

# THE GO AHEAD BOYS AND THE RACING MOTOR-BOAT



## Chapter 17: Sending for Sam

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The waiting of the boys continued longer than any of them had expected.

An hour passed and still no one appeared from the cottage.

“I wonder if there’s anything wrong,” said Fred as he glanced anxiously at the door.

“I guess not,” answered George promptly. “The girls probably are exhausted, but I don’t think there’s anything serious. They came out of it a good deal better than I was afraid they would at first.”

Following George’s statement, the two girls were seen at that moment departing from the house. Accompanying them on their way to the dock were several members of the household who were doing their utmost to assist them.

Apparently, however, their services were neither required nor requested, for in a moment both girls moved quickly in advance of the little company and approached the dock.

Stepping quickly on board, Miss Susie said, “What did you do with my canoe?”

“We have got it here for you in tow. We thought you would probably want to take it with you and we’re going to carry you home.”

“That’s very good of you,” laughed the girl as she glanced back at her companion to make sure that she too had boarded the motor-boat.

“If you’re all ready to go,” suggested Fred, “we’ll start right away. We have been waiting until you were ready.”

“That’s very good of you,” again said the girl quickly. “I haven’t thanked my life preservers yet for what they did. If you had not been there where you were the accident never would have happened,” she added boldly.

For a moment the four Go Ahead boys stared blankly at the girl, who apparently had forgotten all their efforts to rescue her and her companion. Fortunately for the boys they had had other suits of clothing in the cabin of their boat so that all four now were clothed and dry. But to have all their heroism forgotten and to be blamed for being the cause of the accident was something which had not even remotely occurred to them.

“Yes,” declared the girl, “if you had left us alone we wouldn’t have tipped over.”

“What was it we did?” demanded George.

“Why you came up with your old motor-boat and when I tried to be polite, Mildred thought she had to do the same thing, and then over we went.”

“Well, that was the time when it was fortunate for you that we happened to be nearby,” said John dryly.

“That’s just what you had to do; you couldn’t have helped yourselves.”

In spite of the words of the animated girl, who apparently now had recovered her spirits and strength, it was plain to the boys that she was genuinely grateful for the rescue which they had made. She was a deeply interested spectator of the work of the boys in casting off and starting their swift boat and even insisted upon being permitted to steer part of the way.

“Have you joined the yacht club yet?” she inquired.

“What’s that?” demanded George.

“Why the St. Lawrence Yacht Club. I am sure Fred’s grandfather must belong and probably that will be enough of an introduction. We have some fine times there. Tennis all day, dances in the evenings and I don’t know what all. You must be sure to come over there.”

“You may be sure we’ll come,” spoke up George promptly. “Now I want to know,” he added, “what our reward is to be for our heroic rescue of two forlorn maidens who were sinking in the cold waters of the St. Lawrence River.”

“I think virtue will have to be its own reward in this case,” laughed Mildred. “You ought to be satisfied with the honor you have won.”

Fortunately the island which Mr. Stevens had rented was not far distant and not many minutes had elapsed before it was plainly seen by them all.

Before a landing was made, however, Miss Susie Stevens had suggested numerous plans for picnics, cruises among the islands, meetings for tennis at the yacht club and various other methods by which the days were to be passed.

As soon as their passengers departed, the Black Growler was headed swiftly for Chestnut Island, the name by which the place owned by Fred’s grandfather was commonly called.

Upon their arrival they were informed that already Mr. Button had telephoned for Sam Hodge and that he had received word that the man would arrive the following morning.

“I hope he’ll bring all his legs, and arms with him,” suggested George with a laugh.

“What do you mean?” inquired Mr. Button.

“Why, he has a choice assortment,” explained George. “It seems he used to work in a shop on Broome Street in New York City where they make legs and heads and arms for dummies.”

“I don’t understand yet,” said Mr. Button blankly.

“Why, these wax figures that they have in the windows,” explained Fred. “It was in a place where they make them that Sam Hodge worked and he made us all laugh when we took him on at Henderson Harbor. He was telling us about the boss throwing his leg at him and Sam told us he fired a foot back and before he had gone very far we had the air full of eyes, heads and legs and arms, feet and hands and everything else that goes to the making of a dummy. In fact I have almost come to believe that Sam is pretty well made up himself.”

When he comes down to-morrow I'm going to ask him to let me take out his eyes, take off his hair, pull out a foot and an arm, and when he gets through I'll see just how much there is of the real Sam anyway."

The boys laughed as Fred pictured the condition in which the loquacious Sam would be left.

Their interest, however, was still great in the exciting events through which they recently had passed. Mr. Button was an interested listener and when the story had been all told he said quietly, "Mr. Stevens has been down here several summers. I have been afraid of that girl every year. If she doesn't find herself in the bottom of the river some time soon, I don't believe the fault will be hers."

"Why, what's the matter with her?" inquired Fred.

"She's too much of a tomboy."

"What's that?" inquired Grant, winking at the other boys as he spoke.

"Why, she does most of the things that the boys do. She plays tennis, shoots a rifle, paddles a canoe and manages the Stevens family."

"And that is why you call her a tomboy?" inquired Fred.

"Yes, sir, it is," said the old gentleman solemnly. "Girls didn't act that way when I was young."

"How did they act?"

"Why, they were taught to be ladylike."

"And what is ladylike?" asked Fred.

"Why, it is to act like a lady."

"Yes," protested Fred, "but why shouldn't a lady do these things you're speaking of?"

"Because they are not ladylike," replied Mr. Button testily.

"But why aren't they?" persisted Fred. "I don't see."

"That's because you haven't learned any sense yet," said his grandfather, irritated at last by the failure of his grandson to agree to all that he had said.

Fred laughed goodnaturedly, for behind the manner of his grandfather he knew there was a heart that was big and generous. Mr. Button occasionally stormed about the "present generation" being so markedly different and deficient in all the good qualities that marked the young people of his own younger days.

"What about that bond?" inquired John. "Have you heard anything more about it?"

"Not a word," said Mr. Button sharply.

Before the old gentleman turned away, however, for Fred suspected that the subject was not a welcome topic of conversation, he said quickly, "Where's the man that wanted the bond?"

"How should I know?" retorted his grandfather.

“Has he been back here?”

“No, sir, he hasn’t.”

“Do you know where he is?”

“I’m not sure if I did that I should tell you.”

“But you said he went to Syracuse.”

“If I did that’s probably where he went.”

“Yes,” said Fred, still persisting in asking questions, “but you don’t say whether he is coming back or not.”

“That’s quite true.”

“Is he coming?”

“I cannot tell you.”

“Don’t you know?”

“Did any one ever hear such a pestiferous child!” said Mr. Button, laughing as he spoke. “His questions and his tongue run like a mill-tail.”

“What’s a mill-tail?” inquired Fred.

“There he goes again!” said Mr. Button, holding up both hands in mock despair.

“But I want to know whether or not you have been up to Cape Vincent to do anything about that bond,” demanded Fred.

“The bond isn’t registered in my name anyway,” answered Mr. Button. “Probably I couldn’t get it if I wanted to.”

“But you don’t answer my question.”

“Go into the house now and get ready for dinner. If you haven’t any plans made for to-morrow I may ask you to take me up to Cape Vincent in the Black Growler.”

“Of course we’ll take you,” said Fred. “We should like nothing better.”

“Then it’s understood that to-morrow we’ll go to Cape Vincent.”

“But, Grandfather,” said Fred before he went upstairs, “Susie Stevens and Mildred think they will want to go with us to-morrow.”

“And you told them they might?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, I don’t see then but what you’ll have to keep your promise, though you mark my words, young man, you’ll be sorry you took that tomboy along with you. She’ll get you into trouble just as sure as the sun rises. You mark my words.”

Fred laughed and as he went to his room he had no thought how nearly his grandfather’s words were to be fulfilled the following day.