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In the Smugglers' Cave

By Mona Maxwell.

Auntie gave the boat a big shove down into the water, and we were off!

Betty and Billy took an oar each, Peggy and I took the other two, and we rowed merrily away, and away. The boat bobbed up and down on the big curly waves in ripping style. Marjorie and Jock, the two little ones, sat in the stern, and we gave them lollipops to keep them still.

We were going to have a picnic on the "Silver Strand," just two miles on along the coast; it's our favorite spot. But when we had nearly reached it, I got an idea—How jolly it would be to go to the "Smugglers' Cave" instead!—only perhaps Betty wouldn't agree.

I'm Phil, and the biggest boy in the family, and I can easily get the others to do as I like; but Betty is a year older, and always wants her own way. She was soon persuaded, though, when I told her what a splendid place it was for all sorts of adventures.

So we turned our boat and rowed back again, along past our snug little cottage on the beach. We called out to Auntie as we passed, for we wanted her to know we had changed our plans; but she was nowhere to be seen.

When we reached the caves the tide was right in, so we had to fasten our boat to one of the rocks, then get out and climb along from one rock another until we reached the caves. They were so very dark inside, and it seemed so much jollier out in the sunshine, that we just paddled about, hunting for crabs and things amongst the seaweedy rocks.

After that, we were so hungry that we waded out to the boat for our hamper of goodies, and hauled it up on to a big flat rock close by. Then we all sat down and ate up everything. couldn't make a fire, for there weren't any sticks about; and, anyway, the wind would have blown it out.

We were all so glad we didn't go to the "Silver Strand." It was far more fun having a picnic in the middle of the sea -at least, having the water all round The little ones just laughed and chuckled to themselves with the jollity of it all; even Betty didn't grumble, as she mostly does when it's not her adventure.

Just when I was in the middle of telling them an exciting story, Peggy called

"Oh, look! There's a storm coming on!"

We all looked up, and, sure enough, the sky was black with clouds, and the sea had changed too. It seemed to have risen twice as high.

Suddenly there was a loud crash of thunder, then another, and another, right over our heads. Then came a bright flash of lightning, and the sea burst into a loud roar.

We were so surprised that we couldn't move, until a big wave washed over our boat

"Quick! Quick!" cried Betty. "Jump in and let's make for home.

So we got in as fast as anything, and rowed away with all our might. But when we reached the headland we found we could not get beyond it at all-the wind was awful! It just twirled our boat round and round like a spinning

What were we to do? I tried to think hard. It was no use asking Betty, she is always so delighted when we are in for an adventure, and dreadful things We couldn't seem likely to happen. climb the cliffs, they were far too high.

There was nothing for it but to go back to the "Smugglers' Cave" and wait till the storm was over. We turned our boat and started for the caves again. We really thought we would never get there, for every time we gained a little, a big wave would come and send us back again. Billy and I knew that the lives of all depended on our good rowing, so we put our whole strength into it, and Betty and Peggy did the same.

At last we reached the caves. We had to make wild jumps for the rocks, and let the boat go, as it was impos-

(Continued on Page 31)

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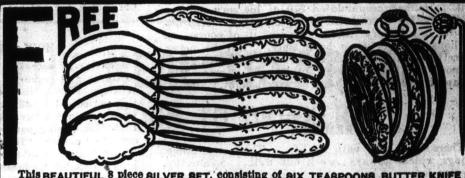
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