

Chapter 1

The Kidnapping

“Aye, matey, thars a tale to be told. ‘Tis full of mystery, magic, and adventures. Do yar think yar brave enough to come along and crew aboard a sailboat for the summer?” This was the strange question Captain Blood asked Chanel and Peach. Their parents died when Peach was an infant three and a half years ago. The orphans had no living relatives and foster parents looked after them. They were at an adoption party where adults find children to make them part of their “forever family” - a family full of love.

Chanel was the older sister. At seven years of age she had seen a lot. She took good care of her little brother Peach. Peach was only four and got his nickname because he loved to eat peaches and did not like his name - Noel. You could always tell when he ate a peach because his face, chin, hands, and shirt would be covered with peach juice when he was done. The name stuck to him like the juice he wore all over his face and it fit him perfectly.

Chanel and Peach lived in six different homes since Peach was a baby. Nobody seemed to want them and they didn’t know why. They tried to follow directions. They always cleaned their plates. They went to bed on time, but their social worker always came to take them to another foster family and they never knew when they would move. All of their clothes were put into garbage bags and were carried to the next house. The

foster families were nice, but they were not “forever families” and the children knew that they did not want to love these families too much because soon they would move to another house. Chanel and Peach wanted more than anything to find a home of their very own.

The adoption party was at the local YMCA. There were many children of all ages everywhere. Some played basketball in the gym and others were having fun jumping into the pool. Of course there was food! Lots of hotdogs, hamburgers, and make your own sundaes! Adults came to the party to meet the children and talk with their social workers. Chanel and Peach were swimming in the pool when they first noticed Captain Blood and a woman talking with Linda, their social worker. They kept pointing at the children and Linda kept nodding her head as they were talking.

“Who do you think they are?” asked Peach.

“I don’t know, but this could be trouble,” said Chanel with a worried look. “They look kind of strange, don’t they?” The clothes they wore were very faded: jeans, tee-shirts, hats, and very old boat shoe - everything they had on looked like they were used for many years. Were they too poor to buy new clothes?

“Do you think they will try to take us with them?”

“I hope not. They look weird, like maybe they haven’t been around kids before.” Little did they know that the adults had taught a number of children for many years. These two saw the three adults smiling and shaking hands. Something was going to happen all right, but what?

After Peach and Chanel changed out of their swim suits it was time for hot dogs. Then, it happened. First they saw Captain Blood and then the woman and finally Linda. Linda said, “This is Captain Blood and Bobby. They noticed that you are both great swimmers and wondered if you had ever been on a sailboat before?” Both children shook their heads no, but wondered about the reason for the question. “They want to ask you something.”

That’s when Captain Blood first spoke in a strange kind of accent, like the way they spoke in some old pirate movies, and it was very different from anything they heard where they lived. The Captain kneeled down to speak to the children. “Aye, thars a tale to be told. ‘Tis full of mystery, magic, and adventures. Do yar think yar brave enough to come along and crew aboard a sailboat for the summer?”

The children were speechless with puzzlement. “What kind of question is that?” Chanel blurted and then more politely asked. “What do you mean?”

“We’ll be sailing all through the summer and wondered if you would like to come with us for fun and new experiences,” Bobby said with a warm smile.

“What’s ‘speriences?” asked Peach who sometimes left off the first syllable of words.

“EXperiences, laddie. They be what fills the day with wonder. Have yar spied a whale up close or hunted for buried treasure or followed the moon to the horizon?” Chanel and Peach both had their mouths open as they listened to these questions and could only shake their heads ‘no’. “Those be experiences and not many get to see them. We be choosing you two to join us on the summer breezes.”

Linda added, “Captain Blood and Bobby are looking for children to be a part of their family this summer and they chose you. Would you like to go?”

“When?” Chanel asked.

“You could stay here while I drive to your foster parents’ house and get all of your things. Then, you all could leave from here!” Linda sounded genuinely excited about this move and was always hopeful that the children would find a “forever family”. They did not know that Linda, Captain Blood, and Bobby had met a few times before today to discuss the possibility of them going on this adventure.

“Could we talk to each other about this alone for a minute?” queried Chanel.

“Sure, why don’t you go in here to make a decision,” said Linda and she ushered the children into an empty small meeting room. Then, she left them alone.

“What do you think?” Peach asked with joyful excitement in his voice and pulled on Chanel’s arm. “Come on Chan, we could have a great time with new ‘speriences!”

Chanel put her hand over his mouth and whispered ssshh in his ear. “Stop pulling on my arm and that’s EXperiences! I don’t know about that Captain Blood. What kind of name is that? What happens if we don’t like them after two days and then we’re stuck with them for the whole summer? The Captain talks about adventures and treasures. You know what that sounds like?”

With a look of wisdom, Peach’s eyes grew wide and he blurted, “You think Captain Blood is a pirate?”

“Aye, matey? Who else talks like that but pirates?”

“But there aren’t any pirates around today, are there?”

“Maybe there are and we just met one. Maybe they are trying not to get arrested and a couple of kids on board will keep the police away. Maybe - ”

“Maybe we should go. Come on Chan, can’t we go, please?” He only called his sister Chan when he wanted something and Peach knew that if he kept pleading like this, Chanel would finally give in to the request. “Pleeeeeease, Chan.”

After a heavy pause Chanel warned, “Okay, but don’t tell me that you don’t like it or that you’re scared after two days.”

“Not me. I’m going to love it.” The children opened the door and told Linda to go get their clothes and belongings. Captain Blood and Bobby nodded and smiled a knowing smile at each other. As the four of them walked toward the door of the parking lot where they would wait for Linda, the children looked at each other with growing apprehension.

Maybe Chanel was right about Captain Blood being a pirate. Perhaps all of this was a cover. As they entered the parking lot the children saw an old red, rusty four door pick-up truck and behind the truck was a trailer with a sailboat on it.

“That can’t be it!” announced Chanel with disbelief bordering on disgust.

“Aye, this be *Epiphany* and a fine vessel she be,” Captain Blood said proudly.

“But, it’s teeny!” protested Chanel as she and her brother got into the back seat of the truck.

“Nineteen feet ‘tis all you need to keep the seas between ye and me.” Just then Linda arrived and

helped the couple load the children's belongings into the back of the truck.

As the Captain and Bobby got into the front seat Linda looked in and said with a smile, "You children have a great time this summer. I'll talk to you later. Bye." The truck engine started with a sputter and off they drove while the children looked back and gave a half wave to Linda.

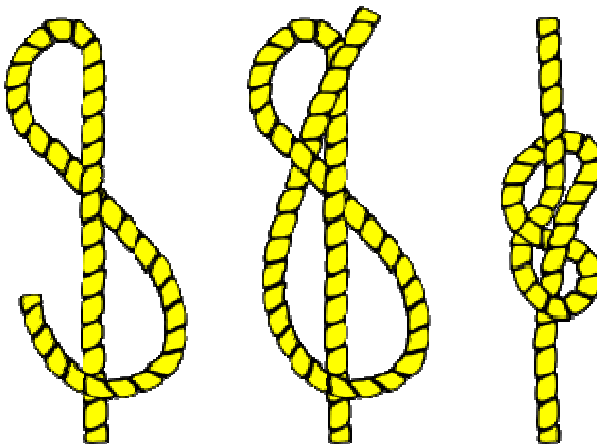
Ever so quietly, Chanel whispered to her brother, "I think I was right. They are pirates. You know what pirates do?"

"Hunt for buried treasure?" Peach asked gleefully.

"No, they kidnap children and put them on boats!" They fearfully looked back at their fate being pulled behind them. Her name - *Epiphany*.



How to make a figure 8 knot.



Chapter 2

Epiphany

“What is nap, Chanel? I don’t want a nap!” Peach was always asking questions, but Chanel was not quite sure how to answer this without scaring her brother.

“KIDnap. That’s when an adult steals little kids and takes them far away and makes them take a nap in a strange place.”

“Then that can’t be us ‘cause Linda knows where we are and didn’t seem to mind us going away,” Peach confidently stated.

“Yeah, they were pretty sneaky about getting Linda to let us go with them. Pirates are like that, you know, sneaky,” she gave him a knowing nod of her head.

“What are you two whispering about? Did you get enough to eat at the party?” asked Bobby.

“Yes, ma’am,” came a unison reply.

“It’s going to be a long drive until we get to Provincelands. That’s the name of our homeport where *Epiphany* has a mooring.”

“Captain, what does *Epiphany* mean?” Peach asked.

“Aye, it be an ‘aha’ experience,” seeing a puzzled look from both children the Captain continued. “A revelatory experience, a moment of insight, or an understanding.”

“It was also the date when the Magi saw Jesus on January 6,” Bobby added.

“The who saw the what?” Chanel asked while she scrunched up her face with doubt.

“The three kings found Jesus, the son of God,” and Bobby began to sing... “We Three Kings of Orient Are...”

“Oh, I get it,” Chanel celebrated.

“Aye, yar had an epiphany,” pointing to the boat, “That be her name. We always be learning new knowledge about life aboard *Epiphany*.”

Bobby said, “The drive is about four hours because we need to go to the end of the Cape.”

“What’s a cape?” wondered Chanel.

“I know! I know!” Peach exclaimed holding his hand up like he did in school. “That’s something a superhero wears!”

“No, Peach. This kind of cape describes the land,” she held her arm out straight and then curved her hand and forearm back making it look like a fish hook. “See? If my arm is the land, it goes out into the ocean and kind of looks like this. Here,” as she pointed to the tips of her fingers, “is where we are going – way out to the end.”

After a time of silence the children took a nap. When they awoke Bobby said, “Look out the window every so often and notice if the land looks any different.”

“The trees look a little funny,” observed Chanel.

“What do you mean?”

“Well, the trees - they’re getting, I don’t know - smaller.”

“Do you know what kind of trees they are?”

“No. ”

“They’re pine trees. The wind blows so hard across the Cape that over years the only way these trees could survive was to grow smaller.”

“When are we going to be there?” Peach questioned loudly.

“Aye, mateys, smell the air.” It was different. The salt air and humidity could be smelled as well as felt.

“My skin feels a little sticky,” Chanel complained as she rubbed her arm.

“You’ll get used to that in a while,” said Bobby. The truck entered a large parking lot with many empty cars, trucks, vans and all had something in common - they had empty boat trailers behind them. Farther from shore the water was a deep blue, but near the shore the color was greener except where boats were going into the water. The harbor was dotted with moorings and many boats pointed their bows toward the shore.

“Thar’s the boat ramp where we be launching *Epiphany* and it be deeper water.”

“I’m not hungry. Why are we having lunch, again?” Peach asked.

“No boy, launch. That means we be putting the boat into the water.” The Captain and Bobby got out of the truck leaving the worried sister and brother behind.

“What should we do?” Peach always thought Chanel had the answers.

“I’m not sure.”

Just then they heard Bobby, “Come out children and help us with the boat.” Chanel nodded at Peach to let him know that it was ok to get out. Captain Blood

and Bobby were all ready on board as the children closed the truck doors.

They walked back to *Epiphany* and Peach was the first to notice, “Hey, she’s got a smile on her face.”

“The bow, boy, the bow,” the Captain corrected. Peach did just that, he bowed to *Epiphany*. “No, son, the front of the boat be called the bow. *Epiphany* has a smile on her bow.”

“Why?”

“She be a right happy old girl and she be having a friendly personality.”

Bending down to the children Bobby said, “I think the Captain put a smile on her just to hear what other boaters would say about it.”

“Aye, ‘tis a good conversation piece,” said the Captain.

Peach pulled Chanel away from the boat for a private talk. “How can they be pirates with a smiling boat?”

“Don’t you see - that’s part of their plan so you won’t think that they are pirates,” said Chanel, but Peach just pushed her off like she was talking crazy.

Bobby waved, “Come on up children. There are steps off the stern. The bow is in the front and the stern is the back of the boat.” Chanel helped Peach up first, then she climbed aboard.

Epiphany was a white fiberglass boat that was almost like new. All of her metal shined bright silver, and in the stern were two seats that looked like solid white benches. On top of them were light blue cushions that were more comfortable than the hard fiberglass.

“It’s ok to sit down,” said Bobby. A big aluminum pole laid down the center on top of *Epiphany*. It went from the bow out past the stern and was about twenty-two feet in length.

“This here be the mast. The first thing we need to do be raise the mast and secure it with these wires.”

“Is the boat sick, Captain?” asked Peach.

“No lad. Why do you ask?”

“Cause you said we had to cure it.”

“No, son, SEcure it. Connect it so it won’t fall down. The mast be holding the sails up.” The Captain and Bobby went to work getting the mast ready for raising. “You children sit here while we be hoisting the mast.” The Captain pulled on a rope that lifted the mast up straighter and straighter until it looked like it could reach up and touch the sky. Bobby carefully climbed to the bow to secure a wire up there.

“All set!” Bobby answered. Both adults stepped back and had such big smiles that you could tell they were very excited to be on *Epiphany*. The Captain walked toward the middle of the boat where there was something wooden that looked like a door, but there was fiberglass on top of it. Also, there was a combination lock. The Captain looked at Bobby who waited and finally said, “My birthday.”

“Ah, yes.” The numbers were dialed and with a click the lock opened. Taking the lock off and sliding back the fiberglass top the Captain told the children, “This be a sliding hatch and this door comes off.” As it did the children’s eyes grew bigger with wonder as they looked inside.

“Cool! A house!”

“Aye, a cabin, Peach, and where we be alivin’ this summer.”

“Wow, this is great!” said Peach as he looked down the two steps into the cabin.

The Captain reached inside and pulled out a hat. “Home is where yar hang yar hat.’ Remember that, mateys, and yar never be far from home.” The Captain changed one hat and put on a white, white brimmed hat that had *Epiphany* embroidered on it.

Chanel thought back to the many places she and her brother had called “home,” she thought aloud, “if this is home, then I had better get a very, very small hat.” Looking around she said, “Where are we supposed to sleep?”

The Captain walked down into the cabin and came out with a shorter aluminum pole, only nine feet long. “Wait a moment while I put this on the mast,” Bobby said and took one end to connect it to the mast while the Captain tied a rope onto the other end. “This is called the -” and with a crash that made the boat shake the medal pole fell onto the floor.

“Boom!” Peach yelled out as a sound effect.

“Aye, lad. Yar absolutely right son! ‘Tis called the boom!

“I can understand why,” said Chanel.

“So now you know what the bow and stern are...” Bobby pointed.

“The front and the back,” Peach said excitedly as he pointed with great exaggeration to the two parts he knew.

“Stand and look to the bow.” Peach did. “The left hand side of the boat is the port side and the right is the starboard.”

“Starb’d,” quipped the Captain.

“Which hand is left?” Peach asked as he looked at his hands with confusion.

“Here,” instructed Bobby. “Put your hands out in front of you so you can see the back of your hands.”

“Like this?” Peach had it just right.

“Yes. Now, you put your thumbs down like this. Which hand looks like the letter ‘L’?”

“This one!” he waved the L hand.

“Good. ‘L’ for left and the left side is the port. L-E-F-T has four letters and so does port P-O-R-T.”

“The word four has four letters in it, too,” pointed out Chanel.

“Very good spelling, Chanel,” nodded Bobby.

“So the other side is the starb’d?” she asked very deliberately.

“Aye, lass, it is. Well spoken.” With that compliment Chanel smiled at the Captain whose smile became even bigger back at her. Chanel noticed something she had not seen in the Captain before, a face full of joy.

The Captain started singing and Bobby joined in, too.

A ship was built. Her mast was stepped
And her sails were like clouds in the sky.
Upon a fair wind on a Provincelands day
We hoisted her sails up so high...singing -

Roll out, roll out the sails on *E - piph - an - y*.
Roll out, roll out, set her course out to the sea.

We headed for sea as our sails were unfurled
With her jibs’l over her bow.

And aft once again the Captain had said
“Hoist the main, let the breeze sing out loud.”

Roll out, roll out the sails on *E - piph - an - y*.
Roll out, roll out, set her course out to the sea.

Sailors do come and sailors do go
And change like the tide in the sea.
But a ship like this one will be only once
And the song of *E - piph - an - y* - singing -

Roll out, roll out the sails on *E - piph - an - y*.
Roll out, roll out, set her course out to the sea.

“All ashore,” announced the Captain and they climbed off *Epiphany*, down the trailer onto the parking lot. A small, five horse power engine was screwed onto the engine mount at the stern and the Captain stated, “Well, old girl, I think yar be ready to splash your bottom.”

“What?” Chanel questioned as if she would have nothing to do with such an activity.

“That means *Epiphany* is ready to be launched,” reassured Bobby.

“Put into the water?” Chanel asked.

“Aye. Children, go stand by that post over there,” Chanel led Peach over to a sign post where they could watch the Captain back the truck and put the trailer into the water. They were looking at the bow, which went in last, and noticed something different. Before, *Epiphany* only had a smile. Now she had a smile and eyes.

“Hey, do you see that?” Peach tugged at Chanel’s arm.

“Yes, were those eyes there before?”

“I don’t remember them.” And then it happened. Something that made both of them wonder if they were seeing things.

“She winked!” they both exclaimed and sure enough, as *Epiphany’s* bow was off of the trailer and floating on the water, she winked at the children. Bobby held onto the line that kept *Epiphany* by the shore as the Captain drove the truck and dripping trailer into the parking lot. After locking up the truck, the Captain came over to the children and leaned over to talk to them.

“Aye, could it be that a boat be able to wink at yar? This place be very different, this Provincelands.”



How to tie a cleat.

