

Humphrey dipped his hand in the water and sang a college song. Shadows began to play lightly along the shining water. The dip of the oars and the creaking of the rowlocks sounded loud in the still air. The bow of the boat cut the water sharply and the ripples murmured along the sides of the boat. The shores behind them stood out vividly in the quiet light. Tom began to flag at his oar.

"We'll have supper now," said Billy.

Tom sighed his relief and Humphrey stooped to pull out the basket.

"No, the captain serves out the rations; give it to me," said Billy pompously.

"I wish we had brought something to drink," sighed Tom.

"You must think I am silly, young fellow," said Billy good humouredly, and pulled a black bottle out of his overcoat which lay in the bow of the boat.

"That's cold tea, and real good too, and I've got some bread and butter and ginger bread."

The stars had dropped through the sky above them before they finished. The shore behind them was a dark shadow. The light on the point waxed and waned steadily.

"Are you going out any farther?" asked Tom.

"Bless you, yes. It's your turn now, Humphrey."

Tom changed seats and rubbed his arms when he thought the others were not looking. There he watched the stars and wondered if mother would be putting Mary to bed.

By chance his hand touched a button on his sleeve. He watched the boys' shoulders going up and down in front of him against the sky.

"Say, Billy, it's your turn to rest now. I'm not tired, let me row your oar, Billy."

"You couldn't row up here, your arms ain't long enough, but I guess we'll stop and have something to eat now."

"Look here, you had better put on your overcoat; why in the world didn't you put it on before?" exclaimed Billy.

"Will it be very long before we see the Phantom Ship, Billy?" asked Tom with chattering teeth.

"A good while yet; it can't be more than nine o'clock."

"I am so cold," said Tom.

"Here, take this sandwich, it'll make you feel better," said Humphrey, stuffing the last one into his hand. A cloud had crept across the sky and swept away the stars. Billy was drinking tea from the bottle when a wave struck the boat and sent a shower of spray over them.

"Hi," he exclaimed, corking the bottle at a blow and getting out his oar, "keep her head round, Tom."

"Now I'll row with one hand; you might give me a sandwich, Humphrey."

"There aren't any more," said Humphrey.

"Oh, all right, a cookie will do."

"There aren't any cookies either."

"And there isn't any bread and butter. I know. Oh well, I guess I need both hands to row any way," he said, as the wind began to catch the boat.

Tom took his turn at rowing but got his oar too far down and a wave nearly wrenched it away. He went back to the stern again and Humphrey took his place. Tom strained his eyes; he could see nothing but the black sky and the darkly gleaming surface of the water, except where far, far away over the waves a light waxed and waned faintly.

"Billy," he said, keeping his voice steady, "you are not going to turn back, are you?"

"Why, Tom, there ain't no danger as long as we keep her head to the wind, and we must see the Phantom Ship now. Give her a chance, it's not late yet."

"I am not frightened," said Tom stoutly; "I want to see the ship too."

"Say, Billy," asked Humphrey, "what was the pirate's name, was it Captain Kidd?"

"I don't know his name; I guess it wasn't Captain Kidd though. Humphrey, have you got any matches?"

"No, what do you want them for?"

"I thought we might strike a light and look at your watch."

"Perhaps I can see anyway."

"No, you can't, unless you are a cat."

"I'm not a cat."

"Who said you was?"

"You did."

"I didn't, but I might as well."

"Oh Billy, it's beginning to rain," cried Tom.

"Let it," said Billy gruffly; "there won't be any Phantom ship to-night, now that it is raining. Back water, Humphrey, I am going to turn her round."

Humphrey who had not forgotten about the cat, pushed out his oar swiftly. He grasped after it wildly, it was gone.

"Back water, Humphrey," shouted Billy, as another wave came full against the boat.

"I can't, I've lost my oar."

Billy pulled hard and managed to get the boat's head into the wind. He dared not try to turn round.

"Well," he said, "I guess we'll wait till the Phantom ship comes and never mind going home."

"I am awfully sorry, Billy," said Humphrey.

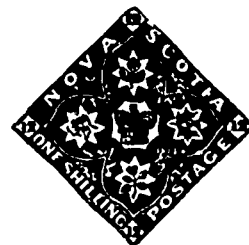
"Oh well," answered Billy loftily, "you couldn't expect anything else. We Britishers are sailors, you Americans ain't, it's Britain that's mistress of the seas."

"Our sailors are just as good as yours," cried Humphrey "they are, I don't care."

"You are the only person who says so. What is the matter, Tom?"

"Oh Billy, Billy, I wish we hadn't come."

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