks, to strike upon which meant sure destruction in the now boiling sea.

Then, with a feeling of relief, Andy saw that they were sheering off, but very slowly. Could they make it? They were near to death, for no one—not even the strongest swimmer—could live long unaided in that boiling sea that would pound him upon the sharp rocks.

Suddenly Frank uttered a cry, and pointed to a spot at the left of the rocks, in a space of water comparatively calm.

"There! Look! Look!" he shouted.

"What is it? The whale?" demanded Andy.

"No, a boat—a motor boat! It's disabled—drifting! It must have been on the rocks. It's a large one, too. Look out you don't hit it."

"It's on fire!" cried Andy. "See the smoke—the flame! It's burning up!"

The *Gull* was now far enough from the Shark's Teeth to warrant her safety, and the boys could look at the motor craft, that was bobbing helplessly about in the spume and spray, being tossed hither and thither by the heaving waves.

"See anybody on her?" yelled Andy.

"No—not a soul," answered Frank, who had made his way forward, and was standing up, clinging to the mast.

Suddenly, amid the howling of the storm, there came a sharp explosion. There was a puff of flame, and a cloud of smoke hovered over the hapless motor boat, which, strange to say, still remained intact and afloat.

"She's blown up! Exploded!" yelled Andy.

"Yes, and there's a boy in the water! Look!" fairly screamed Frank. "He was on the boat! The explosion must have blown him out! He's floating! We must save him, Andy!"

"Sure! Jupiter's lobsters! but things are happening to us to-day! Look out! I'm going to put about!"

Frank scrambled back to join his brother. The big boom with its shortened sail swung over, and, heeling under the force of the shrieking wind, the *Gull* darted toward the dangerous rocks once more. Toward the wrecked motorboat, toward the figure of the boy floating in the smother of foaming and storm-torn waves she swept.

Could they reach the helpless lad in time? It was the question uppermost in the hearts of Frank and Andy Racer.

CHAPTER III

THE BOY'S RESCUE

"Can we make it, Frank?" questioned Andy desperately.

"We've got to," came the quick answer. "Ease her off a little until I get the lay of things."

"Is he swimming?" demanded the younger lad.

"Yes, but only with one hand. He must be injured. He can just manage to keep afloat. Put in a little closer. We've passed the worst of the Teeth. It's deep water here, isn't it?"

"Yes, as near as I can tell. I haven't been here very often. It's too dangerous, even in calm weather, to say nothing of a storm."

The wind was now a gale, but the boys had their sailboat well in hand and were managing her skillfully. They came nearer to the feebly swimming lad.

"There he goes—he's sunk—he's under!" yelled Andy, peering beneath the boom.

"Too bad!" muttered Frank. "We're too late!"

Eagerly he looked into the tumult of waters. Then he uttered a joyful cry.

"There he is again! He's a plucky one. We must get him, Andy!"

"But how? I daren't steer in any closer or I'll have a hole in us and we'll go down."

"We've got to save the poor fellow. I wonder who he is?"

"It's tough," murmured Andy. "See, the fire on the motor boat seems to be out."

"Yes, probably the explosion blew it out. The boat floats well. Maybe we can save that."

"Got to get this poor boy first. Oh, if he could only swim out a little farther we could throw him a line. Hey there!" he called to the lad, "we're coming! Can you make your way over here? We daren't come in any closer."

There was no answer, but the desperately struggling lad waved his one good arm to show that he had heard. Then he resumed his battle with the sea—an unequal battle.

"Plucky boy!" murmured Frank. "I'm going to save him. He can never swim out this far."

Andy had thrown the boat up in the wind, had lowered the sail so that she was now riding the waves comparatively motionless, for there came a lull in the gale.

Then, even as Frank spoke, the unfortunate lad again disappeared from sight.

"He's gone—for good this time I guess," spoke Andy, and there was a solemn note in his faltering voice.

"No! There he is again!" fairly yelled Frank. "I'm going overboard for him."

"You can't swim in this sea!" objected his brother. "There'll be two drowned instead of one."

"I *can* do it!" firmly declared the older lad. He began to take off his shoes, and divest himself of his heavier garments.

"You're crazy!" cried Andy. "You can't do it!"

"Just you watch," spoke Frank calmly. "I can't stand by and see a lad drown like that. Have we a spare line aboard?"

"Yes, plenty. It's up forward in the port locker under the deck."

"Good. Now I'm going to tie a line around my waist, and go overboard. I'll swim

to that chap and get a good hold on him. Then it will be up to you to pull us both in, if I can't swim with him, and I'm afraid I can't do much in this sea. Can you haul us in, and manage the boat?"

"I've just *got* to!" cried Andy, shutting his teeth in grim determination. "The boat will ride all right out here. The wind isn't quite so bad now. Take care of yourself."

"I will. Shake!"

The brothers clasped hands. Frank well knew the peril of his undertaking, no less than did Andy. They stood on the heaving, sloping deck of the *Gull*, and looked into each other's eyes. They understood.

"Watch close, and pull when you see me wave to you," ordered the older lad, as he fastened the rope about his waist.

"All right," answered Andy, in a low voice.

With a quick glance about him, noting that the wounded lad was still struggling feebly in the water, Frank dived overboard. He disappeared beneath the green waves with their crests of foam, and for a moment Andy anxiously watched for his brother. Then he saw him reappear, and strike out strongly toward the other youth. Frank was an excellent swimmer.

"That's the way to do it!" murmured Andy, admiringly. "If anybody can save him, Frank can."

The younger lad was braced against the tiller, standing in a slanting position, his feet planted firmly in the cockpit, while he payed out the rope, one end of which was about Frank's waist, and the other made fast to a deck cleat.

"To the left. To the left!" yelled Andy suddenly, as he saw his brother taking a slightly wrong course. The spume in his eyes, and the bobbing waves which now and then hid the wounded lad from sight, had confused Frank. The latter made no reply, but his hand, raised above the water, and waved to Andy, told that he understood the hail.

Frank changed his course, still swimming strongly. The wind had again begun to blow hard, and the *Gull* was drifting nearer the rocks, yet Andy dared not send

her out for fear of pulling Frank with him. He must stand by until—

Carefully he payed out the line. He could see it slipping through the green water. Then he caught a glimpse of his brother on the crest of a wave. The next moment he saw how close he was to the lad he had so bravely set out to save.

"Tread water! Don't swim! Tread water and save your strength!" cried Andy to the injured one. The boy heard and obeyed.

In another moment Frank was near enough to clasp the almost exhausted lad in his strong right arm. Andy saw this and there was no need for the signal which his brother gave an instant later. Frank was on his guard lest the youth he was rescuing might clasp him in a death grip. But the latter evidently knew something about life saving, for he placed his uninjured hand on his rescuer's shoulder and let Frank do as he would.

Andy began to haul in on the rope. It was hard work to do this, and manage the boat at the same time, but he did it somehow—how he never could really tell afterward. But he had something of his brother's grim determination and that was just what was needed in this emergency.

Slowly the rope came in, pulling the rescuer and the rescued one. Without it that life could never have been saved, for the waves were running high, and there was a current setting in toward the sharp, black rocks.

Foot by foot Frank and his almost unconscious burden were pulled toward the *Gull*.

"Can you keep up?" asked the elder Race lad.

"I—I guess—so," was the faint reply.

"We'll be there in a minute now. You'll soon be all right!"

The other did not answer. Valiantly Andy hauled in, until his brother's head was right under the rail.

"I'll take him now," called Andy, as he let go of the tiller, and reached for the lad Frank had saved. With a strong heave Andy got him over the side. He slumped down into the cockpit, unconscious. A moment later Frank clambered on board

and quickly untied the rope from his waist.

"Quick, Andy!" he cried. "Mind your helm! We're drifting on the rocks again!"

"Look out for this lad. I'll steer clear!" yelled his brother in reply, as he sprang back the tiller, after hoisting the sail.

Frank lifted the unconscious form in his arms, and moved the wounded lad over to a pile of tarpaulins. With all his strength Andy forced over the tiller, for the wind was strong on the sail, and the waves were running high, their salty crests filling the atmosphere with spume, while a fine spray drenched those aboard the *Gull*.

Suddenly there was a scraping sound, and the little craft shivered from stem to stern.

"The rocks! The rocks! We're on the rocks!" cried Frank, as with blanched face he looked up from where he was kneeling over the silent form of the lad he had rescued from the sea and the gale.

CHAPTER IV

"WHO ARE YOU?"

For a moment terror held the Racer boys motionless. The danger had come so suddenly that it deprived them of the power to think. Then came the reaction, and they were themselves once more.

"Quick! Throw your helm over! We can just make it!" yelled Frank.
"I'll attend to the sheet—you manage the tiller! Lively now!"

Andy needed no second command. He fairly threw himself at the helm, and with all his strength forced it hard over. The shortened sail rounded out with the pressure of the wind on it, and the *Gull* heeled over at dangerous angle. Under her keel came that ominous scraping sound that told of her passage over part of the Shark's Teeth.

"It's a submerged rock!" shouted Andy. "We may scrape over it!"

"Let's hope so!" murmured Frank, as he looked hastily down at the unconscious form of the strange lad. Then he gave all his attention to the rope that controlled the end of the swinging boom.

With the same suddenness that it had come upon them, the danger was past. The *Gull* slid into deep water, and the hearts of the boys beat in glad relief. Rapidly the craft paid off until she was well away from the ugly black points that could be seen, now and then, rearing up amid a smother of foam.

"Round about and beat for home!" yelled Frank. "Whoever this fellow is, he needs a doctor right away. I hope the wind holds out."

"Did you learn who he was?" asked Andy, as he gave his attention to putting the boat on the proper course.

"No. How could I? He was as weak as a cat when I got to him, but he had sense enough not to grab me. He knows how to swim all right, but something is the matter with his left arm."

"Think it's broken?"

"I don't know. It's a wonder he wasn't killed when that boat blew up. He must have been hurt in some way, or he wouldn't be unconscious."

"Maybe it's because he's nearly drowned. He may be half full of water."

"That's so," agreed Frank. "I'll see what I can do for him while you steer. Make all you can on each tack."

They were fast leaving behind them the wrecked motor boat which bobbed about on the waves. It was no longer on fire, and the brothers would liked to have towed it to the pier, but this was impossible in the storm.

Then, as his brother skillfully managed the sailboat, Frank once more bent over the unconscious form. He knew what to do in giving first aid to partly drowned persons, and lost no time in going through the motions designed to rid the lungs of water.

Frank did succeed in getting some fluid from the system of the stranger, but the lad still remained unconscious, with such a pale face, with tightly closed eyes, and showing such apparent weakness, that Andy remarked:

"I guess he's done for, poor fellow!"

"I'm not so sure of that," responded Frank "He's still breathing, and there's a spark of life in him yet. We must get him to our house, and have a doctor right away. Oh! now's the time I wish we had a motor boat!"

"We're doing pretty well," declared Andy, And indeed the *Gull* was skimming along at a rapid rate. She was quartering the wind, until a sudden lull in the gale came. They hung there for a moment or two, and the brothers looked anxiously at each other. Were they to be becalmed when it was so vitally necessary to get the stranger to a doctor immediately?

But once more the sail swelled out, and with joy the Racer boys noticed that the

wind was now right astern and that they could run down to the dock on the wings of it, making an almost straight course.

"This is the stuff!" cried Frank, as he made a sort of pillow from some sail cloth for the sufferer's head.

"It sure is. We'll be there soon. You'd better get some of your clothes on before we land."

Frank slipped on his garments, over his wet underwear and trusted to the wind to dry him before reaching home.

"I wonder who he can be?" mused Andy. "He wears good clothes, and if he owns that wrecked motor boat he must have money, for it was a big one, and cost a lot."

"It sure did. Well, we may find out who he is when he comes to, after the doctor has seen him. We'll take him up to our house."

"Of course. There's no other place for him in Harbor View. We'll be at the dock in five minutes more."

The rest of the trip was quickly covered, and, a little later, the two brothers had run their craft right up to the float, made her fast and began lifting out the unconscious form of the lad they had saved.

"Avast there! What ye got?" cried the hearty voice of Captain Trent.
"Is he dead? Who is he?" He peered down over the pier railing.

"We don't know," answered Frank to both questions. "He was in a motor boat—wrecked—it blew up—we saved him."

"By Davy Jones! Ye don't mean it! Wa'al, I'll give you a hand."

With the old salt's aid the boy was soon lifted up to the pier. Then Frank asked:

"Where's your horse and wagon, Captain? We can never carry him to our house without something like that. Where's the wagon?"

"Bob jest got back from delivering clams in it. I'll go clean it out—the hoss is hitched to it yet, an'——"

"Don't bother to clean it!" interrupted Andy. "Just put some sail cloth in the bottom. It doesn't matter if it's dirty. Every second counts now. Get the wagon."

"Right away!" cried the old sailor, who did a general clamming and fish business. He hurried off in the direction of his store and stable, impressed by the words and energetic actions of the Racer boys. "Hi there, Bob!" the captain called to his son, whom he saw approaching. "Bring Dolly an' the rig here as quick as you can! Frank an' Andy Racer went out an' brought back a dead motor boat—leastways I mean a fellow that was nearly killed in one. Bring up the rig jest as she is! Lively!"

"Aye, aye!" answered Bob, seaman fashion.

A minute later a nondescript vehicle, drawn by a big but bony horse rattled up, driven by the captain's son.

"What's up?" asked Bob Trent of the lads, with whom he was quite friendly. "Who is he?"

"That's what we'd like to know," spoke Frank. "We may find out if he doesn't die. We've no time to spare."

They lifted the unconscious form into the wagon, on the bottom of which had been spread a number of old sails.

"I'll drive," said Bob briefly. "I can get more out of Dolly than most folks. You've got to do your best now, old girl," he called to the horse. The animal pricked up her ears.

"I'll ride in back and hold his head," volunteered Frank. "Andy, you go telephone for Dr. Martin. Tell him to get to our house as soon as possible—explain why. Have him there by the time we arrive, if possible."

"Right!" cried Andy sharply, and he raced off toward the nearest telephone, there being a few of the instruments in Harbor View.

"Wa'll, I'll be jib-boomed!" exclaimed Captain Trent, as his son drove off, the

horse making good time. "Them Racer boys is allers up to suthin' or other."

Bob spoke the truth when he said he could do better with Dolly than most drivers, for the steed started out at a fast pace, and kept it up until the rickety vehicle turned into the drive that led to the handsome cottage owned by Mr. Racer. Mrs. Racer hurried to the door as she heard the sound of wheels, and at the sight of Frank sitting in the wagon, holding the head of another lad in his lap, Mrs. Racer cried out:

"Oh, Frank! What has happened? Is—Is it—Andy? Is he—is he——?" she could say no more, and began crying.

"It's all right, mother!" shouted Frank heartily. "We rescued an unknown lad. Andy has gone to telephone for Dr. Martin. He ought to be here now. Tell Mary to get some hot water ready. We may need it. Lay out some blankets. Get a bed ready, mother."

Frank issued his requests as if he had been used to saving drowned persons every day. His crisp words had the effect of restoring Mrs. Racer to her usual calmness.

"I'll attend to everything," she said. "Oh, the poor fellow! Bring him right in here. Can you and Bob lift him?"

"I think so," answered the captain's sturdy son.

"Oh, why doesn't Dr. Martin come?" cried Mrs. Racer.

"That sounds like his auto now!" exclaimed Frank, as he and Bob carried the unknown lad into the house. "Yes," he added a moment later, "here he comes."

"And Andy's with him," added Bob. "The doctor must have picked him up on the way here."

It was the work of but a few moments to get most of the unconscious youth's clothes off and place him in bed. By that time the physician was ready to begin his ministrations.

"I don't know," mused Dr. Martin, as he felt of the feeble, flickering pulse, and listened to the scarcely audible breathing. "He's pretty far gone. Hurt internally, I imagine. But we'll see if we can save him."

With the eager and able assistance of the Racer boys, their mother and Bob Trent, Dr. Martin labored hard to restore the lad to consciousness. At first his efforts seemed of no avail. His eyes remained closed, and the pulse and breathing seemed to grow more feeble.

"I think I'll try the electric battery," said the doctor finally. "If one of you will bring it in from my auto, I'll see what effect that has."

"I'll get it!" cried Andy, and he fairly ran out and back.

For a time it looked as if even the powerful current would be useless, but when the doctor turned it on full strength there was a convulsive shudder of the body. Then, suddenly the eyes opened, and the voice of the rescued lad murmured:

"It's cold—the water—Oh! The gasoline tank! It will explode! I can't get away now! I must jump!"

He raised himself in bed, but the doctor gently pressed him back.

"There, there now," spoke the physician soothingly. "You are all right. Don't worry. You'll be all right."

"He's going to live," said Andy softly.

Once more the tired eyes closed, and then opened again.

"Where—where am I?" asked the lad wildly.

He looked about the room in amazement, and once more tried to get out of bed, but was restrained.

"You're with friends," said Mrs. Racer softly. "You will be well taken care of."

"What—what place is this?" gasped the lad.

"Harbor View," replied Frank promptly. "Who are you?"

Eagerly they all leaned forward, for they wanted to solve the mystery of the identity of the rescued lad. He gazed at them all in turn. A half smile played about his face. Then he said weakly:

"I am——"

He sank back upon the bed unconscious, his name unspoken.

CHAPTER V

SEEKING THE WRECK

For a moment there was silence in the room, and something like a disappointed sigh came from Frank and his brother. Andy leaned over the bed.

"Who are you?" he asked, placing his hand on the head of the lad. "Can't you tell us who you are, or where you live? We want to help you. How did you come to be in the boat alone? How did it get on fire?"

There was no response.

"It is useless to question him," said Dr. Martin. "I will give him some medicine, now that he is partially restored to consciousness, and perhaps when he is stronger he can tell who he is. In the meanwhile it will be best not to bother him."

The boys took this as a hint that they had better leave the room, so the three of them filed silently out to permit of the physician and Mrs. Racer continuing their efforts to bring the lad out of the stupor into which he had fallen.

"It's a queer case," mused Frank.

"It sure is," agreed his brother. "I hope he doesn't die before we find out who he is, or where he belongs."

"I hope he doesn't die at all," put in his brother quickly.

"Oh, of course," assented Frank. "So do I."

"Could you make out any name on the motor boat?" inquired Bob.

"Didn't have a chance," answered the older Racer lad. "Andy and I had our hands full managing our boat, and, when I went overboard I had to depend on Andy to pull that lad and me back. The sea was fierce and it was blowing great guns. All I know is that it was a fine boat, and it's a shame it was wrecked on the Shark's Teeth."

"She'll go to pieces if she stays there long," was Bob's opinion. "The bottom will be pounded out of her and she'll go down."

"Your father was right about the storm coming up," said Frank, after a pause. "I never saw it blow so hard in such a short time."

"Oh, dad can generally be depended on for a weather guess," said the son proudly. "Well, I must be getting back. Got to put on another load of clams before supper. Let me know how that chap makes out, will you?"

"Sure," assented Frank. "And if you see or hear anything of that motor boat up or down the coast, let us know. Maybe we can save it, and find out something about this boy from it, in case he isn't able to tell."

"I'll do it," promised the captain's son.

"And if you see a wounded whale, it belongs to us," added Andy.

"A wounded whale?" gasped Bob. "Are you stuffing me? This isn't Thanksgiving."

"It was a whale all right," went on Andy, playfully poking his brother in the ribs, "and it stove in my boat. If I could catch the beggar I'd sell his hide or oil or whatever is valuable about him, and get a new boat."

"Does he mean it?" asked Bob, turning to Frank, for the younger Racer lad was well known for his practical jokes and his fun-loving characteristics.

"Yes, we did get rammed by one just before we went out in the *Gull*," said Frank, a bit solemnly, for the events of the past few hours had made quite an impression on him. Then he briefly told the story of the monster's attack.

"We didn't say anything to your father about it when we came in," explained Andy, "as we didn't want to be delayed. But if you see or hear of that whale,

don't forget he belongs to us."

"I won't," declared Bob. "Now I've got to hustle, as it's almost supper time."

"Supper!" cried Andy. "That reminds me, we haven't had dinner yet, Frank."

"My stomach reminded me of that some time ago," declared the brother.

"We had such a strenuous time that it slipped our minds, I guess. But I'm going to make up for it now. So long, Bob; see you later."

"So long."

Then, as the rickety wagon was driven away Frank and Andy went in the house to change their wet garments.

The two brothers were tiptoeing their way to the room where the wounded lad lay, having first ascertained from Mary, the cook, that supper would soon be ready, when they saw Dr. Martin coming from the apartment.

"Is he better?" asked Frank in a whisper.

"Yes," and the doctor smiled. "I succeeded in fully restoring him to consciousness, and he is now sleeping quietly. I have given him a powder and it will be some time before he awakens. He is worn out, in addition to being injured."

"Is he badly hurt?" Andy wanted to know. "Is his arm broken?"

"No, only severely sprained. In addition, he has several big bruises and a number of cuts where he must have been tossed against the rocks. His hands are burned slightly, but there is nothing dangerous, and with care he ought soon to recover."

"He must have gotten burned trying to put out the fire on the boat," commented Frank. "But, Dr. Martin, did you learn anything about him? What's his name? Where does he belong? What was he doing near the Shark's Teeth in a gale?"

"I can't answer any of your questions," replied the physician gravely. "I asked the lad who he was, thinking that his people would be worried, and that I might be

able to send some word to them. But, though he was fully in his senses, and seemed to realize what he had gone through, I couldn't get a word out of him about his name.

"When I asked him, as I did several times, and as also did your mother, he would begin, 'I am——' Then he would stop, pass his hand across his forehead, and look puzzled. He did this a number of times, and it seemed to pain him to try to think. So I gave it up."

"How do you account for that?" asked Andy.

"Well, the fright and injuries he received may have caused a temporary loss of memory," replied the doctor. "Or there may be some injury to the brain. I can't decide yet. But I'll look in again this evening. He'll be much improved by then, I am sure."

"It's getting queerer and more queer," commented Andy, as the physician hastened away in his car. "Think of forgetting who you are, Frank!"

"It sure is too bad. We must try to help him. That motor boat would be a clue, I think. As soon as the weather gets better, and this storm blows over, we'll have a search for it."

"Yes, we're in for a hard blow, I think. It's a worse gale now than when we were out."

The wind, which had momentarily died out, had sprung up again with the approach of night, and it began to rain. Out on the bay, a view of which could be had from their house, the boys could see big tumbling billows.

"It's a good night to be home," mused Frank. "I'm afraid we'll never see that wrecked motor boat again. It will pound to pieces on the Shark's Teeth."

"Very likely. Well, let's go in and see how much nearer supper is ready. Dad's home now."

It was rather a long and dreary night, with the storm howling outside, and Frank, who had the last watch, was not sorry when the gray daylight came stealing in. The unidentified lad had slept soundly, only arousing slightly once or twice.

"We must have a nurse for him," Mrs. Racer decided, when she and her husband, together with the boys, had talked the case over at the breakfast table. "Poor lad, he needs care. He looks as if he came from good people—a refined family—don't you think so, Dick?" and she turned to her husband.

"Oh, yes, he seems like a nice lad. Get a nurse if you can, and have the best of everything. And I don't want you boys tackling any more whales," Mr. Racer added decidedly, as he gazed at his sons a bit sternly.

"No, indeed!" their mother hastened to add. "I should have died of nervousness if I had known they went out again, after that dreadful fish smashed Andy's boat."

"A whale's an animal, not a fish, mother," said the younger lad as he gave her a kiss. "We are going to capture that one and sell its oil."

"Don't you dare venture whale-hunting again, or we'll go straight back to New York, and that will be the end of your vacation," she threatened.

"That's right," added Mr. Racer. "Don't forget. Well, I must be off or I'll miss my boat," and he hurried away to his New York office.

There was quite an improvement in the condition of the mysterious youth that day, and, with the arrival of the nurse, the Racer boys and their mother were relieved from the care of him, though one or the other of them paid frequent visits to the sick room.

"He's doing nicely," said Dr. Martin on the third day. "He is out of danger now."

"And still not a word to tell who he is," spoke Frank.

"No," said the doctor musingly, "he talks intelligently on every subject but that. He remembers nothing of his past, however. He doesn't even seem to know that he was out in a motor boat. All he can recall is that he was in some kind of trouble and danger, and that he was saved. He knows that you boys saved him, and he is very grateful."

"And he doesn't know a thing about himself?" asked Andy wonderingly.

"Not a thing. It is as if he was just born, or as if he came to life right after the

wreck. He has some dim memory of being in a big city, and of looking for some man, but who this man is seems to be as mysterious as who he himself is. So I have given up questioning him for the present as it distresses him."

"Will he ever recover his mind?" asked Mrs. Racer anxiously.

"Well, such cases have been known," replied the doctor. "Perhaps in time, with rest and quietness, it may all come back to him as suddenly as it left him. But what are your plans in regard to him?"

"He is to stay here, of course, until he recalls something of himself," said Mrs. Racer decidedly. "Then he may be able to tell us who his people are."

"And if that should take—say all summer?" The doctor looked at her questioningly.

"If we have to take him back to New York with us in the fall, we'll do it," went on the mother of Frank and Andy.

"Perhaps the city sights may recall him to himself," suggested Frank.

"Perhaps," agreed Dr. Martin. "Well, I'll stop in again to-morrow."

The next day, and the next, however, saw very little change. The lad grew much stronger, so that he could sit up in bed, but that was all. The past remained as dark as before. Yet he was intelligent, and could talk on ordinary topics with ease, and with a knowledge that showed he had been well educated. But even his name was lost to him. They looked in the newspapers but saw no mention of a lost boy.

Meanwhile Frank and Andy had made diligent inquiries about the wrecked boat, but had heard nothing. Nor was there any news of the whale.

"Of course I don't intend to go out after him, when dad and mom don't want us to," Andy carefully explained to his brother, "but it does no harm to ask; does it?" and he laughed joyously.

"No, I suppose not," assented Frank.

It was about a week after the rescue of the mysterious lad, and his physical

condition had continued to improve. He would soon be able to get around, the doctor said. Frank and Andy, who never grew tired of discussing the problem, and of wondering when the lad's mind would come back, were strolling along the beach of Harbor View. The weather had cleared and they were thinking of going for a sail, mainly on pleasure but incidentally to look for the wrecked motor boat.

"It's queer no one has sighted her, or heard of her," remarked Andy, gazing on to sea, as if he might pick up the disabled craft on the horizon.

"Yes," agreed Frank. "I guess she's sunk all right."

They walked on in silence, and were about to turn back toward where their boat was moored, when they noticed a man walking rapidly along the sands of the beach toward them.

"He seems to be in a hurry," observed Frank, in a low voice.

"Yes," agreed his brother. "He looks as if he wanted to speak to us."

"He's a stranger around here," went on Andy.

A moment later the man hailed them.

"I beg your pardon," he began, striding up to the two brothers, and shifting his gaze rapidly from one to the other. "But have you seen or heard of a large motor boat going ashore around here? I'm looking for one. There would be a boy in it perhaps—a lad of about your size. Perhaps he put in here to get out of the storm. I've inquired all along the coast, but I can't get any word of him. You haven't happened to have heard anything, have you?"

Frank and Andy looked at each other quickly. At last they seemed on the track of the mystery.

"Was he a tall, dark lad, with black hair?" asked Frank.

"Yes—yes, that's the boy I'm looking for!" exclaimed the man quickly.

"And was the motor boat a long one, painted white with a green water line, and with the engines forward under a hood?" added Andy.

"Yes!" eagerly cried the man, in his excitement taking hold of Andy's coat.

"That's the boat! Where is it? I must have it!"

"She's wrecked," said Frank quickly. "We saw her on the Shark's Teeth, going to pieces, and we've been looking for her since, but the boy—"

"Yes—yes! The boy—the boy! What of him? Where is Paul—?"

The man stopped suddenly, and fairly clapped his hand over his own lips to keep back the next word. He seemed strangely confused.

"We rescued the boy, and he is up at our house," said Frank quickly. "We have been trying to pick up the wreck of the boat and learn who the boy is. He has lost his memory."

"Lost his memory!" the man exclaimed, and he actually appeared glad of it.

"Yes, he doesn't remember even his name," explained the elder Racer lad. "But now we can solve the mystery as you know him. You say his name is Paul. What is his other name? Who are you? Don't you want to see him? We can take you to him—to Paul."

The brothers eyed the man eagerly. On his part he seemed to shrink away.

"I—I made a mistake," he said, biting his nails. "I know no one named Paul. I—I—it was an error. That is not the boy I want. I must hurry on. Perhaps I shall get some news at the next settlement. I am—obliged to you."

His shifty eyes gazed at the brothers by turns. Then the man suddenly turned away muttering something under his breath.

"But you seemed to know him!" insisted Frank, feeling that the mystery was deepening.

"No—no! I—I made a mistake. His name is not Paul. I am wrong. That is—well, never mind, I'm sorry to have troubled you."

He was about to hurry away.

"Won't you come and see him?" urged Frank. "It is not far up to our house. My mother would be glad to meet you. Perhaps, after all, this lad may be the one you seek. His name may be Paul."

"No—no! I must go! I must go. I—I don't know any Paul," and before the Racer boys could have stopped him, had they been so inclined, the man wheeled about and walked rapidly down the beach.

CHAPTER VI

CHET SEDLEY'S STYLE

"Well, wouldn't that frazzle you!" exclaimed Andy.

"It certainly is queer," agreed his brother.

They stood looking down the beach after the figure of the strange man who had seemed to know the lad whom they had rescued from the sea, but who, on learning of his location, had shown a desire to get away without calling on the unfortunate youth.

Andy set out on a run.

"Here, where you going?" his brother demanded quickly.

"I'm going after that man, and make him tell what he knows!" declared the impulsive youth. "It's a shame to let him get away in this fashion, just when we were on the verge of learning something," Andy called back over his shoulder.

"You come right back here!" exclaimed the older lad, sprinting after his brother and catching him by the arm.

"But he'll get away, and we'll never solve the mystery!"

"That may be, but we can't take this means of finding out. We don't know who that man is. He may be a dangerous chap, who would make trouble if you interfered with him. You stay here."

"But how are we ever going to find out, Frank?"

"If this boy is the one whom that man wants he'll show his hand sooner or later.

He was taken by surprise when he found that we had him, and he didn't know what to say. But he won't disappear altogether—not while the lad is with us. He'll come around again. Now you stay with me."

"All right," assented Andy, but with no very good grace. "I'm going to holler after him, anyhow."

Then, before Frank could stop him, had he been minded to do so, Andy raised his voice in a shout:

"Hey, where are you going? Don't you want to send some word to that boy we rescued?"

The man turned half around, and for a moment Andy and Frank hoped he would come back. Instead he shouted something that sounded like:

"Important business—see—later—don't bother me."

"Humph!" exclaimed Andy, as the man resumed his rapid walk. "We're not going to bother you. But we'll solve that mystery, whether you want us to or not," he added firmly. "Won't we, Frank?"

"If it's possible. I'm almost ready to go out now and have a search for the motor boat, but I think we'd better go back and tell him what happened."

"Tell who, the doctor?"

"No, this lad—the one who's at our house. He may know the man when we describe him."

"That's so. Paul, the man said his name was. Wonder what the other half was?"

"Guess you'll have to take it out in wondering. Come on back to the house."

It was a great disappointment to Frank and Andy when, after detailing their adventure with the queer man, and describing him minutely, to have the rescued lad say:

"I'm sorry, boys, but I can't recall any such man."

"Try hard," suggested Frank.

"I am trying," and the youth frowned and endeavored hard to concentrate his thoughts. "No, it's useless," he added with a sigh. "My memory on that point, if I ever had any, has gone with the rest of the past. It's too bad. I wish I *could* remember."

"Well, don't try any more now," said Frank quickly, as he saw that the youth was much distressed. "We'll do our best to help you out. And the first thing we'll do will be to look for that motor boat—that is, if she's still floating."

"Does the name 'Paul' mean anything to you?" asked Andy. "That's what the man called you before he thought."

"Paul—Paul," mused the lad. "No, it doesn't seem to be my name. Did he mention any other?"

"No, he cut himself off short. But what's the matter with us calling you Paul, until we find out your right name? It's a bit awkward to refer to you as 'he' or 'him' all the while. How does Paul suit you?"

"Fine! I like it."

"But what about his other name?" asked Frank.

"Gale!" suddenly shouted Andy.

"Gale?" repeated his brother wonderingly.

"Yes, don't you see," and Andy laughed. "We picked him up in a gale. His first name's Paul, I'm sure, and Paul Gale would be a good name. How about it, Paul?"

"It will do first rate until I can find my real one. Paul Gale—Paul Gale—it sounds good."

"Then Paul Gale it shall be," declared Andy. and when he suggested it to his father and mother that night they agreed with him. So the rescued lad became Paul Gale.

As the days passed he gained in health and strength until he was able to walk out. Then the wonderful sea air of Harbor View practically completed the recovery, until Dr. Martin declared that there was no further use for medicine, and only nourishing food was needed.

"But about his mind," the physician went on, "time alone can heal that. We must be patient. Take him out with you, Andy and Frank, when he is able to go, and let him have a good time. That will help as much as anything."

In the meanwhile, pending the gaining of complete strength on the part of Paul Gale, as he was now called, the two Racer boys made many trips around the Shark's Teeth in their sailboat, looking for the wrecked motor craft. But they could not locate it. Nor were their inquiries any more successful. Sailors and fishermen who went far out to sea were questioned but could give no trace of the wreck.

"Guess we'll have to give it up," said Andy with a sigh one day.

"It's like the mysterious man," added his brother.

Mr. Racer was much interested in the efforts his sons were making to solve the mystery of Paul Gale. He even advertised in a number of papers, giving details of the rescue, and asking any persons who might possibly know the history of such a youth as he described, to call on him at his New York office. But none came.

Paul had not yet ventured far from the house, for he was still rather weak. His arm, too, was very painful, and he could not yet accompany his two friends on any of their rowing or sailing trips.

"But I'll go soon," he said one day, when Frank and Andy started off for the beach, with the intention of interviewing some lobstermen who were due to arrive from a long cruise out to sea. "Some time I'll surprise you by coming along."

"Glad of it," called Frank, linking his arm in that of his brother. Together they strolled down on the sands, to await the arrival of the lobstermen. They found Bob Trent there, loading up his wagon with soft clams, which he had just dug.

As Bob tossed in shovelful after shovelful of the bivalves, the two Racer boys

saw approaching the vehicle a youth of about their own age but of entirely different appearance. For, whereas the Racer boys dressed well they made no pretense of style, especially when they were away on their vacation. But the lad approaching the wagon was "dressed to kill clams," as Andy laughingly expressed it.

"Look at Chet Sedley!" exclaimed the younger lad to his brother. "Talk about style!"

"I should boil a lobster; yes!" agreed Frank, laughing.

And well he might, for Chet, who was a native of Harbor View, had donned his "best" that afternoon. He wore an extremely light suit, with new tan ties of a light shade, and his purple and green striped hose could be seen a long distance off.

"You can hear those socks as far as you can get a glimpse of them," remarked Andy.

"And look at his hat," observed Frank. It was a straw affair, of rough braid, and the brim was in three thicknesses or "layers" so that it looked not unlike one of those cocoanut custard cakes with the cocoanut put in extremely thick. In addition to this Chet's tie was of vivid blue with yellowish dots in it, and he carried a little cane, which he swung jauntily.

As Chet passed the clam wagon, manned by Bob, who was dressed in his oldest garments, as befitted his occupation, one of the bivalves slipped from the shovel, and hit on the immaculate tan ties of the Harbor View dude. It left a salt water mark.

"Look here, Bob Trent! What do you mean by that?" demanded Chet indignantly as he took out a handkerchief covered with large green checks and wiped off his shoe. "How dare you do such a thing?"

"What did I do?" asked the clammer innocently, for he had not seen the accident.

"What did you do? I'll show you! I'll teach you to spoil a pair of new shoes that cost me two dollars and thirty-five cents! I'll have you arrested if that spot doesn't come out, and you'll have to pay for having them cleaned, too."

"I—I—" began Bob, who was a lad never looking for trouble, "I'm sorry—I—"

"Say, it's you who ought to be arrested, Chet!" broke in Andy, coming to the relief of his chum.

"Me? What for, I'd like to know?" asked the dude, as he finished polishing the tan ties with the brilliant handkerchief.

"Why you're dressed so 'loud' that you're disturbing the peace," was the laughing reply "You'd better look out."

"Such—er—jokes are in very bad taste," sneered Chet, whose parents were in humble circumstances, not at all in keeping with his dress. In fact, though Chet thought himself very stylish, if was a "style" affected only by the very vain, and was several years behind the season at that.

"You're a joke yourself," murmured Frank. "It wasn't Bob's fault that the clam fell on you, Chet," he added in louder tones.

"Why not, I'd like to know?"

"Because you are so brilliant in those togs that you blinded his eyes, and he couldn't see to shovel straight; eh, Bob?"

"I—I guess that's it. I didn't mean to," murmured Bob.

"Well, you'll pay for having my shoes shined just the same," snapped Chet, as he restored his handkerchief to his pocket with a grand flourish.

"Whew! What's that smell?" cried Andy, pretending to be horrified. "I didn't know you could smell the fish fertilizer factory when the wind was in this direction."

"Me either," added Frank, entering into the joke. "It sure is an awful smell. Whew!"

"I—I don't smell anything," said Chet, blankly.

"Maybe it's your handkerchief," went on Andy. "Give us a whiff," and before the dude could stop him the younger Racer boy had snatched it from his pocket.

"Whew! Yes, this is it!" he cried, holding his nose as he handed the gaudy linen back. "How did it happen, Chet? Did you drop it somewhere? It's awful!" and he pretended to stagger back. "Better have it disinfected."

"That smell! On my handkerchief!" fairly roared Chet. "That's the best perfumery they have at Davidson's Emporium. I paid fifteen cents a bottle for it. Give me my handkerchief."

"Fifteen cents a bottle?" cried Andy. "Say, you got badly stuck all right! Fifteen cents! Whew! Get on the other side, where the wind doesn't blow, please, Chet."

"Oh, you fellows think you are mighty funny," sneered the dude. "I'll get even with you yet. Are you going to pay for shining my shoes, Bob?"

"I—er—" began the captain's son.

"Sit down and let's talk it over," suggested Andy, as he flopped down on the sand. "Have a chair, Chet. You must be tired standing," he went on.

"What? Sit there with—with my good clothes on?" demanded the dude in accents of horror. "Never!"

"A clam might bite you, of course. I forgot that," continued the fun-loving Andy. Then, as Chet continued to face Bob, and make demands on him for the price of having his tan shoes polished, the younger Racer lad conceived another scheme.

In accordance with what he thought were the dictates of "fashion" Chet wore his trousers very much turned up at the bottoms. They formed a sort of "pockets," and these pockets Andy industriously proceeded to fill with sand. Soon both trouser legs bulged with the white particles.

"Well, are you going to pay me?" demanded Chet of Bob finally.

"I—I didn't mean to do it, and I haven't any change to pay you now," said the captain's son.

"Pay him in clams," suggested Frank.

"No, I want the money," insisted the dude. He took a step after Bob, who walked around to get on the seat of the wagon. At his first movement Chet was made

aware of the sand in the bottoms of his trousers.

The dude looked down, half frightened. Then he made a leap forward. The sand was scattered all about, a good portion of it going into the low shoes Chet wore. This filled them so that they were hard to walk in, and the next moment the stylishly dressed youth lurched, stepped into a hollow, and fell flat on the sand, his slender cane breaking off short at the handle as it caught between his legs.

"Come here and I'll pick you up!" shouted Andy, who had scrambled away as he saw Chet start out.

"You—you—who did this? Who pushed me?" stammered Chet, as he got up spluttering, for some sand had gotten in his mouth. "I'll have revenge for this—on some one! Who knocked me down?"

"It was the strong perfumery on your handkerchief," suggested Andy.

"It went to your head, Chet."

"It was you, Bob Trent; you did it!" yelled the dude, making a rush for the captain's son. "I'll give you a thrashing for this!"

CHAPTER VII

A LIVELY CARGO

"Hold on there, Chet!" cried Andy, as he saw Bob about to suffer for the trick he himself had played. The dude had hauled back his fist to strike the captain's son, who put himself in a position of defense.

"You can't stop me!" yelled Chet, making rapid motions with his fists. Bob Trent shrank back.

"Stop, I say!" shouted Andy again, making a rush to get between the prospective combatants.

"Now you see what your fooling did," spoke Frank, in a low voice to his brother. "Why can't you cut it out?"

"Can't seem to," answered the fun-loving lad. "But I won't let 'em fight. I'll own up to Chet, and he can take it out of me if he likes."

"There!" suddenly cried Chet, as he landed a light blow on Bob's chest. "That'll teach you to dirty up my shoes, fill my pants full of sand and trip me up. There's another for you!"

He tried to strike the captain's son again, but Bob, though he was not a fighting lad, was a manly chap, who would stand up for his rights. Suddenly his fist shot forward and landed with no little force on the nose of the dude.

Once more Chet went down, not so gently as before, measuring his length in the sand. When he arose his face was red with anger, and his former immaculate attire was sadly ruffled.

"I—I—I'll have you all arrested for this!" he yelled. "I'll make a complaint

against you, Bob Trent, and sue you for damages."

Chet made another rush for the driver of the clam wagon as soon as he could arise, but this time Andy had stepped in between them and blocked the impending blows.

"That'll do now!" exclaimed the younger Racer lad with more sternness and determination than he usually employed. "It was all my fault. I filled your pants with sand, Chet. I really couldn't help it, the bottoms were so wide open. But I didn't push you when you fell the first time. You tripped in that hollow. Now come on, and I'll buy you two chocolate sodas to square it up. I'll treat the crowd. Come along, Bob."

"No, I can't," answered Bob. "Got to get along with these clams. I'm late now. But I want to say that I'm sorry I knocked Chet down. I wouldn't have done it if he hadn't struck me first."

"That's right," put in Frank. "I'm sorry it happened."

"So am I," added Andy contritely. But it is doubtful if he would remain sorry long. Already a smile was playing over his face.

"Well, who's coming and have sodas with me?" asked the younger Racer brother, after an awkward pause, during which Bob mounted the seat of his wagon and drove off. "Come on, Chet. I'll have your cane fixed, too. And if you don't like a chocolate soda you can have vanilla."

"I wouldn't drink a soda with you if I never had one!" burst out the dude, as he wiped the sand off his shoes and brushed his light suit. "I'll get square with you for this, too; see if I don't."

"Oh, very well, if you feel that way about it I can't help it," said Andy. "I said I was sorry, and all that sort of thing, but I'm not going to get down on my knees to you. Come along, Frank. Let's go for a sail."

The clam wagon was heading for the street that led up from the beach. Chet had turned away with an injured air, and Andy linked his arm in that of his brother.

"You see what your fooling led to," said Frank in a low voice, as the two strolled off, "Why can't you let up playing jokes when you know they're going to make

trouble?"

"How'd I know it was going to make trouble, just to put sand in Chet's pants?" demanded Andy, with some truth in his contention. "If I had known it I wouldn't have done it. But it was great to see him tumble; wasn't it?"

"Oh, I suppose so," and in spite of his rather grave manner Frank had to smile. "But you must look ahead a bit, Andy, when you're planning a joke."

"Look ahead! The joke would lose half its fun then. It's not knowing how a thing is going to turn out that makes it worth while."

"Oh, you're hopeless!" said Frank, laughing in spite of himself.

"And you're too sober!" declared his brother. "Wake up! Here, I'll beat you to the dock this time!" And with that Andy turned a handspring, and darted toward the pier, near which their sailboat was moored. Frank started off on the run, but Andy had too much of a start, and when the elder lad arrived at the goal Andy was there waiting for him.

"Now the sodas are on you!" he announced. "How's that?"

"Why, we didn't finish the rowing race on account of the whale, but this contest will do as well. I'll have orange for mine."

"Oh, all right, come on," and Frank good-naturedly led the way toward the only drug store in Harbor View. "But I thought you were going for a sail, and see if we could get a trace of mysterious wrecked motor boat," he added.

"So I am," admitted Andy. "But first I want a drink. Then I'm going to see how Jim Bailey is coming on with repairing the skiff that the whale tried to eat. After that we'll go sailing."

"And we'll see what we can do on our own account," announced Frank, as a little later he assisted his brother to hoist the sail on the *Gull*. Soon they were standing out of the harbor under a brisk wind which heeled their craft well over. They knew it was practically useless to expect a sight of the mysterious wreck until they were well out, and so they gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the trip, talking at intervals of many things, but principally of the strange lad still quartered at their house.

"Poor Paul Gale!" said Frank. "It must be hard to lose your memory that way."

"Sure," agreed Andy. "Not to know who your father or mother is, or whether you have any, or whether you are rich or poor—it sure is tough."

"I think he must be well off, as I've said before," declared Frank. "But that's as far as I can get. If there was only some way of getting on the track of that strange man who seemed to know Paul, we could do something."

"But he's disappeared completely," said Andy. "He sure did make a quick getaway the day we met him on the sands."

Frank, who was steering, changed the course of the *Gull*. As he did so Andy suddenly stood up, pointed off across the slowly rolling waves, and cried out:

"Look there!"

"What is it, the motor boat or the whale?" asked Frank.

"It's a boat, but look who's in it. The mysterious man!"

A short distance away was a dory, containing one person, and it needed but a single glance from the eyes of the Racer boys to tell them it was indeed the tall, dark stranger who had acted so oddly after questioning them about Paul Gale. The man was rowing slowly and awkwardly, as if unused to the exertion, but as the sea was fairly calm he was not having a hard time, especially as the dory was built for safety.

"Think he sees us?" asked Andy.

"No, but he'll hear us if you don't talk lower," objected Frank.

"Sounds carry very far over water."

"All right," whispered the younger lad. "Let's see if we can't creep up on him. If we get near enough we can tell him Paul is much better, and he may be so surprised that he'll let out some information before he knows it."

"I haven't much hope of that," replied Frank, "but we'll try it." He changed the course of the sailboat once more until, it was headed right for the dory. The man rowing seemed to pay no attention to our heroes.

They were rapidly drawing close to him, and Andy took pains to conceal himself so that the stranger could not see him until the last moment. Frank was well screened by the sail.

Suddenly, off to the left, the boys heard a cry:

"Help! Help! They're getting loose! I can't catch 'em! Help! Help!"

"What's that?" demanded Andy in some alarm. "Some one is drowning."

"No, the call came from that lighter over there," declared Frank, pointing toward one of the clumsy harbor craft used to transport or "lighter" cargoes from one ship to another, or from dock to dock. The next moment this was made plain, for the call sounded a second time:

"Help! Help! Sailboat ahoy! Come to the rescue! I'll be bitten to death! Help!"
At the same time the boys saw a man quickly climb up the stumpy mast of the lighter and cling there with one hand while he waved his cap at them with the other.

"We've got to go help him!" exclaimed Andy.

"If we do, this strange man will get away," warned his brother.

"That's so. What shall we do?"

They paused, undecided. Following up the man might mean the solution of the mystery surrounding Paul Gale. On the other hand they could hardly ignore the call for aid. They could not go to both places, as the lighter was in one direction and the dory being rowed in another. Once more came the cry:

"Help! Help! They're all getting out of the cages!"

"What in the world can he be talking about?" demanded the puzzled Frank, trying to catch a glimpse of the deck of the lighter. But the rail was too high.

"Shall we go to him?" asked Andy.

"Yes," spoke Frank reluctantly. "We can't let him die, and he seems to be in trouble. Maybe we can find that mysterious man again;" and he swung the tiller

over. The *Gull* headed about and moved toward the lighter.

The man on the mast was frantically waving his cap and pointing at something down on the deck. Andy gave one look in the direction of the dory. The man was rowing more rapidly now. Perhaps he wanted to get out of the zone of so much excitement.

"There's something lively going on aboard that lighter," declared Frank, as they drew nearer.

"I should say so!" agreed Andy. "Hear those yells! They must be killing one another! I'll bet it's a mutiny!"

"Mutiny aboard a lighter, with one man as captain and crew?" demanded Frank. "Hardly. But we'll soon find out what it is. Aboard the lighter!" he yelled. "What's the trouble?"

"Everything," was the quick answer. "Hurry up if you want to save me. They're all over the deck."

"What is?" demanded Andy.

"Snakes and monkeys. They broke out of their cages and they're raising hob! Come on! Come on! Never again will I lighter a cargo of live stock of this kind! Hurry, boys! Hurry!"

"Snakes and monkeys!" murmured Andy. "I should say it was a lively cargo! How in blazes are we going to save him? I don't want fifteen feet of anaconda or boa constrictor aboard us!"

"We've got to do something for him," decided Frank with a grim tightening of his lips. "Stand by, I'm going to head up in to the wind. Then we'll lower the small boat and see what we can do."

CHAPTER VIII

ANDY IS CAUGHT

The lighter had been slowly moving ahead, but not under the influence of her sail, for the main sheet was free and the piece of canvas was idly flapping in the wind. Consequently the boys had no difficulty in coming up to her in their boat. Now they were ready to lower the small craft they carried slung on davits at the stern. This was a new addition to the *Gull*, put in place since the rescue of Paul Gale, for the brothers thought they might need it if they chanced to sight the wreck of the motor boat. Now it was likely to come in useful.

"Lower your sail," called Andy to Frank. "Then we can leave the *Gull* to drift while we pull over and see what's up."

The canvas came down on the run, and then Frank assisted his brother in lowering the small boat.

"Hurry! Hurry!" begged the man on the mast of the lighter. "One big gray-bearded monkey is getting ready to shin up after me, and there's a twenty-foot snake wiggling this way from the after hatch. Hurry!"

Andy paused in the operation of lowering the boat.

"Say, we're going to be up against it ourselves if we board that lighter," he said to Frank.

"I know it, but I don't intend to board her until I get those creatures out of our way."

"But how you going to do it?" his brother wanted to know.

"I'll make some plan after we row over and talk to the man. It's queer how he

happened to have such a cargo, and how they got loose. Lower away."

The little craft took the water easily and was soon riding under the stern of the *Gull*. Frank and Andy slid down the rope falls, after tossing two pairs of oars into the boat, and unhooked the blocks, leaving them dangling to be used on their return to hoist the boat up to the davits again.

"We're coming!" yelled Frank, in answer to another frantic appeal for aid. "How many of them are there?"

"About a million snakes and ten thousand monkeys!" was the frightened reply. "Come on! I can't hang here much longer."

"Where did they come from?" demanded Andy, when he and his brother were near the side of the lighter.

"I got a job of transferring them from a ship that's just in from South America, to a dock up near Seabright way," answered the man.

"How'd they get loose?" Frank wanted to know.

"Hanged if I know," was the reply. "I was sailing along easy like, when all of a sudden I felt something on my leg. It was sort of squeezin' me, and when I looked down I saw a big snake crawling up. I gave one yell and scudded across the deck. Then I saw a monkey making faces at me from the hatchway. The long tailed beasts must have broken out of their cages, and then the monkeys let the snakes loose. I climbed up here, and here I am."

"Are they savage?" asked Andy.

"Say, for the love of lobsters don't ask so many questions!" begged the man. "Get aboard here and drive the critters away so I can come down. One of the monkeys cast off the main sheet and spilled the wind out of the sail."

"It's a good thing he did, or we couldn't have come up to you," called Frank. "We'll see what we can do. Where are the cages?"

"Down in the hold. The steamer captain, when I took the beasts, told me to keep 'em below, and I did, but I didn't think they'd get loose so I didn't have the hatch covers on."

"Well, it's easier than I thought," went on Frank. "Wait a minute and we'll be back."

He started to row their boat toward the *Gull*.

"Oh, don't leave me!" wailed the man.

"I'm not going to," shouted back the elder Racer boy.

"What are you going to do?" asked his brother.

"Go back and get some grub, and my revolver with blank cartridges in it."

"What's that for?"

"You'll see."

The brothers were soon aboard their own sailing craft again, and Frank quickly secured the weapon, directing Andy to pack in a bag all the spare food on board, for the boys usually kept a supply in a small galley, in case they were ever becalmed over night.

"Here's some crackers, some cans of peaches, some peanuts and a lot of stale pop corn balls," announced Andy.

"That'll do. Get a dish, and bring along the can opener," ordered Frank. "I guess that will do."

"Oh, I'm on to your game now," said Andy.

"I'll want some condensed milk, too," went on the older boy. "Got any?"

"Yes, here's a couple of cans."

"Good, bring 'em along and another dish. Now I guess we're ready."

They were soon at the side of the lighter again with their odd collection.

"Where is the safest place to come aboard?" asked Frank of the man, who was still up the mast.

"Right amidsthips," he answered. "There's not a snake or monkey near there now, and it's right by the open hatch."

"Good!" answered Frank. "That'll do. Make our boat fast, Andy, and follow me. Bring the grub."

His brother obeyed, and soon the two lads were aboard the lighter. They saw a group of monkeys aft, chattering and wrestling among themselves, whether in play or anger was not evident. Forward were several large snakes contentedly sunning themselves on deck. There did not seem to be so much danger as the man had said, though doubtless if the monkeys were really aroused they might injure some one, as several were very large specimens.

"Quick now!" called Frank to Andy. "Help me spread out this grub near the open hatch. Open the cans of peaches and pour them over the crackers in the dish. Do the same with the condensed milk, only put that in a separate dish. It's lucky the snakes are forward, they'll get a whiff of it there."

Soon there was an array of food about the open hatch. So far the monkeys had paid no attention to the boys, for the brothers had worked silently, the man on the mast watching them curiously, but still afraid to come down.

"Now I guess we're ready," announced Frank. "Come over here, Andy, and we'll hide under this pile of canvas."

With his revolver in readiness, Frank led the way, followed by his brother. When they were both concealed from view Frank reached out his hand, and tossed several crackers toward the group of monkeys. There was a movement among them, and the chattering broke out doubly loud. One monkey grabbed a cracker in each paw, but they were immediately snatched from him by some of his mates. Then the whole crowd caught sight of the food around the open hatch and made a mad dash for it.

At the same time the snakes must have smelled the milk, and, as it is well known that these reptiles are very fond of this liquid, they crawled toward it.

"Now's my chance!" exclaimed Frank, when he saw the snakes and monkeys grouped about the hole in the deck, eagerly devouring the food. He raised his revolver in the air and fired several shots rapidly.

The effect was almost magical. With screams of fright the monkeys fairly leaped down the dark hole, and the snakes with angry hisses followed them. In less than five seconds not an animal or reptile was on deck.

"Quick! The hatch cover!" cried Frank, springing from under the canvas. His brother followed and the cover was clapped into place.

"Good enough!" yelled the man, climbing down from the mast, and assisting the boys to make the cover fast. "Now I've got the critters where I want 'em, and I'll keep 'em there until I get to the dock. Then the man that owns 'em can take 'em out. I won't. That was a slick trick, all right, boys. I'd never thought of that. You saved my life."

"Oh, I guess they wouldn't have killed you," spoke Frank. "But what's going to be done with them?"

"They're to go in some sort of summer show up Seabright way, I reckon. My! but I'm obliged to you boys! How much do I owe you?" and the man made a motion toward his pocket.

"Nothing," answered Frank quickly. "We're glad we could help you. I guess you won't have any more trouble."

"Not if you keep the hatch closed," added Andy.

"And you can make up your mind that I will!" answered the man decidedly. "No more snake or monkey cargoes for me. Well, I'll get along now, I guess. Say, I'd like to make you boys a present. I've got some prime lobsters that a fellow gave me. They're all alive. Won't you take some along?"

"Well, we generally can eat them," spoke Frank. "And my mother is very fond of lobster salad."

"Don't say another word," exclaimed the lighterman. "Here you are," and he drew forth a basket from under a pile of bagging at the foot of the mast. "Take 'em along."

There were a dozen fine, large lobsters in the basket as Andy ascertained by a peep, and then after thanking the man for them, and making sure that the hatch cover was on tight, the brothers rowed back to their craft. As they sailed away

they saw the man carrying a small ketch anchor and placing it on top of the hatch cover.

"He isn't taking any chances," remarked Frank.

"Indeed not," agreed his brother. "Well, let's see if we can pick up that mysterious man again."

They looked all about, but there was no sign of the dory, and they felt that it would be useless to sail about in search, as it was getting late.

"Let's put for home," proposed Frank, and Andy assented.

When nearing their mooring place Andy got a piece of string and some strong paper, and proceeded to wrap up one of the largest lobsters.

"What are you going to do with that; give it to some of your girls?" asked Frank.

"Hu! I guess not," was the somewhat indignant answer. "I'm going to have a little fun with it. There are more than we need in that basket."

"Look out that some one doesn't have fun with you," warned his brother.

"Oh, I can take care of myself," answered Andy with a grin. He assisted his brother to carry the basket of lobsters up on the pier, and then, as they were rather heavy, and as a delivery wagon from a grocery where Mrs. Racer traded was at hand, Frank decided to send the shell fish home in that.

"Coming along?" asked the elder boy of his brother, as the delivery vehicle drove off.

"Yes, but I want to have some fun first. I see Chet Sedley coming, and I'm going to make him a present of this lobster. It's a lively one, and he won't know what's in the paper—until he opens it. Watch me."

Frank shook his head, but smiled. He followed his brother at a distance. The town dude, attired more gorgeously than before, saw Andy approaching, and was about to turn aside.

"Hold on," called Andy. "I'm sorry about what happened a while ago,

Chet, and here's a little present for you."

He held out the package.

"What's in it?" asked Chet suspiciously, as he took it.

"Why—er——" began Andy, but just then Mabel Chase, one of the prettiest girls in Harbor View, approached, and Andy took off his hat. Chet did likewise, making an elaborate bow. At the same time he let slide to the sidewalk the package containing the lobster, and he gave it a shove with his foot so that it would be in back of him.

For Chet was a very proud youth, and did not want to be seen carrying a bundle, especially by a young lady whose good opinion he desired.

"Charming day, Miss Chase," murmured Chet, as he resumed an upright position.

"Delightful," agreed the girl. "Where have you been, Andy? I haven't seen you in some time."

"Oh, we have been sailing."

"Have you rescued any more strange boys?" she went on. "Oh, I think that was so romantic! Does he know who he is yet?" For the story of Paul Gale was well known in Harbor View by this time.

"He hasn't the least idea," answered Andy.

"Beautiful day," observed Chet, edging nearer to the girl. "Oh, I said that before, didn't I?" he asked in confusion, for the dude's powers of talk were rather limited. "I mean, do you think it's going to rain?"

"Hardly," replied Andy. "But say, Chet, why don't you open the present I gave you?"

Andy could not resist the opportunity of seeing how his joke would turn out—especially when there was a girl present to witness it.

"Oh, I—I don't want to now," replied Chet, and he took a step backward.

Accidentally he stepped on the paper containing the large lobster. The string slipped off. There was a rustling movement in the wrapping and the paper suddenly opened. Something of a sort of greenish hue came into view; something with big claws. Neither Chet nor Andy noticed it, for they were both talking to Miss Mabel. The girl saw the lobster slowly reach up one large claw.

"Oh!" she screamed.

"What's the matter?" asked Andy.

He knew a moment later, for the crustacean caught him by the left ankle in a firm grip, and held on, while the would-be joker danced about on one leg, holding the other up in the air with the lobster dangling from, it. The tables were effectually turned.

CHAPTER IX

"THAR SHE BLOWS!"

"Take him off!" yelled Andy, dancing about. "Grab him, Chet. Wow! How he pinches!"

"Oh! Don't let it get loose!" begged Miss Mabel, looking for a place upon which she could climb out of danger.

"Loose! That's just what I want to do—get him loose!" cried Andy.

"How—how did it happen?" asked Chet innocently. "Was that a lobster you gave me, Andy?"

"Never mind what I gave you," howled the youth. "Help me get him off."

Now Chet was not a very wise youth, but he knew better than to pick off a lobster, especially when there was yet one large claw that wasn't working, but which was waving about seeking for something else to pinch.

"Can't you help me?" begged Andy. Frank had stopped to speak to an acquaintance, and did not see the plight of his brother.

"Oh! Oh, dear! What shall I do?" wailed Mabel. Several men and boys began to gather about the scene.

"I've got to get him loose or he'll pinch off my foot!" cried Andy. He reached over as well as he could, while standing on one foot, and tried to get hold of the lobster by the back, behind the vicious claws. But he made a miscalculation.

The next moment the other claw of the lobster had gripped him on the wrist, fortunately taking hold around Andy's coat sleeve so that the flesh was not cut by

the "teeth" of the crustacean's pincher.

Andy was now in a peculiar predicament, for he was held in a stooping position with the lobster clinging to his ankle and wrist. He put on the ground the foot which had first been gripped and was vainly endeavoring to pull the lobster loose when Frank, attracted by the crowd, hurried up. He saw at once what the trouble was, and with one well-directed kick he sent the lobster spinning out into the middle of the street, the suddenness of the blow loosening the tight claws.

"Well, of all things! What happened, Andy?" Frank asked.

"Don't ask me. Come on home," replied his brother, limping away, while Miss Mabel smiled and turned aside. Chet Sedley grinned. It was the first and only time he had unwittingly gotten the better of Andy Racer.

"I told you not to play any more jokes," spoke Frank, as he walked along at his brother's side. "You never can tell when they're going to come back on you."

"Oh, say, let a fellow alone; can't you?" expostulated the younger lad.

"Does it hurt you very much?" inquired Frank.

"I should say it does!" and Andy stooped over and rubbed his ankle and then gently massaged his wrist.

"Better get home and put some vaseline on it," suggested Frank.

"Vaseline! Say, the next time I try to play a joke on anybody, please holler 'Lobster' at me. And if that doesn't do any good just pinch me good and hard," requested the younger lad.

"I told you so," commented Frank.

"Yes, but I didn't believe you. Let's get home. Don't tell mother. She'd think I'd be in for a siege of blood poisoning, and keep me in bed. I'll be all right. But say, things have been happening lately; haven't they?"

"I should say yes. I'm sorry we missed that strange man to-day. We might have been able to get something about Paul out of him."

"I doubt it. However, we had a great time with the snakes and monkeys. Better not say anything about that at home, either, or dad and mom will put a stop to our sailboat if they think that something happens every time we go out in her."

"I guess that's right. We'll lay low and say nothing."

But the story got out, for the skipper of the lighter told at the dock in Seabright how two boys had come to his rescue, and the description of them fitted our heroes.

"I don't know what I'm going to do with you chaps," said their father after supper a few evenings later, as he looked at them over the top of the paper. "Seems to me you're always doing something." He had heard the lobster and snake stories from a friend that day.

"But this wasn't our fault," said Frank. "We just had to help that man."

"It was just the same as when they rescued me," put in Paul Gale, who was sitting in an easy chair. "I'd never be alive to-day only for them."

"And it's too bad we missed getting a chance to talk with that strange man," went on Andy, glad to change the subject. "He might have told us something about you, Paul."

"I doubt it," commented Mr. Racer. "That man, whoever he is, has some strong object in keeping out of our way. I can't understand it, and have half made up my mind to put detectives on the case, for I feel sure that there is some strange mystery behind it all."

"Detectives, dad!" exclaimed Andy. "Say, let Frank and me do the detective work, and pay us the reward."

"Reward! I never thought of that!" exclaimed the silk merchant. "I believe it would be a good idea to do that. I'll put another advertisement in the papers."

He did so. But it brought no responses of any account, though many irresponsible persons claimed to be able to solve the mystery of the identity of Paul Gale. However, they all proved to be "fakers," and Paul was as hopeless as before.

"Never mind, we'll get on the track of it yet," declared Frank one day.

"Oh, if you only could!" sighed Paul. "Perhaps my mother or father may be anxiously looking for me, and can't find me. Nor can I find them until I know who I am."

"Well, we'll find out, if it's possible," declared Andy. "I haven't yet given up looking for your motor boat. I suppose it was your boat?" and he looked at the lad who, though yet partly an invalid, was rapidly convalescing.

"I—I don't know," was the weak response. "Sometimes I have a hazy notion that I had many such things, an auto, a boat, a pony, and a rich home, but it is all like a dream—a dream," and Paul buried his face in his arms.

"Don't worry," spoke Mrs. Racer soothingly. "Now you boys must stop talking about this, and get on a more cheerful subject. I want you all to promise to come and see me play golf to-morrow. We have a medal match at the Harbor View links, and it will do you good to get in some society, other than that of whales, wrecked motor boats and sailors. You will be strong enough to come, won't you, Paul?"

"I—I think so. I'm feeling better every day."

Paul went to the golf match in a carriage, and sat on the shady porch of the clubhouse while the two Racer boys followed their energetic mother about the links.

The sixteenth hole was down near the sandy shore of the bay, and while Mrs. Racer was teeing up for a trial at the seventeenth, Frank and Andy strolled toward the beach.

"It's a fine day for a sail," observed the younger lad.

"What! Go off and not see mother win!" cried Frank.

"Oh, I was only joking."

"Hum! Joking!" exclaimed Frank, and Andy laughed uneasily.

"There's someone in a boat headed this way," said Frank, after a pause.

"He's rowing fast, too."

"Looks like Bob Trent's dory," commented his brother.

"It is," was the answer. "Wonder what he's in such a hurry about?"

They watched the rower in silence for a few minutes, while Mrs. Racer played on, too interested in the game to miss her sons. A little later Bob's boat grounded on the shelving beach. He leaped out, pulled it up farther on the sands, and then, seeing the two Racer boys regarding him, he sang out:

"There she blows! A whale! Almost dead, and headed for shore. There she blows!"

He pointed out across the bay.

"A whale?" cried Frank.

"Maybe it's our whale!" exclaimed Andy "Let's go out and get It!"

He looked at his brother. Then both glanced over to where their mother was posing for a difficult shot.

"Come on!" cried Andy, and Frank followed him in a race to the beach, where Bob Trent awaited them. Out on the bay they could see two misty fountains of spray blown into the air—the spouting of the wounded whale.

CHAPTER X

A RIVAL CLAIM

"Pull hard!" cried Andy Racer.

"Pull hard yourself," retorted his brother.

"We've all got to pull for all we're worth if we want to get that whale before someone else does," added Bob Trent. They were all three in the old captain's big boat—the one in which Bob had been out clamming when he sighted the wounded whale, and hastened to shore with the news.

"Do you think anyone else would want it?" asked Frank, as he labored at the heavy oars. There was room for the trio of lads to handle sweeps.

"Sure, most anyone would want a whale," replied Bob. "It'll be worth a lot of money to the fertilizer factory, and then there's the oil."

"Then there's the whalebone," put in Andy eagerly. "We ought to get a lot of money for that."

"This kind of a whale doesn't have the sort of bone that is valuable, I believe," suggested Frank. "It's only for the oil that they're hunted. But still, if we can get this one we ought to knock out a pretty penny."

"If there was a lump of ambergris in it we all be millionaires!" exclaimed Andy eagerly.

"Well, of course ambergris is said to be found in dead whales," admitted Frank, as he cast a look over his shoulder to observe their course, "but our whale isn't dead yet."

"And? maybe we won't get it after all," went on Bob. "Have you seen him spout lately?"

"No, but then he may have sounded and it will be about fifteen minutes before he comes up again," announced Frank. "Was he nearly dead, Bob?"

"Pretty far gone. Some gulls were hovering over him in anticipation, I guess, and that's a good sign."

"I wonder what mom will say," came from Frank, after a pause. "We sort of promised we wouldn't go whaling again, Andy."

"I don't believe she'd care if she knew how it was, but we didn't have time to tell her. Besides, she doesn't like to be interrupted when she golfing. Anyhow, this whale is nearly dead and there can't be any harm going for a dead one. I was a live one she and dad were thinking about when they warned us."

"I guess so," agreed Frank. "Anyhow we're out now and we might as well keep on. I wonder——"

"There she blows again!" interrupted Bob excitedly, and he stopped rowing long enough, to point to a spot in the bay not far distant.

"And she's spouting blood now!" fairly yelled Andy. "That whale is ours as sure as guns! Have you a line aboard, Bob?"

"Yes, a long anchor rope, strong enough, I guess, for what I need. Let's put in a little closer. We can keep track of the whale now. Don't lose sight of it."

"One of us had better keep on the watch," proposed Andy.

"What are you trying to do—get out of rowing?" asked his brother with a laugh.

"No, we can take turns being lookout. Only we don't want to lose sight of the whale."

This was agreed to, and, as he had suggested it, Andy was allowed to take his place in the bow and watch the progress of the immense animal. It was a large whale, probably seventy-five feet long and big in proportion. It was swimming

slowly along, about half submerged.

"Don't go too close," advised the younger Racer boy, in memory of what had once happened to him when he first met the whale. "It may remember me and be anxious to finish up what it began."

"Do you suppose it's the same one?" Frank wanted to know.

"Shouldn't be a bit surprised," said Bob. "There would hardly be two whales around here so close together, and both injured. That's your whale sure enough. But Andy's right, we must not get too near. It might take a notion to charge us."

Accordingly they sheered off, and rowed along in a course parallel with that of the monster. They had paid little attention to where they were heading, and it was not until an exclamation from Frank drew their attention to it that they noticed how far away from land they were.

"We'll have a fine long row to get back," observed Andy.

"Yes, towing the whale, too," added his brother.

"Maybe we'd better take a chance and make fast," suggested Bob. "I think I can get my anchor line over that harpoon I see sticking out and then we can begin towing."

"Nixy on that!" exclaimed Andy quickly. "We don't tackle any live whales. We'll wait for this one to die."

"I wish it would hurry up about it then," grumbled Frank. "I don't want to stay out here a night."

Suddenly, as he spoke there was a flurry of water about the dying monster of the deep.

"Look out!" yelled Andy. "It's coming for us."

"Back water!" shouted Bob.

They bent to the oars with a will, Andy taking up his discarded ones. But they need not have been alarmed. It was the last move the whale was destined to

make. Rearing itself partly up out of the water the monster suddenly sank, making such a commotion that the boat of the boys was tossed about like a chip in the surf.

"He's sounded again!" shouted Andy.

"No, that's the end," said Bob, who had heard his father tell of whaling voyages. "The whale is dead, and he's gone to the bottom."

"Then we can't get it," came regretfully from Andy.

"Oh, yes we can," declared Bob.

"How?" Frank wanted to know.

"Why, after a whale dies, and sinks, gases very soon begin to form inside it. This swells it up like a balloon, and it comes to the top again. Then we can get it."

"How long will it take?" asked Andy, with an anxious look at the sun, for it was getting late.

"Oh, maybe an hour, perhaps longer," replied Bob. "We will just have to hang around here until it comes up."

"I hope our folks don't get worried about us," remarked Frank, who was a little uneasy about having gone off as they had so suddenly. "We left Paul at the clubhouse all alone, too."

"Oh, well, he won't mind. There's lots going on, and we'll soon be back—if we have luck," commented Andy.

"Queer about that Paul," spoke Bob. "You haven't seen anything more of that strange man; have you?"

"No, and I'm afraid we won't, either," declared the elder Racer boy. "It seems to be a mystery we'll never solve. If we could only find that missing motor boat it might help some. But I guess that's sunk, though it was floating when we took Paul aboard our craft."

The boys rowed slowly about the spot where the whale had gone down, casting

eager glances from time to time at the rolling billows. They were careful to keep far enough away so that the rising monster would not come up beneath them, and capsize the boat.

It was a little short of an hour when Frank, who had stood up to stretch his cramped legs, suddenly uttered an exclamation:

"Look!" he cried, and pointed dead ahead.

Something rose from the sea, rolled over several times, and then swayed gently with the motion of the waves.

"Our whale!" cried Andy.

"Dead as a door nail!" added Frank.

"Don't be too sure," cautioned Bob. "Wait a minute."

They waited, but there was no motion to the monster save that caused by the heaving ocean, and they ventured closer.

"Gee whizz! He's big all right!" exclaimed Andy.

"That's right," agreed Bob. "Now let's make this line fast to the harpoon handle, and we'll tow him ashore."

"Why, there are two harpoons in him!" cried Frank, as a second shaft was visible.

"There was only one when he tackled us," declared Andy. "Someone else must have had a try at killing him since he smashed my boat."

The other lads agreed that this was very probable, but there was no time to speculate on it. The anchor line was quickly made fast, and being attached to the stern of the boat the work of towing the whale to the beach was begun.

It was hard work, and it might seem that three boys could not accomplish it. But it is well known that once a large and heavy body is started in motion in water, a slight force will keep it going. It was so in this case.

At first the three lads tugged and strained on the oars to little advantage. The whale did not move. But finally persistence told, and the inert body began to slide through the waves. After that it was but a matter of keeping at it.

"Oh, we'll get home before dark I guess," remarked Andy, when they had rowed in silence for half an hour.

"If we don't we'll be in for it when we do arrive," prophesied Frank half dubiously. "Let's see if we can't get up a little more steam."

They quickened their strokes, and soon the coast line came into view, having been hidden by mist. Then they headed for the stretch of sand of their home town.

"Where shall we land it?" asked Frank, nodding at the whale, floating astern.

"Oh, a little way up from the big pier will be a good place, I guess," decided Bob. "It's deep water close in to shore there, and we'll have to get the body stranded where the tide won't carry it off. Besides, if we sell it to the fertilizer factory that's the best place for them to come after it."

To this the Racer boys agreed, and by hard work they managed to reach the beach before dark, towing the whale in as close to shore as possible.

Their arrival was soon noticed by the people of Harbor View and as word of what they had captured spread, a large throng soon gathered on the beach.

"A whale! Good land, what will them Racer boys do next?" one woman wanted to know. No one took the trouble to answer her.

"It's a fair-sized one, too," observed old Captain Obed Harkness. "I mind the time I was up in the Arctic after them critters. We didn't often git 'em bigger'n that."

"What you fellows going to do with it?" asked Harry Dunn, who sometimes went clamming with Bob. "Gee, I wish I'd been along."

"We're going to sell it to the fertilizer factory," said Andy. Then he added to his brother, in a low voice: "Hadn't we better telephone to mother that we're here? She may get wind of this and worry."

"Yes, I'll call her up," volunteered Frank. "Then we'll see if we can talk to someone at the fertilizer factory. You stay here. I'll be right back."

"Say, why don't you put a tent over the whale, and charge admission to see it?" asked Bert Ramsey. "You could make a lot of money. Summer visitors from Seabright and other places would like to see a real whale."

"Couldn't get a tent big enough without a lot of trouble," replied Andy, as his brother hurried away. Meanwhile the crowd on the beach became larger, and there were new arrivals every second, as the news spread.

"There's a big motor boat coming in here," suddenly remarked Bob to Andy, as they stood near the head of the whale.

The Racer lad glanced across the darkening sea. He had a momentary idea that it might be the craft from which he and his brother had rescued Paul Gale. But a glance showed him that it was a fishing vessel, that had been fitted up with a "kicker" or small gasoline engine, the noise of which came across the bay as the craft was headed toward the spot where the whale was stranded.

"Wonder what they want?" mused Andy.

"Out of gasoline, perhaps, and need a supply," suggested Bob.

Few paid any attention to the oncoming craft, as they were too interested in looking at the whale. Frank came hurrying back, and said to his brother:

"It's all right. Mother was just beginning to get worried. But I fixed it all right, and said we had the whale, and hadn't been in a bit of danger."

"What about the fertilizer factory?"

"Couldn't get 'em on the wire. To-morrow will do for that. Now let's get home. The whale will be safe here, I guess."

"Let's see that the line is good and tight," suggested Bob, for the ketch anchor cable had been carried up on shore and made fast to an old bulkhead.

The three boys were just making their way through the crowd when the oncoming motor boat came to a stop as near the shore as was possible to run in. Two men, in long rubber boots, leaped overboard and waded through the shallow water.

"Here it is, Bill!" called the foremost.

"So you were right about it, Jack. Those lads in the small boat did have it."

The two burly fishermen elbowed their way through the throng, shoving people to right and left as they approached the whale.

"Come now!" exclaimed the one called Jack. "Get away from our whale! We're going to tow it out again."

"Your whale!" cried Frank, who, hearing the words, quickly turned back with his brother and Bob.

"Yes, our whale!" cried Bill. "We harpooned it the other day, and we've been hunting for it ever since. We thought we saw a motor boat towing it away to-day, and chased after it just about the time Jack spied you lads in the rowboat hauling something. Jack wanted to take after you, but the rest of us thought the motor boat had our prize, so we lost time until we found it was only a wrecked boat that they were towing. Then we came after you. I wish we'd caught you before you hauled this up on shore, as we're going to have trouble getting our whale off again."

"What makes you say that's *your* whale?" demanded Andy hotly.

"Because it is," answered Jack. "We struck it, though it didn't die right away. Now you folks keep back, and we'll haul it off. Come on, fellows!" he called to the others in the motor boat. "Lend a hand here, it's bigger than I thought."

"That's not your whale, and you can't have it!" cried Frank determinedly. "We picked it up at sea, and towed it in. My brother and I saw it several days ago, and it struck one of our boats. It's our whale, and we intend to keep it."

"Get out of the way!" roughly cried the man called Bill. "We haven't time to bother with you," and he elbowed Frank to one side.

CHAPTER XI

A FIRE ON BOARD

Surprise at the bold claim of their rivals held the three boys almost spellbound for a moment. The possibility that someone should seek to get possession of the whale they had brought ashore after such labor, and almost as soon as they landed, had never occurred to them. Yet the fishermen seemed determined, for one of them began casting off Bob's anchor line, and several more of the burly chaps, in their long rubber boots, leaped overboard from the boat, and waded ashore.

"What had we better do?" asked Andy of his brother. "Are you going to let them take our whale?"

"Not much!" exclaimed Frank, with a determined tightening of his lips. "I'm going to fight every inch. They shan't take it away."

"Let's appeal to the crowd," suggested Andy. "Tell 'em just how we found the whale, and they won't let these men take it away from us."

Frank looked doubtful as to the wisdom of that course. Meanwhile the men were busily preparing to tow the whale away out to sea in the powerful motor boat.

"If my father was only here," began Bob, "he would know what to do, and what our rights were. There are certain laws about whales and things found at sea, and he'd make these fellows skip out if they were in the wrong."

"Of course they're in the wrong!" cried Andy. "Didn't we see the whale first, and didn't we to it home?"

"But they say they harpooned it," said Bob,

"Yes, and there was only one iron in it, Andy, when it broke your boat," added Frank. "Now there are two harpoons in the back. One might be theirs. I'm going to notify Justice Fanchard and see what he says."

"Lively now, men!" called Bill, as Frank started off.

There was another movement on the outskirts of the throng, and someone pushed his way in.

"It's dad!" cried Bob. "Hey, dad!" he shouted. "These men are going to take our whale! We just towed it in, Frank and Andy Racer and me! Can these men take it?"

"Of course we can, kid!" cried one of the fishermen. "Get out of the way, if you don't want to be knocked down."

"Oh, it's you, is it, Jack Kett!" exclaimed Captain Trent. "And Bill Lowden and his crowd. Well, you fellows would take anything, whether it was yours or not. Now jest hold on a bit. Luff up and let's see where we're at. Maybe you're on the wrong course and need new clearance papers. Avast there, and let me know the particulars."

"There ain't any particulars except that we harpooned this whale, and it's ours," growled Bill Lowden. "You needn't be putting your oar in, Cap'n Trent. We know our rights. There's our iron, and it's got the name of our boat branded in it—the *Scud*—you can see if you light a match," for it was now dark.

"Hum! When did you strike it?" asked the captain, amid a silence, for, as an old whaling master and one of the most influential residents of Harbor View, the captain was universally respected.

"We were going along just outside the Shark's Teeth reef day 'fore yesterday," spoke Jack Kett, "when our lookout spied the whale. We keep a couple of irons aboard for sharks, dogfish and the like, and it didn't take long to sink one in this critter. Then he sounded and we couldn't pick him up again. We've been looking for him ever since, and to-day we thought we saw someone in a motor boat towing our whale away. I explained how we got on the wrong course," and he detailed what is already known to my readers.

"Then we found the whale here," went on Jack Kett, "and we're going to have

it."

"Hum," mused the captain. "It looks as they had the right of it, boys," he said in a low voice, to his son and the latter's chums.

"Ask them if the whale wasn't about dead when they harpooned it, and if it didn't already have an iron in it?" suggested Frank.

"Another iron; eh? That's a different story. Somebody bring a lantern," called the captain quickly.

One was procured, and the crowd made way while the aged whaleman approached the dead beast.

"Here, you can see our iron," said Bill Lowden eagerly. "There it is, as plain as day, with our boat's name burned in the handle."

"Hum, that's right," admitted Captain Trent as he noted the harpoon. "But what about this?" he asked quickly, pointing to a second one, lower down, and in such a position that it could not be readily seen. "Is that yours too?" and Captain Trent held the lantern so that the gleam shone on the other implement.

"What's that? Another harpoon?" cried Kett. "Did we use two, boys?" and he turned to the group of his men.

"No, only one," somebody answered.

"This has a brand on it too," went on Bob's father. He held the lantern nearer. "The *Flying Fish*," he read as he saw the burned letters. "Guess that was in some time before your iron, Lowden, for it's pretty well worn by sea water. There's a prior claim to this whale, and as long as no one is here from the *Flying Fish* this prize belongs to the boys that towed it in. If you don't agree with that jest say so, an' we'll go to law about it. But I know my rights, and these boys will get theirs."

"That's right!" cried several in the crowd. "The whale belongs to the boys."

Jack Kett and Bill Lowden looked at each other. This was something for which they had not bargained. There was a murmur among their men.

"We—we didn't know the whale had been struck before," admitted Bill.

"That's right," chimed in his partner. "We only want what's fair," he went on, in more conciliatory tone than at first.

"That's the way to talk," commented Captain Trent. "I admit you have some claim on the whale, for your iron helped to kill it. The law gives you a tenth part, after other parties have landed the prize, and I'll see that you get it. Now if it's settled you fellows can go, and I'll notify you when the money's ready."

"All right," assented Bill, after a conference with his partner and men. "I guess it's the best we can get out of it. But it's hard to lose a prize when you think you're got it. I'm not blaming you boys," he added quickly, "for I guess you had a hard pull with it. Come on, men, we'll leave our case with Captain Trent."

It was an unexpected turn of affairs, and the boys were glad the contest had ended in their favor. They were congratulated on all sides, and jokingly asked what they were going to do with the money, which was likely to be quite a large sum.

"We're going to buy a whaling vessel, make Mr. Trent captain, and go into the business," said Andy with a laugh. He looked around for his brother, and saw Frank talking to Kett.

"I heard you say something about seeing a boat towing something you thought was the whale, but which turned out to be a wrecked motor boat," began the elder Racer lad. "What sort of a boat was the wrecked one?"

"Well, it was pretty big, with a hood up forward, and it looked as if it had been in a fire. It was all blacked."

"A fire!" cried Frank eagerly, as the memory of the boat from which Paul Gale had been rescued came to him. "Are you sure of this?"

"Certain. We were right close to 'em. That's what made us lose so much time. If we'd taken after you boys in the first place we might have found the whale ourselves."

"Bob Trent sighted the whale before he came for us," explained Frank, "so he'd have first claim on it anyhow. But which way was the motor boat going?"

"Along toward Seabright. Then it got hazy and we lost sight of it."

"Did you notice whether there was a tall, dark man aboard?" asked Frank eagerly.

"Yes, there was such a chap," broke in Bill Lowden. "And he seemed mighty anxious about the wrecked boat in tow. Why, do you know him?"

"I don't know—I've met him," said Frank, as he quickly turned to join his brother. Then he whispered to Andy: "Come away, I've got on the track of the mysterious man and the wrecked motor boat. I want to talk to you."

Wonderingly, Andy followed. There was no need to stay and guard the whale, as Kett and his crowd were preparing to leave. Soon Andy had been told all that Frank had learned.

"What are you going to do?" asked the younger brother.

"We'll go to Seabright the first thing in the morning. Maybe we can find the man there. I believe we're on the right track. Let's go and tell Paul."

There was no little excitement in the Racer home when Andy and Frank arrived with their tale of the sea, the whale, and the quarrel about it. So interested were Mr. and Mrs. Racer that they did not chide their sons for their partial disobedience of orders. As for Paul, he leaned forward eagerly in the easy chair, listening to the tale of the brothers.

"Oh! If I would only get strong enough go with you!" he exclaimed regretfully.

"Don't worry, you will be strong soon," said Mrs. Racer kindly.

"It was rather mean of us to go away and leave you all alone, momsey," spoke Frank. "And Paul, too. But when Bob called us we just couldn't resist."

"I'll forgive you," said the mother. "I won my golf match after all, and perhaps if you had followed me over the links I might not have done so."

"And I didn't mind being left alone," added Paul. "I'm so glad you got the whale."

"And we may get your motor boat, and find out who that strange man is," said Frank.

"Now go slowly," advised Mr. Racer. "I don't want you boys getting into trouble and danger. I think I had better attend to this matter myself, only I can't very well stay away from the office to-morrow."

"Oh, we can do the work all right," declared Frank. "We'll go in our sailboat, it won't take us long. Perhaps Paul will be strong enough to come along."

"I wish I was," and the invalid shook his head. "But somehow I don't feel so well to-night."

"Then we must have Dr. Martin look at you," decided Mr. Racer, and, in spite of Paul's protests the physician was summoned by telephone.

"It is nothing," he said after examining Paul. "He exerted himself a little too much to-day. He must be quiet for a couple of weeks yet and he'll be all right."

"Then that means no trip for you to-morrow," said Mrs. Racer kindly. "Never mind, I'll amuse you while the boys are away pretending they are detectives," and she smiled at Paul.

It was about nine o'clock when Frank happened to remember that he had left aboard their sloop *Gull* a book of adventures in which he was much interested.

"I'm going down and get it," he announced. "I won't be long."

"I'll go with you," offered Andy, and the two started off toward the mooring place, which was near the big public pier. The boys kept a light skiff tied to the float and in this way they used to row out to the sailboat.

As they approached the pier they heard confused shouts and cries coming from the direction of the bay.

"Something's going on!" cried Frank, breaking into a run.

"Yes. Sounds like someone in trouble," added Andy as he hollowed.

Once more came the cry, and this time the brothers could make it out:

"Fire! Fire! Fire!"

They turned a corner of the street that led straight out on the long pier, and there caught sight of a cloud of smoke in the moonlight, and saw dancing flames near the surface of the water. Then Frank uttered a cry of alarm:

"It's our boat—the *Gull*—she's on fire!" he yelled.

CHAPTER XII

THE STRANGER AGAIN

Frank and Andy ran as they had never run before. Out on the long pier they speeded, their eyes turned toward their boat which they could now hardly see on account of the haze of smoke.

"How do you think it happened?" panted Andy.

"Don't know. We've got to get the fire out first, and think afterward. Come on, leg it faster!"

Once more they heard the cries of fire.

"That's Bob Trent!" called Frank. "There he goes out in his boat! We'll have to get some sort of a pump."

"That's—right!" gasped Andy.

The brothers were now at the gangway leading down to the float. Several men and boys who had been fishing off the end of the pier were gathered there, and it was they who had been shouting.

"Guess your boat's a goner," observed Captain Trent. "Bob has gone out to her."

There was now more smoke than fire aboard the *Gull*, but it seemed to the boys only a matter of a few seconds when the flames would again break out.

"Is there a pump? Has anyone a pump?" begged Frank.

"Here's a small one they use to get the bilge water out of their motor boats," said the dock master, for the pier was a station for a yacht club, and the dock-keeper

lived in a small house on the pier. "It doesn't throw much of a stream, though."

"Better use pails," cried Captain Trent. "Here are a couple I use for clams. Take 'em along. The fire started sudden-like, when we were all standing here talking about the whale."

Andy and Frank did not stay to hear more. Quickly they shoved off in their skiff and were soon approaching the *Gull*, at the side of which Bob Trent now was.

"It's a lot of hay smoldering!" he shouted. "Maybe I can get it overboard with my boathook. Come on, fellows."

"Row! Row!" cried Frank, for Andy had the only available pair of oars.

"I am rowing as hard as I can. Hay on fire! We had no hay on our boat. Someone must have put it there and tried to burn it!"

"I guess so. But don't talk—save your breath for rowing."

A minute later Frank and Andy were beside Bob in his boat. Dense smoke was pouring from the *Gull*, and Frank, dipping up a pailful of water, dashed it into the cockpit. There was a hiss, showing that fire was present.

"Wait!" cried Bob. "I think I can pull the hay overboard now. It's a small bale."

He stood up and jabbed his boat-hook into something. The next moment a dark mass, in which red glowing embers could be seen, and which gave out a dense smoke, splashed into the water with a loud hissing noise.

"There's still some fire in the boat!" cried Andy, as he saw tiny tongues of flame.

"Yes, the woodwork is on fire, but a little water will douse that," cried Frank, as he caught up another pailful. With Bob using the second pail, and Andy the pump, the fire was soon put out.

"Not so much damaged," observed Frank, as the three boys went aboard, and examined the craft with a lantern. "But how in the world did it start—or, rather, who put the hay here and set fire to it?"

"That's the question," admitted Bob. "All I know is that I was standing talking to

dad, when I smelled smoke, and saw it coming from your boat."

"Did you see anyone around it to-night?" Andy wanted to know.

"Not a soul. We'll ask the pier master."

But when the boys, after making sure that no sparks of fire remained, had gone back to the float, the dock master could give them no information. He had not noticed any suspicious characters about, but it was admitted that under cover of darkness, before the moon had risen, someone might have rowed silently to the side of the *Gull* and started the fire smoldering in the bale of hay.

"But why would they want to do it?" asked Captain Trent.

"Give it up," said Frank. "Well, we might as well get back home, Andy. Will you keep your eyes open for any more fires, Mr. Robinson?" he asked of the caretaker of the yacht station.

"Sure I will, and they'll find they're in the wrong harbor if they try any more tricks like that."

"Have you any suspicions?" asked Andy of his brother, as they were on their way home.

"I sure have," was the answer.

"What are they?"

"Well, either the men who were disappointed in not getting the whale did this, or it's up to that mysterious man who knows Paul Gale."

"I believe it's the latter. He wants to discourage us from trying to get on his track."

"Probably. Well, we won't say anything about that part of it at home, though we'll have to mention the fire. I hope we can make our trip to-morrow to Seabright."

"So do I."

It was found the next morning that the *Gull* was not much damaged, and, though it smelled strongly of smoke, the two brothers did not mind that as they prepared for the cruise to Seabright.

"Think we'll get any clue?" asked Andy, as he cast off, while Frank ran up the sail.

"Well, it won't be from want of trying. We'll keep a good lookout on the way up, and then we'll go ashore there and make some inquiries. I'm going to get at the bottom of this mystery if it's at all possible," and Frank looked very determined as he fastened the throat and peak halyards on the cleats and looked to see if the sheet was running free in the blocks.

On the trip up the coast the boys kept a sharp watch for anything resembling a wrecked motor boat, or for one in good condition resembling the towing craft of which Jack Kett had spoken. They saw nothing, however, even though they sailed out to sea several miles.

"Let's head for Seabright now," proposed Andy, as they swung about on a long tack. "Maybe he's there waiting for us."

"He'll run if he sees us," jokingly replied Frank.

In about an hour the boys had made their craft fast to the Seabright pier, and going to the office of the dock master they inquired for a motor boat that answered the description of the one for which they were looking.

"We have so many craft here in the summertime," said the dock official, "that it's a pretty hard matter to remember 'em all. I don't recall the boat you speak of, and I'm sure no motor craft that was partly burned has put in here. But speaking of a tall dark man, I recollect now that Jim Hedson, who runs the sailboat *Mary Ann*, was telling me he had a fellow come to him and want to hire her. Maybe that's the fellow you're looking for."

"Perhaps!" agreed Andy eagerly. "Where is Jim Hedson?"

"Over there," and the dock master pointed to where a group of sailors and fishermen were seated on an overturned boat on the beach.

"We'll talk to him," proposed the elder Racer lad, and, followed by his brother,

he approached the little gathering. Before they reached the men Andy uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Look!" he cried to his brother, pointing up the street which led down to the water front. "That man—the mysterious stranger—here he comes!"

"Sure enough!" agreed Frank, as he saw a tall dark man hurrying toward the pier. "That's him all right."

The boys stood waiting, hoping against hope that they could now solve the mystery. The man hastened forward. All at once he caught sight of the lads.

Like a flash he wheeled about and fairly ran back up the street, while Frank took after him calling:

"Hey! Hey! Wait a minute! Stop!"

CHAPTER XIII

A MIDNIGHT SCARE

There was a trolley line, newly built, which ran through Seabright, touching some of the other seacoast towns, but not Harbor View. As luck would have it, just when Frank Racer took after the strange man, hoping to make him stop by calling to him, one of the trolley cars came past.

In a flash the man had jumped aboard the electric vehicle, and, as fate would have it, the motorman happened to be behind time. No sooner was the queer stranger in the car, which had not even stopped for him, than the knight of the controller handle swung it clear around in an endeavor to keep up to his schedule, and with a whizz the car darted off.

"Wait! Wait!" yelled Frank, waving at the conductor. The latter shouted something, what it was the lad could not make out. Andy rushed up and joined his brother.

"Missed him; didn't we?" exclaimed the younger lad ruefully.

"Yes, worse luck," replied Frank. "He always seems to get away from us."

"There'll be another car along in fifteen minutes, boys," said a kindly fisherman passing along.

"It wasn't the car we wanted, it was someone on it," answered Frank.
"Fifteen minutes will give him such a start that we can't follow him."

"Was he a pickpocket?" asked the fisherman.

"We don't know what he was," said Andy. "Come on, Frank, we'll go back and talk to Jim Hedson."

"I was thinking of taking the next car, and keeping after this fellow," spoke Frank, with his usual determined manner.

"What would be the use?" asked Andy, who generally took the easiest way. "He might get off anywhere along the line, and we could hunt all day and not find him. It would be time wasted."

"I guess you're right," assented Frank, with a sigh. "But I hate to give up. I'm sure there's some great mystery back of all this, and Paul and that man are in some manner connected with it. I shouldn't be surprised if that man had wronged Paul in some way."

"How, by taking his motor boat?"

"No, in some other way. It was a queer thing why Paul should be out in his boat alone in the blow. Then to have the boat disappear, and to be seen again towed by this man."

"You're not sure of the last part."

"I am pretty sure. But let's ask Mr. Hedson what he knows about it."

The boys did not find the boatman in a very kindly frame of mind. He greeted them rather sulkily as they approached:

"What do you lads mean by scaring off customers?" he asked.

"We didn't scare him off," answered Frank sturdily.

"What do you call it then? Wasn't he coming here to hire a sailboat off me, and didn't you chase after him, and make him leave on the car? Now he'll likely go to Hank Weston at Edgemere, and hire a boat off him. I lose the trade."

"We're sorry," explained Frank, "but if you noticed that man you saw that he ran as soon he saw us. We didn't say a word to him. He just turned tail and sprinted."

"So I see," grumbled Mr. Hedson, "but I thought maybe you flew some kind of a distress signal."

"We were only too anxious to talk to him," put in Andy. "But he's afraid of us."

"Afraid; why?"

"Well, there's some mystery about him," went on Frank, "and we'd like to discover it. It's connected with a boy whom we saved from a gale." And he told about Paul, and how the man had hastened away that day on the beach. "Do you know anything about him?" finished the elder Racer lad.

"Only this," spoke the boatman, not quite so angry now. "He come to see me yist'day, and asked if I had a sailboat I could hire out for a few days. He said he wanted to go cruising out to sea to bring in a boat of his that was disabled."

"A boat!" interrupted Frank eagerly. "Did he say what kind? Was it a damaged motor boat?"

"He didn't say, and I didn't ask him. I arranged with him to take my *Spray* and he was to come to-day and get her. Now you see what happened."

"We're sorry to have spoiled your business," spoke Frank regretfully, "but perhaps it's just as well you didn't hire that man your boat. I don't believe he's to be trusted," and he told about the suspicion they had that the stranger had already been seen towing a disabled motor boat with a gasoline craft.

"The question is, where has he left the damaged boat—Paul's boat?" went on Andy. "This thing is getting more and more complicated. Why should he want a sailboat to go out and tow in the motor craft, when he was seen in power vessel yesterday?"

"Maybe whoever owned the power vessel took it away from him," suggested Frank.

"I wouldn't wonder but what you're right!" exclaimed Jim Hedson, slapping his big palm down on his broad leg. "Now I think of it, I didn't like the looks of that man. He wouldn't look you square in the eye, but kept shifting around. I'm just as glad I didn't hire him my *Spray*, and I'm sorry I took you fellows up so short. I'll keep a lookout for that man, and if I see or hear anything of him I'll let you know. You're cottaging over Harbor View way; aren't you? I think I've seen you there."

"Yes, we're the Racer boys," replied Frank, "and we'll be obliged to you if you can put us on the track of this man. It isn't so much for our sake, as that we want

to find out who Paul Gale is."

"Paul Gale!" exclaimed Mr. Hedson "That's a good name for the lad found as he was. Well, I'll do my best."

"Where to now?" asked Andy, as he followed his brother up the street.

"To the fertilizer factory. I think we can make a deal with them about our whale better by talking than over the telephone."

"We ought to have some of Chet Sedley's fifteen cent perfume if we're going up there," said Andy. "It smells worse than ten skunks on a wet night."

"Oh, well, I guess we can stand it a little while."

The fertilizer factory, where fish, chiefly menhaden, were ground up and treated, before being spread on farms and gardens to enrich them, was not a very delightful place. The boys soon located the manager, who had heard about their whale, and he made them a good offer for it, agreeing to take the carcass away promptly.

Paul improved but slowly, and, as far as his mind was concerned, there was no change. The past was an entire blank to him, and Dr. Martin, as the days passed, shook his head in doubt.

"I'm afraid it's going to take a long time," he said.

"Have you given up hope, Doctor?" asked Mrs. Racer, as she followed him from Paul's room.

"No, not entirely, but I'm disappointed that there is not a glimmer of the past. Perhaps if he could see something or someone connected with his former life it might produce a shock that would start the sluggish brain cells to working. Otherwise I don't know what can be done."

Andy and Frank, in their goings to and fro about the bay in their sailboat, kept a close watch for the mysterious man. But they did not see him. Neither had Jim Hedson heard anything.

"I guess you'll have to give it up," said Paul one night, when, with his chums and

Mr. and Mrs. Racer, he was discussing the case. "You better ship me off somewhere. I—I'm afraid I'm becoming a burden to you."

"Not a bit of it!" cried Frank heartily. "Andy and I always wanted another chum, an' now we've got him."

"Don't you feel strong enough to come for sail with us to-morrow?" asked Andy.

"I think so," answered Paul. "Dr. Martin said I could go for a walk to-morrow."

"Then we'll arrange for a sail," decided Frank. "It will do you lots of good."

"But mind, no chasing after whales, dead or alive!" stipulated Mr. Racer, with a laugh.

"All right," agreed his sons.

Paul soon afterward went to his room. A chamber on the ground floor, with a window opening into the garden had been fitted up for him, to save him the necessity of climbing up and down stairs. It was in this little chamber that, soon afterward, he went to bed, hoping against hope that he might awaken on the morrow with his memory restored.

It was about midnight when Frank, who was a light sleeper, was awakened suddenly by hearing a noise under his window. He occupied the room over Paul.

"I wonder if he's sick?" he thought, as he arose softly. "Perhaps he is, and doesn't want to call anyone. I'll take a look I guess."

Before going down, however, Frank stepped to his window, softly raised the screen, and looked out. As he did so he was startled by a shrill cry from the room below him. It was Paul's voice, and the mysterious lad was crying:

"Get away! Leave me alone! What do you want of me again? Oh, why can't you let me alone!"

"What's the matter?" shouted Frank in alarm.

"That man! He's after me again!" screamed Paul.

Before Frank could leave his window to rush to the aid of the lad below him, he saw a bright light flash out from the casement of the boy who had no memory. In an instant Frank recalled that it must be the portable electric light with which they had furnished the invalid in case he wanted to get up in the night.

Then a movement below him attracted Frank's attention, and he saw a dark figure spring from Paul's window. As this happened the light flashed out once more, and in the glare of it the elder Racer lad saw the countenance of the mysterious man, while Paul called out in fear:

"Oh, don't come near me! Let me alone! I'm afraid of you!"

Then it became dark, and Frank could hear someone crashing away through the bushes of the garden.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WRECK AGAIN

"Paul, are you hurt? I'm coming! Father, turn on the light! Someone tried to get in Paul's room!"

Thus Frank cried as he made his way through the darkness to the hall, and fairly ran down the stairs. He knew every foot of the way.

"What's the matter?" yelled Andy.

"Oh, dear! Is it burglars?" screamed Mrs. Racer.

"Careful, boys!" shouted Mr. Racer, as he stepped out into the hall from his room, nearest to which the electric switch was, and flashed on the incandescents. "Don't run into danger."

Andy was now following his brother, having caught up a heavy fishing rod, bound together, as a substitute for a club.

"Paul, are you hurt?" cried Frank again, and by this time he was at the room door of the lad who had been so alarmed by the midnight visitor.

"No, I—I'm all right," was the panting answer, and Paul met Frank at the portal, throwing the gleam of the hand electric all about. Frank turned on the regular light in Paul's room, and looked around. The wire mosquito screen was raised, showing how the intruder had gained entrance. By this time Andy and Mr. Racer had joined Frank and Paul, and Mrs. Racer had been assured that whoever had entered was now outside the house.

"But what was it? Who was it?" demanded Mr. Racer.

"I—I—" began Paul, who was trembling from fright.

"I know who it was, I saw him!" interrupted Frank. "It was the same man we met on the beach—the mysterious man who knows something about Paul but who won't tell! What did he do to you, Paul?"

"Nothing. That is, as far as I know. I was sleeping soundly when I heard a noise in my room, and I could just see someone moving about around the bureau, opening drawers. At first I thought it was one of you boys, or Mr. Racer, and then I knew you wouldn't come in without making a light.

"I reached under my pillow where I kept this electric lamp, and flashed it. As I did so the man came toward my bed. Then I saw who he was and I yelled. I thought he was going to take me away."

"Take you away?" questioned Frank. "Do you know him—have you seen him before?"

"Yes!" suddenly exclaimed Paul. "I—I know him! His name is—"

"That's what we want to know—who is he?" interrupted Andy eagerly.

"He is—his name is—Oh, why can't I remember?" cried poor Paul, passing his hand over his forehead in despair. "I thought it was coming to me, but it's faded away again! Oh, why can't I recall who he is? Then I know the mystery would be solved. But I can't—it's all—so—so hazy. Only I know that this man had something to do with me—and, yes, I'm beginning to recall it now—my father also. He wanted to harm me—or was it my father? I can't—"

"Now look here," broke in Mr. Racer kindly, "this won't do, you know. You must calm yourself, Paul. I can't let you excite him, boys. Here is some quieting medicine Dr. Martin left, Paul. Take that and in half an hour you will be calmer. Then you can tell us all you recollect. Perhaps by that time your memory will be stronger. Meanwhile, if you boys want to do something why don't you get some clothes on, and go with Jake the gardener to see if you can get any trace of that scoundrel? I'll call up the police."

"Good!" cried Frank. "That's what we'll do. Come on, Andy."

The two boys were soon scouring the garden with lantern, accompanied by Jake,

the man of all work. But they had little hope of coming upon the intruder. They found the place where he had burst through the currant bushes after leaping from Paul's window, and there were his footprints in the soft earth; but that was all.

"He's far enough off by this time," declared Andy. "Let's go in and see if Paul can tell us anything."

They found their friend much quieter. Mr. and Mrs. Racer had dressed, and Paul had on his clothes. They were sitting in the dining room, Mr. Racer drinking some hot coffee Mary had made.

"We'll have a little midnight supper," said the boys' mother with a faint laugh. "I'm sure I won't get to sleep again to-night."

"Did you see anything of him?" asked their father.

Frank shook his head. "What about Paul?" he asked. "Can he remember anything?"

"I wish I could," said the unfortunate youth, with a sigh. "But it's all so hazy. As soon as I saw that man's face in the light I knew I had met him before, and that he was an enemy of mine. But I can't grasp any details. I flashed the light on him as he was getting out of the window."

"That's how I happened to see him," said Frank, in explanation, "and how I knew him to be the mysterious man."

"Did he touch you?" asked Andy.

"No," answered Paul, "though I don't know what he might have done if I hadn't awakened as I did."

"Did he take anything of yours from the room?" asked Mr. Racer.

"I haven't anything of my own, except the clothes I wore when the boys rescued me, so he couldn't get anything."

"But you said he was at the bureau," went on Frank.

"Nothing is missing from there," said Mrs. Racer quickly.

"Perhaps he thought Paul had some important papers," suggested Andy.

"I'm sure I haven't," and once more the unfortunate youth passed his hand across his forehead. "I wish I could recall when it was, and under what circumstances, I met that man before. But I can't. Only I'm sure of one thing—he is an enemy of mine—and of my father."

"Can you recall anything of your father—or mother?" asked Mrs. Racer softly.

"No," answered Paul with a shake of his head; and tears filled his eyes.

"Well, I know one thing!" exclaimed Frank decidedly. "I'm going to have another try at finding that man. I'm sure he's in this vicinity now. He's hanging around here for some reason, and we have a double motive in locating him. I believe he set our boat on fire," and for the first time he told his parents of his suspicions.

"Be careful if you do meet him," cautioned Mr. Racer. "He is evidently a dangerous character. Now to see what the police can do, and then we'll go back to bed."

The police could do very little, as might be expected, though they promised to keep a lookout for the fellow. They made an utterly useless inspection of the house and grounds, and left. Then the family and Paul went to bed to get what little sleep they could.

Frank and Andy discussed the matter long and earnestly the next day. Paul was not so well, on account of the fright, and so it was not thought wise to have him accompany them on a sailing trip.

"I'm not so sure it will do any good to go off in our boat," declared Andy. "That fellow is just as likely to be on land as at sea."

"I think he's more likely to be at sea," declared Frank. "He wants to get that damaged motor boat."

"Well, let's try looking for him ashore a while and if that doesn't amount to anything, I'll go sailing with you," suggested the younger brother.

To this Frank agreed; and for several days he and his brother went from one seacoast settlement to another, making inquiries. Nothing, however, came from

them. They spent much time riding back and forth on the electric car line, hoping they might unexpectedly meet the mysterious man there, but he kept out of their way as if he knew they were on his trail.

"Well, now for a sailing cruise!" exclaimed Frank, one morning, and Andy announced that his theory had been tried and found wanting. The brothers wanted to take Paul, but he was not well enough, so, having taken along a supply of provisions, if they should be becalmed and kept out all night, as was sometimes the case, they set sail, beating up along the coast.

There was a fair wind, that freshened at noon, but which died out toward evening, and finally there settled over the ocean a dead calm.

"It's us out for all night, unless you can whistle up a wind," said Frank grimly.

"We'll both try," proposed Andy, and they whistled all the tunes they knew, but without avail.

Then, having lighted their lamps, and cooked a supper on the oil stove in the small galley, they prepared to spend the night at sea. They had often done it before, for their craft was a staunch one, and as they had said at home that they might be detained, they knew their folks would not worry.

They stood watch and watch, of several hours at a stretch, and Frank was on duty when the gray and misty night began to be dispelled by the rosy sun rising from the water. As he glanced across the slowly heaving billows, something in the very path of Old Sol's smiling beams caught his eye.

It was a sailboat, somewhat larger than the *Gull*, but it was not the sight of the craft itself that attracted Frank's attention. It was something trailing behind.

"Andy! Andy, come up here!" called elder Racer lad.

"What's the matter?" demanded his brother, coming from his berth in the tiny cabin, and rubbing his sleepy eyes. "See another whale?"

"No, but look at that sailboat? Isn't it dragging something?"

"It sure is!"

"What do you make it out to be?"

"It looks like—why it's a motor boat, and it looks as if it had seen hard usage."

"That's what I thought, and I'll miss my guess if that isn't the very boat that blew up when Paul Gale was in it."

"I believe you're right. Wait a minute." Andy disappeared, to return a moment later with a pair of powerful glasses. He focused the binoculars on the object trailing behind the sailing craft. Then he uttered a cry:

"It's the damaged motor boat! We're on the track of it again! Let's chase after it and see who has it!"

CHAPTER XV

ORDERED BACK

The wind had freshened and was now blowing at a lively rate. Andy and Frank sprang to the sails, even hoisting a small jib which they seldom used. But now they wanted all the speed they could get, for the craft which was towing the damaged motor boat was some distance away, and was rapidly drawing ahead.

"Can we catch her, do you think?" asked Andy, as he gave the tiller over to his brother.

"We've got to," was the answer with quiet determination. "Suppose you get something to eat while I handle the boat? We may not have time to cook anything after we come up to them."

"Are you going to come to close quarters?"

"I'm going to try to get near enough to see if the mysterious man is aboard, and if he is, I'm going to fire some questions at him, and let him know that he's liable to arrest for entering our house the other night."

"I'd like to fire something else besides questions at him. I've got my small rifle aboard."

"None of that!" objected Frank quickly. "We'll proceed on lawful lines, no matter what he does. Now, Miss *Gull*," and he patted the rail of the craft, "do your prettiest. See if you can't catch up to those fellows."

The wind continued good and the boys' craft slipped through the water at a lively rate of speed. Andy busied himself in the galley, whence soon came the appetizing odor of coffee, bacon and eggs.

"Hurry up with that!" called Frank. "I'm as hungry as a crab."

"It's almost ready," replied his brother. "Shall I bring it up, or will you come down?"

"You get yours first, and then relieve me. I don't want to eat with one hand and steer with the other. Only don't be all morning, and leave some for me."

There was enough, as Frank soon discovered, and when he came up on deck again he found Andy leaning against the tiller and peering at the distant vessel through the binoculars.

"Can you make out anything?" he asked.

"No, I can see several men aboard, but I don't notice our mysterious friend."

"Do they seem to be paying any attention to us?"

"Not a bit. Guess they don't even know we are here. I don't believe we are going to catch up to them, though."

"Oh, yes we are. The *Gull* is plenty fast, and they are handicapped by dragging that motor boat in the water. It must be partly filled, as it sets so far down, and that makes it all the harder to tow. We're gaining on them."

"Not so's you could notice it."

"Oh, well, we've got all day, and grub enough for another night. I'm not going to give up this chase until I have to, or until I've solved the mystery."

"And I'm with you."

There is not much excitement in a sailing race, as the boys very soon found out. There was nothing they could do, which would have been the case in a motor craft, to add to their speed. All they could do was to sit and let the wind carry them. And they were glad to see that the breeze was continually freshening.

"There'll be another gale before night, if this keeps up," predicted Frank.

"Let it," assented Andy. "The *Gull* likes heavy weather, and we can stand it."

"Yes, but father and mother will be worried about us. If it comes on to blow too hard we'll have to turn back."

"And let that man get away?"

"There'd be no help for it. But we haven't turned back yet, and now his craft ought to be easy to trace."

Once more they looked through the glass at the vessel ahead of them. They could see sailors moving about on deck, but that was all. No sign of the tall dark man was visible.

"Perhaps he isn't aboard," suggested Andy.

"It can't be helped," answered his brother. "We want the motor boat almost as much as we want the man, and we can't take our choice I'm afraid. But we are certainly creeping up on them."

This was true, for while two miles had at first separated the vessels, the distance was now narrowed to a little less than a half mile, and the *Gull* was sailing better than was her rival.

"What are you going to do when you get within hailing distance?" asked Andy, after a pause.

"I don't know—haven't exactly made up my mind," was the answer of the elder Racer lad. "But I'll have to soon."

Frank was giving all his attention to managing the *Gull*, so as to gain every foot. Andy went up forward now and then to report progress.

"Hey, Frank!" he suddenly called, "there's something doing on board."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why the whole crowd of them have come aft and are looking at us for all they're worth."

"Are they using glasses?"

"No—yes, they are too! A new man has come up on deck, and he's got a pair. He's training them on us."

"Good! That shows they're worried. Take our glasses and see what you can make out."

Andy looked long and earnestly. Then he let out a yell.

"It's him! It's that mysterious man!" he shouted. "He's excited, too, for he's making motions to the crew!"

"Good! Watch him carefully. We'll be up to them in about five minutes."

Andy watched. In a minute he gave another cry.

"What is it?" asked Frank.

"They're laying-to—waiting for us, I guess."

"They won't have long to wait," declared Frank grimly.

The *Gull* was swiftly slipping through the water. In a little while it was almost abeam of the craft towing the mysterious motor boat. Frank threw her head up into the wind, and, as he did so a voice from the other sailboat hailed him.

"*Gull* ahoy! Are you trailing us?"

It was the mysterious man calling, and he was standing on the rail.

"Yes, we are," answered Frank boldly.

"Well, what do you want?"

"We want to find out who you are, what you have to do with a boy named Paul, why you have his motor boat in tow, and why you entered our house like a thief in the night."

"Hu! That's a lot of questions. And I suppose you think they'll be answered," commented the man, in sneering tones.

"I do," said Frank calmly. "Where are you going with that boat?"

"None of your business!" snapped the man. "And I want to tell you one thing more. You've got to quit trailing after us, too!"

"Suppose we refuse?" asked Andy.

"Then it will be the worse for you. Meldrick, just run that brass cannon over on this side."

A moment later the muzzle of a small brass gun was pointed menacingly at our heroes.

"There's my answer," went on the mysterious man. "If you persist in following us you'll be plugged below the water line. Now you go back where you came from, and keep away. Don't try to meddle with what doesn't concern you."

"This does concern us—or, rather a friend of ours," said Frank determinedly. "And what's more, we're going to swear out a warrant for your arrest for setting fire to our boat with a bale of hay."

The man on the rail started.

"Are you going to turn back?" he shouted.

"No!" declared Frank.

"Get ready to fire," said the scoundrel calmly.

"I guess they've got us," spoke Andy, in a low voice to his brother.

"We can't risk being fired at."

"No, I suppose not," answered Frank bitterly. "We'll have to run back."

He let the head of his craft fall off in the wind.

"That's more sensible," commented the man on the rail. "Good-bye!" he called sarcastically as the vessels separated, the one towing the damaged motor craft forging ahead, while the *Gull* sailed off on the backward tack.

There were bitter feelings in the hearts of Frank and Andy Racer. They had

almost solved the mystery, only to lose at the last moment. But they resolved not to give up.

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE SEARCH

For some time after they had been ordered back from their pursuit of the strange vessel neither Frank nor Andy said anything. They were thinking too hard for mere words. Finally the younger lad expressed himself.

"Well, wouldn't that spoil your clam chowder?"

"It sure would," agreed Frank, who was used to queer remarks from his brother.

"He must be up to something crooked or he wouldn't be so anxious to have us stop following him," went on the younger Racer lad.

"That's right. And I was so sure I'd find out what the mystery was! But I didn't count on the cannon."

"No, it wouldn't have been safe to risk a shot. We might have sunk."

"But I'll not give up!" exclaimed Frank determinedly. "We've got some clues now, and we can follow them. Just notice which way they're sailing, Andy."

"What good will that do?"

"I intend to circle back in a short time, and see if I can pick them up. It's one thing for him to order us back, but we have just as much right on the ocean as he has, and he can't keep us off. If we stay far enough back they can't see us, and we can find out where they're going."

"Where do you think they're heading for?"

"Give it up, but I know one thing. It's evident that this man, whoever he is, wants

to keep out of observation. That is proved by the fact that he once had this damaged motor boat in tow of another gasoline craft, and for some reason he gave it up. He may have anchored it in some out-of-the-way place, and has only just now gone for it. That's what he wanted of Jim Hedson's boat, but we spoiled his plans. Now he has another sailing craft to tow the prize in."

"I believe you're right, Frank, but where do you suppose he's taking it?"

"Give it up, but I'm going to keep on the search for him. If there's a chance of bringing back Paul's memory I'm going to do it."

"And I'm with you!" exclaimed Andy heartily.

The two brothers cast backward glances at the vessel with which they had had a clash. It was rapidly disappearing in a slight haze that was arising, and soon Frank thought it would be safe to turn about, sail with the wind, and take after the mysterious man.

But he did not count on the weather. Soon the wind increased in violence, and there was a choppy sea.

"I don't like this," remarked Andy, as their small craft pitched and tossed on the waves. "I don't mean I'm seasick, or anything like that, but we're getting pretty far out, and with a storm coming on toward night—"

"That's right," agreed Frank. "We'll have to turn back. It's tough luck, just as we're on the right track, but it can't be helped. It wouldn't be right to make mom and dad worry. We'll beat it back for home."

But the wind came up with such sudden violence, and the sea ran so high, that the best the boys could do was to run for shelter. In fact it was only with considerable risk that they made a safe harbor, for with a rising tide and a cross current their small craft was in a bad way.

"We'll never make Harbor View!" cried Frank above the noise of the wind and the spatter of the salt spume on deck.

"What'll we do then?" shouted Andy. The two brothers had donned their oilskins which were glistening with moisture in the fading light of the day.

"Run for Mardene and anchor there. Then we can go home on the railroad."

"All right. Got any cash?"

"Enough for fares I guess."

It was some hours later when two tired boys entered the Racer cottage, where they found their father and mother not a little alarmed at their absence in the storm which had rapidly developed.

"But we're on the right track!" cried Frank with enthusiasm.

"How's that?" asked his father.

"We saw the mysterious man, and he had your motor boat, Paul."

"I'm not sure it was my boat," answered Paul. "I can't seem to remember that I ever owned one."

"Well, that man had possession of it, whoever it was," went on Andy. "And he was quite threatening, too," he added, as he related about the brass cannon.

"I'm glad you boys had sense enough to turn back," spoke Mr. Racer.

"Don't take any chances with such scoundrels. The probability is that he wouldn't have shot at you, but it isn't safe to run the risk. But, Paul, is your memory any better for what Frank and Andy have told you?"

"No, I'm afraid not. I think—yes, I can remember something more!" he suddenly cried. "I think I was once in a chase after that same man. Now that you boys speak of it my mind is a little clearer, but there is still that haze. I'm sure I was after that man for something that belonged to me or my father. And I remember something else?"

"What is it?" cried Andy eagerly.

"It has something to do with a doctor. My father is ill, or was ill, I can dimly recollect that. And I seem to see a nurse in a uniform, and—and—but it is all so hazy and blank!" and again the poor lad passed his hand over his aching head, in a vain endeavor to remember.

"There, never mind," soothed Mrs. Racer. "That's enough for to-night. My! how it rains! I'm glad you boys are not out in the storm."

"Just the same, I wish we were after that man," said Frank in a low voice.

For three days the storm continued, and with such violence that the Racer boys could not even go after their boat which they had left at Mardene.

Then, on the fourth day, the clouds broke and the sun shone. There was a brisk wind, and Frank proposed that they take a train and get the *Gull*, sailing her back to Harbor View.

"Before you go I wish you'd call at Captain Trent's fish store, and get me some lobsters," requested Mrs. Racer. "I want some for dinner to-night."

"And Andy wants one for a leg bracelet," added Frank with a laugh.

"Aw, cut it out!" begged his brother.

They stopped in the fish store on their way to the depot. There they found Bob, busily engaged in putting up clams, and other products of the sea, for customers. Andy remarked to the captain that he thought he had a new clue to the mysterious man.

"And that reminds me, that I meant to ask you where he would likely be heading for when he drove us back," put in Frank.

"Where was he?" inquired the old seaman, and the brothers described the location.

"By Neptune!" suddenly exclaimed the captain. "I shouldn't wonder but what he was going to Cliff Island!"

"Cliff Island!" cried Frank.

"Yes, you know that group of rocks—it's not much more than ten miles from the Shark Teeth."

"Sure we know where it is," agreed Andy "But no one lives on it. It's as desolate

as a volcano."

"All the better for what that man wanted," declared the captain. "Take my word for it he's gone there with the damaged motor boat, though why I can't say. But he wants to be let alone, and that's the best place he could pick out for the purpose. Why don't you go there?"

"I believe we will!" cried Frank. "We didn't know just how to begin the search, but that's the best clue yet."

"On to Cliff Island!" cried Andy.

"Hush! Not so loud," cautioned his brother. "You can't tell who might hear you."

Then, having ordered the lobsters, they hurried away to take the train for Mardene to get the sailboat. Once more they were on the search for the mysterious man.

CHAPTER XVII

ON CLIFF ISLAND

"Why didn't we think before of going to the island?" asked Andy, as he and his brother sat in the train on the way to Mardene.

"Give it up," answered Frank. "But, as the captain says, it would be just the place for a criminal to hide. Hardly any boats stop there if they can help it, unless they want shelter from a storm, and it's out of the line of regular travel. Still, we may not find our man there."

"Yes, but it's a good chance. There's a fine wind to-day, and we oughtn't to be a great while running to the island."

The brothers discussed the curious case into which they had been drawn since rescuing Paul Gale, and they talked about the island.

Its name came from the fact that, situated in the center of it, there was a high rocky cliff. There were several caves running under this cliff, hollowed out by natural means, and rumor had it that, in the early days, sea rovers and pirates used them as places of refuge, or to hide their ill-gotten plunder.

No one had been able to confirm this, however, though it was not for want of trying, as our heroes, as well as several other boys, had paid a number of visits to the island.

But they found no traces of pieces of eight or Spanish doubloons, and, truth to tell, the caves were not very inviting places, being damp and dark, so the lads never penetrated very deeply. Thus Cliff Island was not very well known. It was a desolate, barren sort of place, wind and storm swept, and the abiding place of innumerable gulls.

"I tell you what we ought to do," remarked Andy, as the train neared their destination.

"What's that? Not play any more jokes I hope." And Frank smiled as he looked at his brother.

"No, I mean about this chase. We ought to arrange to stay on the island for several days—sort of camp there. It's so big and so irregular in shape, and with so many caves, that we can't go all over it in one day. And there's no telling where that man may be hiding."

"That's so. Then you think we'd better stock up with grub, and make it a sort of picnic?"

"I do. We can telephone word home of what we're going to do, so they won't worry. It will be fun, even if we don't find any clues of the mysterious man."

"I'm with you. We can buy our grub in Mardene and stock our boat. Then for 'a life on the ocean wave, a home on the bounding deep,'" quoted Frank, in a sing-song voice.

The *Gull* was tied up in a small slip where they had left her, and the provisions were soon put aboard. Then the two brothers went over every rope and sail, to make sure they would serve in the strain of a storm.

"Well, guess we might as well pull out," remarked Frank, as he looked up at the "tattle-tale," or piece of triangular bunting flying from the mast to tell the direction of the wind. "We've got a good breeze now. I hope it holds."

"Wait just a minute," begged Andy. "I want to take a look at that motor boat," and he motioned to a large one that was tied near the sailboat. "I wish we had one like that. It's a beaut!"

No one was near the craft and soon Andy was in it, inspecting her critically. Frank saw him handling some of the wires that ran to spark plugs in the four cylinder heads.

"Better let things alone," cautioned the older Racer lad. "You might get something out of order."

"I just thought of a little joke I can play on the fellow who owns this," chuckled Andy, as he disconnected one of the high-tension cables.

"Oh you and your jokes!" objected Frank, somewhat sternly. "You'll get more than you count on, some day."

"Oh, I'm only going to fix things so that when he turns on the batteries and starts to turn over the fly wheel he'll get a shock," explained Andy. "I'll just cross these wires and——"

Andy Racer didn't finish what he was going to say. Instead he jumped back as though he had been stung by a hornet, and let out a yell:

"Wow! Sufferin' cats!" he cried, holding one hand in the other and prancing about.

"What's the matter?" asked Frank in some alarm.

"I got a fearful shock! The wires were short-circuited and I didn't know it! Smoked mackerel! I got a big charge of electricity!" howled Andy.

"Serves you right for meddling with other people's boats, and trying to play jokes on them," declared Frank, as sternly as he could, though he had to laugh at the wry face Andy was making as he danced about.

"Huh! Guess you wouldn't think it funny if you had about twenty-seven hornets after you!" grumbled the younger lad.

"Well, maybe you'll get over playing jokes some day," predicted Frank.

"I didn't suppose it was going to turn out this way," was the dubious answer.

"Well, come aboard now, and we'll get under way," said Frank, trying not to laugh.

A little later, under a spanking breeze, the *Gull* was standing out for Cliff Island, while the boys peered eagerly forward for the first sight of the bit of land in the big bay which might mean so much to them.

"Are you going to sail straight up to it?" asked Andy after they had covered

several miles.

"Well, the best place to drop anchor is in that little inlet on the east side. To get to that we have to sail half way around the island, and I was thinking we might as well make a complete circuit."

"Why?"

"Oh, we might see something of the man, or the boat, and that would give us a line on how to act. After we go around we can tie up in the inlet and row ashore. Then we can begin our search."

"I guess that's a good plan," assented Andy; "Now I'll go get some grub ready and by that time we may sight the island."

It was shortly after the meal, partaken of while the little boat was pitching and tossing on long ground swell, that the younger lad, who had stationed himself in the bow, called out:

"Land ho!"

"Where away?" demanded Frank.

"Dead ahead."

"It's the island, all right," exclaimed Frank. "I laid a straighter course for it than I thought."

In a little while the barren speck loomed up more plainly. As they approached closer the boys eagerly scanned the shores for a sight of the mysterious man, or the wrecked motor boat. But they saw nothing, even through the powerful glasses they used.

"Now to tie up and go ashore," said Frank, after the circuit was completed. A little later the anchor splashed into the shallow waters of the inlet and the two brothers were rowing ashore.

"Look out for yourself, Mr. Mysterious Man!" exclaimed Andy, as he stepped out of the boat. "We're on your trail."

"Bur-r-r-r! It's as desolate as the place where Robinson Crusoe was stranded!" cried Frank, as he looked about.

Overhead gulls were wheeling and circling with noisy cries, but this was the only sign of life on Cliff Island.

CHAPTER XVIII

"THERE HE IS!"

"Well, what's the first thing to be done?" asked Andy, after he had assisted Frank to pull the boat up on the beach beyond high-water mark.

"There's plenty to do," declared his brother. "In the first place we've got to decide whether we'll stay on shore over night, or sleep on the boat. If we stay on land we've got to bring our grub ashore. Then, the next thing is to map out a plan so we can search the island, and not go over the same ground twice."

"My! You'd think you had done this sort of thing all your life, and had it down to a science," declared Andy with a laugh.

"Well, if it's going to be done at all, it might as well be done right. This thing is getting serious, and I want to clear it up if possible. For our sakes as well as for Paul's."

They talked the matter over at some length, and decided that it would be more fun to camp on shore instead of going back and forth to the boat to sleep and eat.

"The weather is warm," said Andy, "and we can sleep out in the open, especially as we have plenty of blankets. And it will be jolly to build a fire on shore and sit around it nights. Just like some old sea pirates. Wow!"

"Easy!" cautioned his brother. "This isn't a joy-picnic. We're here on serious business, and there may be some danger."

"But we might as well have some sport along with it," argued Andy, who could not help seeing the funny or bright side of everything. Frank, though more serious, did not despise a good time by any means, but he went at matters more determinedly than did his brother.

"To my notion, the first thing to do is to go at this search with a system," went on the older lad. "We'll climb up to the top of the cliff, and see if we can make out anything from there. If that man is here he may have set up a camp, and built a fire. If he has, we can easily see it from the cliff. Then we will know where we're at."

To this Andy agreed, and soon they were toiling to the top of the high land that ran lengthwise of the island, roughly dividing it into two parts. It was no easy matter to reach the summit, and several times the boys had to stop for a rest. But finally they were at the goal.

Below them, on all sides, washing the rocky shores of the island were the heaving waters of the great bay. They could take in most of the shore line, irregular and indented as it was, but, look as they did, there was no sign of life.

They saw no curling smoke from a campfire. They saw no figure of a man—the man whom they had so fruitlessly pursued. Nor was there any vestige of a big motor boat half-burned.

"Well, nothing doing so far," remarked Frank, after a pause. "Now we'll go down and begin a circuit of the shore and see what is in some of the caves."

Slipping and sliding over the loose stones and gravel, they reached the bottom of the slope near where they had drawn up their boat. The sight of this craft gave Frank an idea.

"Suppose while we're on one side of the island that man—or someone—should happen to come along?" he suggested. "He'd make off with our boat, sure."

"Probably," agreed Andy. "But we can prevent that."

"How?"

"By hiding the oars. We'll shove 'em under some bushes quite a distance back, so they can't be found."

Frank agreed that this was a good idea, and though there was a chance that someone might land in a motor boat and tow off their rowing craft, still they had to take that risk.

Then began a systematic search of the island. They went along the shore, and looked into many small caves. The interior of these was dark, but they had each provided a pocket portable electric flash lamp, so that they were able to illuminate the caverns.

"Nothing here," announced Frank, after an inspection of the first one. And that was the result in all the others that they penetrated before dusk. By nightfall they had covered perhaps a quarter of the shore line and then they turned back.

A roaring blaze was kindled on the sand from the plentiful supply of driftwood that strewed the beach, and at the cheerful fire they sat and talked as they ate their supper.

"Jolly fun, isn't it?" asked Andy.

"It sure is, even if we don't discover anything. I wish Paul was along."

"Perhaps it's just as well he's home," commented the younger lad. "I have an idea that this man keeps informed of our movements, and don't fancy having him sneak up on us during the night, which he would be very likely to do if Paul was with us."

"That's so. But, speaking of night, what are we going to do about sleeping?"

"Under our boat, with our blankets spread out on the sands," said the younger lad. "It's plenty warm enough."

It was not a half bad way to spend the night, especially as the overturned rowboat kept off the chilly dew. Soon the two brothers were soundly sleeping. They did not bother to keep a watch and even allowed the fire to die out, taking the precaution, however, to put some wood under the boat, where it would be dry in case of rain in the night.

"Well, now for another try at the mysterious man!" called Frank, as he crawled out from under their shelter the next morning. "Maybe we'll have better luck to-day."

They set off directly after breakfast, and took with them their blankets and a supply of food. For they intended to make a half circuit of the island that day, and they figured that night would find them too far away from their camp to

make it practical to return.

"We'll eat and sleep wherever we are when it's dark," decided Frank.

Their search that day was as fruitless as fore. Not a vestige of the man or boat to be seen. They made a sort of shelter of driftwood and seaweed before darkness fell, and built a rousing fire in front of it, where they sat and talked until it was time to turn in.

"I don't like the looks of the weather," remarked Frank as he wrapped up in his blankets.

"Why not?" his brother wanted to know.

"It looks like rain, and if it does we're going get wet."

"Oh, I guess not," said the younger lad easily. He never looked for trouble.

It was along toward morning when Frank awoke from a troubled dream that he was standing under a shower bath. He found it to be almost a reality, for it was raining and the water was coming in through the flimsy roof of their shelter.

"What's the matter?" asked Andy sleepily as he heard his brother moving about.

"It's raining a flood! I'm drenched and so must you be."

"That's right, I am pretty wet. What had we better do; make for the *Gull*?"

"What, in this storm and darkness? No, but I think there's a cave near here. We can go in that and keep dry, at any rate."

"Go ahead, I'm with you."

They were fortunate in finding a small cavern, and in it was a supply of dry wood. They made a fire, though the smoke was almost as bad as the dampness, but it served to get rid of that chilly feeling.

It was still raining when morning came, but the boys were more cheerful with the appearance of daylight, though they had to breakfast on cold food, for all the wood was wet, and the supply in the cave had been burned.

"Oh, well, we can go back to our first camp and row out to the *Gull* pretty soon," remarked Frank. "Let's hurry on with our search now."

"I'm afraid it isn't going to amount to anything," declared Andy. "That man isn't here, and he hasn't been here. Captain Trent's theory was all right, but it didn't work out."

"Oh, I'm not going to give up yet," insisted Frank. "We have a good part of the island to explore yet."

But, as they went farther on, it became more and more evident that there was no one on the island but themselves—that is, unless the mysterious man was hidden somewhere between them and their first camp—a distance of about a mile.

"We'll cover that, and then all there is to do is to sail back home," proposed Andy, as they started on the last lap of their search, after eating a hasty lunch. It had stopped raining, for which they were very thankful.

There was one more cave to explore, and this was soon proved to contain nothing but a colony of bats, which they disturbed with their flashing light.

"I hope our boat's safe," mused Frank as they headed for the place where they had left it. "I don't fancy swimming out to the *Gull*."

"Oh, it will be all right," asserted Andy confidently. "There she is," he added a moment later, as he made the turn around a jutting rock. "She hasn't been moved since we slept under her."

Together they approached their boat. As he neared it Frank looked critically at some marks in the wet sand—a series of footprints all about the craft.

"Look!" he exclaimed, pointing to them.

"Well, what about it?" asked Andy calmly. "You and I made them."

"It rained since we were here night before last," said Frank in a low voice, as if afraid someone would hear him. "Our footprints would have been washed away. Someone has been here since—a man——"

He paused and looked down the beach. An indefinable something had attracted

his attention. The next moment he grasped Andy by the arm.

"There he is!" he exclaimed.

And there, about a quarter of a mile away was a man, standing beside a big wrecked motor boat that was drawn up on the beach. It was the mysterious personage for whom the Racer boys were searching.

CHAPTER XIX

IN THE CAVE

For a moment Frank and Andy were so surprised that neither one of them could think of anything to say. It seemed almost impossible that their search should be rewarded just at the time when they had given it up. Yet there was no mistake. There was the man they wanted. At least they assumed so, for they could not make out his features at that distance. At any rate, there was the wrecked motor boat, and the tall man was critically inspecting it.

"Look! Look!" was all Andy could whisper.

"Yes," assented Frank. "Now if he'll only let us get within talking distance, and not run as he always does, we may learn something. I wish we could steal up on him quietly."

"No chance of that, I'm afraid. He knows we're here. It was he who was walking around our boat."

"Sure; and he knows it's the one from the *Gull*. Well, the only thing to do is to go right up to him. I wonder what he wants with that boat, anyhow? See, he's poking into it as if there were gold or diamonds concealed in it."

"Perhaps there are. Maybe that's the mystery," said the younger Racer lad eagerly.

"Oh, you got that out of some of the books you read. But I can't understand how we could have missed him."

Andy did not answer. Instead he grabbed his brother and pulled him down on the sand behind the boat. It was only just in time, for the man had turned and was gazing back toward the overturned craft.

"I hope he didn't see us," whispered Andy.

"We must lay low until we think of some plan. Maybe he'll get down inside the motor boat and then we can get up to him before he knows it. But I tell you what I think, Frank," he went on, "either that man was hiding in some cave farther back than we looked, or he has just arrived."

"The motor boat has just arrived, anyhow, or at least since night before last," assented the elder lad. "We couldn't have overlooked that. Say, Andy, he is getting inside! Now's our chance!"

They saw, by peering over the edge of their craft, that the mysterious man had climbed over the half-burned rail of the damaged motor boat. His back was toward them, and they could not see his head. He appeared to be tearing the interior of the craft apart.

Cautiously the two brothers crept out from behind their shelter and made their way softly over the sand toward where the man was. What they intended to do when they confronted him they hardly knew. Frank was sure that he wanted to ask the queer stranger certain questions, and he hoped to be able to plead with him to tell what he knew of Paul Gale. The question was, whether or not the man would answer.

It was lucky that their footsteps made no sound on the soft sand, for they were thus enabled to approach to within a short distance of the wreck as it rested on the beach. The man was still in it, and they could hear him pounding and splitting wood in the interior. Evidently he was not aware of their presence.

For the first time since they had begun their surprising series of adventures, the boys were able to make out the name of the strange craft. It was the *Swallow*, and as they had a chance to look at her graceful lines they realized that, before the fire, wreck, and explosion the boat had been a powerful one.

"I think we have him this time," whispered Andy, as they came nearer and nearer, and the man was still bending over with his back toward them.

Frank laid his finger across his lips as a sign of caution. At that moment an unfortunate thing happened. Andy stepped on a shell, not seeing it, and it broke under his weight with a sharp, crackling sound.

Like a flash the man leaped up, and fairly sprang out of the boat. He stood confronting the Racer boys.

"Who are you? What do you want?" he demanded sharply. Then, as he recognized them, he added: "Oh, it's you two again. Didn't I warn you to stop following me?"

"We didn't choose to," retorted Frank calmly. "We've found you after a good deal of trouble, and we intend to end this mystery now. A boy's life—the life of Paul Gale—hangs in the balance."

"As if I cared," sneered the man. "You have had your trouble for your pains. I shall tell you nothing, and I order you off this island."

"We're not going!" exclaimed Andy firmly. "This is a public place, and we have as much right here as you have. Besides, you haven't any cannon now, and we're two to one."

"Oh, you are; eh?" demanded the man in an ugly voice. "We'll see about that. Once more I order you to stop following me; do you hear?"

"We're not going to let you get away until you answer our questions!" declared Frank. "We demand to know what you are doing with Paul's boat, and we want to know what his full name is, so that we can communicate with his friends."

"You'll never know from me!" fairly shouted the man. "And I defy you to get anything out of me. I'm not going to be bothered with you. Come on, men, here are these two bothersome boys! Let's get rid of them!" he suddenly cried, waving his hand as if at someone approaching Andy and Frank from the rear.

Involuntarily they turned, but the next instant they heard a triumphant laugh, and when they turned back, having seen no one, they beheld the mysterious man racing across the sands toward the interior of the island.

"Quick! After him!" cried Frank.

"Yes, we mustn't let him get away again!" added his brother.

They set off after the stranger at full speed. He was running rapidly, now and then glancing over his shoulder at them.

All at once he changed his course, and darted around a small rocky promontory. The tide was rising and he had to step into the water to make the turn.

"After him!" yelled Frank again.

The two brothers made the turn, and just far enough behind the man to see him dart into the black entrance of a small cave. It was one they had looked into, but into which they had not penetrated far.

"Now we've got him!" yelled Andy. "There's no way out of that! Come on, Frank!"

Together the two brothers entered the dark cavern. The change from the glaring sunlight on the sands to intense gloom made them pause for a moment, and they heard from somewhere in the blackness of the rear a sinister chuckle.

"He's in here," declared Andy. "We have him now."

The two pressed forward resolutely in the darkness. Of what lay before them—the danger from a desperate man and the danger of the cavern they knew not—they only resolved to end the mystery if possible.

CHAPTER XX

THE RISING TIDE

"Where are you, Frank?" called Andy.

"Right here. Give me your hand. It won't do to get lost in this darkness. Where are you?"

The two brothers groped about in the darkness until they had found each other.

"Listen," whispered the older one. "Do you hear him?"

In the silence and blackness there came to them the sound of retreating footsteps, and of small stones and particles of earth falling.

"He must be climbing up," said Andy. "This cave is bigger than we thought, and he must know the place, even in the dark.

"It *is* as dark as a pocket," complained Frank. "I can't see anything."

"Wait!" suddenly exclaimed Andy. "Why didn't we think of them before? Our pocket electrics. They'll do the trick!"

"Sure enough."

An instant later two small but powerful gleams of light cut the blackness of the cavern, and the boys were enabled to see so they could hurry ahead. They could still hear the man retreating before them.

"We're coming!" cried Andy in reckless bravado.

"Hush! He'll hear you," cautioned his mother.

"What of it? I want him to. He'll see our lights anyhow. But I think we have him trapped."

"If there isn't another outlet to the cave. But come on."

Forward they pressed. They could still hear the noise made by the man, and once they were startled by his mocking laugh. So close was it that they knew he must have doubled on his tracks returned toward them.

"There are several passages in this cave, I'm sure of it," declared Frank. "We'll have to be careful not to get lost."

"That's right. This fellow must be at home here. But the floor is beginning to slope upward. Say, it's damp in here, all right," Andy added, as he stepped into a little puddle of water.

"From the rain, I guess," replied Frank.

"Hu! How could rain get in here?"

"It must have soaked in through the roof. But we can't talk and listen for that man. Let's hurry on."

Once more they advanced, but they became confused by many windings and turnings of the dark passages, until Frank called a halt.

"Let's consider a bit," he said to his brother. "We can't go on this way. We've got to mark some of these passages so we'll know them again if we come by. Otherwise we'll get all confused."

"Good idea. Make some scratches on them with your knife. That will do."

Frank quickly did this and they pressed on. Occasionally they called to the man, but he did not answer them now—not even by his mocking laugh. They, however, could still hear him.

"He's leading us on a wild goose chase!" declared Frank at length.

"The first thing we know he'll get back to the entrance and escape."

"Then one of us had better go to the mouth of the cave and either stop him, or

else be there to give the alarm when he tries to get out," proposed Andy. "I'll go."

"No, I think we'd better stick together," suggested his brother. "That man is too dangerous for one of us to tackle alone. We may catch up to him any moment now, and I hope he'll give in, and tell us what we want to know."

Without the portable electric lights which they each carried it would have been impossible for the Racer boys to have found their way about the cave. They marveled how it was that the mysterious man could follow the windings and turnings in the dark, but, as they learned afterward, he had been in the cave before.

Back and forth, up and down, here and there, like following some will-o'-the-wisp went the boys. At times they thought they had lost the object of their pursuit, but again they would hear him hurrying on ahead of them.

"Hold on a minute!" suddenly exclaimed Frank, when he had led the way down a steep descent. "I don't like this."

"Like what?" asked Andy, in some alarm.

"This chase. That man knows what he's doing and we don't. If he wanted to he could have been out of this cave a dozen times or more, yet he's staying in and leading us on. He has some object in it, and I don't mind confessing that I'm afraid of it."

"How do you mean afraid?"

"I think we may come to some harm. He fairly enticed us in here and now he's playing with us as a cat does with a mouse. I'm going to stop and go back to the entrance."

"Well, perhaps you're right," admitted Andy, and it was quite an admission for him, as he was always willing to take more risks than was his brother. "We'll stand still a few minutes and see what happens."

They remained there, quiet in the darkness. For a time not a sound broke the stillness. Then, with startling suddenness came a hail:

"Well, why don't you catch me?"

"Catch me?" repeated the echoes, and there followed a mocking laugh.

"Here he is!" cried Andy. "Off to the left."

"No, the right," insisted Frank. "Over this way."

"All right," agreed Andy, and he followed his brother.

Hardly had he spoken than there rang throughout the cave a dull, booming sound. It seemed to shake the ground.

"He's exploded something!" cried Frank, coming to a halt. He flashed his electric torch around, but could see nothing. He and his brother were in a low, rock-roofed passage.

"It sounded like something falling," was Andy's opinion. "Let's go forward and see what it was."

They had not gone forward more than a dozen steps before they were halted by the sound of a voice—the voice of the mysterious man.

"Maybe you'll take a warning next time!" he sneered. "I think you've followed me once too often. This is the end."

They could hear him hastening away. Then came silence.

"What did he mean?" asked Andy.

"I don't know," replied his brother. "Let's look."

Andy was in the lead. Slowly he advanced, flashing his electric light. Then he came to a halt.

"What's the matter?" asked Frank.

"I can't go any farther. The passage ends here in a solid rock."

"Then we'll have to go back. I thought he was fooling us. He wanted to get us in some side chamber, so he could make his escape from the entrance. Hurry back."

They fairly ran to the other end of the passageway, retracing their steps. This

time Frank was ahead. Suddenly he came to a halt.

"Well, why don't you go on?" asked Andy.

"I can't. There's a big rock here."

"A rock? There wasn't any there when we came in."

"I know it, but it's fallen down since. The passage is closed."

"Closed!" gasped Andy. "Then I know what happened. That was the noise we heard. That man toppled this rock down to trap us here. We're caught, Frank! Caught!"

For a moment the older brother did not answer. Then he replied:

"It does look so. But we'll try to shove this stone out of the way. Come on, lend a hand."

Together the boys pushed and shoved. But all to no purpose. Flashing their lights on the obstruction, they saw that it had fallen down in a wedged-shaped place, dove-tailing itself in so that no power short of dynamite could loosen it. The hopelessness of moving it struck them at once.

"The other end!" cried Frank. "We must try to get out the other way!"

Back they raced along the passage, slipping stumbling on the wet, rocky floor. But it only to come face to face with a solid wall of rock.

"No use trying to get through there," said Andy. "We must try to move the big rock."

"We can't," spoke Frank. "I think——" But he never finished that sentence. Instead focused his light down on the stone floor of passage in the cave. A thin stream of water trickling along it.

"Look! Look!" whispered Andy.

"Yes," answered his brother in a low voice. "The tide is rising. It's running into the cave, and we—we're trapped here, Andy. No wonder that man said it was the

last time. We're trapped by the rising tide!"

CHAPTER XXI

DEATH IS NEAR

"Frank, are you there?"

"Yes, Andy. Give me your hand."

The two brothers spoke softly. It was in the darkness of the cave, for they had both released the pressure on the springs of their portable lights to make the little dry batteries last as long as possible. It was several minutes after the first awful discovery of the incoming tide, and they had maintained a silence until the younger lad, unable to longer endure the strain, had called out.

Silently they clasped hands in the blackness.

"Frank, do you—do you think there's any way out?"

"Why, of course there is, Andy. All we've got to do is to wait a while, and someone will surely come to our rescue. Father and mother know we started for this island, and if we don't get home soon they'll start a searching party after us."

"Yes, but the rising tide, Frank. We—we may drown."

"Nonsense. The water can't get very high in here. We'll simply go to the highest part of the passage, and wait until the tide goes out. That won't be so very long. What makes me mad though, is to think how that man fooled us. That was his object all along. He wanted to get us in here so he could drop that rock across the opening and have us caged."

"Can't we try to get out?" asked Andy. his usually joyous spirits had departed. He was very much subdued now, and in the momentary flash of his light, which he permitted himself, Frank saw that his brother was very pale.

"Of course we'll try!" exclaimed the elder lad, with all the assurance he could put into his voice. "Perhaps we can manage it, too. Let's have a try. It's of no use to do it here. We must go back to where he pushed down the rock. Perhaps it isn't in as tight as we thought at first. Come on. But don't use your light. Mine is enough, and we must save them as long as we can."

By the gleam of the single electric torch they made their way back. Soon they were at the rock which made them prisoners. It loomed grim and black in the semi-darkness.

"The water's higher," said Andy, in a low voice. Frank had noticed that, for it now reached to his ankles as he splashed his way back along the passage. But he had said nothing, hoping Andy had not observed it.

"Yes," said the older boy cheerfully, "It's bound to rise until the tide is at flood, and then—why, it will go down again—that's all."

"But suppose it fills this cave?"

"Nonsense! It can't. I'm not going to suppose anything of the sort. Now come on. Let's see if we can move this rock."

Together they pressed on the stone with all their strength. They might as well have tried to budge the side of a mountain. The rock was firmly wedged in place.

"It's no use," spoke Andy, in a dull, hopeless tone.

"Oh, don't give up so easily," urged his brother. "If we can't do it one way, we may another. See, it has slid down in a sort of groove. Only a little ridge of rock on either side holds it in place. Now if we can break away those upright ridges, which are like the pieces on a window sash up and down which the window slides, we may be able to push the rock out. Let's try. Use your knife and take a rock for a hammer."

Frank placed his torch on a ledge of rock, tying the spring down by a piece of cord so that the light would focus on the big boulder. Then, with their pocket-knives as chisels, and stones as mallets, they began their futile attempts to cut away the holding ridges of rock.

That it was a futile attempt was soon made evident, for their knives slipped off

the flint-like stone, and several times when the blades unexpectedly shut, the lads received severe cuts on their hands.

Suddenly Andy uttered an exclamation:

"The water! It's getting deeper!" he cried

It was up to their knees now.

"Of course it getting deeper," said Frank, with a cheerfulness that he was far from feeling. "The tide isn't half in yet."

Andy shuddered.

"What will we do when it's high water?" he asked.

Frank did not answer, but kept on chipping away at the rock. He managed to break off several pieces, but it was easy to see that it would take much more work to loosen the retaining ridges so that the boulder that imprisoned them would fall outward.

"There it goes!" suddenly exclaimed the older brother in despair.

"I've broken my knife blade! You'll have to do all the work, Andy."

"Oh, what's the use?" sighed the younger lad. "The water is coming in faster. See, it's up to our waists now, and the tide is nowhere at full! We're doomed, Frank!"

"Not a bit of it. See that ledge of rock up there? We'll climb up on it and wait until the water goes down. Then maybe someone will come for us, or we can get out. Climb up, Andy. We won't try to break off any more rock."

Frank helped his brother to take a position on the narrow ledge. It was barely wide enough for two, but, somehow, they managed to cling to it. The surface was wet, and there were little puddles of water here and there. Seeing them in the gleam of his light, Frank could not repress a shudder.

"The tide must come up even to here," he thought. "If it comes up to the roof—well, that's the end of us." But he said nothing to Andy.

Slowly the water rose. The boys watched it, sitting on the narrow ledge with their feet and legs dangling off. From time to time Frank would flash his light on the little lapping waves.

"It will soon stop," he said, as cheerfully as he could. But he did not believe himself. He held Andy's hand in a firm grip.

Higher and higher rose the tide. It was at the knees of the boys now, and still mounting.

"Let's stand up," proposed Frank at length. "I'm tired of sitting."

They took an upright position on the ledge of rock. Their heads just touched the rocky roof of the cave. In fact Frank, who was a trifle taller than his brother, had to stoop.

"Now we'll be all right, Andy," he said. "We can stand here until the water goes down."

"If—if it doesn't touch the roof," was the solemn answer.

Frank said nothing.

Standing on the ledge, high above the floor the cave, the water now lapped their ankles once more. Frank could feel it creeping higher—ever higher. In spite of himself, a horrible fear took possession of him. Death was very near, he thought—a terrible death by drowning in the cave where they were caged like rats in a trap.

CHAPTER XXII

THE STORM

"Do you know how high the tide rises on this island?" asked Andy after a pause. His voice sounded strange in that hollow, dark place, amid the ceaseless lapping of the water on the rocks.

"How high? No, but it can't get much higher," answered Frank as cheerfully as he could. "It's been rising some time now, and it must stop soon."

"It seems a long time, but it isn't," went on Andy in that quiet voice. "Look, it's seven o'clock," and he held out his watch, illuminating it with the flashing electric light.

"Seven in the evening," murmured Frank. "It must be getting dark outside." It had been dark from the beginning in the cave.

"Seven o'clock in the evening," went on Andy, "and we came in here about four! The tide has several hours to rise yet, and——"

He did not finish, but he glanced down at the water that was steadily rising up on their legs. It was chilling them, yet they dared not move much for fear of toppling off the narrow ledge.

Frank did not answer. He was busy trying to think of some way of escape. Yet, rack his brain as he did, no way out of the cave seemed possible. Were they doomed to die there?

"Can we climb any higher?" asked Andy, after another period of silence. "If we could, we might get out of reach of the water, even when the tide is full. Let's turn on both our lights and look at the wall back of us."

They had been saving the fast-waning current in the electric lamps against the time of need. They might have but little further use for it, so both Andy and his brother pressed the springs that turned on the gleaming lights.

In the glow they could see the black and gurgling water at their knees. It was swirling around from the force of the tide outside that was rushing into the cave. Though the stone thrown down by the man at the entrance prevented our heroes from escaping, the boulder did not fit so tightly but what water could come in.

"Now to see what's back of us," spoke Frank, turning around as well as he could on the small shelf, and flashing his light on the wall behind him.

"Say!" suddenly exclaimed Andy, "doesn't it strike you that the water isn't coming in so fast as it was?"

Frank held his light lower, and looked at the rising tide.

"There doesn't seem to be quite so much force to it," admitted the elder Racer lad, "but I'm afraid that's only because it's higher, and because it has to wind in and out of so many passages, and force itself under and around the rock which that scoundrel threw down. I wish we had him here!"

"I guess he's far enough off by this time," remarked Andy. "But let's see if there's a way to get higher up."

Together they examined the wall of the cave against which they had been leaning. Frank uttered a cry of joy.

"It's mostly dirt, not stone!" he exclaimed. "We can cut steps in it, and climb up. Maybe we can get high enough so that the tide won't reach us, or at least we can keep our heads above water until it goes down. Come on, where's your knife?"

Working by turns, with the only knife available between them, the boys began frantically cutting niches or steps in the dirt wall. Fortunately it was packed hard enough so that it did not crumble. They took turns at the desperate labor, one holding the torch, and the other wielding the knife.

All the while the tide kept coming higher, until it was now to their waists. But they had not yet made enough notches to enable them to stand up, clinging by their hands and toes. For it needed four niches for each lad—eight laboriously-

cut holes in the wall, four niches for the hands and four for the feet, some distance apart. Even when this was done it would only raise them about twenty inches. Would that be enough?

"We can't cut any more after this," said Frank dully, when they had almost finished the eight.

"Why not?"

"Because we can't hold on in these and cut any more. The footing isn't good enough. If we only had a sort of platform to stand on, we could reach up higher. As it is, I'm afraid this isn't going to do much good—that is for very long. The water is still rising."

"If we only had some sticks," exclaimed Andy hopelessly. "We could drive them in the dirt, leaving the ends projecting, and then we could go up, like on a ladder."

"But we haven't any sticks."

"Maybe there are some on the shelf where are standing; imbedded in it."

It was a slim chance, but worth trying, and by turns they stooped over and felt down beneath the water. This had the effect of wetting them to their shoulders, but not a piece of wood could they discover. Helplessly they stared at each other in the dying gleam of their electric torches. Relentlessly the water mounted higher.

"We might as well get up in the niches," said Andy, after another long pause. "We may not be able to climb if we wait too long."

"Wait as long as possible," advised his brother in a low voice.

"Why so?"

"Because it's going to be hard to cling there. It's a stiff position to hold, and we ought to stay here, where we have a good footing, as long as possible. There's time enough when the water gets up to our shoulders."

It was like waiting for almost certain death, but the boys never lost their hearts.

Somehow they felt that there would be a way out—yet how it would come they dared not even imagine. They only hoped and—waited.

"We'd better climb up now," said Frank at length. "You go first, Andy, and get a good hold. I'll follow."

"Why don't you go first?"

"Oh, you might fall."

"So might you."

"Go ahead, I tell you!" and Frank spoke more sharply to his brother than he had ever done before. Andy turned and clambered up in the niches. They had cut them slanting to give their feet and hands a better grip, and this was a wise provision, for it was desperate holding at best.

Frank followed his brother, and then, at the last stand, they clung there together, listening to the lapping of the water that, raised up as they were, even now wet their legs.

How long they clung thus they did not know. It seemed a long time, but it could not have been more than fifteen minutes they agreed afterward, for the water did not gain much. But suddenly the silence of the night outside was broken by a loud report.

"Signal guns!" exclaimed Andy. "Some vessel is in distress."

"No, that's thunder!" said Frank. "There's a storm coming up. But we won't know it—in here."

"I hope our boat is safe, and that the *Gull* is well anchored," went on the younger lad anxiously.

"As if that mattered," thought Frank, but he did not say so. He began to think they would never have any further use for their craft. He choked back the dreadful fear that seemed to take possession of him.

Once more came a terrific clap of thunder, and it seemed to shake the very island to its center.

"It's a fierce one," murmured Andy.

In quick succession came a number of awful reports. The earthy wall to which they were clinging seemed to tremble. The water gurgled below them, rising higher and higher.

"I wonder—" began Andy, after a terrific clap, but his words were silenced in the thunderous vibration that followed. It was the hardest clap yet, and the boys felt a tingling, numbing sensation in their fingers.

"That struck near here!" yelled Frank.

His face was turned upward toward the roof of the cavern. He felt something falling on his cheeks. It seemed to be particles of dirt. Then he felt a dampness that was not from the waters below him. More particles fell.

"What's the matter?" cried Andy. "Something is happening. What is it?"

Before Frank could answer, had he known what was taking place, there came a loud splash in the water at Andy's left.

"Is that you Frank? Have you fallen?" he called desperately.

"No, I'm here," replied his brother. "That must have been part of the side or roof of the cave jarred off by the thunder. Hold fast, Andy."

There came a second splashing sound in the water, followed by another. The drops of dampness and particles of earth continued to rain into the faces of the lads.

"The cave's crumbling in!" cried Andy. "The roof is falling."

"Hold—" began Frank.

A roar interrupted him. Suddenly the cave seemed to be illuminated by a dazzling light bluish in color. By it the boys could see each other as they clung to the wall. They could see the black and swirling waters now waist high. But they could see something else.

They could look up and out through a jagged hole in the roof of the cavern, and

through that opening they had a glimpse of the fury of the storm. They could see the lightning flashing in the sky.

For a moment the meaning of it was lost on them. Then Frank uttered a cry of hope.

"We're saved, Andy, saved! Now we can crawl up out of the top of the cave and escape. The tide can't reach us now! We're saved!"

CHAPTER XXIII

TO THE RESCUE

Back in the Racer cottage there was an anxious consultation going on. It was the afternoon of the second day since Andy and Frank had gone to Cliff Island, and they had not returned.

"I don't like it!" exclaimed Mr. Racer, tossing aside the paper he had been trying to read, and restlessly pacing the floor. "I wish they hadn't gone. I wish they were back."

"Don't you think they can look after themselves?" asked the mother. Usually she was the more nervous, but this time it was her husband.

"Oh, I suppose they could, ordinarily," he answered. "But this is different."

"How, Dick?" and there was an anxious note in Mrs. Racer's voice. She had just come in from a tennis tournament to find that her husband had returned from New York earlier than usual. Now she began to realize the cause. It was on account of the boys.

"Well, there's a storm coming up, for one thing, and then there's that man. I wish Andy and Frank hadn't started after him."

"It was to help Paul, dear."

"I know. They meant all right, but they're too daring. However, it can't be helped. Where's Paul?"

"He felt so well that he went for a little walk. He said he'd go down toward the pier and see if he could see or hear anything of the boys."

"Well, I'm glad he's getting better." Mr. Racer once more tried to read the paper, but gave it up.

"You're nervous," said his wife, as he tossed it aside.

"Yes, I am. Nothing is worse than sitting still, and waiting—waiting for something to happen.

"Oh, Dick! I'm sure you don't want anything to happen!"

"Of course not. But I don't like this weather."

Paul came in at that moment. The glow off health was beginning to reappear in his pale cheeks.

"Well?" asked Mr. Racer quickly.

"They're not in sight," answered the lad who did not know who he was.

"And Captain Trent says a bad storm is brewing."

"That settles it!" exclaimed Mr. Racer. He started up and took down an old overcoat and hat.

"Where are you going?" asked his wife in alarm.

"I'm going for those boys. I can't stand it any longer."

"But how can you get to Cliff Island if a storm is coming up? You have no boat, and to row—"

"I don't intend to row. Mr. Lacey, a friend of mine, put in here with his big motor boat a little while ago. I saw him as I got off the New York steamer, and he said he might stay here a couple of days. His craft is at the pier float. I know he'll take me to Cliff Island, blow or no blow, and his *Norma* is big enough to weather quite a sea."

"Oh, Dick, I'm afraid to have you go!"

"Oh, there's no danger, but there might be to our boys, and I'm going to the rescue. Don't worry. I may be able to get out to the island and back before dark.

They're probably scouting around, looking for that man, and he isn't there at all. They think they're having a good time, but they don't realize what the weather is going to be."

Mr. Racer went on with his preparations for being out in the storm. Mrs. Racer, after the first alarm, agreed with him that it was best to go after the boys.

"Do you think that I—that is—Oh, mayn't I go?" burst out Paul Gale. "I'd like to help. Andy and Frank have done so much for me. Can't I go?"

"I'm afraid you're not strong enough," objected Mr. Racer.

"Oh, but I am!" insisted the lad. "I believe it will do me good. But can't you ask Dr. Martin?"

They were saved the necessity of calling the physician up on the telephone for he drove past at that moment and Mr. Racer hailed him. The case was soon stated.

"I agree with you that it is a good thing to go after Andy and Frank," said the medical man. "As for taking Paul along—hum—well, I don't know."

"Oh, I'm all right, doctor," insisted the lad again.

"You certainly have gained much strength in the last few days," went on the physician. "If you take care of yourself perhaps it won't do you any harm. But don't exert yourself too much."

"No," promised Paul eagerly. Then, as he hurried to his room to get ready, Dr. Martin said to Mr. Racer in a low voice:

"I'm not so sure but what it won't be a good thing for him. He lost his memory in a storm, you know, and if there is a little blow out in the bay his mind may be restored again. We doctors don't know as much about the brain as we'd like to. It can't do any harm to try it, especially as you are going in a big, safe boat. Good luck to you."

Mrs. Racer parted with her husband and Paul rather tearfully. The signs of the storm increased as the two went down to the pier. Mr. Racer found his friend there, and Mr. Lacey readily agreed to the use of his boat.

"I'll pilot you to the island myself," he said generously, "and I'll tell the engineer and crew to make all the speed they can. We've got lots of gasolene, and I guess we can weather almost any blow that's due this time of year."

They were soon speeding away from the pier, and the sharp prow of the *Norma* was turned in the direction of Cliff Island. Clouds were rapidly gathering and there was an occasional muttering of thunder.

Paul Gale kept to the cabin, as the wind had freshened since they started and there was quite a sea on, that sent the spume and spray of the salty waves across the deck.

They were longer reaching the island than they counted on, and just before they sighted it the storm broke in all its fury. But they were prepared for it, and the *Norma* plunged gallantly ahead through the smashing big seas of green water that at times buried her nose out of sight. Suddenly there was a slight crash forward and a shiver seemed to go through the gasolene craft.

"What's that?" cried Mr. Racer in alarm.

"We hit something," said Mr. Lacey. "Danforth, just see what it is, will you?" he asked of the mate, who was in the snug cabin with the owner and his guests.

But Mr. Racer did not wait. He rushed up on deck. The *Norma* had been brought to quarter speed and the silk merchant could see, floating off to one side, a small wrecked skiff. It seemed familiar to him.

"That's what we hit, sir," explained one of crew. "Cut it right in two."

"It's my boys' boat!" cried Mr. Racer. "The one they carry on the *Gull*. I know the shape of it, and I can see the red circle on the stern. Were they in it when we cut it down?"

"No, sir. I don't think so, sir," answered sailor as he noted the anguish of Mr. Racer. "I saw it immediately after we struck, and I'm almost sure no one was in it. I'd have seen them, sir, if there was, sir."

"Oh, but perhaps they were in it!" cried Mr. Racer. "Their sailboat may have foundered and they might have had to take to the small boat. Oh, Mr. Lacey. We *must* pick up my boys!" he added, as the owner came on deck.

"Of course. Captain Nelson, put back and circle around that boat. Light the searchlight and play it on the wreck."

"Aye, aye, sir!"

The *Norma* began the search amid the storm and gathering darkness, while the father peered over the side in anguished fear.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE ESCAPE

"Climb up, Andy! Climb up! Every time you see a lightning flash!"

"But where are we going, Frank?"

"Out of this cave! Don't you see what has happened? There's a hole in the roof, and it slopes right down to us here. Crawl up on your hands and knees, but don't slip back. It's our only chance!"

It was a few minutes after the stunning crash that had actually opened up a way of escape for the two lads imprisoned in the cave. Frank was quick to see and take advantage of it. A sort of sloping way was now before them, and it was possible to crawl up along it.

But there was danger, too, for the rain was pouring in through the opening in the roof—a veritable stream of water, probably diverted from some puddles that had gathered from the heavy downpour. And to climb up through this, along a muddy, slimy slope, was no easy task. But it was their only means of escape, for back of them the tide was still rising relentlessly.

"All ready, Andy?" called Frank.

"As ready as I ever shall be," was the grim answer.

"Well, don't move except when you see where you're going by means of the flashes. It's the only safe way. Go ahead; I'll follow."

Slowly the younger lad took his feet and hands from the niches. He was stiff from holding the same position so long, but his young blood was soon in circulation again. He crawled out on the slope. It was quite steep, but

considerable earth had been jarred and washed from it so that it was no worse than going up the peaked roof of a house, and Andy and his brother had often done this in carrying out some of their boyish pranks.

Slowly and painfully the younger lad toiled upward, followed by his anxious brother. It was but a comparatively short distance up which to climb, but going on their hands and knees made it seem doubly long.

Finally it was accomplished, however, and Andy crawled out of the ragged hole and stretched out on the wet earth above, almost exhausted.

"Come! Get up!" cried Frank, as he finished the perilous journey and sought to raise his brother. "You mustn't lie there. You'll get cold and stiff. Move around—get warmed up. We're safe now, Andy! Safe!"

"Yes, I know, but I'm so tired—I—I want a rest."

"There'll be time enough to rest when we get to some shelter. It's raining cats and dogs, and we can't get much wetter. Let's see if we can make out where we are, and maybe we can get back to camp, and find some grub. I'm starved."

"So am I. What time is it?"

"My watch has stopped," answered Frank, looking at the timepiece by a lightning flash. "The water did it."

"Mine's not going either. Well, let's see if we can find our camp. Some grub wouldn't be bad. Only we've got to look out for that man."

"Which side shall we go down?" asked Frank, as they paused on the summit of the cliff.

"It's hard to decide," answered Andy. "Let's try this," and he motioned to the left.

Down they went, slipping and stumbling, pausing now and then to get their breaths, and again to speak of the terrible fate they had escaped.

"Don't mention it any more," begged Andy with a shudder. "I can't bear to think of that tide rising—rising all the while, and no way of getting out!"

"Lightning probably struck a place on where the earth was thinner than anywhere else made a hole, and the rain did the rest," was Frank's theory.

Drenched to the skin, covered with mud from the climb up the slope, tired and weary, the Racer boys stumbled on in the darkness. Sometimes they fell over huge boulders or were tripped on outcropping tree roots. But they did not halt until they were on the sandy beach, where the big waves were pounding. There, at least, the going was easier.

"Now, which way?" asked Andy, as they halted to rest.

"It's hard to say. Camp might lie in either direction, and it's too dark to see. I guess it doesn't make much difference. We'll come up to it by morning, anyhow, if we can keep going that long. Let's head off this way."

Frank started to circle the island shore to the right, and Andy followed. At times the rain would cease, and then it would begin its downpour again. The lightning was less frequent, but they did not need the flashes to guide them now.

That night seemed almost a year long, they said afterward. Sometimes they fell from very weariness, only to get up again and struggle on. Frank placed his arm about his brother and half carried him at times.

They covered many miles. As yet they had seen no indication of their "camp," as they called the place on the beach opposite where they had left the *Gull* riding at anchor, and where they had placed their small boat and a supply of provisions.

"We must have come the wrong way, and have almost made a circuit of the island," said Andy wearily.

"Never mind, it can't be much farther off now," and Frank tried to speak cheerfully. But it was hard work.

The rain had ceased for some time now, and looking up the boys saw the faint gleam of stars.

"It's going to clear," observed Andy.

"Yes," assented Frank.

Another mile was covered. A dim glow seemed to suffuse the sky. It grew brighter.

"It's morning!" cried the older lad.

"Yes, and look there!" suddenly exclaimed Andy. He pointed ahead.

"There's where our camp was," he added.

Frank gazed for a moment in silence. Then he gasped:

"But our small boat's gone."

"And so is the *Gull*!" fairly shouted the younger lad as he waved his hand toward the place where it had been anchored. "That man has taken it and gone off! We're marooned Cliff Island!"

CHAPTER XXV

A LUCKY QUARREL

Frank stared uncomprehendingly toward the slowly heaving waters of the bay.

"I can't believe it!" he exclaimed. "The *Gull* must be somewhere else. We're at the wrong place."

"I only wish we were," spoke Andy dubiously.

"But you can see for yourself that this is where we camped. Here is where our small boat was pulled up on shore, where we slept under it, and, if you want any better evidence—here's grub! Grub, Frank do you hear? We shan't starve, even if we are marooned!"

He raced to a clump of scrub bushes some distance up on shore and began pulling out boxes and tins.

"Good!" shouted Frank. "I never was so hungry before in my life. Now if we could only make a fire!"

But that was out of the question. Every bit of driftwood, of which there was a big supply, was soaking wet. The boys had plenty of matches, in waterproof boxes, but they would be useless until some dry fuel was available.

"Well, it can't be helped," said Andy, as he proceeded to open a tin of corned beef. "We ought to be thankful for this. Open that tin box of crackers. Luckily they're not wet. We can make a meal off this, and we'll have a cooked dinner. I wonder—why—blub—ugh—that man—um—lum—didn't—"

"Oh, don't try to talk and eat at the same time," requested Frank with a laugh—the first since their adventure in the cave. "Take your time." For Andy was fairly

devouring the corned beef.

"Hum! I guess you can't be very hungry, or you wouldn't take your time," retorted the younger lad. "Hurry up with those crackers. And there's some jam, somewhere. Oh, for a cup of hot coffee."

"Cheese it!" cried Frank sharply. "Do you want to make me throw something at you? But what were you trying to say when you had your mouth full a while ago?"

"I said it was a wonder that man didn't take this grub with him when he took our boat and the *Gull*."

"I don't know. Maybe he couldn't find the food. But what makes you think he took our boats?"

"They're gone; aren't they?"

"Yes, but I think the tide carried away the small boat. The waves came up unusually high, as you can see by the marks in the sand. We didn't pull the skiff up far enough."

"What about the *Gull*?"

"Well, I admit he might have taken that, though there is a possibility that it dragged the anchor. We'll take a look all around the island after we get things in shape. If we've got to stay here a while we might as well be comfortable."

"I don't believe we'll stay very long."

"Why not?"

"Because dad will start out and search for us if we don't get home pretty soon, and the first place he'll head for will be this island."

"Guess you're right. Pass the jam. My! but this tastes good!"

"Good! I should say so!" agreed Andy.

They made a rude but substantial breakfast, washing it down with plenty of

spring water which they found a little way inland. Then they talked matters over.

The first thing to do, they agreed, was to look for the *Gull*, and to this end they once more ascended the cliff and looked all about. She was not in sight, nor was there any other craft on the waters that now sparkled in the sunlight, for the storm had passed away.

"The next thing to do is to make another circuit of the island," went on Frank. "We'll do it as quickly as we can, and perhaps we can come upon our boat. It may have drifted ashore."

Together they started off. They planned to keep up the search all day, taking their lunch with them, and camping out at night, as they had done before.

"But first we'll hoist a distress signal, in case dad comes for us, and we'll leave a note saying where we have gone and that we'll come back," suggested Frank.

This was done. They tied one of their coats to a tall tree well up on the cliff, where it could be seen by a boat coming from the direction of Harbor View. Then, leaving a note, written on a piece of paper from a cracker box, they set out.

Up to noon they had found nothing, but an hour later Andy, who was in the lead, suddenly uttered a cry as he turned a little promontory and started down a level stretch of beach.

"There's our man!" he cried. "He's just come ashore, and the wrecked motor boat is there too! It must have drifted away and he went after it. He has a man with him!"

Frank saw what his brother indicated. Disembarking from a large rowboat were two men—one the mysterious stranger who had imprisoned them in the cave. The other seemed to be a boatman, or fisherman. The two were pulling up on the beach the battered hull of the wrecked motor boat, now more dilapidated than ever.

"What shall we do?" asked Andy.

"Let's go right up to him," proposed Frank.

"He ought to be afraid of us now, and he may play right into our hands."

They started forward, but, were suddenly stopped by loud voices between the two men, neither of whom had yet noticed the approach of our heroes.

"I want my pay now!" they heard the boatman declare.

"And you won't get it until I'm ready to give it to you," retorted the mysterious man angrily. "Now you help me get this boat farther up on the sand."

"I won't do another thing! I'm done with you. Give me my money!"

"No!"

"Then take that!"

With a quick motion the boatman drew back his fist and sent it with all his force into the face of the mysterious man. The latter reeled under the blow, staggered for a second, and then toppled over backward on the sand, falling heavily.

"Try to cheat me, will you!" shouted the man. Then he caught sight of the boys. A change seemed to come over him. He shoved out the big rowboat, ran out after it, holding to the stern and then leaped in. The next moment he was pulling away lustily.

The mysterious man lay motionless on the sands.

"Now's our chance!" cried Frank. "That was a lucky quarrel for us. We can capture him. That boatman saved us a hard job. Come on, Andy!"

Together the brothers ran forward.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PRISONER

"What had we better do to him?" asked Andy, as they neared the prostrate man.

"Tie him up so he can't get away again," replied Frank, as he glanced at the seaman who was rapidly rowing away. "If we keep him, now that we've got him, he may tell us what we want to know. And we've got the wreck of the motor boat, too. We sure ought to get at the bottom of this mystery now."

"Well, we deserve something after all we went through," remarked the younger lad, as he thought of the rising tide in the cave.

"That fellow is in a hurry all right," went on Frank, with a wave of his hand toward the sailor who was now some distance out. "I guess he hit him a pretty hard blow."

"Maybe he killed that man, and is afraid we'll arrest him," suggested Andy.

"Nonsense! I don't believe that man is dead."

They were close to him now and stopped to observe the quiet figure. They hesitated for a moment, for, though they had made up their minds to make the man a prisoner, it was the first time they had done anything of the sort, and, naturally, they were a little timid.

Suddenly the figure on the sands stirred, and there came a murmur from the mysterious man.

"If we're going to do anything, we'd better get at it," suggested Andy.
"He'll come to his senses in a minute and we'll have our hands full."

He's a powerful fellow."

"That's so. I wonder where there's some rope?" asked Frank.

Andy motioned to the wreck of the motor boat, near which the man lay.

"There's plenty," he said. "They had a long rope to tow it with. I'll get some."

Holding the cord in readiness, the two brothers approached the man, one on either side.

"You take his feet, and I'll attend to his hands," whispered Frank. "Have a slip-noose ready to put on, and pull it tight. Then take several turns and we'll truss him up."

They worked silently and rapidly. Andy slipped the coil of rope about the man's ankles, and pulled the noose taut. As he was doing this the man stirred and murmured:

"I'll get even with you for this, Hank Splane!"

"Quick! He'll come to in a minute!" whispered Andy.

"I've got him," answered Frank. As one of the man's arms was partly under him the lad had to pull it out before he could slip the noose around it. But he finally accomplished this, and, just as he had it tight, the fellow suddenly sat up.

"Here! What's this? Splane, are you crazy to tie me up this way? Let me go, I say, or I'll make you sorry for this. Let me go, I say!"

He was struggling violently, swaying to and fro as he sat on the sands. Then his vision, which was probably obscured by the blow he had received, cleared, and he saw the two boys holding the ends of the ropes that bound him.

"Oh, it's you; is it?" he gasped, plainly astonished. "Didn't I tell you to stop following me? I won't have it! If you don't—" He stopped short. A look of wonder followed by one of alarm came over his face.

"The cave!" he exclaimed. "I left you in the cave. The tide was rising. You—you —"

"Yes, we escaped, but no thanks to you!" exclaimed Frank sternly. "You meant us to be drowned, but we found a way out, and now we have you just where we want you, you rascal! You'll tell us what we want to know, you'll clear up the mystery of Paul Gale, and you'll confess what you want of this motor boat now, I guess."

"Suppose I refuse?"

"Then we'll take you before the authorities."

"Ha! Ha! A likely story. Marooned on this lonely island you can't do much. You see I happen to know your boat is gone, and—"

"Gone, yes, because you took her," interrupted Andy.

"No, I didn't take either your sailboat or the rowboat," spoke the man simply. "I wanted to, but some one else got ahead of me. I had to row away from the island as the storm came up, and it was no joke, either."

"Then who did take our boats?" asked Andy blankly.

"I don't know," replied the man. "But I do know that you have more than you bargain for if you think you can make me talk. There is no one on this island but ourselves, now that Splane played me a mean trick, and deserted. Talk of authorities! Ha! Ha! It's a joke," and he pretended to be amused.

"We'll soon be off the island," said Frank, with more confidence than he felt. "Our father will be looking for us, and may arrive at any minute."

The man uttered an exclamation beneath his breath. Evidently he had not counted on this. The two boys stood regarding him. Now that they had him, they hardly knew what to do with the fellow.

With a suddenness that was surprising, considering that his feet were tied, the man managed to stand upright. Then, with a mighty effort, he tried to loosen the rope around his hands.

"When I get loose I'll show you what it means to trifle with me!" he shouted. "You'll be sorry you ever meddled in this matter! Wait until I get this rope off!"

He tried desperately to get it off his hands, and Andy saw the strands loosening.

"Quick, Frank!" cried the younger lad. "We've got to take some more turns on that! I'll help! He can't hurt us now!"

The two brothers fairly threw themselves on their prisoner and all three went down in a heap on the sands.

CHAPTER XXVII

SEARCHING THE WRECK

There was a hard struggle on the beach of lonely Cliff Island. And the boys did not have such an advantage as it would seem at first, even though the hands and feet of their mysterious prisoner were bound.

He was big and strong, and he had evidently been in tight places before, for he knew how to handle himself. Every time he got a chance, as he and his captors rolled together over the sands, he would strike out with his two hands at once. Several times he hit Frank or Andy glancing blows, and once he gave the elder lad such a bop on the side of the head that the boy saw stars for a moment.

Again he hit Andy, and knocked him several feet distant so that at first Frank feared his brother had been hurt.

"I'm all right!" shouted the plucky Racer lad, as he jumped and came on to renew the struggle. "Hold his head down in the sand, Frank, and I'll tie some more ropes around his feet!"

"You will not!" yelled the man, and as Frank took his brother's advice, and pressed the man's head down in the yielding sand, Andy endeavored to slip another noose about the feet, for the boys had cut the tow rope into several pieces.

Like a madman the fellow kicked out with both feet. Frank saw his object, and uttered a warning cry.

"Keep away!" shouted the elder lad. "If he hits you it will be all day with you!"

"That's what it will!" yelled the infuriated man.

"Watch me!" cried Andy with a laugh. "I didn't learn to throw a lasso for nothing." He swung the noose in a circle about his head, and, as the man raised his feet in the air, to ward off any personal attack, Andy skillfully tossed the coils about his feet. They fell around the shoes, and in an instant Andy had pulled his end of the rope taut, making two coils about the prisoner.

"Now I have him, Frank," he called. "I'll take a turn around part of the boat, and pull. Then you tie down his arms."

It was a good plan, and well carried out. With a turn of the rope about a part of the wrecked motor boat, Andy pulled the man's menacing legs down flat on the sands. He could no longer raise them.

"I have him!" exclaimed Frank a moment later, as he passed several turns of the rope he held about the still bound hands and arms of their prisoner. "Now we'll truss him up!"

The man was practically helpless now, and realized it. Suddenly he ceased his struggles and when the brothers had completed their work, and raised him to a sitting position on the sand, he could do no more harm.

"Well, I guess you've got me," he growled. "What are you going to do with me?"

"It depends on what you tell us," said Frank.

"I'll tell you nothing!"

"Then we'll take you where you will. I guess when Paul Gale sees you he'll remember something about you that will put us on the right track."

"Paul Gale! That's not his name. It's—you say he'll remember?" and the man interrupted himself in some confusion. "Has he lost his mind?" The question was an eager one.

"He can't remember—" began Andy, but Frank stopped him with a sudden gesture.

"When you tell us what we want to know, we'll answer some of your questions," the elder lad said. "Come on, Andy. Let's have a look at the wrecked motor boat. Maybe we can find some clues there."

"You keep away from that boat!" cried the man savagely. "It's mine. I order you to keep away!" He struggled desperately to get loose, but could not.

"We'll do as we please now," said Frank. "You had your way long enough. We're going to solve this mystery. Come, Andy."

The man glared at them, but he could not help himself. He watched them go toward the boat and muttered threats at them. But the boys were not frightened.

The interior of the motor boat, which once had been an expensive craft, was all confusion. It plainly showed the effects of the fire and explosion, and the battering of the sea. The hull, however, was sound, or it would have sunk.

"What do you suppose is in it that he's been looking for?" asked Andy.

"I don't know," replied Frank. "Gold perhaps, or jewels."

"Maybe valuable papers."

"Perhaps. Well, let's see what we can find."

They poked about in the engine cockpit, looked in all the lockers, and took out some of the broken seats to search under them, but came upon nothing of value. There were many splintered and charred boards, and these they removed, but all to no purpose.

"If anything is here it's well hidden," remarked Frank at length.

"This is a fine boat, and with a little fixing could be made good again."

They went on with the search. At times the man laughed at them, and again he harshly urged them to leave the wreck alone. But the boys searched on. The sun rose higher and the day grew hot.

"I wonder if dad will come for us?" ventured Andy.

"Sure," asserted his brother.

"I suppose they'll say we did wrong to come here, and run so many risks," went on Andy.

"Well, we meant it all for the best, and it has turned out fine," declared Frank. "They won't worry much, I guess. I wish they'd come for us though. I don't know what to do with this man."

"That's right. Well, keep on looking. Dad may come by afternoon."

If the boys had only known of the cutting down of their rowboat and the intense anxiety of Mr. Racer they would not have been so confident of the lack of worry on the part of those at home.

"Say, are you fellows going to keep me here like this all day, in the hot sun without shelter and nothing to eat?" the prisoner finally exclaimed. "It's not right!"

"Well, perhaps it isn't," agreed Frank, "but it wasn't right for you to shut us in the cave, either. However, we will give you something to eat, if you promise not to attack us if we loose your hands."

"Loosen only one hand, and don't trust him," whispered Andy.

"Oh, I suppose I've got to promise," grumbled the man. "I'm half starved."

"So am I," remarked Andy to his brother. "Let's quit searching now, and go for grub. We have plenty of it at our camp, and we can bring it here. Guess we'd better camp here, too. It's a better place, and we can't move him down very well."

To this Frank agreed, and they soon had their food moved to the new location. They looked well to the bonds of the prisoner before leaving him, even for a few minutes. Then, when a fire had been built, and some food prepared, they loosened the ropes from one of his hands so that he might feed himself. Andy and Frank were seated in front of him, eating, when Andy happened to turn around.

He saw that the man had in some manner, secured possession of a piece of heavy driftwood. This club he was raising to bring down on the head of Frank, who was nearest to him. There was no time to call out, for the stick was already descending, and Andy did the next best thing.

With a quick shove of his foot he sent his brother sprawling over on his side in

the sand, while the club came down harmlessly, but only a few inches away.

CHAPTER XXVIII

BUILDING A RAFT

"What was the matter?" gasped Frank, somewhat dazed, as he crawled away and sat up. "Why did you shove me over?"

"Don't you see?" asked Andy quickly. "He was going to hit you! Then he'd have tackled me I guess. Look out! He's at it again!"

With a snarl of rage the man had again raised the club. But Frank was too quick for him. Fairly leaping at him, the sturdy lad tore the piece of driftwood away and tossed it some distance off.

"So! That's how you keep your promise, is it?" the elder lad asked. "We won't give you any more chances. We'll tie him up again, Andy, and let him go hungry for a while."

The man glared hatred at them, and tried to fight them with the hand they had freed so that he might eat. But the two lads were more than a match for him in his condition, and soon had him made fast again. He had eaten only a part of his dinner when he thought he saw this chance to make his escape.

"Are you going to leave me like this?" he growled, when Andy and Frank resumed their interrupted meal. "I'll get sunstruck."

"It would almost serve you right," murmured Frank, "but we'll return good for evil. Let's make a sort of shelter, Andy."

With pieces of driftwood they raised a framework over their prisoner as he sat on the sands. On the boards they put sea weed, of which there was an abundance, and soon the man was sheltered from the hot sun.

"We'll have to make something like that for ourselves to-night," observed Frank.

"Yes, and it isn't going to be very pleasant staying here with that man, even if he is tied up," went on his brother. "I'm afraid he'll get loose in the night and attack us."

"We'll have to look well to the knots, and keep a sort of watch I suppose," remarked Frank. "But let's go back and finish searching in that wreck. I wonder what it is that's in it, and where it is?"

But the boys found no answer to their questions, though they made diligent search.

"I don't believe it's here," said Andy at length. "Whatever there was Paul must have taken away before he lost his memory, and he may have hidden it somewhere else. But I have another plan, Frank?"

"No jokes, I hope."

"No, this is serious. The more I think of staying here with that man all night, the less I like it."

"I don't like it either, but what can we do! Dad may think we're staying away too long, and he may come for us. He knows we started for Cliff Island. Then again he may not come for several days, as he knows we've got lots of food. And our distress signal doesn't seem to attract any attention."

"No, and that's why I think we oughtn't to stay here any longer. It is very seldom that vessels come here, and we haven't much chance of being taken off. We ought to get away and in the path of the fishing schooners. Then we would be picked up."

"Yes, but how are we going to get off? We haven't a boat."

"I know, but we can make a raft. There's no end of wood here, and we have plenty of rope left after tying that man up, with which to bind the planks together. There are some nails in that motor boat wreck, too, and some tools. We could make a raft good enough to take us far enough out so we would be picked up. We might even make the main land. There are two paddles in the *Swallow*."

"What are we going to do with him—leave him here?" and he nodded toward the prisoner.

"We'll have to take him along," said Andy. "We're not going to lose him after we had so much trouble in finding him."

"Well, perhaps it's the best thing to do," agreed Frank, after thinking it over. "But we can't get it done in time to leave to-day. It's late afternoon now."

"No, but we can start it, finish it the first thing in the morning, and leave as early as possible. We ought to be home by to-morrow easily."

"I wish we could be. If we could only run the *Swallow*."

"It wouldn't be safe, in the condition she's in. The raft is the only thing."

They ceased their useless searching of the motor boat, and began gathering large pieces of driftwood. Their prisoner in his seaweed shelter watched them curiously.

"What are you up to now?" he asked in his surly voice.

"You'll see soon enough," answered Frank. He had no idea of telling their plans.

It was not so easy to build a raft that would hold three as Andy had supposed. But they did manage to get the framework of it together. Then they had to think of a shelter for themselves, and built one near that of the prisoner. They also gathered wood for a campfire and made preparations for supper.

"Am I going to starve?" demanded the man, as they made no effort to loosen his bonds so that he might eat. "I'm thirsty, too."

"We'll feed you and give you a drink," spoke Frank. "We aren't going to take any more chances."

And this they did, putting pieces of food in the man's mouth, and holding up a tin cup for him to drink from.

They divided the night into watches, each taking turns. While one slept the other would sit by the fire to see that the desperate man did not loosen his bonds.

It was Andy's trick, and he was very tired. In spite of himself his head would nod at times. He even walked up and down to get rid of the sleepy feeling but it came back. As he sat by the fire his head swayed to and fro.

"I'll just close my eyes for a half minute," he told himself. "Just for a few seconds. I—I'll—"

Andy was asleep and in the shelter where the prisoner lay bound there was a movement. Eager and cruel eyes watched the lad on guard. Both Andy and Frank were slumbering now.

"It's my only chance," murmured the man as he heard their heavy breathing. "My only chance." Then he began rolling over and over on the sand, out of his shelter.

CHAPTER XXIX

"SAIL HO!"

Frank, in the heavy slumber that had come to him as soon as his watch was over, seemed to smell something burning. It was like the mingled odor of charred rope and scorched leather and came pungently to his nose.

At first he paid no heed to it, but turned restlessly in his slumber to compose himself more comfortably on the bunch of seaweed that served as his bed. Then the odor became stronger.

"Andy must be too near the fire, and is burning his shoes," he thought in a sort of hazy way. "He ought to be more careful. I guess—"

Frank was wide-awake in a moment, for he heard some one exclaim aloud as if in pain.

"What's that?" cried the lad, sitting up. The smell of burnt leather and rope was even more noticeable. Frank peered out of the shelter toward the campfire.

A strange sight met his eyes. There was Andy fast asleep, and there was the mysterious man, lying at full length on the sand, holding his rope-bound feet as near to the blaze as he dared. He was burning off the cords that bound his legs that he might be free, and it was the smell of charred rope and leather that had awakened Frank.

The explanation came to him in an instant. The man had seen Andy fall asleep. He had rolled from his shelter over and over on the sand and had gotten near enough to the blaze to nearly, accomplish his purpose. Frank dashed out.

"Andy! Andy!" he called. "Wake up, our prisoner is trying to get away!"

The man, with a snarl of rage, tried to burst the ropes that still held his legs, but they were not yet burned enough to break. He had not risked loosening his hands in that way.

Frank, in another instant, was beside their prisoner. He had a spare piece of rope, and this he quickly passed about the man's ankles, for fear some of the other strands had become weak.

"What's the matter?" demanded Andy, rubbing his eyes and leaping up.
"Did I fall asleep? Did he get away?"

"You were asleep all right," replied Frank, "But he didn't escape. I guess we'll have to both watch after this."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," said the younger lad contritely.

"That's all right," spoke Frank kindly. "You couldn't help it. We had no sleep last night. Now you get back where you came from," he ordered the man.

"Aren't you going to help me. I can't walk."

"Then roll in the same as you rolled out."

There was no help for it, and the prisoner, muttering threats against the lads, was forced to roll over and over on the sand until he was back in his shelter. Thereafter Andy and Frank both stayed awake until morning came.

They resumed work on the raft immediately after a hasty breakfast. In order that their prisoner might be taken to the mainland, or out as far as they might go before a ship picked them up, they made a sort of platform, on which he could sit. They also improvised a mast on which they stretched a piece of canvas they found in the wrecked motor boat. By noon their rude vessel was completed.

"Now for the launching," exclaimed Frank. "It's nearly high tide, and if we can work it a little farther down the beach the tide will do the heaviest work for us. Then we'll go aboard."

"I'm not going on that thing!" snarled their prisoner.

"Yes, you are, if we have to carry you," declared Frank.

"But I may be drowned. You ought to take off these ropes if you're going to do such a fool-hardy thing as to sail on that raft."

"Not much!" exclaimed Frank determinedly "We've had enough of your tricks. You'll go on that raft, and you'll stay tied up."

"But if I give you my promise?" whined the man, who seemed to have lost much of his bravado.

"Nixy on *your* promises," exclaimed Andy. "Come on, Frank, let's work the raft down to shore a bit."

It was not without much labor that the boys succeeded in getting the heavy mass of driftwood down where the tide would float it for them. The man watched them with a scowling face, occasionally muttering to himself.

"Better take something to eat along with us; hadn't we?" asked Andy, when they were waiting for the rising tide.

"Sure," assented Frank. "We may not be picked up until along toward night. And we'll want water. Lucky we've got some empty cracker tins to carry it in."

They put the food and water aboard, rigged up their rude sail, and then carried their prisoner aboard, as it would be awkward to handle him after the raft was afloat.

Meanwhile they had looked eagerly for any sign of an approaching sail, but had seen nothing.

"Well, I guess we can get aboard," spoke Frank at length. "It's been quite an adventure for us, and I'm glad it's about over. Paul Gale will soon know who he is."

"We'll see," sneered the man.

The raft was afloat. With their paddles the boys began to work it slowly from shore. The wind caught their small sail.

Suddenly Frank, who was seated ahead of his brother, uttered a cry.

"Sail ho! Sail ho!" he shouted.

"Where?" demanded Andy.

"Right over there and she's headed this way," said Frank, pointing.

"It's a big motor boat. I believe it's coming to rescue us, Andy!

Let's wait a bit!"

Eagerly they looked to where a speedy craft was plowing over the waters of the great bay. Frantically they shouted and waved anything they could find until answering signals told them that theirs had been seen.

CHAPTER XXX

THE ACCUSATION—CONCLUSION

"Frank! Andy!" came a hail from the swift motor boat.

"It's dad!" cried the two brothers together.

"Yes, and Paul Gale is with him!" added the older lad. "They arrived just in time. Now we'll be all right."

"And this will wind you up, Mr. Man!" exclaimed Frank, looking at the prisoner.

"We'll see," was the sullen answer.

"We might as well put back to shore, and unload our stuff," proposed Andy.

"No, stay on the raft," suggested Frank. "I will be easier to get in the motor boat then, as she can't run in too close to shore."

It was a good idea, for the speedy craft of Mr. Lacey, as it proved to be, could not have come in very close. But the raft made a good landing float.

"Well, Andy and Frank!" exclaimed Mr. Racer, when he could grasp their hands. "You've given us a fine scare."

"We didn't mean to," spoke Andy.

"And we have the man who caused all the trouble," added Frank. "He's a prisoner, dad. See, Paul. Here's the man we've been after."

Paul Gale pressed to the side of the motor craft as it floated near the raft. At once a strange change came over the lad's face. His cheeks flushed and his eyes grew

bright. There was a look of fear, and then it gave place to one of anger. As for the prisoner he tried to turn his head away, but his bonds held him.

"Ha! Now I remember!" cried Paul. "I know you, James Shallock! I remember all! It all comes back to me when I see you face to face."

"Who is he?" asked Frank eagerly.

"And who are you, if you can tell us?" demanded Mr. Racer. This was more important than learning about the prisoner. Frank and Andy thought it even more to the point than learning how their father had come to their rescue. While, as for Mr. Racer, as long as his boys were safe he could forgive them the anxiety they had caused him. "Who are you, Paul?" demanded the silk merchant.

"I am—I am—" the lad hesitated. He denied to be undergoing a severe mental struggle. "I am Paul—Bartlett!" he cried. "That's it! I remember it all now! And this man, who tried to swindle my sick father and myself, ought to be in jail!"

"That's where he'll be, soon," declared Frank.

"Tell us about it," urged Andy.

"How did you happen to come for us, dad?" asked Frank.

"We came here as a last hope, after we ran down your rowboat at sea, and found the *Gull* adrift."

"The *Gull* adrift!" exclaimed Frank. "That explains it then. Our rowboat was washed away by the tide. The *Gull* pulled her anchor in the storm."

"And we thought you were drowned or had fallen overboard," said the father. "Thank the Lord you are safe! It will be good news to your mother. But let us hear Paul's story."

"This man is a scoundrel," began the lad who had so suddenly recovered his memory. "For a number of years he was my father's confidential secretary. My father, who had large business interests fell ill, and this man took advantage of him to secure important papers. He sought to ruin my father, and enrich himself.

"There came a time when my father could no longer attend to business, and he

went to a sanitarium to be cured. I was an only son, and as there were no other near relatives I stopped at a seaside hotel not far from here. I had only just arrived when I found that this man, James Shallock, was following me. I had certain important papers of my father's and I knew he was trying to get them away from me as they were very valuable.

"I made up my mind to escape. Perhaps I acted foolishly, but I was very much afraid of this man. I decided to go away in my motor boat, which my father had given me just before I went to the seaside hotel. One night I started out, taking the papers with me. I was all alone, and I decided to go to some quiet place in my boat, and there stay until I could communicate with my father. I hoped to throw this man off my track.

"I left one evening, and soon found myself in this bay. I did not know much about navigation, and I soon got off my course in the darkness. Then in the morning the storm came up, and my boat hit some obstruction which threw the steering gear out of order.

"Next something went wrong with my engine, so I shut it down, hid the papers, and drifted at the mercy of the wind and waves, for no boat answered my signals of distress. The storm grew worse, and all the next day I was driven about. Then came a calm, but I could not make land, nor were my signals of distress answered. I drifted farther and farther, and as I had no food or water I soon became partly delirious, I suppose.

"Then came another storm, and I saw some jagged rocks, there was no way of avoiding them. I thought of leaping overboard for I am a good swimmer, but my foot caught in an electric wire. I pulled it from place as I fell, injuring my arm, and this made a short circuit. There was some gasoline, from a leaky tank, on the floor of the cockpit, and this caught fire from the electric spark.

"The storm grew worse. I did not know what to do. Then came an explosion and I found myself in the water. I remember some one calling to me, and taking me on board a sailing vessel, and then it all became a blank. My mind left me."

"That was when we rescued you," spoke Frank, as Paul Bartlett finished.
"But what did you do with the important papers?"

"Wait. Let me think," pleaded the lad. "I put them—"

They all leaned eagerly forward to hear answer. The mysterious man struggled vainly at his bonds.

"I put them in one of the cylinders of the engine," cried the lad. "One of the cylinders was out of commission. I shut off the water supply, took off the head and stuffed the papers between the outer wall and the inner one. They ought to be there now."

"No wonder we couldn't find them," exclaimed Frank.

"And where is your father now?" asked Mr. Racer.

"Still in the sanitarium I hope," answered Paul. "That is the reason none of our advertisements about me were answered. My father did not see them, and I have no other relatives. His business was closed up, and his friends did not know where he or I had gone. But it's all right now. Oh, how I want to see my father!"

"We'll send him word at once, if you have his address," said Mr. Racer.

"And what shall we do with this man?" inquired Mr. Lacey.

"Jail is the place for him," declared Mr. Racer. "He is a desperate criminal to have followed Paul about as he did. Now, boys, get aboard, and we'll take Mr. James Shallock in with us also. Cast off the raft, and we'll go home."

"Wait until I get Paul's papers!" cried Frank.

It did not take long to remove one of the engine cylinder heads, and there, between the two walls, were the important papers, safe. They involved the possession of much property that Shallock hoped to get under his control.

They set out for the mainland with their sullen prisoner. He soon realized that his games were up, and when turned over to the authorities he made a partial confession. He admitted that he had followed Paul, soon after the lad left the hotel, hoping to get the papers. When the lad left in his motor boat the scoundrel lost track of him for a while. Then he learned of Paul's efforts to escape and set out after him. From the Racer boys the man learned of Paul's rescue, but naturally he would not tell what he wanted of him, and hurried away. He hung about Harbor View, hoping for a chance to get hold of the helpless lad, or steal the papers. That was the cause of his midnight visit to the Racer home.

Then he had an idea that the papers were in the boat, and he made a search for that. He found it floating at sea, and hiring a sailboat, started to tow it to land.

He was frightened by the Racer boys, however, and soon afterward, a storm coming up, the tow line parted and the *Swallow* was once more afloat. Shallock made another attempt to find it, and succeeded. Then he decided to tow it to Cliff Island so he might have plenty of time to search it.

The arrival of the boys spoiled his plans, and once more he fled, after imprisoning them in the cave.

He next hired a boatman to put him on the island with the wreck of the boat, but there was the quarrel which the boys witnessed, and once more the scoundrel's plans failed. The rest is known to my readers. Shallock confessed to setting fire to the sailboat of the Racer boys, and after a trial he was sent to jail for a long term.

Mr. Racer explained to the boys how he and Mr. Lacey had set out in search for them, and how they had run down the rowboat. Then sure, after a fruitless search in the storm, that his sons were drowned, the silk merchant was distracted. He was more so when the *Gull* was found adrift a little later, having dragged her anchor in the gale.

After that Mr. Racer, in the motor boat of Mr. Lacey, made a search up and down the coast for his sons' bodies. Paul Bartlett, who was much improved, went with them, and it was Paul who suggested the possibility of the boys still being on the island. Accordingly another trip was made there, with what result we have seen.

"Oh, I'm so glad I know who I am, and that I have a father!" exclaimed Paul, when word had been sent to the invalid in the sanitarium. "I thought I would never get my memory back."

"It was the shock of seeing Shallock the second time that did it," said Dr. Martin. "You are as good as ever now, Paul, and you won't need any more medicine."

And the doctor was right. The former invalid joined his father, who also recovered his health and Paul grew into a sturdy youth who had many good times with the Racer boys, and with Bob Trent. He also helped to play several jokes on Chet Sedley, the Harbor View dude, for Paul was as lively as was Andy.

"I declare I don't know what to do with of two boys," said Mrs. Racer in despair one day to her husband. "Here is the latest. Andy took out that Chet Sedley for a row, and dumped him overboard. Something ought to be done."

"I suppose they ought to be sent away school," said Mr. Racer reflectively. "They getting to be old enough now."

"Yes, a good quiet school would do them good," said his wife. "I think I know of right place, kept by an old professor who is very deep student. It is a nice quiet place."

"We'll send them there," decided Mr. Racer.

And how the Racer boys went to this same "quiet" school, and how they gave that same school a very rude, but very necessary, awakening will be related in the second volume of this series, to be called, "Frank and Andy at Boarding School; or, Rivals for Many Honors."

Paul went back to his sick father a few days after the mystery had been cleared up, taking the important papers with him. He gave Andy and Frank the wrecked motor boat, which they brought from Cliff Island and had repaired, so that it was a fine craft. In it the brothers and Bob Trent had many a trip.

Mr. Bartlett's health improved very much after his son joined him at the sanitarium. Though the truth about the lad's disappearance had been kept from him as much as possible, yet something of it had to be told, and this, naturally, made the invalid worry.

"But I am all right, now that you are safe, Paul," he said, affectionately patting his son on the shoulder. "I think I will soon be able to leave this place."

And he was, for his condition grew rapidly better after that. The finding of the important papers, without which much of his fortune would have gone to Shallock, no doubt aided in Mr. Bartlett's return to health.

"I should like to meet those brave Racer boys who aided you so much, Paul," said his father one day. "How would it do for you and me to take a trip to Harbor View?"

"Just the thing, dad!" exclaimed the boy, and thither they went. That Frank and

Andy were glad to see their chum once more goes without saying, and in the repaired motor boat they went to the island where Frank and Andy had undergone such an experience, visiting the cave where the lads had been held prisoners.

Paul and his father remained at Harbor View for some weeks, and then business called Mr. Bartlett away. He left, promising to see his friends again soon.

"Come on," called Andy to Frank one day, "I've just thought of a fine trick to play on Chet Sedley."

"Not for mine!" exclaimed Frank. "I've had enough of your tricks for a while. I'm going fishing. We haven't much more time at the beach, as it will soon be time to go back to New York."

"And then for boarding school," exclaimed Andy, turning a handspring. "I heard dad talking to mother about it. Say! Maybe we won't have sport!"

"If we don't, it won't be your fault," spoke Frank.

Then he and his brother went for a run in the *Swallow*; and here we will take leave of them for a time.

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