

CHAPTER I

CALIFORNIA

"This is it!" exclaimed Dad as he, Sally, and Jeff drove up to an old mansion.

"It's a nice thing that Dad inherited this place from his grandfather," said Sally.

"Yeah," agreed Jeff.

"Let's look around," suggested Dad; and they went into the backyard.

"Look!" exclaimed Jeff.

There, about a yard away, was a grave marker bearing the epitaph: "Rest In Peace, Alex John."

"Wow!" exclaimed Jeff.

Sally asked, "Dad, do you know an Alex John?"

"No," said Dad, "I don't-"

"Let's go inside," suggested Jeff.

When they entered the front door, they saw a parlor with a chair turned over, the table smashed to pieces, and glass all over the floor from a lamp that fell over and broke. The place looked like it had had King Kong for a house guest.

"It's going to need some repairs," Dad admitted.

"Where is my room?" Sally asked.

"We are going to sleep in a hotel tonight," answered Dad.

As they entered the hotel lobby, Jeff observed, "The hotel is just about to close. Let's get registered."

"California is beautiful," said Sally as she peered out the hotel window.

"Good night," said Dad.

"Good night," said Jeff and Sally.

In the morning, arriving at the house, Jeff and Sally went into the backyard.

"Look!" Jeff said to Sally. "The grave marker has moved!"

"Dad!" yelled Sally.

"What is it?" asked Dad.

"The grave marker moved!" answered Sally.

"Well, I'll be the son of a ditchdigger," Dad said.

"Dad, should we contact the police?" asked Jeff.

"I wouldn't worry about it," answered Dad.

"Should we buy some paint?" Sally asked Dad.

"We will buy it after you clean up your bedroom," answered Dad.

"I'll be there in a minute," said Jeff.

Jeff walked over to where the grave marker used to be. "Water," Jeff muttered.

"Hurry up," urged Sally.

They went up to the bedroom and cleaned it up.

"Come on, you two," Dad yelled, "let's go get some paint."

They spent that night in the mansion.

"After you have your pajamas on, come sit by the fireplace," invited Dad.

"Dad, are there any cookies in the cookie jar?" Jeff asked.

"Only the ones with coconut cream in the middle," Dad answered.

"I'll get some," volunteered Jeff, and he left the room.

"I wonder what's keeping Jeff," said Sally with a worried look on her face.

"Help!" cried Jeff from the kitchen.

"I'm coming!" yelled Dad.

What is it?" asked Sally.

"A masked man was in here!" exclaimed Jeff.

"Well, he's gone now," said Dad as he looked around the room.

"Let's get some sleep."

"Good night," said Jeff.

"Good night," echoed Sally.

"Good night," Dad returned.

In the night Jeff and Sally heard someone outside. They stepped outside into the night air and saw a figure running across the lawn.

"After him!" shouted Jeff.

Jeff's voice must have startled the stranger because he started to run faster.

"Hurry up," said Jeff breathlessly. "We lost him."

They chased him all the way to the grave marker where he seemed to just disappear.

"Let's go back to bed," said Jeff.

In the morning Jeff and Sally told Dad about the stranger in the night.

"We'd better start taking watches," Dad suggested.

"Jeff and I will take the first watch," Sally volunteered.

"Can you handle it?" Dad asked.

"We always have," replied Jeff with a smile.

After breakfast Jeff and Sally went to the zoo.

"Look at that cute tiger scratching behind his ear!" cried Sally.

"Let's get some ice-cream" suggested Jeff.

"I'll have a chocolate sugar-cone," Sally decided.

"Me, too," said Jeff.

After the ice-cream cones, Jeff and Sally went home.

That night Sally saw something. "Jeff, look out behind you," she said as one of the men grabbed him. "I'll get Dad."

When Sally was halfway up the stairs, the other man got her, too.

In the morning, Dad got up and dressed and went downstairs.

"Jeff! Sally!" he called. Then he went into the kitchen and saw a note on the table. He picked it up and read:

"If you value your kids' lives,
leave the mansion!"

Dad picked up the phone and dialed "0" and said to the operator, "Get me the police."

When the police arrived, Dad showed them the note. They started to search the premises. You can imagine how the kidnappers felt when they saw the police snooping around. They took Jeff and Sally and set them by some bushes and left. The police found them bound,

gagged, and blindfolded. The police released them from their captivity and took them to their Dad.

"Thanks, Officer," said Dad appreciatively.

"I need to have you sign a paper," explained the officer. After he had signed the paper, the police left.

"Let's finish cleaning our room" suggested Sally, and they went upstairs and began the work of finishing the cleaning they had started.

"Hey, Jeff!" Sally called. "Come here!"

"What is it?" asked Jeff.

Sally had discovered a door that was wall-papered over. "Here is a door that has been covered over with wallpaper," Sally replied. "Help me open it."

When they got the door open, Jeff looked in and was amazed. "There must be a billion boxes in here. Let's open them."

After some of the boxes had been opened, Sally lamented, "some old bricks."

"These aren't bricks! These are painted-over ingots of gold!" Jeff declared.

"Dad!" yelled Sally excitedly.

"What in tarnation is going on?" asked Dad as he entered the room.

"We found some gold!" replied Sally excitedly.

"Gold?" Dad asked with a doubting look on his face.

"Don't you believe us?" asked Jeff.

"No," replied Dad.

"Have a look," invited Sally.

"Taste it. Smell it. Stare at it," suggested Jeff.

"It is gold," agreed Dad, with a satisfied look on his face.

"Where are we going to put it?" asked Sally.

"Let's keep it in the wood cabinet next to the fireplace," suggested Jeff.

"Good idea," Dad agreed.

"Let's move them," said Sally; and with much struggle they got the ingots of gold down the stairs and into the wood cabinet.

"That was a chore and a half," remarked Sally as she wiped the sweat off her forehead. "Let's go get some lunch."

Jeff agreed, and Dad joined them. After they had had lunch at the French Fry Factory, they returned home.

"We have to figure out what we are going to do with that gold," Sally said as she pointed to the wood cabinet.

"Let's sell it on the streets," joked Jeff.

"Get serious," said Sally.

"Sally is right," Dad chimed in.

"What are we going to do, then?" asked Jeff.

"I don't know," pondered Dad.

They sat around and watched T.V. until they were bored. Later, Sally suggested, "Let's go to bed."

On their way upstairs, Sally asked Jeff if he remembered something. "Do you remember sitting by an old dresser?"

"Yeah. It was hard, so it must have been maple wood," Jeff answered.

"Let's look at what used to be the butler's quarters," suggested Sally.

"We'll start tomorrow," said Jeff.

CHAPTER II

CC McARTHUR

"Dawn at last," said Sally as she climbed out of bed. After getting dressed, she awakened Jeff.

"What is it?" asked Jeff as he opened one eye.

"Get up!" whispered Sally.

"Jeff groaned, "No!" and rolled over and went to sleep.

"Brat!" Sally whispered, and went downstairs. She found Dad in the kitchen. "Morning," she greeted him.

"Good morning," returned Dad.

"I'm going to have Cheerios," said Sally.

"That's fine," replied Dad.

"Jeff and I are going to look in the old butler's quarters today," said Sally through a mouthful of Cheerios.

"Where is Jeff?" Dad inquired.

"Sleeping," answered Sally.

"Go wake him up," said Dad.

"I tried," replied Sally, but he wouldn't budge."

"Jeff!" Dad yelled. What?" Dad heard Jeff yell back.

"Get dressed and come downstairs!" yelled Dad.

"All right," said Jeff, and he got dressed and trotted down the stairs.

"What's for breakfast?"

"Cheerios," answered Sally.

"Hurry and eat," ordered Dad.

Just as Jeff sat down, there was a knock at the door. "I'll get it," shouted Sally, and she ran to the door. When she opened it, there was a girl about Sally's age standing there.

"Hello," said the girl. "I'm your neighbor and my name is CC."

"Hello," replied Sally. "My name is Sally."

"Whom do we have here?" asked Jeff as he came out of the kitchen.

"This is CC," answered Sally. "She is our neighbor."

"Come in," invited Sally, and led her to a couch. She looked sort of funny with her hair in pigtails and wearing a striped shirt. She also had on a pair of blue shorts.

"Hi," greeted Dad as she walked into the livingroom.

"Dad, this is CC," said Sally in introduction.

"What is your last name?" Jeff asked.

"McArthur," replied CC.

"We will look at the butler's quarters at four o'clock," said Jeff.

"Let's go over to the swimming pool and swim," suggested CC.

"Good idea," agreed Sally.

"Yeah," Jeff agreed also.

Jeff, Sally, and CC got their things together and walked down to the swimming pool. "Last one is a rotten egg!" yelled CC as she dived into the pool. The Sally jumped in, and Jeff was last.

"My feet were stuck to the floor," said Jeff.

"Sure," said Sally.

After two hours of swimming, they went home.

"I'll see you," said Sally as she and Jeff went into their house.

"Yeah," replied CC.

"Let's search the butler's quarters now, suggested Sally.

"Let's go!" exclaimed Jeff, and she ran outside and into a clump of trees.

"This is it!" exclaimed Jeff. As they entered the room Jeff's keen eye spotted an old dresser.

"There it is," said Jeff as he pointed to the old dresser.

"Wrong," disagreed Sally, "this dresser is made of Alpine wood."

"There goes a perfectly good clue," groaned Jeff disappointedly.

"Not really," replied Sally. Look at this note."

"It's in code," said Jeff. The note looked like this:

RSQHJD ZS LHCMHFGS

Signed: UNO

"Uno means one in Spanish," commented Jeff.

Maybe if we'd move back each letter one, suggested Sally,
"we'd find what it says."

They did just that and here is what they got:

QRP GIC YR KGBLGEFR

"That's not it," muttered Sally.

"Try advancing the letters one," suggested Jeff. When Jeff did

this, they got:

STRIKE AT MIDNIGHT

"Strike at midnight!" exclaimed Jeff.

"Let's show Dad," urged Sally.

"It might mean us," said Dad. "Let's guard the front door tonight and see what happens."

"Great idea," Jeff agreed.

They set everything up. They put three chairs by the front door, set the alarm for 11:00 p.m., and ate dinner. Finally, they went to bed.

They waited for what seemed a very long time after the alarm had aroused them.

"It's one minute to midnight," Sally whispered impatiently.

"Wait! Listen! Quick! They're getting away!" said Dad.

"Hurry!" Jeff shouted.

"They got away!" said Dad.

"Hold on," said Jeff. He scurried over to the wood cabinet and then ran back to Dad and Sally. "That's what I was afraid of."

"The dark?" Sally joked.

"No!" Half of the gold is gone!" Jeff moaned.

"It seems as though they are right here with us," said Sally.

"They knew where the gold was."

"Maybe they are," replied Jeff.

"What?" Dad asked.

"A bug," Jeff whispered.

"Let's look for them," whispered Dad.

Jeff found two under the table, Dad found three in the bedrooms, and Sally found one in the cabinet's roof. They took the bugs and threw them in the garden.

"Let's get some sleep," suggested Jeff.

"Great idea," agreed Dad.

"Super," agreed Sally, and they all trotted to bed.

In the morning, Dad was the first one up. Soon Jeff was up.

"Good morning," Dad greeted him.

"Morning," returning Jeff. "What's for breakfast?"

"Scrambled toast and eggs," joked Dad.

"Okay," said Jeff, as he walked to the living room to wait until Dad was ready to serve breakfast. Just then Sally trotted down the stairs and greeted the slunk-over figure of Jeff on the couch.

"I'm famished," complained Jeff who just woke up out of a trance.

"Let's eat," Dad suggested.

When they were all seated, Dad said, "I've been thinking."

"I'm glad," said Sally with a grin as long as the Mississippi River.

"Let's hide tonight," Dad began, ignoring Sally's teasing.

"Sally, you hide in the wood cabinet. Jeff, you hide under the sink. I'll be hiding behind the couch.

The plan was agreed upon unanimously.

After breakfast, Jeff went back to bed, Dad took a shower, and Sally went outside to play with CC. They played hide-and-go-seek until it was time for lunch.

"I'll see you tomorrow," said Sally in parting.

"I'll see ya," returned CC.

Sally went inside and ate lunch with Dad and Jeff.

"Let's fix up our hiding places," suggested Jeff after lunch.

"Great idea. I need to make sure I can fit in that tiny wood cabinet," said Sally. She and Jeff fitted the gold into a position so that she could fit.

"We are ready," Jeff announced.

"I hope so," said Dad.

That night Sally heard voices. The lid to the wood cabinet opened and a man said, "Look what I found--a little girl!"

Another voice said, "We can take her with us to Timbuktu."

"Hold everything!" Dad commanded as he popped up from behind the couch. The two men tried to get Dad, but they missed and knocked themselves silly.

"Call the police!" Dad ordered. Sally called the police and they came right over.

"Thank you, Officer," said Dad as the two men were dragged away.

"My duty," replied the officer, and he left.

After the police left, Dad asked Sally, "Where is Jeff?"

"Sleeping," Sally replied.

"Let him be," said Dad; and he and Sally returned to bed.

In the morning, Jeff crawled out from under the sink to find Dad and Sally sitting at the table eating breakfast.

"What happened?" Jeff wanted to know. Dad and Sally told him what had happened.

"Two," Jeff said.

"Yep," said Sally.

Just then the telephone began to ring.

"I'll get it," said Dad.

"I wonder who it is," said Sally.

"Hello. Yeah. No. No? All right, Bye," said Dad and hung up.

"Who died?" Jeff joked.

"Nobody," Dad replied.

"Was that the police?" Sally asked.

"Yep," said Dad.

"What's the news?" Sally inquired.

"We have to fly to Atlanta to testify," Dad answered.

"Let's start packing," urged Jeff.

"When do we leave?" Sally asked.

"As soon as possible," Dad answered.

Jeff, Sally, and Dad packed their bags.

"Do we need any evidence?" Jeff asked.

"No," answered Dad.

"I'll take a nugget of gold just in case," decided Jeff.

They got into their stationwagon and drove to the airport.

"Let's board the plane," said Sally excitedly.

They bought their tickets at the ticket booth and then went through the metal detector. When the dispatcher called their flight, they boarded the plane and took off.

"Isn't it beautiful up here?" Sally asked as she looked out of the airplane window.

"Yeah," Jeff agreed.

"Dad, let's see the pictures of the crooks again," Sally suggested; so he pulled the pictures out of the bag.

"Ugly!" Sally commented.

"Let's go get a drink," suggested Jeff.

"Good idea," Sally agreed, and off they went to the fountain and got drinks.

"Hey, Sally!" Jeff whispered. "Don't those two resemble the crooks in the pictures?"

They sure do!" Sally agreed. "Let's tell Dad."

"Dad," Jeff whispered when they got back to their seats, "the two crooks are on this very plane!"

"Are you sure?" Dad asked.

"No," said Sally.

"Look over there in chair 3-d and across the aisle in 4-c," Jeff pointed out.

"They surely do look like them!" agreed Dad.

"We had better sit down in our seats because we are about to land in Tennessee," said Sally to Jeff.

After landing, the three went to get lunch.

"These turkey sandwiches sure are good," Jeff commented at the lunch counter.

Meanwhile, back at the plane, Ted Darby and Charles Sylvia were hi-jacking the plane.

"Let's go, Mr. Pilot!" Darby commanded, and the plane took off without any passengers. When Dad, Jeff, and Sally found out about the incident, they reported it to the police.

"How are we going to get to Atlanta?" Jeff worried.

"I don't know," Dad said, "I just don't know."

"How about if we have a person with a private plane fly us?" suggested Sally.

"That's an idea, and I have one hundred dollars," said Dad.

They went to see Jack Morse, an expert pilot. "It'll cost you forty-five dollars," Jack informed them.

"That's fine," said Dad; and as they boarded the plane, he remarked to Jeff and Sally, "It's a good thing I grabbed our luggage."

"We're here," Jack announced as he landed the plane in Atlanta.

"That's forty-five dollars."

"Thank you," said Dad.

The three trudged to the Atlanta Courthouse. When they arrived, they found that the villains hadn't arrived.

"Should we go home?" Jeff asked.

"We'll wait half an hour. If they don't show, we'll catch a flight back to California," said Dad.

Meanwhile, back on the plane, "Okay, steer to the left and land on that island," Darby instructed.

"What is that island called?" Sylvia asked.

"It's one of the Phillipines," replied Darby.

After they landed, Darby said, "Give me your wallets."

They gave them the wallets and they took the money and threw the credit cards out in the water.

"Go get 'em," ordered Darby. "We don't want any witnesses."

"The Coast Guard will be on you like termites in wood," said the co-pilot.

"Shut up and get your cards," said Sylvia.

"Hold it, Mr. Pilot. We have better uses for you," said Darby.

The co-pilot dove into the water, and Darby pulled out a gun and shot him. "Come on. Let's go!" Darby yelled.

CHAPTER III

STRANGE

Back at the courthouse, the Judge let Sally, Jeff, and Dad go.

"Let's call Jack Morse," suggested Dad, and he called Jack. "He will be here in a few minutes," he said.

When Jack arrived, they piled in with their luggage.

"Where to?" asked Jack.

"Sun Valley, California," Dad answered.

Jack flew them home and Dad paid him.

After breakfast the next morning, Jeff and Sally went to the corner market to buy groceries.

"Do we need some beans?" Sally asked.

"Green," replied Jeff.

About half-way home, Jeff remarked, "I know a short-cut."

"Oh, no," groaned Sally. "Last time you said that, we ended up on the state line."

"I'm sure this time," replied Jeff.

"That's what you said last time," mumbled Sally.

Soon Sally asked, "Where are we?"

"My instincts tell me to turn right," said Jeff.

They turned right and walked in silence for two blocks.

"Left," Jeff commanded.

They turned left and Sally said, "These groceries sure are getting heavy."

"Hey, look at that guy over there," said Jeff, ignoring her remark. "Do you think he is drunk?"

"Either that or he ran away from the funny farm and never returned," retorted Sally.

"I think he's strange," said Jeff.

"There's our house!" Sally cried in relief. "Let's go!"

When they got home, Dad called them into the kitchen. "What took so long?" he asked.

"Jeff took a short-cut," Sally replied in a sassy voice.

Meanwhile, back on the island, Darby commanded the pilot, "Bring that rock over."

The pilot struggled and strained, but the rock wouldn't budge. Finally the rock gave in and the pilot rolled it over to the place Darby and Sylvia had for a shelter. Then they went around gazing at the sky. The pilot couldn't figure out what they were doing.

Finally Darby said, "Okay. Climb that tree and gather all the bananas you can find.

The pilot skillfully climbed to the top of the banana tree and gathered as many as he could hold. Soon he had also picked every coconut off the coconut trees. He had also found some grape vines, so his captors made him make grape juice out the grapes by squeezing them into some glasses they found in the plane.

"I wonder what Dr. Fizz is doing," Darby said.

"Who is he?" the pilot asked.

"He poses as different people. He's spying on someone right now."

Back in California Dad said to Jeff and Sally, "Let's eat!" They sat down to a lunch of chopped ham sandwiches, cottage cheese salad, and chocolate milk.

"Sally, when we got done, let's look in the butler's quarters," Jeff suggested.

"Okay," agreed Sally.

After they were finished eating, they trooped out to the butler's quarters.

"Boy, would I like to have been the butler," Jeff said and gave a low whistle. The butler's quarters was a fantasy room. There were satin sheets on the bed. A shower was included in the bathroom. The kitchen was well-stocked with food--and there was a microwave oven, too.

"Look at this bottle of wine," Sally pointed out. It's marked 1981."

All of a sudden, the door slammed shut and locked. They heard no footsteps.

"I guess we'll have to wait until Dad comes and gets us," Jeff reasoned.

It was five o'clock when Jeff's and Sally's friend came to see them.

"I don't know what's taking them so long," Dad told CC, "but you can go look in the butler's quarters."

"Thanks," CC said, and she headed for the backyard. When she got there, she knocked on the door.

"You will have to unlock it," Jeff said.

"It locks from the inside," CC told them

Jeff got up and felt around the door knob and found the lock. He opened the door, and both squinted at the sun.

"Hello, CC," Sally said promptly.

"Let's play tag," CC suggested.

"Great idea," Jeff said.

They played tag until Jeff noticed a man lying on the front lawn. "Isn't that the man we saw today?" Jeff asked Sally.

"Yeah, it is!" Sally replied.

"Let's tell Dad," Jeff suggested.

They all ran inside. "Dad, guess what!" Sally said excitedly.

"What?" Dad asked.

"There's a man out on the front lawn and it's the guy we saw on our way home from the store!" Sally explained.

"And there's a bottle of wine in the butler's quarters that is marked 1981. I thought the butler was dead," Jeff put in.

"He is," said Dad.

"Maybe it's his ghost," CC said in a spooky voice.

"I doubt it," said Jeff.

"Bring the wine here," Dad told Jeff.

"Roger!" Jeff ran out the door and fetched the bottle of wine.

"Here it is," he said breathlessly on his return.

"Interesting," said Dad. "We'll keep it for evidence."

"I'll put it up in the cupboard," said Sally.

"Okay," Dad said, and he gave Sally the bottle of wine.

Then Jeff, Sally, and CC ran upstairs. "Let's make a log of what has happened," suggested Jeff.

Their log went something like this:

"We flew to Atlanta to testify.

"The two robbers were on the same flight as we were.

"We got off the plane and the robbers high-jacked it in Tennessee.

"We flew to Atlanta on a private plane.

"Robbers never showed up.

"Came back.

"Got sut in the butler's quarters.

"Someone on the lawn."

Jeff ran downstairs and looked out the window. "Hey, Dad! The guy is gone," said Jeff.

"I know. I knew he would leave," Daid said.

Jeff ran back upstairs and told Sally that the guy had left.

"Let's finish the log," Jeff said, and they continued:

"We were kidnapped.

"Caught two gangsters trying to steal the gold.

"A figure disappeared into thin air.

"Found a note in the butler's quarters."

"That should do it for now," said Jeff. Just then the phone rang. They heard Dad answer it. Dad yelled for them to come downstairs.

"What is it?" Jeff asked.

"The police think the criminals are near the Philippine Islands. We can go ourselves or hire a detective. What should we do?" Dad asked.

"Let's go!" Jeff and Sally chorused together.

"Can we take CC?" Sally asked.

"You'd better ask her mother," said Dad.

They flew out of the house and over to CC's house. They waited outside for CC. Finally she came out.

"I can!" she squealed gleefully.

CHAPTER IV

GOING BANANAS

Still on the island, Sylvia and Darby were unskillfully climbing banana trees.

"Your turn," Darby said to the pilot.

"No thank," replied the pilot. "I'm too tired."

The pilot had a plan. This is what he figured. He figured he didn't have to do anything. He knew they wouldn't shoot him because he remembered that Darby had said they needed him for something else.

"What!" roared Darby, and pointed his gun at the pilot. He pulled the trigger. Click!

"Who took the bullets out of my gun?" roared Darby.

"Oh, these little things?" said the pilot. "I think they would look good out in the ocean," and threw them out into the ocean.

Sylvia pointed his gun at the sky and pulled the trigger. Click!

"Just as I figured," said Sylvia. "I have an extra bullet in my pocket."

"Just as I figured," said the pilot. "I found the sand in it. The sand would look good on the beach." He threw the gunpowder on the beach.

"Well, so much for that," remarked Sylvia.

Sylvia pulled out a map and scanned the Philippine Islands. Then he asked Darby, "Are you sure we're on the Philippines?"

"Of course I'm sure," replied Darby in a rough voice.

"We'll see," Sylvia muttered.

At five the next morning, Dad, Jeff, Sally, and CC loaded into their station wagon and drove off to the pier where they were to meet their boat going to the Philippines.

"Let's get out," urged Jeff.

"Not yet," said Dad.

Ten minutes went by. Jeff had just started to open his door when a great big car pulled up. The door opened. Out fell a man in a black suit. He picked himself up, pulled out his suitcase, and closed the door behind him. He came to Jeff's window and shouted, "Are you ready?"

"What does this jerk think he's doing?" asked Jeff.

"This is Jedadia Johnson, Private Detective."

"What!" asked Jeff.

"He's going with us on the cruise," said Dad.

"Is he any good?" asked Jeff.

"I have plans the CIA hasn't even thought of yet," replied Jed.

"Probably never even dreamed of," said Jeff.

"All aboard!" shouted Dad, and they all tramped into the boat.

When they got settled in, Jeff, Sally, and CC went swimming in the swimming pool on the Aloha Deck.

"Well, tomorrow we land in the Philippines," said Dad.

"Yeah," agreed Jed.

"Let's go get Jeff, Sally, and CC and eat," suggested Dad.

They went to the swimming pool and got them and went to the dining room.

"No children allowed," said the doorman.

"There is now," retorted Dad. He wrote his name on a piece of paper and handed it to the doorman. Then they went in and ate.

After they had eaten, they went back to their cabin. Jeff, Sally, and CC watched "Hill's Heroes" on TV. Dad and Jed were figuring out what they were going to do once they got on the island.

Back on the island, Darby and Sylvia were yelling at each other.

"You were the idiot that let him go!" argued Sylvia.

"Wrong!" said Darby. "You were the nuthead that left. Well, the pilot's gone now."

"We'll search the island," said Sylvia. "I'll take the east and you take the west."

They searched everywhere--except where he was. The pilot was in a cove where the tide comes in. He was in there swimming around. He planned on waiting until dark to get Darby's and Sylvia's guns. He would use them as protection. (He kept bullets in the plane.)

Meanwhile, on the ship, Dad said, "Let's go to sleep."

"Be ready to land in the morning," said the Captain as he shut their door.

"Good night," chorused Jeff, Sally, and CC.

"Good night," returned Dad and Jed.

In the night there was a buzzing noise. "The rudder's gone!" yelled someone. All night they stayed awake. In the morning they noticed that they were not sailing. They got up and saw that they were on land. Dad went to the Captain and asked what had happened.

After he told Dad what had happened, he said, "It will take two hours to fix the rudder."

Dad, Jed, Jeff, Sally, and CC got off the ship and explored. After one hour, they went back to the ship and got their luggage. Half an hour later they went back and the ship was gone.

"It looks like we're here for good," said CC.

"Let's explore some more," suggested Jeff. The three went off to explore and Jed went up and down the coast.

"We've got troubles by the numbers," said Jeff. "Isn't it strange how we get into all these messes? How come you've been so quiet, CC?"

"Sabotage!" exclaimed CC.

"What?" asked Jeff.

"Don't you see?" said CC.

"No," said Sally and Jeff.

"Somebody sabotaged the ship," explained CC.

"Yeah, but who and--oh my goodness! Great balls of fire! Look in that cove. A man is floating in the water," said Sally.

"It's a pilot," said Jeff. "Go back and get Dad!"

Sally and CC ran back and got Dad. He came over to Jeff.

"Is he dead?" gulped Sally.

"No. He is--" Dad began, but he was interrupted by the pilot.

"Hi!" greeted the pilot who just jumped up.

"Who are you and what are you doing?" asked Dad.

The pilot told him everything.

"Did they have names?" asked Dad.

"Yes. One was named Sylvia, and one was Darby."

"Bingo!" yelled Dad.

"Are they on the island?" Jeff asked.

"I'm afraid so," answered the pilot.

"Good," said Jeff. "This might not be so bad after all."

"Let's go," said Dad.

They went back and got their luggage. They set up camp. They got three piles of wood. In case they saw a plane, they could send an SOS.

"We'll all sleep on the ground," said Dad.

"Jeff, Sally, and CC went to get some dirt to mix with water to make an adobe stove.

"Do you think we'll ever get out of this mess?" asked CC.

"Well, CC, I don't know," answered Jeff.

After Jeff and the girls had found enough mud, they headed for camp.

"Here come Jeff and the girls," stated Jed.

"Let's tell them" said Dad.

"Tell us what?" asked Jeff.

"Sylvia and Darby were here," answered Dad. We saw them running away from us. They know where we are, but we don't know where they are."

"I'm not so sure," said Sally.

"Huh?" asked Dad.

"Look," said Sally, pointing to some smoke.

"Well, now, the game is even," said Jeff.

"I'm hungry," remarked CC. "We have a choice of fresh steak (I wish) or pork 'n' beans."

"Some choice!" groaned Jeff.

"I know," agreed Dad.

"I'll get some coconuts and bananas," offered Jeff, and off he went to get some. When he returned, they all ate and went to bed.

In the morning, Jeff, Sally, and CC were the first ones up. They went down to the ocean to wash. When Jeff started to wash his face, he noticed a bottle in the water. He pulled it out of the water. There was a note in it. He called Sally and CC over and then read the note. It read:

"The beholder of this necklace will have..."

Then it stopped. Jeff took the necklace out of the bottle and put it on. Nothing happened. Jeff picked up a coconut and hit it against a rock. It smashed to pieces. They went back to camp. Dad and Jed came out just in time to see Jeff shaking a coconut tree to shake down some coconuts. Surprisingly enough, it toppled out of the ground.

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"Land sakes!" exclaimed Dad.

"More like 'The land shakes,'" commented Jed.

"It must be this necklace," reasoned Jeff. "What else, Dad?"

The girls and Jeff told Dad, Jed, and the pilot the whole story.

"We could use Jeff as our station. He could guard us and protect us," suggested Sally.

Over breakfast (coconuts and bananas), they discussed a plan.

"Let's plan a raid," said Dad. "We'll send an SOS in the morning at about 6:20 a.m. We will give the ship until 6:30 p.m. to get here; then we'll attack," said Dad. "Let's get ready."

Jeff practiced attacking with a dummy they made out of clothes stuffed in a pillowcase. CC and Sally planted two traps so that when they chased Darby and Sylvia through it, it would capture them. Dad, Jed, and the pilot were busy building a telegraph out of the parts from the plane.

Night came and everyone quit and went to bed. At 6:00 A.M., according to the sundial they had built, everyone was ready to go. Then at about 6:20, they sent out the SOS. They ate coconuts and bananas and played around until 5:00 P.M. Then they started their walk across the island to attack Darby and Sylvia.

When they got there, Jeff tried to chase Darby and Sylvia through the traps, but it didn't work. Then, still wearing the necklace, he chased them into the ocean and dunked them under. Then he hurled them on the ground.

They took Sylvia and Darby back to camp and waited for the ship.

Days and weeks went by. Finally after eight weeks and two days and ten messages sent, it came. They gathered up their things and went on board.

"When did you get our message?" asked Dad.

"Yesterday," replied the sailor. "There was some fog so we couldn't get through."

"How long will it take to get back to California?" asked Jeff.

"Three days," answered the sailor.

"Dad! Jed! Mr. Pilot!" cried Sally.

"What is it?" asked Dad.

"Darby got away!" she answered.

Dad and Jed ran to Jeff and CC. "Sylvia didn't get away," Jeff informed them.

"Good," said Dad. "Darby won't leave without Sylvia."

That night everyone slept well on a soft waterbed on the boat.

CHAPTER V

ESCAPE -- CAUGHT

In the morning, Jeff, Sally, and CC were getting dressed when the door opened and the Captain roared, "Rise and shine."

"We're risen, but we're not shining," Jeff returned.

"I've got some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that we are leaking, and the good news is that there is no more bad news."

"We're what?" asked Dad.

"We're leaking a little," repeated the Captain.

"No trouble," offered Jeff. He took some gum, chewed it, and ran back to the leak, and stuck the gum in the crack. He ran back.

"Guess what!" beamed Jeff. "When I was running, I noticed Darby sitting on a pile of boxes of supplies."

"Hot dog!" crowed CC.

"Let's go get him," said Sally.

"No," said Dad. "Let Sylvia go."

"What?" asked Jeff in disbelief. "Dad, how many high-blood pressure pills have you been taking?"

"You heard me," said Dad. "Let Sylvia go." Then he told them his plan.

Dad, Jed, and Jeff hid in the lifeboat. They waited. Finally they heard footsteps. Suddenly the top to the lifeboat was lifted

and there stood Darby and Sylvia. Dad grabbed Darby and Jeff grabbed Sylvia. Darby got away again, but Dad caught him. They went back to their cabins and went to sleep.

"Good night, Dad," said Jeff, Sally, and CC.

"Good night," returned Dad.

"Good night, Jed," said CC and Sally.

"Good night, Whiskey Belly," said Jeff.

"Jeff!" scolded Dad.

The next morning, Dad and Jed were first up. "Let's go get some breakfast and bring it back," suggested Dad.

"OK," agreed Jed. They brought back breakfast.

"Rise and shine!" called Dad.

Jeff, Sally, the pilot, and CC got up, and they all ate breakfast.

"Hi!" greeted the Captain.

"How long is it until we can get home?" asked Dad.

"About one hour," answered the Captain.

"Thanks," Dad said. "Let's pack."

"I can't wait to get back," said Jeff, "so I can go to school."

"Yeah!" agreed Sally excitedly. "I can play dolls again."

"The last I saw of my doll, I stuck it in the oven," commented CC.

Finally they got off the ship. Dad, Jeff, Sally, CC, and the pilot and Jed were home. They got in the car and Dad said good-bye to Jed and drove home.

Once they got home, they noticed the lawn had been dug up and there was water all over.

"What is this?" asked Jeff. They went inside and Jeff checked the mail. "Hey, Dad. Come here," called Jeff.

"What is it?" asked Dad.

Jeff handed Dad a letter from the water company. It said that the water came up from the ground.

"HMMMMM," mused Jeff.

"What was that?" said Sally.

"Oh, it is nothing," said Dad. Then he and Sally took CC home. While they were gone, Jeff took a look around outside. Everything was in place. The gravemarker was there, the butler's quarters were there. Yep, everything was in place.

He went over to where the water came up. There was a pipe. It looked like it was clogged.

"Jeff!" he heard Dad yell.

Jeff ran back inside

"Let's unpack," suggested Sally.

"That trip was fun," commented Dad.

"Speak for yourself," said Jeff.

"You didn't like it because Jed was there," Sally remarked.

"I'm going over to school and get you guys signed up," yelled Dad.

"OK," yelled Jeff back. To Sally he suggested, "While he's gone, let's play a round of Deadman's Lava Pit."

"OK," agreed Sally.

Deadman's Lava Pit is when two people get on the bed and try to push each other off. They got on the double bed and began fighting. Sally got Jeff all the way to the edge. Then Jeff drew back his foot and threw Sally up against the wall. She disappeared!

"Sally! Sally!" Jeff yelled. There was only one thing to do. Jeff plunged at the wall. He hit it and flew back to the bed.

"Lordy, Lordy, Lordy," Jeff groaned. He ran to the school so fast that it was almost as if he flew over. He found Dad and told him what had happened.

They hurried home and found Sally sitting on the couch, smiling. She said nothing.

"Well, don't just sit there smiling like you've won the Nobel Prize. Tell us what happened," urged Jeff.

"I've done it!" said Sally. "The secret passage goes from our room to the Butler's quarters."

"What?" asked Jeff.

"The passage goes into the Butler's quarters," repeated Sally.

"It's all fitting together now," Jeff muttered.

"Let's go check it out," Dad suggested.

They ran upstairs and Sally demonstrated the secret passage by pushing on the wall.

"We know that exit is there, so if anyone gets away, we know how they got away," reasoned Jeff.

"Lets go get some lunch," suggested Dad.

"OK," Sally agreed.

After lunch they went to the police department and asked if they had gotten anything on Darby and Sylvia.

"The only word they said was the word 'Boss'," said the Chief.

"Boss. Boss." Dad repeated it over and over. "It doesn't make sense."

"Dad, Sally and I are going to the library," said Jeff. "I have a hunch."

"Let's go," urged Sally.

While they were at the library, Dad signed Jeff up for band and bought him a saxophone.

"What are we looking for?" asked Sally.

"You'll see," was the only answer Jeff offered. "You go look for some books. I'll be over in the reference area."

Sally left and got some books on escape routes and made some ditto copies. She found an interesting page that had a picture of an escape route from the bedroom to the back lawn. She took a nickel from her pocket and made a copy of that, too; put the book back on the shelf, and went over to Jeff.

"Let's go," said Jeff.

When they got home, Jeff got the paper. "Would you look at the headlines these days. Listen to this: 'Smugglers Smuggle Diamonds Across Nevada Border'," Jeff read.

"Let's go inside and see what Dad is up to," suggested Sally.
They went inside and Jeff gave Dad the newspaper.

"You're just in time for dinner," greeted Dad.

After dinner, Jeff and Sally went to bed early because the next day was school.

Early the next morning Jeff got up and got dressed. As he was walking downstairs, he noticed the saxophone. He found Dad in the kitchen and asked him about the sax.

"You can have it tomorrow," Dad told him.

"Good morning!" greeted Sally as she entered the room

"Good morning," returned Dad.

After breakfast, Jeff and Sally went over to get CC and went to school.

"Hello!" Jeff greeted his teacher, Miss Sweezy.

"Hello," the teacher returned the greeting.

"My name is Jeffrey Courtland, but just call me Jeff," he said.

"Sit down. The bell is about to ring," she instructed.

That day was a long day. At recess, Jeff, Sally, and CC got together and played a game of basketball.

"Br-r-r-ing! Br-r-r-ring," rang the bell.

"I'll see you after school," said Jeff.

"OK," said Sally.

After school, the three walked home.

"How is the wild goose chase?" asked CC.

"It's OK," answered Jeff. "Nothing much has been happening."

That night Jeff and Sally told Dad about their non-exciting day.

"Sounds like fun to me," said Dad.

"Fun wasn't the word I was looking for," sneered Jeff.

"I'm going to bed," Jeff announced after dinner.

"Me, too," said Sally.

"Goodnight," said Dad, and Jeff and Sally returned the good-night to Dad.

During the night Sally got up to get a drink. Something didn't seem right. She shrugged her shoulders and went back to bed.

In the morning, Sally was the first one up. She ate some corn-flakes and got dressed. By that time Jeff and Dad were up and dressed.

"Do I get to blow into my new sax?" asked Jeff excitedly.

"Yes, go ahead," Dad said.

Jeff put his instrument together and blew on it. "No sound," he remarked with a puzzled voice.

"Try again," encouraged Sally.

Jeff blew as hard as he could, and to his surprise a little black bag popped out. "What--the--heck!" cried Jeff in surprise.

"Open it and find out," suggested Sally excitedly.

Jeff opened it. "Diamonds!" he exclaimed.

"Smugglers," said Dad. "These diamonds were smuggled."

Jeff said, "Let's call the police."

"No, I have an idea," Dad began. "Let's leave the diamonds on the table. Then we'll put an ad in the paper describing the bag.

The owner will have to describe the contents. Then if someone tries to get the bag, we have 'em trapped."

"Then what?" asked Sally.

"Pow!" Jeff answered.

"You'd better get to school," said Dad.

That day Jeff couldn't keep his mind on his schoolwork. Sally wasn't doing well, either.

After school, Jeff and Sally flew home like lightning.

"What's up?" asked Jeff.

"Nothing," answered Dad.

"I'm going to watch cartoons," announced Jeff.

"I'm going upstairs," said Sally.

"Wait! Listen! There's someone upstairs," whispered Jeff.

Jeff, Sally, and Dad ran upstairs.

"They're gone!" cried Jeff disappointedly.

"They probably used the secret passage," said Sally.

"Quick! To the butler's quarters!" Jeff commanded.

They ran to the butler's quarters.

"Negative! Retreat," said Jeff. "Nothing. It took only a half a minute to get here."

Sally had the answer. "That means they didn't come out this way."

"What do you mean?"

"I'll show you." She went into the bedroom and pushed up

against the wall. Suddenly she fell out and landed in the back yard. That's how they got out.

"Clever! Very clever!" said Jeff.

"It's almost time to put our plan into action," Dad commented as he look at his watch, which read 7:00 p.m.

They ran into the house and put their little scheme in action. Night came. They got in their positions. They didn't wait long until two more masked men tip-toed in. They searched place. They found the little black bag.

"Here's the bag. Grab it and split," said one.

"I'll take that," said Dad as he took a swipe at the bag, but missed. Jeff and Sally chased them out into the front yard and then they seemed to have blown away with the wind.

"Darn it," cried Jeff. "They got the diamonds."

"Well, we might as well go to bed," said Sally.

"I'm sort of bushed, myself," admitted Dad.

The next morning they went to the cafe and had breakfast. After breakfast, Jeff and Sally went to school.

After school, they went home and told Dad that they were going to explore. They went over to the grave marker. Jeff noticed something.

"Look at this," invited Jeff.

"It's a croquet bar. So what?" asked Sally.

"It's too low to the ground to be a croquet wicket," Jeff reasoned as he pulled on the wicket.

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"A secret passage!" cried Sally.

The grave marker had opened up.

"Why didn't I think of it?" lamented Jeff.

"What's that noise?" asked Sally.

"Someone's coming. Quick! Duck!"

They ducked as two men passed by.

"Two masked men," whispered Jeff.

After the two men had passed, Jeff and Sally went into the main room.

"Holy cow!" exclaimed Jeff. "Monkeys don't go to church."

"Let's get out of here and get to the police," urged Sally.

"You are not going anywhere," said a masked man.

"Oh, yes, we are," said Sally, and she and Jeff barged past the men and outside.

"Dad!" Jeff yelled ahead, "Get the police!"

Dad phoned the police.

CHAPTER VI

ELEMENTARY

When the police arrived, Jeff and Sally showed them where the secret passage was.

"Freeze!" commanded the officer.

"You see, Officer," began Jeff, "this grave marker is a fake. When we chased these crooks, they disappeared here. The grave marker moved because when they were digging a tunnel with a pick-axe, they hit our water pipe.' That is what made the water comeup."

"And these diamonds are the ones that got smuggled across the state line," said Dad as he picked them off the masked men.

"The butler's quarters are mixed up in this, too," said Jeff. "Come and I'll show you." Then he led Sally, Dad, the gang, and the officer to the butler's quarters. When they went into the butler's quarters, Jeff said, as he pointed to a little black box in the corner, "Look. This is a remote control; and it shut us in."

"We knew this was the meeting place because of two clues," said Sally. "First, there was a note that said, 'Strike at midnight.' Second, they had a wine bottle marked 1981 that they left here."

"What about the gold?" asked an officer.

"Look," said Jeff. "Boss is a lead company. Some of the gold is gold and some is lead. These are your crooks."

"Yeah, I recognize this one as Dr. Fizz," said the officer,
"the drunk."

"Let's go," said the officer as he dragged the crooks away.

"There is only one thing left," said Sally. "The secret pass-
ages."

"Oh, I'll show you them. They just dug a cut while we were gone.
That's how they got away in the bedroom. Remember?" said Jeff.
"Boy, am I glad that's over! Now I can be sitting fancy free."