

off willingly enough, accompanied by the boy, and in five minutes the colt was at the door. Donald made a critical examination of him, and finally offered a hundred and twenty-five dollars, which was promptly accepted. He wrote a cheque and handed it to Aleck.

"Theyre!" he said, "Noo, a'm goin' doon t' look ofer th' *Goosander*; coom on, Dickie. A'll be up t' dinner, Aleck," and the three started for the shore, leaving Aleck Morrison surprised, but more comfortable than he had been for some time. They had not gone far when Maisie looked up inquisitively at Donald, who smiled.

"A suppose y' want t' know aboot th' colt," he said; "weel, a'll joost be needin' a horse for a leetle, 'n' 'ts fery likely a'll be willin' t' sell een a month or two—'n' y' may be wantin' t' buy one yersel' aboot thut time. Y' never can tell what will happen. A—a tak' fery good care o' my horses," he added, as he got the black pipe underway again. Maisie laughed and was satisfied, and, of necessity, Dick was satisfied, too.

The *Goosander* lay at the wharf below the factory. As has been recorded, she was once the property of the Dominion Government, and for a number of years she had come and gone by night, and had hung just over the edge of fog banks, and had travelled betimes without lights, and had escorted one or two brigs and several small, slippery-looking schooners into Sydney or some other port, and had lain still amid the sound of axes on full casks, and had floated in a sea that reeked of Cognac. In those days many a good, fast fore-and-after knew that she was not to be despised. But she had too little freeboard and she was too fine, lacked the beam that makes a good sea boat, and the Government had finally sold her to Aleck Morrison. The *Goosander* had never been beautiful, and Aleck had added to her freeboard by putting a gunwale plank all round her. The gunwale plank made her too high, and took away all the torpedo-boat appearance

she formerly had. Then it had not been put on very artistically, and had left her with a magnified sheer, so that she didn't look unlike a gigantic dory. Aleck finished by painting her black. Altogether, the effect was not pleasing. She had a fine, steeple-compound engine and a new boiler that Aleck had put in under Donald's advice shortly after he got her. Donald had often cruised in her, and had apparently a vast belief in her capabilities. "A'd like t' ha' her for aboot a week!" he often said, "a'd show y' what she cud do. All she'd need'd be t' get a string o' kelp tangled up een her rudder for a tail 'n' they'd theenk 'twas th' Great Sea-Serpent coomin'."

Just at present she looked particularly disreputable. Below the waterline she was grown over with weed; her black paint was blistered and peeled; her gunwale was split and splintered in many places along its fifty-seven feet of length; the engine was covered with a scant, dirty tarpaulin, and the boiler and long funnel were streaked with yellow rust. Maisie and Dick went out to the end of the wharf to spear flounders, the black spaniel retired to the shore and found a shady spot under a bush, and Donald climbed aboard the *Goosander*. He looked over her slowly, then lifted up a hatch over the shaft and sniffed at the oily, iridescent, black water that was sluicing about with the slight motion of the boat.

"Y' dirrty, deesgraceful old hoolk! Y' shood be ashamed o' yersel' for not keepin' yersel' clean. Beelge water! Beelge water! Y' can't help havin' a leetle, but no self respectin' steamer allows't to accumulate like thut!" After this rebuke the old engineer rummaged around for pieces of oily waste and kindlings and soon had a fire underway. Then he opened up the lockers and got out hammers and monkey wrenches and spanners and oil cans and boxes of packing and laid them all in order. While the steam was getting up he swept her from stem to stern. He caught the sound of a slight hiss. "Pop valve leakin'!" he