

**THE BUNGALOW  
BOYS  
ON THE GREAT  
LAKES**

**BY  
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## **Table of Contents**

CHAPTER I. A LAKE HURON "HUMMER."

CHAPTER II. LOST OVERBOARD!

CHAPTER III. TOM ENCOUNTERS SOME OLD FOES.

CHAPTER IV. A CRAFT OF MYSTERY.

CHAPTER V. TOM IS IN THE THICK OF IT.

CHAPTER VI. ALONG A TRAIL OF TROUBLES.

CHAPTER VII. TWO BRAVE LADS AT BAY.

CHAPTER VIII. A TOUR OF EXPLORATION.

CHAPTER IX. "FIFTY DOLLARS TO THE MAN THAT GETS THEM!"

CHAPTER X. A TRAP OF NATURE'S MAKING.

CHAPTER XI. OUT OF THE DARK.

CHAPTER XII. MR. IRONSIDES' SUBMARINE—HURON.

CHAPTER XIII. THE STRANGEST VESSEL ON THE LAKES.

CHAPTER XIV. OFF ON A LONG CHASE.

CHAPTER XV. "WE'VE STRUCK A SUBMERGED WRECK!"

CHAPTER XVI. IN THE GRASP OF CALAMITY.

CHAPTER XVII. CAPTAIN RANGLER RE-APPEARS.

CHAPTER XVIII. A MAN OF QUEER MANNERS.

CHAPTER XIX. WITHIN THE TOWER.

CHAPTER XX. THE ENEMY'S VICTORY.

CHAPTER XXI. "THERE IS A WAY—I MEAN TO TRY IT."

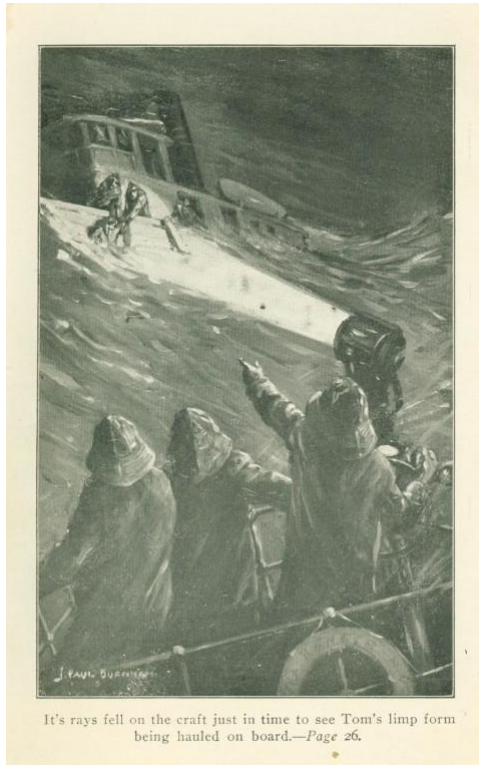
CHAPTER XXII. A BIT OF MADCAP DARING.

CHAPTER XXIII. BRAINS AND GRIT—A COMBINATION  
HARD TO BEAT.

CHAPTER XXIV. "COWARD!"

CHAPTER XXV. WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?—  
CONCLUSION.

# The Bungalow Boys on the Great Lakes



**Its rays fell on the craft just in time to see Tom's limp form being hauled on board.**

# **The Bungalow Boys on the Great Lakes**

## CHAPTER I. A LAKE HURON "HUMMER."

"Looks as if it might be blowing up for nasty weather, Tom."

Jack Dacre, the younger of the Bungalow Boys, spoke, as his head emerged from the engine room hatchway of the sixty-foot, motor-driven craft, *Sea Ranger*.

Tom nodded, and spun the spokes of the steering wheel ever so little. The *Sea Ranger* responded by heading up a trifle more into the seas, which were already growing threatening.

"I've been thinking the same thing for some time," he said presently. "If Alpena wasn't so far behind us, I'd turn back now."

"We can't be more than three miles off shore. Why not head in toward it?"

The elder Dacre boy shook his head.

"Don't know the coast," he said; "and it's a treacherous one."

The sky, cloudless but a short time before, was now heavily overcast. To the northwest, black, angry-looking clouds were banked in castellated masses. Their ragged edges would have shown a trained eye that, as sailors say, "there was wind behind them."

The waters of Lake Huron, recently sparkling under the bright sun, were now of a dull, leaden hue. The long water rows began to

rise sullenly in heaving billows, over the crests of which the *Sea Ranger* plunged and wallowed.

"What are we going to do?" asked Jack presently, after an interval in which both brothers rather anxiously inspected the signs of "dirty weather."

"How are your engines working?" was Tom's way of answering with another question.

"Splendidly; as they have done ever since we left New York. I'm not anxious about them."

"Then we'll keep right on as we are. It would be risky to turn back to Thunder Bay now. The *Sea Ranger* is stanch. We saw to that before we chartered her. She will weather it, all right."

"I guess you're right. But I can see here and now that our camping cruise isn't going to be all fun. These Lake Huron storms have a bad reputation. When we were down off Florida, old Captain Pangloss said that they were as bad as anything he had encountered, even in the China seas."

"At any rate, that trip taught us a lot about boat-handling," said Tom, "and other things, too," he added, with a rather grim smile, as he recalled the stirring times they had had on the voyage referred to. Those adventures were all set forth in full in *The Bungalow Boys Marooned in the Tropics*.

"They sure did," agreed the younger Dacre. "The weather looked like this off Hatteras, before the time we beat out Dampier and Captain Walstein in the search for the sunken treasure-ship."

"And thereby helped to get large enough bank accounts to plan this trip," interpolated Tom. "By the way, I wonder whatever became of those two rascals after their escape from jail?"

"The papers said that they were supposed to have made their way to Canada. But nobody knows for certain."

While he spoke, the sea was growing more and more turbulent.

"I'll go below and rouse up Sandy and Professor Podsnap. We want to have everything secure and snug in the cabin before the storm hits us."

Jack found the professor and Sandy deep in a game of chess. One, at least, of the players, namely Sandy, was not sorry to have the game broken up. The professor had his hand poised above his bishop, and was about to make a move that would speedily have checkmated the Scotch youth, when Jack burst into the cabin.

They had been so interested in the game that they had not noticed the increased motion of the *Sea Ranger*. But, as Professor Podsnap leaped to his feet, when Jack rapidly made them aware of the situation, the bald-headed professor went sliding off to leeward across the cabin floor. An unusually heavy lurch had propelled him, and his speed was great.

To save his angular form from an ignominious tumble, he clutched at the cloth on the cabin table. As might have been expected, it did not prove a substantial support. Before either of the boys could interfere, the professor was in a heap on the floor, struggling blindly to extricate himself from the folds of the drapery which enveloped him. Struggling to check their laughter, the boys rescued him. But their subdued mirth broke into a loud shout as



they beheld the professor's countenance. A bottle of ink had been standing on the table, and its contents were now spilled in black rivulets all over the professor's face. His bony features fairly streamed with the black fluid, while his spectacles hung suspended from one ear, in a most undignified manner.

He gazed about him in a bewildered fashion, as he scrambled to his feet. He made such a comical sight that the boys, in spite of their respect for his learning and age, could no longer check their merriment at the ludicrous figure, and they laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks, only stopping to gasp out apologies and then go off into more paroxysms of mirth.

"The sea—as someone has observed—is no respecter of persons," observed the professor, wiping the ink in long smudges with his pocket handkerchief.

"Of parsons, sir?" inquired Sandy.

"Of persons," said the professor solemnly.

"Which reminds me," said Jack, controlling his laughter and rapidly describing to the professor and Sandy the condition of things outside. They at once set to work securing everything movable. The professor didn't even take time to clean his face.

In the meantime, Jack had returned to the deck, passing through the engine room on his way. The *Sea Ranger* was driven by a powerful forty-horsepower, six-cylinder, gasolene engine. The boy paused only to ascertain that everything was in good order before he rejoined Tom, who stood on a sort of bridge amidships.

Even in the short time he had been below, the weather had noticeably roughened. It was almost dark.

"What time is it?" inquired Jack, as he gained Tom's side. The other drew out his watch.

"Only a little after five. But it's getting as dark as if it were three hours later."

"It certainly is. We are in for a hummer, all right."

"Don't make any mistake about that."

The rising wind began to scream about the laboring craft. Whitecaps flecked the lead-colored waves. The sky was overshadowed by a dark canopy of clouds.

Across the tempest-lashed waters, Tom, by straining his eyes, could manage to make out a dark point of land.

"That ought to be Dead Fish Point," he observed to Jack. "But I couldn't be sure unless I saw the light."

"What kind of a light is it?" asked Jack.

"White and red, in one-minute flashes, I looked it up on the chart before we left Thunder Bay."

"Well, they ought to light up now. It's dark enough," opined Jack. "By the way," he went on, "wasn't it from that lighthouse that they drove off the gang that has been wrecking vessels by displaying false lights?"

"Yes. The men visited the light just as an increased force of lighthouse keepers had been put on, owing to the number of wrecks that have happened recently from the operations of this gang. They were driven off. But they had a swift tug and escaped. The authorities have been looking for them since."

"If the newspapers are right, it is the same outfit that has been operating on all the Great Lakes."

"Yes. It's a new and up-to-date method of piracy, as the police claim. The gang engaged in it wrecks vessels by means of changing or extinguishing lights, and then raids the cargo. It is dastardly business!"

"Well, I should say so!"

At this point the professor and Sandy came on deck.

"Hoot mon!" exclaimed the Scotch youth, "it's as dark as an unco' dark tunnel."

"It resembles midnight," put in the professor, who had, by this time, removed the traces of his encounter with the ink bottle.

The four, who were the only ones on board the *Sea Ranger*, stood side by side on the bridge, holding tightly to the hand-rail to avoid being thrown off their feet.

"D'ye ken if it'll get wurss?" asked Sandy presently.

"It will get worse before it gets better," was Tom's pithy rejoinder.

The *Sea Ranger* had set out from New York three weeks before. Her destination was a small island situated in the Mackinac Straits, called Castle Rock Island. The trip was in the nature of a holiday outing following the Bungalow Boys' trying experiences with the Chinese smugglers, as related in *The Bungalow Boys in the Great Northwest*.

Mr. Chisholm Dacre, the Bungalow Boys' uncle, with the mystery of whose life the first volume of this series—*The Bungalow Boys*—was concerned, had decided, after some persuasion, to allow the lads to go. It had been a trip which they had often longed to take. Mr. Dacre and the parents of Sandy MacTavish, whose father was a wealthy importer, agreed that a vacation cruise would do the lads no harm after their really trying experiences in the hands of Simon Lake.

The *Sea Ranger* had, therefore, been chartered, being a suitable craft for the expedition. Mr. MacTavish, who had a partial claim to Castle Rock Island, had permitted the boys to make it their rendezvous. They meant to use it as a sort of headquarters during their stay on the Great Lakes.

Well provisioned, and manned by as happy a crew as ever left New York harbor, the *Sea Ranger* had set out on her long trip through the Hudson River and through the canals, to Buffalo. From Buffalo, they voyaged by easy stages to Detroit, and thence to Port Huron. Till that afternoon when they had started on the last "leg" of their cruise, from Alpena, on Thunder Bay, they had not encountered any but ordinary incidents of travel. Now, however, it looked as if they were going to have an unpleasant change. But all the lads were adventurous and daring, and the prospect of a lively blow did not scare them.

A word of explanation is necessary in regard to Professor Podsnap's presence on the *Sea Ranger*. Two days before she had sailed from New York, the professor, whom the boys and Mr. Dacre had rescued from a drifting raft in Florida waters, appeared at the lads' home. He was about to start out on an expedition in search of Indian relics. By a strange chance, Lake Huron was to

form part of his hunting ground. Mr. Dacre, deeming it a good thing to have an elder person along with the boys, had responded to the professor's somewhat broad hints by inviting him to join his nephews. As for the boys, they respected the professor's learning, and had a genuine liking for him, even if his eccentric ways did, at times, amuse them.

And now, what had promised to be a tame voyage, suddenly became fraught with excitement.

"Hold hard, everybody!" cried Tom suddenly.

He had seen a white wall of water sweeping down toward the *Sea Ranger*. The full fury of the storm was about to burst upon them.

"Here she comes!" yelled Jack, as the howling wind rushed down on them as if it would rend them apart.

This was the beginning of a storm which endured through the night, and which was to have a curious influence on the strange events which lay in the Bungalow Boys' future.

## CHAPTER II. LOST OVERBOARD!

"This is the worst yet!"

Tom fairly shouted the words at Jack, who stood by him on the bridge of the storm-tossed *Sea Ranger*. The younger lad had just come from below, where he had deluged the engines with oil. He had also gone over them carefully, although the way the little craft was pitching made the job a difficult one. But Jack knew that the safety of the boat might depend on the way the engines kept at work.

"I never saw anything like it," yelled Jack, forming his hands into a funnel to make his voice carry. "Is it letting up at all?"

"Not a bit. It is worse, if anything."

Tom peered into the gloom ahead. But he could see nothing but angry breakers, their white tops whipped off by the furious wind and sent scattering as they formed. Both boys wore oilskins and sou'westers. The spray had drenched them till their garments shone in the gleam of the binnacle lamp.

"Better switch on the side and head lights," observed Tom presently.

He turned a button, and the red port light and its green companion on the starboard side were presently gleaming out. Above them, on the short mast with which the *Sea Ranger* was equipped, there beamed a white light, and another lantern of the same variety now shone out astern. All were lighted by electricity,

furnished from a dynamo in the engine room, so that no matter how hard the wind blew, or how high the spray flew, there was no danger of their being extinguished.

"I feel a little better now," said Tom, after a while. "There's less danger of anything running into us in this smother. What are the professor and Sandy doing?"

"Trying to get a cup of hot coffee, but not succeeding very well. There's too much motion below, to stand still without gripping on to something."

"Are we keeping a straight course?"

It was Jack who spoke, after another interval in which the wind howled and the waves arose still more menacingly.

"As straight as I can steer her in this. I tell you, it's hard work to hold the wheel at all."

Indeed, every time a wave buffeted the *Sea Ranger's* rudder, it appeared as if the steering wheel was about to be jerked out of Tom's hand. But the elder Dacre boy possessed muscles well-hardened by all kinds of athletic games, and he stubbornly held the laboring craft to her course, despite the storm.

"I'll go below and oil up again," announced Jack presently.

He clawed his way across the bridge and vanished into the engine room. It was a wonderful contrast down there, in the warm, dry motor room, with the brightly polished machinery, working and moving in as rhythmic and unconcerned a fashion as if it was a summer's afternoon without. Incandescent globes made the place

as bright as day, and the brass and steel flashed as it rose and fell with hardly any noise.

Oil-can in hand, Jack went his rounds. He poked the long spout in here and there, and then paused to wipe his hands on a bit of waste.

"I wish we were out of this," he was saying. "I wish we——"

There came a sudden, inexplicable jar throughout the whole structure of the *Sea Ranger*. Jack was flung flat on his back. The engines began to roar and race furiously. Every beam and rivet in her frame seemed to vibrate.

"Something terrible has happened," was the thought that flashed through the lad's mind, as he picked himself up.

He rushed out on deck as soon as he could collect his scattered senses. The wind was still screaming angrily, and the riotous sea was leaping all about the *Sea Ranger*.

But above the turmoil of the storm, Jack caught a startling cry that came through the darkness.

"Help!"

"Tom's voice!" exclaimed the lad.

He stumbled across the heaving deck and rushed up the two steps that led to the bridge where he had left his brother at the wheel. His pulses were throbbing wildly. The next moment, he, too, uttered a cry.

The bridge was vacant! Tom had vanished!



"Help! Help!"

The shout came once more. But it was fainter this time. Jack gazed about him despairingly. Tom was overboard, that much was certain. But how had it happened? How——?

"Put your helm over there!" roared a voice out of the blackness—a harsh, hoarse voice, that cut the storm like a vessel's siren.

Jack, only half-conscious of what he was doing, spun the spokes over. He was just in time. Dead ahead of their craft a larger vessel loomed up for an instant. She carried no lights, and a glimpse was all Jack had of her. But it gave him a clue as to what had occurred. In the darkness they must have collided with the lightless craft, and only his quickness in getting the helm over had averted a second collision, which might have proved disastrous.

"What is it? What has happened?" came a voice behind him.

It was the professor. The binnacle light shone on his gaunt, alarmed features. Close behind him pressed Sandy.

"Hoots, toots!" exclaimed the Scotch lad. "What was the gr-r-r-r-and bo-o-omp?"

"We collided with a vessel without lights," gasped Jack, "and—and——" his voice choked up, "Tom's gone."

"Gone!" exclaimed the professor. "Overboard, you mean?"

Jack mournfully replied in the affirmative. But he launched into action, too.

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