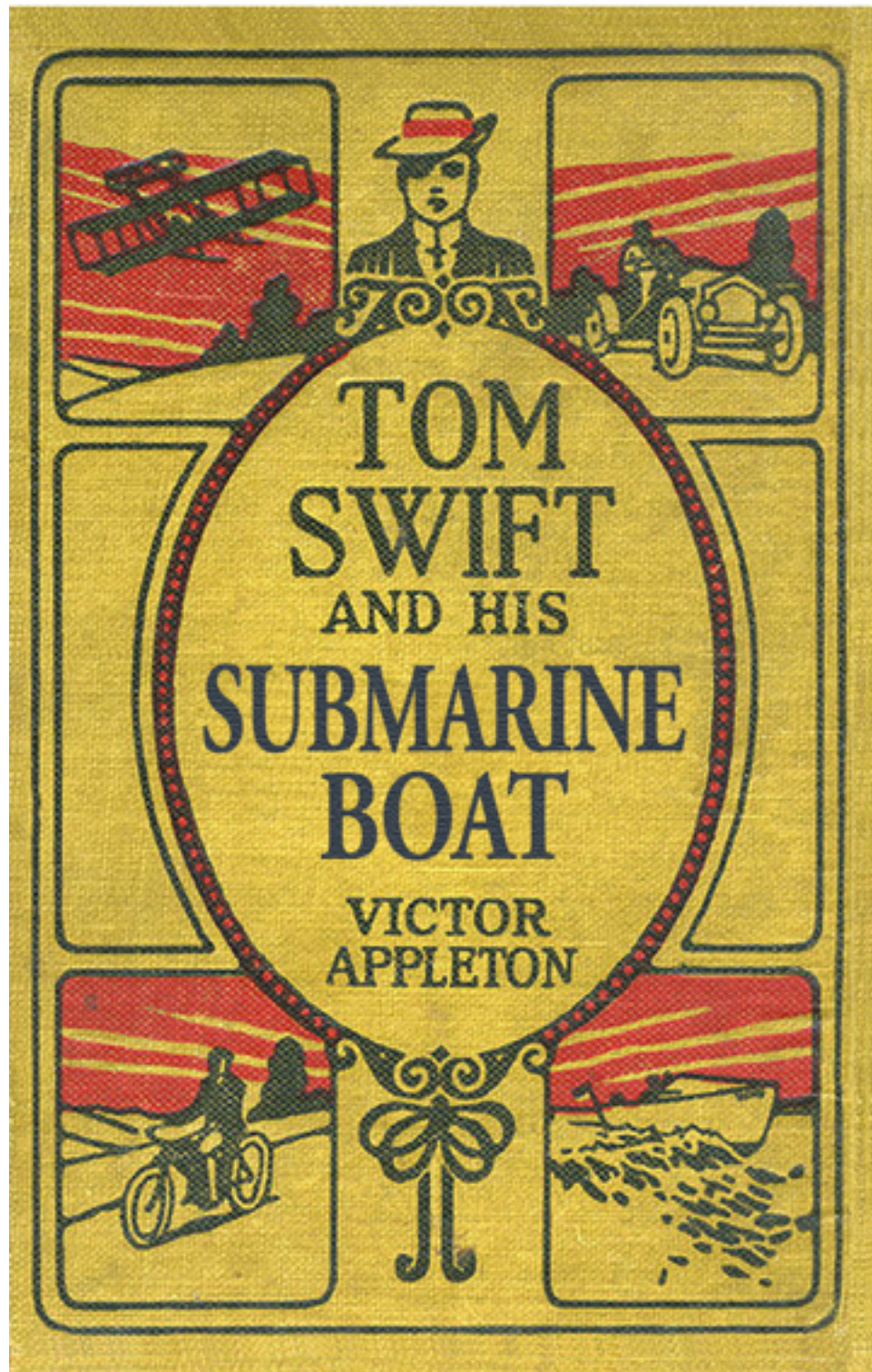
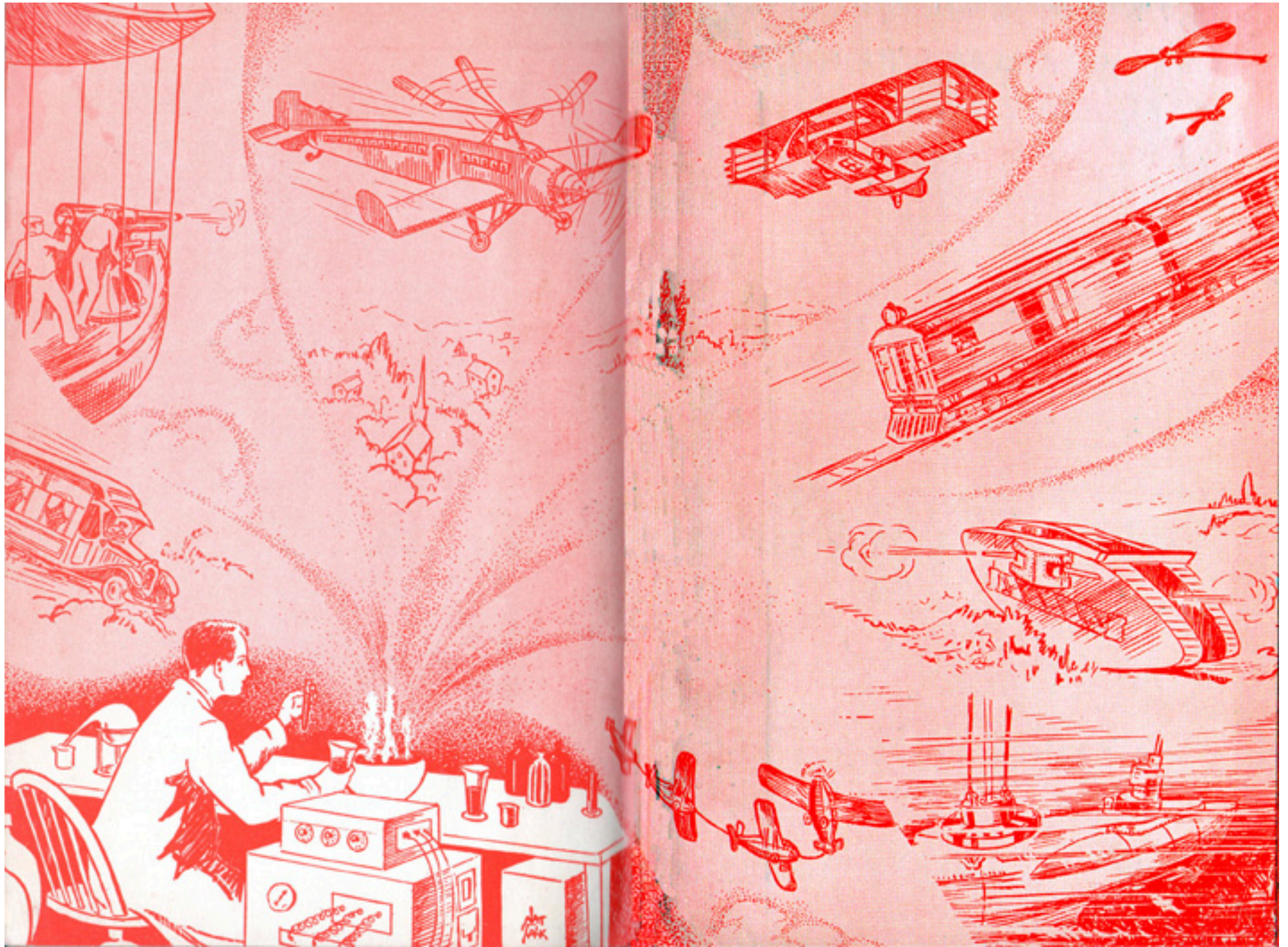


TOM SWIFT

And His Submarine Boat







**TOM SWIFT AND HIS  
SUBMARINE BOAT**  
OR  
*UNDER THE OCEAN FOR SUNKEN TREASURE*

BY  
VICTOR APPLETON

AUTHOR OF "TOM SWIFT AND HIS MOTORCYCLE," "TOM SWIFT AND HIS MOTORBOAT," "TOM SWIFT AND HIS AIRSHIP," ETC.

saw the form of a great shark as it launched  
itself at Captain Weston. Page 110

Tom

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**THE TOM SWIFT SERIES**

**TOM SWIFT AND HIS MOTORCYCLE**

Or Fun and Adventure On The Road

**TOM SWIFT AND HIS MOTORBOAT**

Or the Rivals of Lake Carlopa

**TOM SWIFT AND HIS AIRSHIP**

Or the Stirring Cruise of the Red Cloud

**TOM SWIFT AND HIS SUBMARINE BOAT**

Or Under the Ocean For Sunken Treasure

**TOM SWIFT AND HIS ELECTRIC**

**RUNABOUT**

Or the Speediest Car on the Road

(Other volumes in preparation)

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*Tom Swift and His Submarine Boat*

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**Foreword... The Story So Far**

Tom Swift and his father Barton Swift live in Shopton, New York with their housekeeper, Mrs. Baggert who has been with them for more than ten years. Mr. Swift's considerable wealth comes from his many inventions and patents.

By the age of eighteen, he had already taken out several patents and had filed for two others in recent months.

Tom's first adventure saw him purchase a motorcycle from Mr. Wakefield Damon—an eccentric man whose inability to control the thing led to him crashing it into a tree at the Swift home. Tom and the man became friends and the motorcycle was purchased by Tom. He made many improvements to it and soon it was the fastest thing on two wheels in Essex County.

That purchase and the adventures that followed—when Tom had to help capture a gang of patent thieves who had stolen something from his father—came just prior to Tom buying a motorboat. This, too, was improved by the resourceful young inventor and not only won races, it also helped to capture the same gang of thieves who had remained in the area while they tried to recover a large diamond hidden in Tom's boat.

In the end, Tom got his boat back and foiled the thieves just in time to heroically rescue a balloonist, John Sharp,

whose balloon had caught fire high over Lake Carlopa.

Together, Tom and John next built an airship from John's design and had several adventures in it, including alluding police intent on arresting Tom and Mr. Wakefield—who accompanied them on a long voyage—when those two had been falsely accused of robbing a bank in Shopton. Their accuser was none other than the bully and squint-eyed coward, Andy Foger.

It took some doing, as Andy's father was one of the bank's board members and refused to see what sort of bad egg and scoundrel his own son had become.

Fortunately, after dodging bullets fired at them, crashing after being hit by lightning, and other harrowing exploits, they persevered and returned to Shopton, their reputations redeemed.

And, Andy Foger got a very nasty punch in the nose for all his troubles.

Now, to our new adventure...

# TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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## CHAPTER I

### NEWS OF A TREASURE WRECK

THERE WAS a rushing, whizzing, throbbing noise in the air. A great body, like that of some immense scarlet bird, sailed along casting a grotesque shadow on the ground below. A man, who was seated on the porch of a large house, rose to his feet and peered skyward.

"Gracious goodness! What was that?" asked Mrs. Baggert, a motherly-looking woman who stood in the doorway of the house. "What happened?"

"Nothing much," came Mr. Swift's calm reply "I think

that was Tom and Mr. Sharp in their airship, that's all. I didn't see it, but the noise sounded like that of the *Red Cloud*."

"Of course! To be sure!" exclaimed Mrs. Baggert to her employer.

Barton Swift, the well-known inventor, started down the path in order to get a good view of the air, unobstructed by the trees. "Yes, there they are," he added. "That's the airship, but I didn't expect them back so soon. They must have made good time from Shopton. I wonder if anything can be the matter that they hurried so?"

He gazed aloft toward where a queerly-shaped machine was circling about nearly five hundred feet in the air. The craft, after swooping down close above the house, had ascended and was now hovering just above the line of breakers that marked the New Jersey seacoast, where Mr. Swift had taken up a temporary residence.

"Wonder if they are alright?" he said with a tinge of worry creeping into his voice.

"Don't begin worrying, Mr. Swift," advised Mrs. Baggert, the housekeeper. "You've got too much to do if you want to get that new boat done. No need to worry."

"That's so. I must not worry. But I wish Tom and John would land soon. I want to talk to them."

Almost as if the occupants of the airship had heard the

words of the older inventor, they headed their craft toward the ground. The combined airplane and dirigible balloon, a most wonderful voyager of the air, swung around and, with the elevation rudders slanted downward tilting the nose downward, came in for their landing. When near the landing place, just at the side of the house, the motor was stopped and a hissing noise indicated that the lifting gases were rushing into the red aluminum container above the cabin. This immediately made the ship buoyant and it landed almost as gently as a feather.

No sooner had the wheels touched the ground than a young man leaped from the cabin of the *Red Cloud*. He wore a big smile on his face and quickly walked to the older man.

"Well, Dad!" he exclaimed. "Here we are again, safe and sound. Made a record, too. The speed indicator needle touched ninety miles an hour at times—didn't it, Mr. Sharp?"

"That's right," agreed a tall, thin, dark-complexioned man, who followed Tom Swift more leisurely in his exit from the cabin. John Sharp, a veteran aeronaut, stopped to fasten guy ropes from the airship to strong stakes he had previously driven into the ground.

"And we'd have done better, only we struck a head wind against us about two miles up in the air, which delayed us," went on Tom. "Did you hear us coming, Dad?"

"Yes, and it startled us both," put in Mrs. Baggert. "I guess we weren't expecting you so soon."

"Oh, well," Tom replied noting that his father's face showed more curiosity than supposed fear.

"I wasn't alarmed, only I was thinking deeply about a certain change I want to make to the submarine, Tom. I was daydreaming when your ship whizzed through the air. But tell me, did you find everything all right at Shopton? No signs of any of those scoundrels of the Happy Harry gang having been around?" and Mr. Swift now looked anxiously at his son.

"Not a sign, Dad," replied Tom quickly. "Everything was all right. The police have made nightly patrol drives past the house and report nothing. Mr. Damon drove by the other evening and says it was as quiet as a monastery. We brought the things you wanted. They're in the airship. It was a fine trip. I'd like to take another right out over the sea."

"Not now, Tom," said his father. "I need you to help me. And I need John's help, too. Get the things out of the car, and we'll go to the shop."

"First I think we'd better put the airship away," advised John. "I don't just like the looks of the weather,. Besides, if we leave the ship exposed we'll be sure to have a crowd around sooner or later, and we don't want that."

"No, indeed," remarked the older inventor hastily. "I don't want people prying around the submarine shed. By all means let us make haste and put the airship away, and then I want you both to come into the shop."

In spite of its great size, the airship was easily wheeled along by Tom and John. The special mixture of lifting gases in the container made it so buoyant that it barely touched the earth. A little more of the powerful vapor and the *Red Cloud* would have risen by itself. In a few minutes the wonderful craft was safely housed in a large tent, which was securely fastened and padlocked.

John and Tom, carrying some bundles that they had taken from the cabin of the craft, walked toward a large shed which adjoined the house that Mr. Swift had rented for the season at the seashore. They found Tom's father standing in front of a great shape that loomed up dimly in the semidarkness of the building.

It had the initial appearance of an immense cylinder, pointed at either end. Here and there were openings in the metal skin that were covered with thick glass, looking like immense, bulging eyes. From the number of tools and machinery all about the place, and from the appearance of the great cylinder itself, it was easy to see that it was only partly completed.

"Well, how goes it, Dad?" asked the youth, as he deposited his bundle on a bench. "Do you think you can



make it work?"

"I think so, Tom. The control planes are giving me considerable trouble, though. But I guess we can solve the problem. Did you bring me the galvanometer?"

"Yes, and all the other things," and the young inventor proceeded to take the articles from the bundles he carried.

Mr. Swift looked them over carefully, while Tom walked about examining the submarine, for that was the true nature of the odd craft in the shed. He noted that progress had been made on it since he had left the seacoast several days before to make a trip to Shopton where the Swift home was located. He and John had been tasked with bringing back some tools and apparatus that his father now requires from his workshop there.

"You and Mr. Jackson have put on several new body plates," observed the lad after a pause.

"Yes," admitted his father. "Garret and I weren't idle, were we, Garret?" and he nodded to the aged engineer, who had been in his employ for many years.

"No, and I guess we'll soon have her in the water, Tom, now that you and Mr. Sharp are here to help us," replied Garret Jackson.

"We ought to have Mr. Damon here to bless the submarine and his liver and collar buttons a few times," put in John with a grin, as he brought in another bundle.

He referred to an eccentric man who had recently made an airship voyage with himself and Tom. Mr. Damon's peculiarity being to use continually such expressions as: "Bless my soul! Bless my liver! Bless my shoe bottoms!" and the like.

"Well, I'll be glad when we can make the first trial trip," went on Tom. "I've traveled pretty fast on land with my motorcycle, and we certainly have hummed through the air. Now I want to see how it feels to scoot along underwater."

"Well, if everything goes well we'll be in position to make a trial trip inside of a month," remarked the older inventor. "Look here, John. Tom. I made a change in the steering gear which I'd like you to look over."

The three walked around to the rear of the odd-looking structure—if an object shaped like a cigar can be said to have a front and rear—and the inventor, his son, and the aeronaut were soon deep in a discussion on the technicalities connected with underwater navigation.

A little later they went into the house in response to a summons from the supper bell, vigorously rung by Mrs. Baggert. She was not fond of waiting with meals, and even the most serious problem of mechanics was, in her estimation, nothing compared with having soup get cold, or the possibility of not having the meat done exactly to her liking.

The meal was interspersed with discussions about the recent airship flight of Tom and John and about the new submarine. This talk went on even after the table was cleared off and the three had adjourned to the sitting room. Mr. Swift brought out pencil and paper, and soon he and John Sharp were engrossed in calculating the pressure per square inch of seawater at various depths.

Mr. Swift wished to devise a chart of the anticipated pressures beginning at ten feet and going all the way down to three miles below the ocean surface.

"Do you intend to go as deep as that?" asked Tom, looking up a paper he was reading.

"Possibly," replied his father. "Many parts of the ocean have been found to be at least that deep. Possibly deeper in some regions. I want to be prepared."

Tom resumed his perusal of the newspaper.

"Now," went on the inventor to the aeronaut, "I have another plan. In addition to the positive and negative plates which will form our main motive power, I am going to install forward and aft propellers, to use in case of accident."

Mr. Swift referred to a series of electrified metal plates that would run down each side of the craft. They alternated with the first having a negative charge, the next having a positive charge and so forth. As the water

touching the first plate received its charge it would be automatically drawn back to the second plate since negative and positive charges attracted each other as in magnets. That same water would change its charge as it touched the second plate and be drawn back to the third plate and so on. In accordance with a Newtonian Law of Physics, this would pull the submarine through the water.

Now, the scientist and inventor was proposing an additional, more traditional add-on or backup system.

"Dad! Did you see this?" suddenly exclaimed Tom, getting up from his chair, and holding his finger on a certain place in the page of the paper.

"Did I see what?" asked Mr. Swift.

"This account of the sinking of the treasure ship."

"Treasure ship? No. Where?"

"Listen to this," went on Tom. "I'll read it: 'Further communications from Montevideo, Uruguay in South America, state that all hope has been given up of recovering the steamship *Boldero*, which foundered and went down off that coast in the recent storm. Not only has all hope been abandoned of raising the vessel, but it is feared that no part of the three million dollars in gold bullion which she carried will ever be recovered. Expert divers who were taken to the scene of the wreck state that the depth of water and the many currents existing there,

due to a submerged shoal, preclude any possibility of getting at the ship. It is believed that the bullion was to have been used to further the interests of a certain revolutionary group, but it seems likely that they will have to look elsewhere for finances for their war. Besides the bullion the ship also carried many cases of rifles, ammunitions, and other valuable cargo. Contrary to reports of loss, the crew and the seven passengers the *Boldero* carried were all saved by taking to the lifeboats. It appears that some of the ship's hull plates were torn open by the stresses as she labored in a storm. The ship filled and sank gradually.' There! what do you think of that, Dad?" cried Tom as he finished.

"What do I think of it? Why, I think it's too bad for the revolutionists, Tom, of course."

"No. I mean about the treasure being still on board the ship. What about that?"

"Well, it's likely to stay there if the divers can't get at it. Now, Mr. Sharp," he said turning away from Tom, "about the propellers—"

"Wait, Dad!" cried Tom earnestly.

"Why, Tom? What's the matter?" asked Mr. Swift in some surprise.

"How soon before we can finish our submarine?" went on Tom, not answering the question.

"About a month. Why?"

"Why can't we have a try for that treasure? It ought to be comparatively easy to find that sunken ship off the coast of Uruguay. In our submarine we can get close up to it, and in the new diving suits you invented we can get at that gold bullion. Three million dollars! Think of it, Dad! That should mean a finder's fee of three hundred thousand dollars! Of course, we could easily claim all of it, since the owners have abandoned it, but we would be satisfied with the ten percent fee. Let's hurry up, finish the submarine, and have a try for it."

"But, Tom, you forget that I plan to enter my new ship in the trials for the prize offered by the United States Government."

"How much is the prize if you win it?" asked Tom.

"Fifty thousand dollars."

"Well, here's a chance to make six times that much at least, and maybe more. Dad, let the Government prize go, and try for the treasure. Will you?"

Tom looked eagerly at his father, his eyes shining with anticipation. Mr. Swift was a brilliant man but he was not a quick thinker. He pondered the matter for some minutes. The idea his son proposed made an impression on him. He reached out his hand for the paper in which the young inventor had seen the account of the sunken

treasure. Slowly he read it through. Then he passed it to John.

"What do you think of it?" he asked of the aeronaut.

"There's a possibility," remarked the balloonist "We might try for it. We are certain the submarine boat will go three miles down, and this wreck doesn't lie as deeply as that, if this account is true. Yes, we might try for it. But we'd have to back out of the Government contests."

"Will you, Dad?" asked Tom again.

Mr. Swift considered a moment longer.

"Yes, Tom, I will," he finally decided. "Going after the treasure will be likely to afford us a better test of the submarine than would any Government tests. It might even prove to them more than we ever could with their highly-controlled tests. We'll try to locate the sunken *Boldero*."

"Hurrah!" cried the lad, taking the paper from John and waving it in the air. "That's the stuff! Now for a search for the submarine treasure!"

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER II

#### FINISHING THE SUBMARINE

"WHAT IS THE matter?" cried Mrs. Baggert, hurrying in from the kitchen, where she was washing the dishes. "Have you seen some of those scoundrels who robbed you, Mr. Swift? If you have, the police down here ought to —"

"No, it's nothing like that," explained Mr. Swift. "Tom has merely discovered an account of a sunken treasure ship in the local newspaper, and he wants us to go after it, down under the ocean."

"Oh, dear! Some of Captain Kidd's hidden hoard, I suppose?" ventured the housekeeper who was both greatly intrigued by tales of pirates as well as being quite terrified of ever meeting up with said pirates. "Don't you bother with it, Mr. Swift. I had a cousin once, and he got set in the notion that he knew where that pirate's treasure was. He spent all the money he had and all he could borrow digging for it, and he never found a penny. Don't waste your time on such foolishness. It's bad enough to be building airships and submarines without going after treasure." Mrs. Baggert spoke plainly, with the freedom of an old friend rather than a hired housekeeper. She had been in the family since shortly after Tom's mother died, and she had many privileges.

"Oh, this isn't any of Kidd's treasure," Tom assured her. "If we get it, Mrs. Baggert, I'll buy you a diamond ring."

"Humph!" she exclaimed, as Tom began to hug her in boyish fashion. "I guess I'll have to buy the diamond rings on my own, if I have to depend on sunken treasure for them," and she went back to the kitchen.

"Well," went on Mr. Swift after a pause, "if we are going into the treasure-hunting business, Tom, we'll have to get right to work. In the first place, we must find out more about this ship, and exactly where it sank."

"I can do that part," said John. "I know some sea captains, and they can put me on the track of locating the

exact spot. In fact, it might not be a bad idea to take an expert navigator with us. I can manage in the air all right, but I confess that working out a location underwater is beyond me."

"Yes, an experienced sea captain wouldn't be a bad idea, by any means," conceded Mr. Swift. "Well, if you'll attend to that detail, Mr. Sharp, Tom, Mr. Jackson and I will finish the submarine. Most of the work is done. It only remains to install the engine and motors. Now, in regard to the negative and positive electric plates, I'd like your opinion, Tom."

Tom Swift was an inventor, second in ability only to his father, and his advice was often sought by his parent on matters of electrical construction. Tom made a specialty of that branch of science.

Tom Swift lived with his father, Barton Swift, in the village of Shopton, New York. The Swift home was on the outskirts of the town, and the large house was surrounded by a number of machine shops in which father and son, aided by Garret Jackson, their engineer, did their experimental and constructive work. Their house was not far from Lake Carlopa, a fairly large body of water, on which Tom often sped around in his motorboat.

It was while in his motorboat, *Arrow*, that Tom formed the acquaintance of John Sharp, a veteran balloonist. While coming down Lake Carlopa on the way to the Swift

home, Tom, his father and Ned Newton, saw a balloon on fire over the lake. Hanging from a trapeze under it was John Sharp, who had made an ascension from a fair ground. By hard work on the part of Tom and his friends the aeronaut was saved, and took up his residence with the Swifts.

His arrival was most auspicious, for Tom and his father were then engaged in perfecting an airship, and John was able to lend them his skill, so that the craft was soon constructed.

When the craft was finished, and the navigators were ready to start on their first long trip, Mr. Swift was asked to go with them. He declined, but would not tell why, until Tom, pressing him for an answer, learned that his father was planning a submarine boat, which he hoped to enter in some trials for Government prizes. Mr. Swift remained at home to work on this submarine, while his son and John were sailing above the clouds.

On their return, the bank mystery had been cleared up, so Tom and John aided Mr. Swift in completing the submarine in the property by the New Jersey shoreline.

Of course it had to be built near the sea, as it would have been impossible to transport it overland from Shopton. So, before the keel was laid, Mr. Swift rented the large cottage at the seaside, erected a large tent shed, and the work on the *Advance*—as the underwater ship was

called—had begun.

It would be launched into a large creek that extended past the house from the ocean and had plenty of water at high tide. Tom and John made several trips back and forth from Shopton in their airship to see that all was safe at home and occasionally to get needed tools and supplies from the shops.

It was when returning from the latest of these trips that Tom brought with him the newspaper containing an account of the wreck of the *Boldero* and the sinking of the treasure she carried.

The three fortune hunters discussed various matters about the submarine and the proposed trip until very late that night.

"We'll hurry the work on the ship," said Mr. Swift it length. "Tom, I wonder if your friend, Mr. Damon, would care to try how it seems underwater? He stood the air trip fairly well. We will have room for several other besides ourselves and whatever sea captain Mr. Sharp might locate."

"I'll write and ask him," answered the lad. "I'm sure he'll go."

A few days later Mr. Swift secured the assistance of two mechanics whom he knew he could trust. This was necessary as the construction of the *Advance* was a secret.

Mr. Swift sped up the work on the submarine, and for the next three weeks there were busy times in the shed next to the seaside cottage. So busy, in fact, that Tom and John only found opportunity for one quick trip in the airship, and that was to get some supplies from the shops at home.

"Well," remarked Mr. Swift one night, at the close of a hard day's work, "another week will see our craft completed. Then we will put it in the water and see how it floats, and whether it submerges as I hope it does. I am so happy that you and John pioneered the counter-rotating propellers on the *Red Cloud*. I hadn't given it much thought, but if I allowed the propellers on the submarine to rotate in the same direction, the entire body would begin to rotate the opposite way. That piece of advice and the gearing mechanism you built are sure to make this a success. But, come on, Tom. I want to lock up. I'm very tired tonight."

"All right, Dad," answered the young inventor coming from the darkened rear of the shop. "I just want to—"

He paused suddenly, and appeared to be listening. Then he moved softly back to where he had come from.

"What's the matter?" asked his father in a whisper. "What's up, Tom?"

The lad did not answer but held up one hand. Mr. Swift, a worried look on his face, followed his son. John stood in

the door of the shop.

"I thought I heard some one moving around back here," went on Tom quietly.

"Someone in this shop!" exclaimed the aged inventor excitedly. "Someone trying to steal my ideas again! John, come here! Bring that rifle! We'll teach these scoundrels a lesson!"

Tom quickly darted back to the extreme rear of the building. There was a scuffle, and the next minute Tom cried out, "What are you doing here?"

"I beg your pardon," replied a voice. "I am looking for Mr. Barton Swift."

"My father," remarked Tom. "But that's a strange place to look for him. He's up front. Father, there's a man who wishes to see you," he called.

"I strolled in, and seeing no one about I went to the rear of the tent," the voice went on. "I hope I haven't transgressed."

"We were busy on the other side of the shop, I guess," replied Tom, "but you should have been able to hear us." He looked suspiciously at the man who emerged from the darkness into the light from a window. "If you have a legitimate reason for being here, I beg your pardon for grabbing you the way I did," went on the lad, "but I thought you could be one of a gang of men we've been

having trouble with."

"Oh, that's all right," continued the man easily. "I know Mr. Swift, and I believe he will remember me. Ah, Mr. Swift, how do you do?" he added quickly, catching sight of Tom's father, who, with John, was coming to meet them.

"Addison Berg!" exclaimed the inventor as he saw the man's face more plainly. "What in the world are you doing here?"

"I came to see you," replied the man. "May I have a talk with you—privately?"

"I—I suppose so," agreed Mr. Swift cautiously. "Come into the house."

Mr. Berg left Tom's side and advanced to where Mr. Swift was standing. Together the two emerged from the now fast darkening shop and went toward the house.

"Who is he?" asked John of the young inventor in a whisper.

"I don't know," replied Tom, "but, whoever he is, Dad seems afraid of him. I'm going to keep my eyes open."

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER III

#### MR. BERG IS ASTONISHED

FOLLOWING his father and the stranger whom the older inventor had addressed as Mr. Berg, Tom and John entered the house, having first made sure that Garret Jackson was on guard in the shop that contained the submarine.

"Now," said Mr. Swift facing the newcomer, "I am at your service. What is it you wish?"

"In the first place, let me apologize for having startled you and your friends," began the man. "I had no intent of



sneaking into your workshop, but I had just arrived here. I saw the doors open so I went in. I heard no one about, and I wandered to the back of the tent. There I stumbled over a board—"

"And I heard you," interrupted Tom.

"Is this one of your employees?" asked Mr. Berg in rather frigid tones.

"That is my son," replied Mr. Swift.

"Oh, I beg your pardon." The man's manner changed quickly. "Well, yes. I guess you did hear me, young man. I didn't intend to bark my shins the way I did, either. You must have taken me for a burglar or a sneak thief."

"I have been very much bothered by a gang of unscrupulous men," said Mr. Swift, "and I believe Tom thought it was some of them sneaking around again."

"That's right," added the lad. "I wasn't going to have any one steal the secret of the submarine if I could help it."

"Quite right! Quite right!" exclaimed Mr. Berg. "But my purpose was an open one. As you know, Mr. Swift, I represent the firm of Bentley & Eggert, builders of submarine boats and torpedoes. They heard that you were constructing a craft to take part in the competitive prize tests of the United States Government, and they asked me to come and see you to learn when your ship would be ready. Ours is completed, but we recognize that it will be

in the best interests of all concerned if there are a number of contestants. My firm did not want to send in their entry until they knew that you were about finished with your ship. How about it? Are you ready to compete?"

"Yes," said Mr. Swift slowly. "We are about ready minus a few finishing touches, and then it will be ready to launch."

"Then we may expect a good contest on your part," suggested Mr. Berg.

"Well," began the aged inventor, "I don't know about that."

"What's that?" exclaimed Mr. Berg.

"I am saying that I'm not quite sure that we will compete," went on Mr. Swift. "You see, when I first got this idea for a submarine boat I planned to try for the Government prize of fifty thousand dollars."

"That's what we all want," interrupted Mr. Berg with a smile.

"But," went on Tom's father, "since then certain matters have come up. I think, on the whole, that we'll not compete for the prize after all."

"Not compete for the prize?" almost shouted the agent for Bentley & Eggert. "Why, the idea! You must compete. It is good for the trade. We know we have a very fine craft, and probably will beat you in the tests, but—"

"I wouldn't be too sure of that," put in Tom. "You have only seen the outside of our boat. The inside is better yet."

Mr. Swift made a motion behind his back to try to silence his son.

"Ah, I have no doubt of that," spoke Mr. Berg, "but we have been at the business longer than you have, and have considerably more experience. Still, we welcome competition. I must say that I am very much surprised that you don't wish to compete for the prize, Mr. Swift. Very much surprised, indeed! You see, I came down from Philadelphia to arrange so that we could both enter our ships at the same time. I understand there is another firm of submarine boat builders who are going to try for the prize, and I want to arrange a date that will be satisfactory to all. I am *greatly* astonished that you are not going to compete."

"Well, we were going to," said Mr. Swift, "only we have changed our minds, that's all. My son and I have other plans."

"May I ask what they are?" questioned Mr. Berg.

"You might," exclaimed Tom quickly, "but I don't believe we can tell you. They're a secret," he added more cordially.

"Oh, I see," retorted Mr. Berg. "Well, of course I don't wish to penetrate any of your secrets, but I hoped we

could contest together for the Government prize. It is worth trying for I assure you—fifty thousand dollars. Besides, there is the possibility of selling a number of submarines to the United States. It's a fine prize."

"But the one we are after is a bigger one," stated Tom impetuously, and the moment he had spoken he wished he could recall the words.

"Eh? What's that?" exclaimed Mr. Berg. "You don't mean to say another Government has offered a larger prize? If I had known that I would not have let my firm enter into the competition for the bonus offered by the United States. Please tell me."

"I'm sorry," went on Tom more soberly. "I shouldn't have spoken. Mr. Berg, our plans are such that we can't reveal them now. We will not be in the in competition with you. It's an entirely different matter."

"Well, I guess you'll find that the firm of Bentley & Eggert are capable of trying for any prizes that are offered," boasted the agent. "We may be competitors yet."

"I don't believe so," replied Mr. Swift, softly.

"We may," repeated Mr. Berg. "And if we do, please remember that we will show no mercy. Our boats are the best."

"And may the best boat win," interjected John. "All we ask... all we demand, is a fair field and no favors."

"Of course," spoke the agent coldly. "Is this another son of yours?" he asked.

"No, but a good friend," replied the senior Swift. "No, Mr. Berg, we won't compete this time. You may tell your firm so."

"Very good," was the other's stiff reply. "Then I will bid you good night. We shall carry off the Government prize, but permit me to add that I am very much astonished, very much indeed, that you do not try for the prize. From what I have seen of your submarine you have a very good one, almost as good, in several respects, as ours. Good night," and with a bow the man left the room and hurried away from the house.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER IV

#### TOM IS IMPRISONED

"WELL, I MUST say he's a weird one," remarked Tom, as the echoes of Mr. Berg's steps died away. "The idea of thinking his boat better than ours! And, I still think he was sneaking around our tent. I don't like that man, Dad. I'm suspicious of him. Do you think he came here to steal some of our ideas?"

"I hardly believe so, my son. But how did you discover him?"

"Just as you saw, Dad. I heard a noise and went back

there to investigate. I found him sneaking around, looking at the electric propulsion plates. I went to grab him just as he stumbled over a board. At first I thought it was one of the old gang. I'm almost sure he was trying to discover some of your secrets."

"No, Tom. The firm he works for are good businessmen, and they would not involve themselves in anything like that. They *are* heartless competitors, however, and if they saw a legitimate chance to get ahead of me and take advantage, they would do it in an instant. But they would not stoop to the level where they would try to steal my ideas. I feel sure of that. Besides, they have a certain type of submarine that they think is the best ever invented, and they would hardly change at this late date. They feel sure of winning the Government prize, and I'm just as glad we're not going to have a contest."

"Do you think our boat is better than theirs?"

"Much better, in many respects. Now that I think of it, I believe that they want us in that competition in order to prove that they not only can meet the Government expectations, but that they can outperform strong competitors like us."

"I don't like that man Berg, though," went on Tom.

"Nor do I," added his father. "There is something strange about him. He seemed altogether too anxious that I should compete. Probably he thought his firm's boat

would go so far ahead of ours that they might get an extra bonus. But I'm glad he didn't see our new method of propulsion. That is the principal improvement in the *Advance* over other types of submarines. Well, another week and we will be ready for the test."

"Have you known Mr. Berg long, Dad?"

"Not very long. I met him in Washington when I was in the patent office on my last visit. He was taking out papers on a submarine for his firm at the same time I got mine for the *Advance*. It is rather curious that he should come all the way here from Philadelphia, merely to see if I was going to compete. There *is* something strange about it, something that I don't understand. Yet."

The time was to come when Mr. Swift and his son were to get at the bottom of Mr. Berg's reasons, and would learn, to their sorrow, that he had penetrated some of their secrets.

Before going to bed that night Tom and John Sharp paid a visit to the shed where the submarine was resting on the rollway tracks, ready for launching. They found Mr. Jackson on guard and the engineer said that no one had been around. Nor was anything found disturbed.

"It certainly is a great machine," remarked the lad as he looked up at the cigar-shaped bulk towering over his head. "Dad has outdone himself this time."

"It looks good, for certain," commented John. "Whether it will work as designed is another question."

"Yes, we can't tell until it's in the water," conceded Tom. "But I hope it does. Dad has spent much time and money on it."

The *Advance* was, as her name indicated, much in advance of previous submarines. There was not so much difference in outward construction as there was in the means of propulsion and in the manner in which the interior and the machinery were arranged.

The submarine was over one hundred feet long and twenty feet in diameter at the thickest part. It was divided into many compartments on two levels, all separated by watertight hatches, so that if one or even three were flooded the ship would still be useable.

Buoyancy was provided by several tanks built into the main hull. These could be flooded with water and the submarine would sink under her own weight, or they could be pumped full of compressed air, the water thus expelled through one-way valves, and the boat would rise.

Several compressed air tanks were installed in the interior of the submarine along with an emergency arrangement consisting of a collapsible aluminum container under a cover on the top deck containing chemicals that, once mixed with water, quickly generated an enormous amount of gas. The collapsed tank would

open up and the gas would bring the *Advance* to the surface. This was to be used if the ship was disabled on the bottom of the ocean. The container could be emptied once on the surface, refilled with chemicals, and prepared for another use, all within about fifteen minutes.

Another peculiar feature was that the engine room, dynamos and other apparatus were all contained amidships rather than at the rear of the hull. This gave stability to the craft, and also enabled the same engine to operate both shafts and propellers, as well as both the negative and positive electrical plates.

These plates were the outcome of an idea of Mr. Swift, with some suggestions from his son. Tom, liking his father's concept, had experimented with smaller versions on his motorboat soon after he had been cleared of any wrongdoing in the Shopton Bank robbery. Using a bank of dry cell batteries, Tom had energized a set of four plates, two per side that provided slow but steady forward momentum. A simple reversal of wires to the terminals and the boat had slowed and then reversed course.

The older inventor did not want to depend on the usual screw propellers for his craft, nor did he want to use a jet of compressed air or even water shooting out from a rear tube. Each of those methods of locomotion produced noise and bubbles and other things that might be used to detect and track a submarine. Mr. Swift planned to send

the *Advance* along underwater by means of electricity.

Specially designed metal plates were built to be attached at the forward and aft blunt noses of the submarine. Mr. Swift's original theory said that passing a negative charge of electricity into the forward plate, and a positive charge into the one at the rear should react with the Earth's magnetic field, just as one end of a horseshoe magnet is positive and will repel the north end of a compass needle, while the other pole of a magnet is negative and will attract it.

It didn't exactly work as he had thought. Tom's experiment and his detailed set of observational notes served to convince his father that a series of plates would cause a continuous stream of the surrounding water to slide aft, effectively pulling the submarine forward. By adjusting the amount of electricity going into the various plates, Mr. Swift soon devised a method of propelling the submarine forward, backward and even in circles.

But the inventor did not depend on these plates alone. He added auxiliary forward and aft propellers, or screws, of the regular type so that if the electrical plates did not work, or got out of order, the screws would serve to send the *Advance* along.

There was much machinery in the submarine. There were a pair of multi-cylinder gasoline engines, which could be run in an emergency even under more than

twenty feet of water. A long tube with water-repelling valve could be manually raised in order to draw in air to run the engines. There were dynamos run by the engines to provide electricity, electric motors and powerful pumps. Some of these were for air, and some for water. To sink the submarine even faster than simply flooding the ballast tanks, deflecting planes near the front were to be used, similar to those on an airship. There were also special air pumps and filters on board.

Forward from the engine room was a cabin where meals could be served, and where the travelers could remain in the daytime. There was also a small cooking galley there. Back of the engine room were the sleeping quarters and the storerooms.

The submarine was steered from the forward compartment, and here were all the levers, wheels and valves that controlled all the machinery, while a number of dials showed in which direction they were going, how deep they were, and at what speed they were moving, as well as what the ocean pressure was. This room included a pair of circular ports of high-strength glass through which the pilot might look out.

On top, slightly forward of amidships, was a small conning or observation tower, with auxiliary and steering and controlling apparatus there. This was to be used when the ship was moving along on the surface of the

ocean, or could be brought up above the water while the body of the submarine remained under the water. There was a small flat deck surrounding the conning tower and this was able to be walked upon when the craft was on the surface.

There was a special sealed room made for leaving the ship when it was on the bed of the ocean. When it was desired to do this, one or more occupants put on diving suits, which were provided with portable oxygen tanks. In groups of up to three, they entered a chamber and sealed the inner hatch. A valve was then turned and water admitted until it was equal in pressure to that outside. Then an outer steel door was opened, and they could step out. To enter the ship, the operation was reversed.

This was not a new feature. Many submarines use it. Where the Swift one differed was that it was not located under the hull as with most. Mr. Swift determined that it might be useful to have it on one side so that the hull could rest on the ocean bottom and still allow use of the chamber.

At about twelve locations per side were thick bull's-eye windows through which the underwater travelers could look out into the water through which they were moving.

As a defense against the attacks of sub-ocean monsters there was a steel, pointed ram, like a big harpoon that could be extended to the front, just over the forward

screw. There were also a bow and a stern electrical gun, of which more will be told later.

In addition to ample sleeping accommodations, there were many conveniences aboard the *Advance*. Plenty of fresh water could be carried, and there was an apparatus for distilling more from the seawater that surrounded the travelers. Compressed air was carried in large tanks, and oxygen could be made as needed. In short, nothing that could add to the comfort or safety of the travelers had been omitted.

There was a powerful crane and collapsible boom that had been installed on the topside deck when Mr. Swift thought his boat might be bought by the Government. This could be used for raising wrecks or recovering objects from the bottom of the ocean.

Ample stores and provisions were to be carried and, once the travelers were shut up in the *Advance*, they could exist for a month below the surface, providing no accident occurred.

Tom and John thought of all these things as they looked over the ship before turning in for the night. The craft was made immensely strong to withstand powerful pressure at the bottom of the ocean. The tubular shape of the hull provided additional strength. The submarine could penetrate to a depth of about three miles. Below that it was dangerous to go, as the enormous force of all the

water above would crush the hull plates, powerful as they were.

"We'll rush things tomorrow and the next few days," said Tom as he prepared to leave the building. "Then we'll soon see how well it works."

For the next week there were busy times in the shop near the ocean. Great secrecy was maintained even though curiosity seekers did stroll along now and then. They received little satisfaction. Mr. Swift thought that the visit of Mr. Berg might have unpleasant results, he feared that the man would talk about the craft of which he had so unexpectedly gotten a viewing. But nothing seemed to follow from his chance inspection, and it was soon forgotten.

It was one evening that Tom was alone in the shop. The two mechanics that had been hired to help out in the rush had been paid and sent away, and the ship needed but a few adjustments to make it ready for the sea.

"I think I'll just take another look at the tank valves," said Tom to himself as he prepared to enter one of the big compartments which received the water ballast. "I want to be sure they work properly and quickly. We've got to depend on them to make us sink when we want to, and, what's more important, to rise to the surface in a hurry. I've got time enough to look them over before Dad and John get back."

Tom entered the starboard forward tank by means of an emergency sliding door between the big compartments and the main part of the ship. This was opened and closed using a worm and screw gear; once the ship was in the water it would seldom be used.

The young inventor proceeded with his task, carefully inspecting the valves by the light of a lantern he carried. The apparatus seemed to be fine, and Tom was about to leave when a noise attracted his attention. It was the sound of metal scraping on metal, and the lad's quick and well-trained ear told him it was somewhere about the ship.

He turned to leave the tank, but as he wheeled around his light flashed on a solid wall of steel behind him. The emergency door had been closed! He was a prisoner in the water compartment, and he knew from past experience that his voice could not be heard ten feet away. His father and John had gone into a nearby city for some tools and Mr. Jackson, the engineer, was temporarily away. Mrs. Baggert, in the house, could not hear his cries.

"I'm locked in!" cried Tom aloud. "The worm gear must have shut by itself. But I don't see how that could be. I've got to get out mighty soon, though, or I'll smother. This tank is airtight, and it won't take me long to breath up all the oxygen there is here. I must get that slide open."

He sought to grasp the steel plate that closed the



emergency opening. His fingers slipped over the smooth, polished surface. He was hermetically sealed up—a captive! He set his lantern down and leaned hopelessly against the wall of the tank.

"I've got to get out," he murmured.

As if in answer to him he heard a voice on the outside, saying, "There, Tom Swift! I guess I've gotten even with you now! Maybe next time you won't take my reward away from me, and hit me into the bargain. I've got you shut up good and tight, and you'll stay there until I get ready to let you out."

"Andy Foger!" gasped Tom. "Andy Foger sneaked in here and turned the gear. But how did he get to this part of the coast? Andy Foger, you let me out!" shouted the young inventor. As Andy's mocking laugh came to him faintly through the steel sides of the submarine, the imprisoned lad beat desperately with his hands on the smooth sides of the tank, wondering how his enemy had discovered him.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER V

#### MR. BERG IS SUSPICIOUS

TOM DIDN'T SPEND long trying to break his way out of the water-ballast tank by striking the heavy walls. He realized that this was worse than useless. He listened intently but could hear nothing. Even the retreating footsteps of Andy Foger were inaudible.

"This certainly is lousy!" exclaimed Tom aloud. "I can't understand how he even got here. He must have followed us after we went to Shopton in the airship the last time. Then he sneaked in here. Probably he saw me enter, but how could he know enough to work the worm gear and

close the door?" Then, an answer came to him. Andy had had some experience with machinery, and one of the vaults in the bank where his father is a director closed just like the tank. That's very likely how he learned about it. But Tom realized he needed to do something else besides thinking of that sneak, Andy. He needed to get out of here. He picked up his lantern and tried to see if he might work the gear from inside.

Almost before he started, Tom knew that it would be impossible. The tank was made to close from the interior of the submarine, and the heavy door, built to withstand the pressure of tons of water, could not be forced except by the proper means.

"No use trying that," concluded the lad, after a tiring attempt to force back the sliding door with his hands. "I've got to call for help."

He shouted until the vibrations in the confined space made his ears ring. Yet there came no response. He hardly expected that there would be with his father and John Sharp away, the engineer absent on an errand, and Mrs. Baggert in the house some distance off. There was no one to hear his calls for help, even if they came into the shed.

"I've got to wait until someone comes out here," thought Tom. "They'll be sure to miss me and make a search. Then it will be easy enough to call to them and tell them where I am... once they are inside the shed. But—" He paused, a

horrible fear coming over him. "Suppose they should come—too late?" There was enough air in the tank to last for some time but, sooner or later, it would no longer support life. Already, Tom thought, the air seemed oppressive, though probably it was his imagination.

"I must get out!" he repeated frantically. "I'll die in here soon."

Again he tried to shove back the steel door. Then he repeated his cries until he was too tired to shout. No one answered him. He thought once he could hear footsteps in the shed, but thought it was Andy, come back to gloat over him. But, Tom knew the red-haired coward would not dare venture back. Even if Andy never realized that he was endangering Tom's life—the bully had no idea the tank was airtight when he closed it—he had seen Tom enter and a sudden whim came to him to revenge himself.

But that did not help the young inventor any. There was no doubt about it now—the air was becoming close. Tom had been imprisoned nearly two hours, and all of his yelling had used plenty of oxygen. There was certainly less than there had been in the tank. His head began to buzz, and there was a ringing in his ears.

"It's no use," he moaned, and he sprawled at full length on the floor of the tank, where the air was slightly cooler. As he did so his fingers touched something. He started as they closed around the handle of a big monkey wrench. It

was one he had brought into the place with him. Imbued with new hope he turned on his lantern, which he had extinguished to save the dry cell's power. By the gleam of it he looked to see if there were any bolts or nuts he could loosen with the wrench, in order to slide the door back. It needed but a glance to show him the futility of this.

"It's no go," he murmured, and he let the wrench fall to the floor. There was a ringing, clanging sound, and as it assailed his ears Tom sprang up with an exclamation.

"That's the thing!" he cried. "I wonder I didn't think of it before. I can signal for help by pounding on the sides of the tank with the wrench. The blows will carry a good deal farther than my voice would." Every one knows how far the noise of a boiler shop, with hammers falling on steel plates, can be heard; much farther than can a human voice.

Tom beat a lusty tattoo on the metal sides of the tank. At first he merely rattled out blow after blow. Then, as another thought came to him, he adopted a plan. Some time previous, when he and John had planned their trip in the air, the two had adopted a code of signals. As it was difficult in a high wind to shout from one end of the airship to the other, the young inventor would sometimes pound on the pipe that ran from the pilothouse of the *Red Cloud* to the engine room. By a combination of numbers, simple messages could be conveyed. The code included a

call for help. Forty-seven was the number, but there had never been any occasion to use it.

Tom remembered this now. At once he ceased his indiscriminate hammering, and began to beat out regularly—one, two, three, four—then a pause, and seven blows would be given. Over and over again he rang out this number—forty-seven—the call for help.

"If John only comes back he will hear that, even from the house," thought poor Tom "Maybe Garret or Mrs. Baggert will hear it, too, but they won't know what it means. They'll think I'm just working on the submarine."

It seemed several hours to Tom that he pounded out that cry for aid, but, as he found out later, it was only a little over an hour. Signal after signal he sent vibrating from the steel sides of the tank. When one arm tired he would use the other. He grew weary, his head was aching, and there was a ringing in his ears; a ringing that seemed as if ten thousand bells were jangling out their peals, and he could barely distinguish his own pounding.

Signal after signal he sounded. It was becoming like a dream to him, when suddenly, as he paused for a rest, he heard his name called faintly, as if far away.

"Tom! Tom! Where are you?"

It was the voice of John Sharp followed by the voice of the older inventor.

"Where are you? Tom, are you still alive?"

"Yes, Dad! In the starboard tank!" Tom gasped using the last of his reserves. He slid to the floor, unconscious. When he revived he was lying on a pile of sacks in the submarine shop. His father and the aeronaut were bending over him.

"Are you all right, Tom?" asked Mr. Swift.

"Yes—I—I guess so," was the hesitating answer. "Yes," the lad added, as the fresh air cleared his head. "I'll be all right pretty soon. Have you seen Andy Foger?"

"Did he shut you in there?" demanded Mr. Swift.

Tom nodded.

"I'll have him arrested!" declared Mr. Swift "I'll go to town as soon as you're in good shape again and notify the police."

"No, don't," said Tom. "I'll take care of Andy myself. I don't really believe he would have left me in there if he knew how serious it was. I'll settle with him later, though."

"Well, it came mighty near being serious," remarked John grimly. "Your father and I came back a little sooner than we expected, and as soon as I got near the house I heard your signal. I knew what it was immediately. There were Mrs. Baggert and Garret talking away, and when I asked them why they didn't answer your call they said

they thought you were merely tinkering with the machinery. But I knew better. It's the first time we ever had a use for 'forty-seven,' Tom."

"And I hope it will be the last," replied the young inventor with a faint smile. "But I'd like to know what Andy Foger is doing in this neighborhood."

Tom sat up and gulped in several deep breaths. He was himself again in a few minutes and able to go to the house. Mrs. Baggert brewing a big basin of catnip tea, under the impression that it would in some way be good for him. She could not forgive herself for not having answered his signal, and as for Mr. Jackson, he had started for a doctor as soon as he learned that Tom was shut up in the tank. The services of the medical man were canceled by telephone, as there was no need for him, and the engineer returned to the house.

Tom was fully himself the next morning, and aided his father and John in putting the finishing touches to the *Advance*. They determined that some alteration was required in the auxiliary propellers, their balance being slightly out of true. Much to the regret of the young inventor, this would necessitate postponing the trial a few more days.

"But we'll have her in the water by Friday." promised Mr. Swift.

"Aren't you superstitious about Friday?" asked the

balloonist.

"Not a bit of it," replied the inventor. "Tom," he added, "I wish you would go in the house and get me the roll of blueprints you'll find on my desk."

As the lad neared the cottage he saw a small automobile. A man had just descended from it, and it needed but a glance to show that he was Mr. Addison Berg.

"Ah, good morning, Mr. Swift," greeted Mr. Berg. "I wish to see your father again, but I don't wish to lay myself open to suspicions by entering the shop. Perhaps you will ask him to step out here."

"Certainly," answered the lad, wondering why the agent had returned. Getting the blueprints and asking Mr. Berg to sit down on the porch, Tom delivered the message.

"Please come back with me, Tom," said his father. "I want you to be a witness to what he says. I'm not going to get into trouble with these people."

Mr. Berg came to the point at once.

"Mr. Swift," he said, "I wish you would reconsider your decision not to enter the Government trials. I'd like to see you compete. So would my firm."

"There is no use going over that again," replied the aged inventor. "I have another project to attend to instead of trying for the Government prize. What it is I can't say, but

it may develop in time—if we are successful," and he looked at his son, smiling the while.

Mr. Berg tried to argue, but it was of no use. He changed his manner, saying, "Well, if you won't, you won't, I suppose. I'll go back and report to my firm. Have you anything special to do this morning?" he went on to Tom.

"Well, I always find something to keep me busy," replied the lad, "but as for anything special—"

"I thought perhaps you'd like to go for a trip in my auto," interrupted Mr. Berg. "I had asked another young man who is at the same hotel where I stay if he would like a ride, but he has unexpectedly left, and I don't like to go alone. His name was—let me see. I have a wretched memory for names, but it was something like Randy—"

"Andy!" cried Tom. "Was it Andy Foger?"

"Yes, that was it. Do you know him?" asked Mr. Berg in some surprise.

"I should say so," replied Tom, and he explained about being imprisoned in the tank.

"Oh, dear me!" cried Mr. Berg. "I had no idea he was that kind of a lad. His father is a junior member of the board of directors of my firm. Andy told me he came from home to spend a few weeks at the seaside and happened to stop at the same hotel that I did. He went off yesterday

afternoon, and I haven't seen him since, though he had accepted an offer of a ride with me. He must have come here and entered your shop unobserved. I remember now he asked me where the submarine was being built that was going to compete with ours, and I told him. I didn't know he was that kind of a lad. He didn't give me that impression. Well, since he's probably gone back home, perhaps you will come for a ride, Tom."

"I'm afraid I can't go, thank you," answered the lad. "We are very busy getting our submarine in shape for a trial. I can imagine why Andy left in such a hurry. He probably learned that a doctor had been summoned for me and panicked. As it happened, I didn't need one. But Andy probably got frightened at what he had done, and left. I'll make him more sorry, when I see him."

"Don't blame you a bit," commented Mr. Berg. "Well, I must be getting back."

He hastened out to his auto, and Tom and his father watched him drive away.

"Tom. Never trust that man," advised the inventor solemnly.

"Just what I was about to say," said his son. "Well, let's get back to work. It's very odd that he should come here again, and it's even more odd about Andy Foger."

Father and son returned to the machine shop, while Mr.

Berg puffed away in his auto.

A little later, Tom walked over to one of the out buildings near the boundary of the cottage property. Looking beyond the hedge that bordered the grounds, he spotted an automobile sitting to the side of the road. A second glance showed him that it was Mr. Berg's machine. Something had gone wrong with it, and the agent had opened the hood to make an adjustment.

The young inventor was close enough to the man to hear him talking to himself, though Berg was unaware of his presence.

"Hang it all!" Tom heard Mr. Berg exclaim to himself as he twisted something on the engine. "I wonder what they are up to? They won't enter the Government contests, and they won't say why. Must be up to some game, and I've got to find out what it is. Maybe I can use this Foger boy?"

Berg wiped his hands on a rag he had placed on the fender. He shook his head and leaned back into the front of the auto.

"He seems to have it in for young Tom," Mr. Berg went on, still talking to himself. "I think I'll try it. I'll get Andy Foger to sneak around and find out what the game is. He'll do it, I know. If not, his father certainly owed the company for several favors."

By this time the auto was in working order again, and

the agent took his seat and started off.

"So that's how it is, eh?" thought Tom. "Well, Mr. Berg, we'll be doubly on the lookout for you after this. As for Andy Foger, I'll make him wish he'd never locked me in that tank. You expect to find out our 'game,' eh, Mr. Berg? Well, if you do, I think it will astonish you. I only hope you don't learn about it until it is too late. For you!"

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER VI

#### TURNING THE TABLES

WHEN THE young inventor informed his father what he had overheard Mr. Berg saying, the aged inventor was not as worried as his son anticipated.

"All we'll have to do, Tom," he said, "is to keep quiet about where we are going. Once we have the *Advance* in the water and try her out, we can start on our voyage for the South American coast and search for the sunken treasure. When we begin our voyage underwater I defy any one to tell track we are going, or what our plans are. No, I don't believe we need worry about Mr. Berg, though

he probably is going to cause us some grief along the way."

"I'm going to keep my eyes open for him *and* Andy Foger," declared Tom.

The days that followed were filled with work. Not only were there many unexpected things to do about the submarine, but John was kept busy making discreet inquiries about the sunken treasure ship. These inquiries had to be made carefully as the adventurers did not want their plans revealed, and nothing circulates more quickly than rumors of an expedition after treasure of any kind.

"What about the sea captain you are going to get to go with us?" asked Mr. Swift of the balloonist one afternoon. "Have you succeeded in finding one yet?"

"Yes. I am in communication with a man I believe to be just the person for us. His name is Captain Alden Weston, and he has sailed all over the world. He has also taken part in more than one revolution and considers himself to be a soldier of fortune. I do not know him personally, but a close friend of mine does, and says he will serve us faithfully. His rate is, I have been led to understand, twenty percent of whatever is recovered or paid out. I have written to him, and he will be here in a few days."

"That's good. Now about the location of the wreck itself. Have you been able to learn any more details?"

"Not many. You see, the crew of the *Boldero* abandoned in a storm, at night, and the captain did not take very careful observations. As nearly as can be figured, the ship went to the bottom near latitude forty-five degrees south, and longitude fifty-two west. That's a pretty indefinite location. Once we get off the Uruguay coast, I hope we can better define it. If we anchor outside the harbor at Montevideo, the small boat we carry can take us ashore and we may possibly gain more details. It was at Montevideo that the shipwrecked passengers and sailors landed."

"Does Captain Weston know our objective?" inquired Tom.

"No, and I don't propose to tell him until we are ready to start," replied John. "I didn't want to chance it by mentioning it before we have him signed on. I don't know just how he'll feel about taking a submarine trip after treasure, but if I spring it on him at the final minute he's less likely to back out. I think he'll choose to go."

The next day it was discovered that still more tools and appliances were needed for the submarine, and they had been left in the house at Shopton.

"Well, I suppose we'll have to go back after them," remarked Tom. "We'll take the airship, Dad, and make a two-days' trip of it. Is there anything else you want?"

"Well, you might bring a bundle of papers you'll find in



the lower right hand drawer of my desk. They contain some information I need."

Tom and John had become so used to traveling in the airship that it was no longer a novelty to them, though they attracted much attention wherever they went. They soon had the *Red Cloud* rising in the air above the shop that contained the powerful submarine, and the nose of the airship pointed toward Shopton.

They made a good flight and landed near the big shed where the airship was kept. It was early evening when they got to the Swift homestead.

Mr. Damon had hired Eradicate Sampson to act as guard and watchman a week earlier. He had not told Tom or his father of the arrangement, but felt it prudent to provide better security to the house and shops than his occasional drive by.

Eradicate was glad to see them.

Eradicate was a good cook, and soon had a hot meal ready for the travelers. While John selected the tools and other things needed and put them in the airship, Tom told the others he would take a stroll into Shopton to see his friend, Ned Newton. It was early evening, and the end of a beautiful day, a sharp shower in the morning having cooled the air.

Tom was greeted by a number of people as he strolled

along. Since the episode of the bank robbery, when he had so unexpectedly returned with the thieves and the cash, he was better known than ever.

"I guess Ned must be home," thought our hero as he looked in vain for his friend among the throng on the streets. "I've got time to take a stroll down to his house."

Tom was about to cross the street when he was startled by the sound of an automobile horn loudly blown just at his side. Then a voice called, "Hey, there! Git out of the way if you don't want to be run over!"

He looked up and saw a car careening toward him. At the wheel was the red-haired bully, Andy Foger, and in the back were Sam Snedecker and Pete Bailey.

"Git out of the way," added Sam, and he grinned maliciously at Tom.

Tom stepped back, well out of the path of the car. There was no necessity for Andy to steer into it, but he saw his opportunity and set course for a puddle directly in front of Tom. A moment later one of the big pneumatic tires had plunged into the dirty fluid, splattering it all over Tom.

"Ha-ha!" laughed Andy. "Get out of my way next time, Swift."

The young inventor was almost speechless with anger. He wiped the mud from his face, glanced down at his dirty clothes, and called out, "Stop, Foger! I want to see

you!" He thought of the time when Andy had shut him in the tank.

"Ta!" shouted Pete.

"See you later," added Sam.

"Go home and take a bath, and then sail away in your submarine," went on Andy. "I'll bet it will sink."

Before Tom could reply the auto had turned a corner and was gone. Disgusted and angry, he tried to wipe off some of the muddy water with his handkerchief. He heard his name called, and looked up to see Ned Newton.

"What's the matter? Fall down?" asked his chum.

"Andy Foger," replied Tom.

"That's enough," retorted Ned. "I can guess the rest. We'll have to tar and feather him some day, and ride him out of town on a rail. I'd kick him myself, only his father is a director in the bank where I work and I'd be fired if I did. Can't afford the pleasure. But some day I'll give Andy a good trouncing, and then resign before they can fire me. I'll need to look for another job before I do that. Come on to my house, Tom, and I'll help you clean up."

Tom was a little more presentable when he left the Newton residence, but he was still burning for revenge against Andy and his cronies. He had half a notion to go to Andy's house and tell Mr. Foger how nearly serious the bully's prank at the submarine had been, but he

concluded that Mr. Foger could only uphold his son. Mr. Foger had been greatly embarrassed when Tom and Mr. Damon were vindicated in the robbery matter and now held no great liking for the inventor. "No, I'll settle with him myself," decided Tom.

Tom and John prepared to start their return trip early the next morning. Bidding Eradicate keep a watchful eye about the house, Tom left word for Mr. Damon to be sure to come to the coast should he again call at the Shopton house before the anticipated launch date.

The gas tank was filled and the *Red Cloud* arose in the air. With the propellers moving at moderate speed, the nose of the craft was swung around and pointed toward the New Jersey coast.

A few miles out from Shopton they detected a head wind in the upper regions where they were traveling. John descended several hundred feet to get below it. They were moving over a sparsely settled part of the country, and looking down, Tom saw, speeding along a highway, an automobile.

"I wonder who's in it?" he remarked, taking down a telescope and peering over the window ledge of the cabin. The next moment he uttered a startled exclamation.

"Andy Foger, Sam Snedecker and Pete Bailey!" he cried. "Oh, I wish I had a bucket of water to empty on them."

"I know a better way to get even with them," said John.

"How?" asked Tom eagerly.

"I'll show you," replied the balloonist. "It's a trick I once played on a fellow who did me an disservice. You steer for a minute until I get the thing ready, then I'll take charge."

John went to the storeroom and came back with a long, stout rope and a small anchor of four prongs. It was carried to be used in emergencies, but so far had never been called into service. Fastening the grapple to the cable, the balloonist said, "Now, Tom, they haven't seen you. You stand on the observation deck and pay out the rope. I'll steer the airship. What I want you to do is this—" and he gave Tom special instructions.

Tom followed his instructions. He slowly lowered the rope with the dangling grapple. The airship came down a bit to help matters; the cable was not quite long enough to reach the earth from the height where they started. The engine was run at slow speed so that the noise would not attract the attention of the three cronies who were speeding along. The *Red Cloud* was easily able to match maneuvers with the automobile.

The anchor was now close to the rear of Andy's car. Suddenly it caught on the tonneau and Tom called that fact to John.

"Fasten the rope to the cleat," directed the balloonist.

Tom did so, and a moment later the aeronaut sent the airship up by running more gas into the container. At the same time he reversed the engine and the *Red Cloud* began pulling the touring car backward, also lifting the rear wheels clear from the earth.

A startled cry from the occupants of the machine told Tom and his friend that Andy and his cronies were aware something was wrong. A moment later Andy looked up and saw the airship hovering in the air above them. He turned his head around and saw the rope fast to his auto. The airship was not rising, or the auto would have been turned over, but it was slowly pulling it backward in spite of the fact that the motor of the car was still going.

"Hey! You let go of me!" cried Andy. "I'll have you arrested if you damage my car."

"Come up here and cut the rope." called Tom leaning over and looking down. He could enjoy the bully's discomfiture. As for Sam and Pete, they were much frightened, and cowered down on the floor of the back seat.

"Maybe you'll shut me in the tank again and splash mud on me!" shouted Tom.

The rear wheels of the auto were lifted still higher from the ground, as John turned on a little more gas. Andy was unable to steer against this.

"Oh! Alright" he cried. "Let me down, Tom. I'm sorry for what I did! I'll never do it again! Please, please let me down! Don't tip me over!"

He had shut off his motor now, and was frantically clinging to the steering wheel.

"Do you admit that you're a sneak and a coward?" asked Tom, rubbing it in.

"Yes, yes! Oh, please don't make us crash!"

"Shall we?" asked Tom of John.

"Sure," replied the balloonist. "We can afford to lose the rope and anchor for the sake of turning the tables on him. Cut the rope."

Using a little hatchet, Tom severed the rope with a single blow. With a crash that could be heard up in the air where the *Red Cloud* hovered, the rear wheels of the auto dropped to the ground accompanied by two loud reports.

"Both tires blown!" commented John dryly, and Tom, looking down, saw the trio of lads ruefully contemplating the collapsed rubber of the rear wheels. The tables had been effectually turned on Andy Foger. His auto was disabled and the airship, with a graceful sweep, rose higher and higher, continuing on its way to the coast.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER VII

#### MR. DAMON WILL GO

"WELL, I HOPE they've had their lesson," remarked Tom, as he took an observation through the telescope and saw Andy and his cronies hard at work trying to repair the ruptured tires. "That certainly was a very good trick."

"Yes," admitted John modestly. "I once did something similar, only it was a horse and wagon instead of an auto. So, now let's try for another speed record to the coast. The conditions are just right."

They arrived at the coast much sooner than they had

dared to hope, the *Red Cloud* proving herself a veritable wonder.

The remainder of that day, and part of the next, was spent in working on the submarine.

"We'll launch her day after tomorrow," declared Mr. Swift enthusiastically. "Then to see whether my calculations are right or wrong."

"It won't be your fault if it doesn't work," said his son. "You certainly have done your best."

"And so have you and Mr. Sharp and the others, for that matter. Well, I have no doubt but that everything will be all right, Tom."

"There!" exclaimed John the next morning, as he was adjusting a certain gauge. "I knew I'd forget something. It is a special brand of lubricating oil. I meant to bring it from Shopton, and I didn't."

"Maybe I can get it in Atlantis," suggested Tom, naming the coast city nearest to them. "I'll take a walk over. It isn't far."

"Will you? I'd appreciate it," stated the balloonist. "A gallon will be all we'll need."

Tom was soon on his way. He had to walk, as the roads were too poor to permit him to use the motorcycle he had brought to the shore, and the airship attracted too much attention to use on a short trip. He was strolling along,

when from the other side of a row of sand dunes, he heard someone speaking. At first the tones were not distinct, but as the lad drew nearer to the voice he heard an exclamation.

"Bless my gold-headed cane! I'm lost. He said it was out this way somewhere, but I don't see anything of it. If I had that Eradicate Sampson here now I'd—well—bless my shoelaces I don't know what I would do to him."

"Mr. Damon! Mr. Damon!" cried Tom. "Is that you?"

"Me? Of course it's me! Who else would it be?" answered the voice. The man looked around. "But who are you. Why, bless my liver! If it isn't Tom Swift!" he cried. "Oh, but I'm glad to see you! I was afraid I was forever lost! Bless my garters, how are you, anyhow? How is your father? How is Mr. Sharp, and all the rest of them?"

"Pretty well. And you?"

"Me? Oh, I'm about as right as rain, only a trifle nervous. I called by your house in Shopton yesterday, and Eradicate gave me your message and told me, as well as he could, where you were located. I had nothing to do, so I thought 'I'll take a run down there.' But what's this I hear about you? Are you going on a voyage?"

"Yes."

"In the air? May I go along again? I certainly enjoyed

my other trip in the *Red Cloud*. Well, all but the fire and being shot at. May I go?"

"We're going on a different sort of trip this time," said the youth.

"Where?"

"Under the water."

"Under water? Bless my sponge bath! You don't mean it!"

"Yes. Dad has completed the submarine he was designing when we were off in the airship, and it will be launched the day after tomorrow."

"Oh, that's so. I'd forgotten about it. He's going to try for some Government prize, isn't he? But tell me more about it. Bless my scarf-pin, but I'm glad I found you! Going into town, I take it. Well, I just came from there, but I'll walk back with you. Do you think—is there any possibility—that I could go with you? Of course, I don't want to crowd you, but—"

"Oh, there'll be plenty of room," replied the young inventor. "In fact, more room than we had in the airship. We were talking only the other day about the possibility of you going with us, but we didn't think you'd consider it."

"Consider it? Bless my liver! Of course I'll consider it. I'll risk it! It can't be as bad as sailing in the air. You can't fall, that's certain."

"No, but maybe you can't rise," remarked Tom grimly.

"Oh, we won't think of that. Personally, whenever I go swimming I seem to bob right to the surface. Of course, I'd like to go. I fully expected to be killed in the *Red Cloud*, but as I wasn't. I'm ready to take a chance in the water. On the whole, I think I prefer to be buried at sea, anyhow. Now, then, will you really take me?"

"I think I can safely promise it," answered Tom with a smile at his friend's enthusiasm.

The two were approaching the city, having walked along as they talked. They kept to the sea side of some small dunes near the road where they could watch the breakers.

"But you haven't told me where we're going," went on Mr. Damon, after blessing a few dozen objects. "Where do the Government trials take place?"

"Well," replied the lad, "to be frank with you, we have abandoned our intention of trying for the Government prize."

"Not going to try for it? Bless my slippers! Why not? Isn't fifty thousand dollars worth striving for? And, with the kind of a submarine you say you have, you ought to be able to win."

"Yes, probably we could win," admitted the young inventor, "but we are going to try for a better prize."

"A better one? I don't understand."

"Sunken treasure," explained Tom in a low voice. "There's a ship sunk off the coast of Uruguay, with three million dollars in gold bullion aboard. Dad and I are going to try to recover that with our submarine. We're going to start day after tomorrow. If you are willing, you may go along."

"Go along! Of course I'll go along!" cried the eccentric man. "But I never heard of such a thing. Sunken treasure! Three million dollars in gold! My, what a lot of money! And to go after it in a submarine! It's as good as a story!"

"Yes, we hope to recover all the treasure," said the lad. "We ought to be able to claim at least half of it."

"Bless my pocketbook!" cried Mr. Damon, but Tom did not hear him. At that instant his attention was attracted by a man who emerged from behind the sand dune near which he and Mr. Damon had halted momentarily while the youth explained about the treasure. The man looked sharply at Tom. A moment later he was joined by another, and at the sight of him our hero could not repress an exclamation of alarm. For the second man was none other than Addison Berg.

The latter glanced quickly at Tom, and then, with a hasty word to his companion, the two swung around and walked hastily off in the opposite direction to that in which they had been walking.

"What's the matter?" asked Mr. Damon, seeing the

young inventor was strangely affected.

"That—that man," stammered the lad.

"You don't mean to tell me that was one the Happy Harry gang, do you?"

"No. But one, or both of those men, may prove to be worse. That second man was Addison Berg, and he's agent for a firm of submarine boat builders who are rivals of dad's. Berg has been trying to find out why we abandoned our intention of competing for the Government prize."

"I hope you didn't tell him."

"I didn't intend to," replied Tom, smiling grimly, "but I'm afraid *we* have. He certainly overheard what I said. I should have waited to tell you once we were in a safe place. Yes, he must have heard us talking. That's why he hurried off so."

"Possibly no harm is done. You didn't give the location of the sunken ship."

"No, but I guess from what I said it will be easy enough to find out about the wreck. Well, if we're going to have a fight for the possession of that sunken gold, I'm ready for it. The *Advance* is well equipped for a battle. I must tell Dad of this. It's my fault."

"And partly mine, for asking you such leading questions in a public place," declared Mr. Damon. "Bless my coat-tails, but I'm sorry! Then I all but shouted it to the very

heavens above us. Oh, dear. Maybe those men were so interested in their own conversation that they didn't hear what was said."

But if there were any hopes on this score they would soon be dashed.

The plans of the treasure hunters had been revealed.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER VIII

#### A SECOND EXPEDITION

WHILE TOM and Mr. Damon continued on to Atlantis to purchase the oil, the young inventor lamenting from time to time that his remarks about the real destination of the *Advance* had been overheard by Mr. Berg.

"What's your hurry?" asked Mr. Maxwell, who was with the submarine agent. "You turned around as if you were shot when you saw that man and the lad. There didn't appear to be any cause for such a hurry. From what I



could hear they were talking about a submarine. You're in the same business. You might be friends."

"Yes, we might," admitted Mr. Berg with a peculiar smile; "but, unless I'm very much mistaken, we're soon going to be rivals."

"Rivals? What do you mean?"

"I can't tell you now. Perhaps I might later. But if you don't mind, let us walk a little faster, please. I want to get to a long-distance telephone."

"What for?"

"I have just overheard something that I wish to communicate to my employers."

"Overheard something? I don't see what it could be, unless that lad—"

"You'll learn in good time," went on the submarine agent. "But I must telephone at once."

A little later the two men had reached a trolley line that ran into Atlantis. They boarded the electric train and arrived at the city several minutes before Mr. Damon and Tom got there. Mr. Berg lost no time in calling up his firm by telephone.

"I have had another talk with Mr. Swift," he reported to Mr. Bentley, who came to the receiver in Philadelphia.

"Well, what does he say?" was the impatient question. "I

can't understand his not wanting to try for the prize. It is astonishing. You said you were going to find out the reason, Mr. Berg, but you haven't done so."

"Ah, but I have."

"You have? What is it?"

"Well, the reason Mr. Swift and his son don't care to try for the fifty thousand dollar prize is that they are after one of three million dollars."

"Three million dollars!" cried Mr. Bentley. "What Government can offer that large a prize for submarines when they are getting almost as common as airships? We ought to have a try for that ourselves. What Government is it?"

"No Government at all. But I, too, think we ought to have a try for it, Mr. Bentley."

"Explain."

"Well, I have just learned, most accidentally, that the Swifts are going after sunken treasure—three million dollars in gold bullion."

"Sunken treasure? Where?"

"I don't know exactly, but it is somewhere off the coast of Uruguay," and Mr. Berg rapidly told his employer what he had overheard Tom tell Mr. Damon.

Mr. Bentley was excited and impatient for more details,

but Berg could not give them to him.

"Well," concluded the senior member of the firm of submarine boat builders, "if the Swifts are going after treasure, so can we. Come back to Philadelphia at once, Mr. Berg, and we'll talk this matter over. There is no time to lose. We can afford to forego the Government prize for the chance of getting a much larger one. We have as much right to search for the sunken gold as the Swifts have. Come here at once, and we will make our plans."

"All right," agreed the agent with a smile as he hung up the receiver. "I guess," he murmured to himself, "that you won't be so high and mighty with me after this, Barton Swift. We'll see who has the best boat. We'll have a contest and a competition, but not for a measly Government prize. It will be for the sunken fortune."

It was easy to see that Mr. Berg was much pleased with himself.

Meanwhile, Tom and Mr. Damon had reached Atlantis, and had purchased the oil. They started back, but Tom took a street leading toward the center of town, instead of striking for the beach path.

"Where are you going?" asked Mr. Damon.

"I want to see if Andy Foger has come back here," replied the lad, and he told all about having been shut in the tank by the bully.

"I've never properly punished him for that trick," he went on, "though we did manage to burst his auto tires. I'm curious to know how he knew enough to turn that gear and shut the tank door. He must have been loitering near the shop, seen me go in the submarine alone, watched his chance and sneaked in after me. But I'd like to get a complete explanation, and if I get hold of Andy I will make him talk," and Tom clenched his fist in a manner that augured no good for the squint-eyed lad. "He was at the same hotel with Mr. Berg, and hurried away after he trapped me in the tank. Then I saw him back in Shopton, but perhaps he might have come back here. I'm going to inquire at the hotel," he added.

Andy's name was not on the register since his hasty flight. However, Tom inquired with the clerk and learned that Mr. Berg was still a registered guest at the hostelry. He rejoined Mr. Damon.

"Bless my buttons!" exclaimed that eccentric individual as they started back to the house and beach where the submarine was awaiting her introductions into the water. "The more I think of the trip we're going to take, the more I like it."

"I hope you will," remarked Tom. "It will be a new experience for all of us. I'm very worried about Mr. Berg having overheard what I said."

"Oh, don't worry about that. Can't we slip away and

leave no trace in the water?"

"I hope so, but I must tell Dad about what happened."

The inventor was alarmed at what his son related, but agreed with Mr. Damon, whom he welcomed, that little was to be accomplished sitting and worrying.

"They know we're after a sunken wreck, but that's all they do know," said Tom's father. "We are only waiting for the arrival of Captain Alden Weston, and then we go. Even if Bentley & Eggert make a try for the treasure we'll have a head start on them. This is a case of first come, first served. Don't worry, Tom. I'm glad you're going, Mr. Damon. Come, I will show you our submarine."

As they were walking to the machine shop, John met them. He had a letter in his hand.

"Good news!" the balloonist cried. "Captain Weston will be with us tomorrow. He will arrive at the Beach Hotel in Atlantis, and wants one of us to meet him there."

"The Beach Hotel," murmured Tom. "That is where Mr. Berg is staying. I hope he doesn't worm any of our secret from Captain Weston."

It was with a feeling of uneasiness that the young inventor followed his father and Mr. Damon to where the submarine was.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER IX

#### CAPTAIN WESTON ARRIVES

"BLESS MY water ballast, but this certainly is a fine boat!" cried Mr. Damon, when he had been shown over the new craft. "I think I shall feel even safer in that than in the *Red Cloud*."

"Oh, don't speak ill of the airship!" exclaimed John Sharp. "I am counting on taking you on another trip."

"Well, maybe after we get back from under the ocean," agreed Mr. Damon with a smile. "I have to say, though, how much I particularly like the cabin arrangements of

the *Advance*. I know I shall enjoy myself."

Mr. Damon was greatly looking forward to traveling by submarine. He was soon familiar with the entire layout. The main cabin was particularly fine, and the sleeping arrangements were good.

More supplies could be carried than was possible on the airship, and there was more room in which to cook and serve food. Mr. Damon was fond of good living, and the kitchen pleased him as much as anything else.

Early the next morning Tom set out for Atlantis to meet Captain Weston at his hotel. The young inventor inquired of the clerk whether the seafaring man had arrived, and was told that he had come the previous evening.

"Is he in his room?" asked Tom.

"No," answered the clerk with a lopsided grin. "He's an—let's say he's an *interesting* character. Wouldn't go to bed last night until we had every window in his room open. It was blowing quite hard, and likely to storm, but that's what he wanted. The captain said he was used to plenty of fresh air. Well, I guess he got it, all right."

"Where is he now?" asked the youth, wondering what sort of an individual he was to meet.

"Oh, he was up before sunrise, so one of the housekeepers told me. She saw him coming from his room, and he went right down to the beach with a big

telescope he always seems to carry with him. He hasn't come back yet. Probably he's down on the sand."

"Hasn't he had breakfast?"

"No. He left word he didn't want to eat until about four bells, whatever time that is."

"It's ten o'clock," replied Tom, who had been studying up on sea terms lately. "Eight bells is four and eight o'clock in the morning, or four in the afternoon or eight at night, according to the time of day. Then there's one bell for every half hour up to eight, so four bells this time of the morning would be ten o'clock, I suppose."

"Oh, that's actually quite simple, eh?" asked the clerk. "I never could get it through my head. What is twelve o'clock noon?"

"That's eight bells, too; so is twelve o'clock midnight. Eight bells is as high as they go on a ship. I read that they do that because each watch period is four hours. Well, I guess I'll go down and see if I can meet the captain. It will soon be ten o'clock, or four bells, and he must be hungry for breakfast. By the way, is Mr. Berg still here?"

"No, he left us early this morning. He and Captain Weston seemed to strike up quite an acquaintance, the night clerk told me. They sat and smoked together until long after midnight—um, eight bells," and the clerk smiled as he glanced down at the big diamond ring on his

little finger.

"They did?" fairly exploded Tom. He had a sudden vision of what the wily Mr. Berg might worm out of the simple captain.

"Yes. Why, isn't the captain a proper man to make friends with?" and the clerk looked at Tom curiously.

"Oh, yes, of course," was the hasty answer. "I can't really say the same for Mr. Berg. I guess I'll go and see if I can find him—the captain, I mean."

Tom hardly knew what to think. He wished his father, or John, had thought to warn Captain Weston against talking of the wreck. It might be too late now.

The young inventor hurried to the beach, which was not far from the hotel. He saw a solitary figure pacing up and down the sand. From the fact that the man stopped every now and then and gazed seaward through a large telescope, the lad concluded it must be the captain. He approached, his footsteps making no sound on the sand. The man was still gazing through the glass.

"Captain Weston?" spoke Tom.

Without a show of haste, though the voice must have startled him, the captain turned. Slowly he lowered the telescope, and then he replied softly, "Aye. That's my name. Who are you, if I may ask?"

Tom was struck, more than by anything else, by the

gentle voice of the seaman. He had prepared himself, from John's description, to meet a gruff, bewhiskered individual, with a voice like a crosscut saw, and a rolling gait. Instead he saw a man of medium size, with a smooth face, merry blue eyes, and the softest voice and gentlest manner imaginable. Tom was almost disappointed. He had looked for a gruff sea-dog, and he met a landsman, as he said afterward. But it was not long before he changed his mind regarding Captain Weston.

"I'm Tom Swift," the youth said, "and I have been sent to show you the way to where our craft is ready to launch." The young inventor refrained from mentioning submarine, as it was the wish of Mr. Sharp to disclose this feature of the voyage to the sailor himself.

"Ha, I thought as much," resumed the captain quietly. "It's a fine day, if I may be permitted to say so," and he seemed to hesitate, as if there was some doubt whether or not he might make that observation.

"It certainly is," agreed the lad. Then, with a smile he added, "You must be hungry. It is nearly eight bells."

"Ha!" exclaimed the captain, also smiling, but even his manner of saying "Ha!" was less demonstrative than that of most persons. "I believe I *am* getting hungry, if I may be allowed the remark," and again he seemed asking Tom's pardon for mentioning the fact.

"Perhaps you will come back to the lodging house and

have a little breakfast with me," he went on. "I don't know what sort of a galley or cook they have aboard the Beach Hotel, but it can't be much worse than some. Possibly better than others. We can only hope."

"No, thank you," answered Tom. "I've had my breakfast. But I'll be glad to wait for you, and then I'd like to get back. Dad and Mr. Sharp are anxious to meet you."

"And I am anxious to meet them, if you don't mind me mentioning it," was the reply as the captain once more put the spyglass to his eye and took an observation. "Not many sails in sight this morning," he added. "But the weather is fine, and we ought to get off in good shape to hunt for the treasure about which John Sharp wrote me. I believe we *are* going after treasure," he said, "that is, if you don't mind talking about it."

"Not in the least," replied Tom quickly, thinking this a good opportunity for broaching a subject that was worrying him. "Just not too loudly if you please. Did you meet a Mr. Berg here last night, Captain Weston?" he went on.

"Yes. Mr. Berg and I had quite a talk. He is a well-informed man."

"Did he mention the treasure?" asked the lad, eager to find out if his suspicions were true.

"Yes, he did come out with that fact pretty damn quick,

if you'll excuse me putting it so plainly," answered the seaman, as if Tom might be offended at so direct a reply.

"Did he want to know where the wreck was located?" continued the lad. "That is, did he try to discover if you knew anything about it?"

"Yes," said Mr. Weston, "he pumped me, if you are acquainted with that term, and are not offended by it. You see, when I arrived I made inquiries as to where your father's place was located. Mr. Berg overheard me, and introduced himself as agent for a shipbuilding concern. He was very friendly, and when he said he knew you and your father, I thought he was all right."

Tom's heart sank. His worst fears were to be realized, he thought.

"Yes, he and I talked considerable, if I may be permitted to say so," went on the captain. "He seemed to know about the wreck of the *Boldero*, and that she had three million dollars in gold aboard. The only thing he didn't know was where the wreck was located. He knew it was off South America or Uruguay somewhere, but just where he couldn't say. So he asked me if I knew, since he must have concluded that I was going with you on the gold-hunting expedition."

"And you do know, don't you?" asked Tom eagerly.

"Well, I have it pretty accurately charted out, if you will

allow me that expression," was the calm answer. "I took pains to look it up at the request of Mr. Sharp."

"And he wanted to worm that information out of you?" inquired the youth excitedly.

"Yes, I'm afraid he did. His intent was as plain as the nose on his face, if you grasp that reference."

"Did you give him the location?"

"Well," remarked the captain, as he took another observation before closing up the telescope, "you see, while we were talking, I happened to drop a copy of a map I'd made, showing the location of the wreck. Mr. Berg picked it up to hand to me, and he looked at it."

"Oh, no!" cried Tom. "Then he knows just where the treasure is, and he may get to it ahead of us."

"Yes," continued the seaman calmly, "Mr. Berg picked up that map and looked very closely at the latitude and longitude I had marked as the location of the wreck."

"Then he'll have no trouble finding it," murmured our hero. "It may be too late for us."

"Eh? What's that?" asked the captain, "if I may be permitted to request you to repeat what you said."

"I say he won't have any trouble locating the sunken *Boldero*," repeated Tom.

"Oh, but I think he will, if he depends on that map," was

the unexpected reply. "You see," explained Mr. Weston, "I'm not as simple as I look. I sensed what Mr. Berg was after the minute he began to talk to me. So I pulled a little game on him. The map which I dropped on purpose, not accidentally, was right where he would see it. And, it did have the location of the wreck plainly marked. Only it didn't happen to be the right location. It was about five hundred miles off the mark."

The captain paused while Tom looked at him, wondering what might come next.

"I rather think if Mr. Berg and his friends go there for treasure they'll find considerable depth of water and quite a lonesome spot. There may be some treasure to be had there, but not the one you're after. Oh, no, I'm not as easy a mark as I look, if you don't mind me mentioning that fact. When a scoundrel sets out to get the best of me, I generally try to turn the tables on him. I've seen such men as Mr. Berg before. I'm afraid, I am very happy to report to you, the sight he had of the fake map I made won't do him much good. Well, I declare, it's past four bells. Let's go to breakfast, if you don't mind me asking you again," and with that the captain started off up the beach.

Tom followed, his ideas all a whirl at the unlooked-for outcome of the interview.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER X

#### SUBMARINE TRIAL

TOM FELT such relief at hearing about Captain Weston's ruse that his appetite, sharpened by an early breakfast and the sea air, came to him with a rush. He had a second morning meal with the odd sea captain, who chuckled heartily when he thought of how Mr. Berg had been deceived.

"Yes," resumed Captain Weston, over his bacon and eggs, "I sized him up for a slick Nick as soon as I laid eyes on him. He, on the other hand, misjudged me, if I may be permitted that term. Oh, well. We may meet again, after

we secure the treasure, and then I can show him the real map of the location of the wreck."

"Then you have it?" inquired the lad eagerly.

Captain Weston nodded, before hiding his face behind a large cup of coffee, his third serving.

"Can I see it?" asked Tom quickly. The captain set down his cup. He looked carefully about the hotel dining room. There were several guests, who, like himself, were having a late breakfast.

"It's a good plan," the sailor said slowly, "when you're heading into unknown waters, and don't want to leave a wake for the other fellow to follow, to keep your charts locked up. If it's all the same to you," he added eyeing Tom, "I'd rather wait until we get to your father and John before displaying the real map. I've no objection to showing you the one Mr. Berg saw, though," and again he chuckled.

The young inventor blushed at his over-eagerness and indiscretion. He felt responsible that the news of the treasure had leaked out through him, though he was the one to get on the trail of it by seeing the article in the paper. Now he had nearly been guilty of another security break. He realized that he must be more cautious.

The captain saw his confusion, and said, "I know how it is. You're eager to get under way. I don't blame you. I was



the same myself when I was your age. But we'll soon be at your place, and then I'll tell you all I know. Suffice now, to say that I believe I have located the site within a few miles. I got on the track of a sailor who had met one of the shipwrecked crew of the *Boldero*, and he gave me valuable information. Now tell me about the craft we are going in. A good deal of our tactics and plans depends on that."

Tom hardly knew what to answer. He recalled what John had said about not wanting to tell Captain Weston that they were going in a submarine until the last moment. His fear was that the old seaman—old in terms of service though not in years—might not want to risk an underwater trip.

Seeing Tom's hesitation, Captain Weston remarked quietly, "I mean, what type is your submarine? Does it go by compressed air, or water power?"

"How do you know it's a submarine?" asked the young inventor quickly, and in some confusion.

"Easy enough. While Mr. Berg was pumping me, I was getting a lot of information from him. He told me about the submarine his firm was building, and, naturally, he mentioned yours. One thing led to another until I got a pretty good idea of your craft. What do you call it?"

"The *Advance*."

"Good name. I like it, if you don't mind speaking of it."

"We were afraid you wouldn't like it," commented Tom.

"What, the name?"

"No, the idea of going in a submarine."

"Oh," and Captain Weston laughed. "It takes more than that to frighten me, if you'll excuse the expression. I've always had a hankering to go under the surface after so many years spent on top. Once or twice I came near going under, whether I wanted to or not, in wrecks. I think I'll prefer your way. Now, if you're all done I think we'll start for your place. We must hustle, for Berg may yet get on our trail, even if he has got the wrong route," and he laughed again.

It was no small relief to Mr. Swift and John to learn that Captain Weston had no objections to a submarine, as they feared he might have. The captain, in his diffident manner, made friends at once with the treasure hunters, and he and Mr. Damon struck up quite an acquaintance. Tom told of his meeting with the seaman, and the latter related, with much gusto, the story of how he had fooled Mr. Berg.

"Well, perhaps you'd like to come and take a look at the craft that is to be our home while we're beneath the water," suggested Mr. Swift and the sailor assented. With much pride, assisted by Tom, he pointed out on the

*Advance* the main features of interest. Captain Weston gave hearty approval, making one or two minor suggestions.

"And so you launch her tomorrow," he concluded, when he had completed the inspection "Well, I hope it's a success, if I may be permitted to say so."

There were busy times around the machine shop next day. So much secrecy had been maintained that none of the residents, or visitors to the coast resort, were aware that in their midst was such a wonderful craft as the submarine. The last touches were put on the underwater boat; the tracks leading from the shop to the creek were well greased, and all was in readiness for the launching. The ocean would soon be at high tide, and then the boat would slide down the timbers and would float in the element meant to receive her.

It was decided that no one should be aboard when the launching took place as there was an element of risk attached. It was not known just how buoyant the craft was. It was expected she would float, until the filled tanks took her to the bottom, but there was no telling.

"It will be high tide now in ten minutes," remarked Captain Weston quietly, looking at his watch. Then he took an observation through the telescope. "No hostile ships hanging about," he reported. "All is favorable, if you don't mind me saying so," and he seemed afraid lest his

remark might give offense.

"Get ready," ordered Mr. Swift. "Tom, see that the ropes are all clear," for it was necessary to ease the *Advance* down into the water by means of strong cables and windlasses. The creek was so narrow that the submarine, if launched in the usual way, would poke her nose into the opposite mud bank and stick there.

"All clear," reported the young inventor.

"High tide!" proclaimed the captain a moment later, snapping shut his watch.

"Let go!" ordered Mr. Swift, and the various windlasses manned by the inventor, Tom and the others began to unwind their ropes. Slowly the ship slid along the greased tracks. Slowly she approached the water. How anxiously they all watched her! Nearer and nearer her blunt nose, with the auxiliary propeller, came to the creek, the waters of which were quiet now, awaiting the turn of the tide.

Now little waves lapped the steel sides. It was the first contact of the *Advance* with her native element.

"Pay out the rope faster!" cried Mr. Swift.

The windlasses were turned more quickly. Foot by foot the craft slid along until, with a final splash, the stern left the ways and the submarine was afloat. Now would come the test. Would she ride on an even keel, fall to one side and sink out of sight, or turn turtle? They all ran to the

water's edge, Tom in the lead.

"Hurrah!" suddenly yelled the lad, trying to stand on his head. "She floats! She's a success! Come on! Let's get aboard!"

True enough, the *Advance* was riding like a duck on the water. She had been proportioned just right, and her lines were perfect. She rode as majestically as did any ship destined to sail on the surface, and not intended to do double duty.

"Come on, we must moor her to the pier," directed John. "The tide will turn in a few minutes and take her out to sea."

He and Tom entered a small boat, and soon the submarine was tied to a small dock that had been built for the purpose.

"Now to try the engine," suggested Mr. Swift, who was almost trembling with eagerness. The completion of the ship meant much to him.

"One moment," begged Captain Weston. "If you don't mind, I'll take another observation," he said, and he swept the horizon with his telescope. "All clear," he reported with a nod. "I think we may go aboard and make a trial trip."

Little time was lost in entering the cabin and engine room, Garret Jackson accompanying the party to aid with

the machinery. It did not take long to start the motors, dynamos and the big gasoline engine that was a vital part of the craft. A little water was admitted to the tanks for ballast, since the food and other supplies were not yet on board. The *Advance* now floated with the deck aft of the conning tower remaining about two feet above the surface of the creek. Mr. Swift and Tom entered the pilothouse.

"Start the engines," ordered the older inventor, "and we'll try my new system of positive and negative electrical propulsion."

There was a hum and whirl in the body of the ship beneath the feet of Tom and his father. Captain Weston stood on the little deck near the conning tower.

"All ready?" asked the youth through the speaking tube to John and Mr. Jackson in the engine room.

"All ready," came the answer.

Tom threw over the connecting lever sending electricity to the propulsion plates, while his father grasped the steering wheel. The *Advance* shot forward, moving swiftly along, about half submerged.

"She goes!" cried Tom

"She certainly does, if I may be permitted to say so," was the calm contribution of Captain Weston. "I congratulate you."

Faster and faster went the new craft. Mr. Swift headed

her toward the open sea, but stopped just before passing completely out of the creek. He was not yet ready to venture into deep water.

"We must test the auxiliary propellers," he said. After a little more testing of the electric propulsion plates, which were found to work satisfactorily, sending the submarine forward and backward in the creek at everything from a slow crawl to a fast rat. Tom pulled the switch back to the off position and the screws were put into gear. They did well, but could equal to the plates in either speed or acceleration, nor was so much expected of them.

"I am perfectly satisfied," announced Mr. Swift as he once more headed the boat toward the sea. "I think, Captain Weston, you had better go below now."

"Why so?"

"Because I am going to completely submerge the craft. Tom, prepare to close the conning tower door. Perhaps you will come in here with us, Captain Weston, though it will be rather a tight fit."

"Thank you, I will. I want to see how it feels to be in a pilothouse underwater."

Tom closed the watertight door of the conning tower. Word was sent through the tube to the engine room that a more severe test of the ship was about to be made. The craft was now outside the line of breakers and in the open

sea.

"Prepare for submersion, John," Tom called down the tube. "We'll run battery power. Close the engine intakes."

"Is everything ready, Tom?" asked his father in a quiet voice. he was checking a local chart to see what depth they could expect at their current position a mile from shore.

"Everything," replied the lad nervously, for the anticipation of being about to sink below the surface was telling on them all, even on the calm, old sea captain.

"Then open the tank valves," ordered Mr. Swift.

His son turned a master valve and adjusted some levers. There was a hissing sound, and the *Advance* began sinking. Tom set two other valves to the proper positions and looked at the pressure gauges. Everything was normal.

*Advance* was about to dive beneath the surface of the ocean, and those aboard her were destined to go through a terrible experience before she rose again.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XI

#### ON THE OCEAN FLOOR

LOWER AND LOWER sank the submarine. There was an initial swirling and foaming of the water as she went down, caused by the air bubbles that the craft carried with her in her descent. Only the top of the conning tower was out of water now, the ocean having closed over the deck and the rounded back of the boat. Had any one been watching they would have imagined that an accident was taking place.

In the pilothouse with its thick glass windows, Tom, his father and Captain Weston looked over the surface of the

ocean, which every minute was coming nearer and nearer to them.

"We'll be all under in a few seconds," spoke Tom in a solemn voice, as he listened to the water hissing into the tanks.

"Yes, and then we can see what sort of progress we will make," added Mr. Swift. "Everything is going fine, though," he went on cheerfully. "I believe we have a good boat."

"There is no doubt of it in my mind," remarked Captain Weston, patting the closest wall plate. Tom felt a little disappointed that the sailor did not shout out some such expression as "Shiver my timbers!" or "Keel-haul the main braces, there, you lubber!" But Captain Weston was not that kind of a sailor, though his usually quiet demeanor could be quickly dropped on necessity, as Tom learned later.

A few seconds more and the waters closed over the top of the conning tower. The *Advance* was completely submerged. Through the thick glass windows of the pilothouse the occupants looked out into the greenish-blue water that swirled about them. As the boat went lower, the light from above gradually faded and then semi-darkness gave way to gloom.

"Turn on the electrics and the searchlight, Tom," directed his father.

There was the click of a switch, and the conning tower was flooded with light. This had the effect of preventing the three from seeing out into the water, just as someone in a brightly lit room cannot look out into the night.

Tom shut them off and switched on the great searchlight. This projected its powerful beams straight ahead and there, under the ocean, was a pathway of illumination for the treasure-seekers.

"Fine!" cried Captain Weston, with more enthusiasm than he had yet manifested. "That's great, if you don't mind me mentioning it. How deep are we?"

Tom glanced at a gauge on the side of the pilot tower.

"About sixty feet," he answered.

"Then don't go any deeper!" cried the captain hastily. "I know these waters around here, and that's about all the depth you've got. You'll be on the bottom in a minute."

"I intend to get on the bottom after awhile," said Mr. Swift, "but not here. I want to try for a greater distance underwater before I come to rest on the ocean's bed. But I think we are deep enough for a test. Tom, close the tank intake pipes and we'll see how the *Advance* moves when fully submerged."

The hissing stopped. Then, wishing to see how the motors and other machinery would work, the inventor and his son, accompanied by Captain Weston, descended

from the conning tower by means of a narrow inner stairway to the interior of the ship. The submarine could be steered and managed from below or above. She was now floating about sixty-five feet below the surface of the bay.

"If I may be allowed an observation, Mr. Swift. Ships sailing by night use lanterns with red lenses for the inside spaces. Makes the eyes work immediately when you go topside. Perhaps red electrical lights would be of better use in the tower above, if that isn't too impertinent to suggest?"

Both Barton and Tom felt that this would be an easy and necessary change to make. Tom took a note in a pad he kept for such things.

"Well, how do you like it?" asked Tom of Mr. Damon, as he saw his friend in an easy chair in the main cabin of the craft, looking out of one of the plate-glass windows on the side.

"Bless my spectacles, it's the most wonderful thing I ever dreamed of!" cried the queer character, as he peered at the mass of water before him. "To think that I'm away down under the surface, and yet as dry as a bone. Bless my galoshes, but it's great! What are we going to do now?"

"Go forward," replied the young inventor.

"Perhaps I had better make an observation," suggested

Captain Weston, taking his telescope from under his arm, where he had carried it since entering the craft, and opening it. "We may run afoul of something, if you don't mind me mentioning a disagreeable subject." Then, as he thought of the impossibility of using his glass underwater, he closed it.

"I shall have little use for this here, I'm afraid," he remarked with a smile. "Well, there's some consolation. We're not likely to meet many ships in this part of the ocean. Traditional vessels are fond enough of remaining on the surface. I fancy we shall have the depths to ourselves, unless we meet a military submarine, and they are hardly able to go as deep as we can. No, I guess we won't run into anything and I can put this glass away."

"Unless we run into Berg and his crowd," suggested Tom in a low voice.

"Ha!" laughed Captain Weston, for he did not want Mr. Swift to worry over the unscrupulous agent. "No, I don't believe we'll meet them, Tom. I guess Berg is trying to work out the longitude and latitude I gave him. I wish I could see his face when he realizes that he's been deceived by a fake map."

"Well, I hope he doesn't discover it too soon and trail us," went on the lad. "But we're going to start the machinery now. I suppose you and I had better take charge of the steering of the craft. Dad will want to be in

the engine room."

"All right," replied the captain, and he moved forward with the lad to a small compartment, shut off from the main room, that served as a pilothouse when the conning tower was not used. The same levers, wheels and valves were there as up above, and the submarine could be managed as well from there as from the other place.

Tom pulled out his paper pad and added a note to outfit all the lights in the pilothouse with red lights as well. Then, considering something, he scratched out a few words and wrote in that all lights throughout the boat should be so outfitted. While he waited for word from his father to proceed, he made a few sketches of a possible mechanism to automatically move a colored lens over each light at the press of a button and then back to normal light position when not required.

"Is everything all right?" asked Mr. Swift as he went into the engine room, where Garret Jackson and John were busy with oilcans.

"Everything," replied the balloonist. "Are you going to start now?"

"Yes, we're deep enough for a speed trial. We'll go out to sea, however, and try for a lower depth record, as soon as there's enough water." He went to the voice tube and called out to his son, "Tom. Start the electricity to the propulsion plates."

A moment later the powerful electric currents were flowing into the positive and negative plates, and the *Advance* began to gather speed, forging through the water.

"Straight ahead and out to sea, Tom," called his father to him.

"Aye, aye, sir," responded the youth. he smiled at Captain Weston.

"Ha! Quite seaman-like, if you don't mind a reference to it," commented the captain returning the smile. "Mind your helm, boy. Keep an even keel and watch that depth indication device. You don't want to poke her nose into a mud bank, or run up on a shoal."

"Suppose you steer?" suggested the lad. "I'd rather take lessons for a while."

"All right. Perhaps it will be safer. I know these waters from the top, though I can't say as much for the bottom. However, I know where the shoals are."

The powerful searchlight was turned to send its beams along the path the submarine was traveling. "Captain Weston has the helm," the old sailor sang out into the voice tube, announcing his taking control in the time-honored manner.

"Aye, Captain," John called back.

The *Advance* gathered speed, gliding through the

waters like a fish.

Mr. Damon divided his time between the forward pilot-room, the main living space, and the place where Mr. Swift, Garret Jackson and John were working over the engines. Every few minutes he would bless some part of himself, his clothing, or the ship. Finally the old man settled down to look through the heavy plate glass windows in the main apartment.

On and on went the submarine. She behaved perfectly, and was under excellent control. Sometimes Weston, at the request of his father, would send her toward the surface by means of the deflecting planes. Then she would dive to near the bottom again. Once, as a test, she was sent obliquely to the surface, her tower just emerging, and then she darted downward again, like a porpoise that had come up for a breath and then returned to the depths. In fact, had any one seen the maneuver they might have imagined the craft was a big fish disporting itself.

Captain Weston turned control over to Tom an hour into their tests and remained at Tom's side, giving him instructions, and watching the compass in order to direct the steering to avoid collisions. For another hour or more the craft was sent almost straight ahead at medium speed.

Then Mr. Swift, joining his son and the captain, remarked, "We should be about at this point by my reckoning." He pointed to a spot on his chart. "How about



depth of water here, Captain Weston?"

"You've got more than a half mile by now. About four hundred and fifty fathoms."

"Good! Then we're going down to the bottom of the sea! Tom, flood more water into the tanks. Let's descend to where nobody has yet visited."

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the lad happily. "Now for a truly new experience!"

"And use the diving planes, also," advised his father. "That will hasten matters. We'll go down at a rate of one hundred feet per minute."

Twenty-two minutes later Tom leveled out the boat and, with a noticeable jarring, the boat came to a quick halt.

"Bless my soul! What's that?" cried Mr. Damon, picking himself up from the floor where he had landed. "Have we hit something?"

"Yes," answered Tom with a smile, shutting off several levers.

"What, for gracious sake?"

"The bottom of the sea. We're on the ocean floor."

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XII

#### FOR A BREATH OF AIR

THEY COULD HARDLY believe it, yet the depth-gauge told the story. It registered a distance below the surface of the ocean of two thousand seven hundred feet—a little over a half mile. The *Advance* had actually come to rest on the bottom of the Atlantic.

"Hurrah!" cried Tom. "Let's get into the diving suits, Dad, and walk about on land nobody has set foot on."

"No," said Mr. Swift soberly. "We will hardly have time for that now. Besides, the suits are not yet fitted with the

automatic air tanks, so we can't use them. There are still many things to do before we start on our treasure cruise. But I want to see how the hull plates are standing this pressure."

The *Advance* was made with a triple hull, the spaces between the layers of plates being filled with a secret material capable of withstanding enormous pressure, as were also the plates themselves. Mr. Swift, aided by Mr. Jackson and Captain Weston, made a thorough examination, and found that not a drop of water had leaked in. There was no sign there the least sign that any of the plates had given way under the terrific strain.

"She's as tight as a drumhead, if I may make the comparison," remarked Captain Weston modestly. "I couldn't ask for a dryer ship."

"Well, let's take a look around by means the searchlight and the observation windows, and then we'll go back," suggested Mr. Swift. "It will take about two days to get the stores and provisions aboard and rig up the diving suits; then we will start for the sunken treasure."

There were several powerful searchlights on the *Advance* arranged so that the bow, stern or either side could be illuminated independently. There were also observation windows near each light.

All inside lights were turned off except in the engine room. One by one the powerful light rays were cast first at

the bow and then aft. In the gleams could be seen the sandy bed of the ocean, covered with shells of various kinds. Great crabs walked around on their long, jointed legs, and Tom saw some lobsters that would have brought joy to the heart of a fisherman.

"Why are they so pale?" he asked. "Some of them even look to have no color at all."

Captain Weston offered the explanation, "It is dark enough down here that colorful shells and scales are not needed. Mostly that sort of thing is, if you will excuse the off-color commentary, use to attract a mate. Not enough light down here to see that, so no colors."

"Look at the big fish!" cried Mr. Damon suddenly, and he pointed to some dark, shadowy forms that swam up to the glass windows, evidently puzzled by the light.

"Porpoises," declared Captain Weston briefly, "a whole school of them. But, they're no fish. They are breathers like you and me and just swim in the water, not breathe from it."

The cavorting mammals seemed suddenly to multiply, and soon those in the submarine felt curious tremors running through the whole craft.

"They're rubbing up against us," cried Tom. "They must think we came down here to allow them to scratch their backs on the steel plates."

The captain explained that they were probably trying to dislodge small sea creatures that clung to their skin. Soon the porpoises had disappeared heading to the surface far above to take a breath of air.

For some time they remained on the bottom, watching the wonderful sights that swam all around them.

"Well, I think we may as well return to the surface," announced Mr. Swift, after they had been on the bottom about an hour, periodically rising just few feet so they might move around a little. "We didn't bring any provisions, and I'm getting hungry, though I don't know how the others of you feel about it."

"Bless my dinner plate, I could eat, too!" cried Mr. Damon. "Go up, by all means. We'll get enough of underwater travel once we start for the treasure."

"Send her up, Tom," called his father. "I want to make a few notes on some needed changes and improvements."

Tom entered the lower pilothouse, and turned the valve that opened the tanks. He also pulled the lever that started the pumps, so that the water ballast would be more quickly emptied, as that would render the submarine buoyant, and she would quickly shoot to the surface. To his surprise, however, there was no outrush of the water. The *Advance* remained stationary on the ocean bed.

Mr. Swift looked up from his notes. "Didn't you hear me ask you to send her up, Tom?" he inquired mildly.

"I did, Dad, but something seems to be the matter," was the reply.

"Matter? What do you mean?" and the inventor setting his papers aside and hastening to where his son and Captain Weston were at the wheels, valves and levers.

"The tanks won't empty, and the pumps don't seem to work," Tom stated.

"Let me try," suggested Mr. Swift, and he pulled the various handles in sequence. There was no corresponding action of the machinery.

"That's odd," he remarked in a curious voice "Perhaps something has gone wrong with the connections. Go look in the engine room, and ask John if everything is all right there."

Tom made a quick trip, returning to report that the dynamos, electric motors and such were running perfectly.

"Try to work the tank levers and pumps from the conning tower," suggested Captain Weston. "Sometimes I've known the steam steering gear to play tricks like that on my ships."

Tom hurried up the circular stairway into the tower. He pulled the levers and shifted the valves and wheels there.

There was still no emptying of the water tanks. The weight and pressure of water in them still held the submarine on the bottom of the sea, more than a half mile from the surface. The pumps in the engine room were working at top speed, but there was evidently something wrong in the connections. Mr. Swift quickly came to this conclusion.

"We must repair it at once," he said. "Tom, come to the engine room. You and I, with Mr. Jackson and Mr. Sharp, will soon have it in shape again. Captain, remain here in case we need you to operate the valves."

"Are we in danger?" asked Mr. Damon in a perturbed voice. "Bless my soul, but it's unlucky to have an accident on our trial trip."

"Oh, we must expect little incidents," declared Mr. Swift with a smile. "This is nothing."

But it proved to be more difficult than he had imagined. The valve had clogged or jammed, and as the outer pressure was so great that the water would not exit the tanks. It needed to be forced.

For an hour or more the inventor, his son and the others worked away. They could accomplish nothing. Tom looked anxiously at his father when the latter paused in his efforts.

"Don't worry," advised the older inventor. "It's got to

come right sooner or later."

Just then Mr. Damon, who had been wandering about the ship, entered the engine room.

"Do you know," he said, "you ought to open a window or something."

"Why, what's the matter?" asked Tom quickly, looking to see if the odd man was joking.

"Well, of course I don't exactly mean a window," explained Mr. Damon, "but we need fresh air."

"Fresh air!" There was a startled note in Mr. Swift's voice as he repeated the words.

"Yes, I can hardly breathe in the living room, and it's not much better here."

"There ought to be plenty of fresh air," went on the inventor. "It is renewed automatically."

Tom jumped up and looked at an indicator. He uttered a startled cry.

"The air hasn't been changed in almost an hour!" he exclaimed. "It is registering in the bad zone. There's not enough oxygen in it. I notice it too, now that I've stopped working. The gauge indicates it as well. The automatic air exchanger must have stopped working. I'll go fix it."

He hurried to the machine which was depended on to supply fresh air to the submarine.

"Why, the air tanks are empty!" the young inventor cried. "We haven't any more air except what is in the ship now!"

"And we're rapidly breathing that up," added Captain Weston solemnly.

"Can't you make more?" cried Mr. Damon. "I thought you said you could make oxygen aboard the ship."

"We can," answered Mr. Swift, "but I did not bring along a supply of the necessary chemicals. I did not think we would be submerged long enough for that. But there should have been enough in the reserve tank to last several days. How about it, Tom?"

"It's all leaked out, or else it wasn't filled," was the despairing answer. "All the air we have is what's in the ship, and we can't make more."

The treasure-seekers looked at each other. It was an awful situation.

"Then the only thing to do is to fix the machinery and rise to the surface," said Mr. Sharp simply. "We can have all the air we want, then."

"Yes, but it doesn't seem possible to fix the machinery," spoke Tom in a low voice.

"We must do it!" cried his father.

They set to work again with fierce energy, laboring for

their very lives. They all knew that they could not long remain in the ship without oxygen. Nor could they desert it to go to the surface. The moment they left the protection of the thick steel sides the terrible pressure of the water would kill them. Nor were the diving suits available. They must stay in the craft and die a miserable death unless the machinery could be repaired and the *Advance* sent to the surface.

Ruefully, Tom thought about the special emergency system. But the expanding lifting tank was not yet in working order.

Frantically they toiled, trying every possibility that was suggested to the mechanical minds of Tom, his father, Mr. Sharp or Mr. Jackson, to make the pumps work. But something was wrong. The air grew more and more foul. They were fairly gasping now. It was difficult to breathe, to say nothing of working in that atmosphere. The thought of their terrible position was in the minds of all.

"Oh, for one breath of fresh air!" cried Mr. Damon, who seemed to suffer more than any of the others. Grim death was hovering around them, imprisoned as they were on the ocean's bed, over a mile from the surface.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XIII

#### OFF TO FIND TREASURE

SUDDENLY, TOM, after a moment's pause, seized a wrench and began loosening some nuts.

"What are you doing?" asked his father faintly, for he was now sitting on the deck, weakened by the stale atmosphere.

"I'm going to take this valve apart," replied his son. "We haven't looked there for the trouble. Maybe it's clogged."

He attacked the valve with energy at first, but his hands soon lagged. The lack of oxygen was telling on him. He

could no longer work quickly.

"I'll help," murmured Mr. Sharp thickly. He took a wrench, but no sooner had he loosened one nut than he toppled over. "I'm all in," he murmured feebly.

"Is he dead?" cried Mr. Damon, himself gasping.

"No, only fainted. But he soon will be dead, and so will all of us, if we don't get fresh air," remarked Captain Weston. "Lie down on the floor, every one. There is a little fairly good air there. It's heavier than the air we've breathed, and we can exist on it for a little longer. Poor Sharp was so used to breathing the rarified air of high altitudes that he can't stand this heavy atmosphere."

Mr. Damon was gasping worse than ever, and so was Mr. Swift. The balloonist lay an inert heap on the floor, with Captain Weston trying to force a few drops of stimulant down his throat.

With a fierce determination in his heart, but with fingers that almost refused to do his bidding, Tom once more sought to open the big valve. He felt sure the trouble was located there, as they had tried to locate it in every other place without avail.

"I'll help," said Mr. Jackson in a whisper. He, too, was hardly able to move.

The air grew more and more devoid of oxygen. It gave Tom a sense as if his head was filled with lead, and ready

to burst with every breath he drew. Still he struggled to loosen the nuts. There were just four more to go, and he took off three while Mr. Jackson removed one. The young inventor lifted off the valve cover, though it felt like a ton weight to him. He gave a glance inside.

"Here's the trouble!" he murmured. "The valve is clogged. No wonder it wouldn't work. The pumps couldn't force any water out."

It was the work of only a minute to adjust the valve. Then Tom and the engineer managed to get the cover back on.

How they inserted the bolts and screwed the nuts in place they never could remember clearly afterward, but they managed it somehow, with shaking, trembling hands and eyes that grew more and more dim.

"Start the pumps!" cried Tom faintly. "The tanks will be emptied, and we can get to the surface."

Mr. Sharp was still unconscious, nor was Mr. Swift able to help. He lay with his eyes closed. Garret Jackson, however, managed to crawl to the engine room, and soon the clank of machinery told Tom that the pumps were in motion. The lad staggered to the pilothouse and threw the levers over. An instant later there was the hissing of water as it rushed from the ballast tanks. The submarine shivered, as though not wishing to leave the bottom of the sea, and then slowly rose. As the pumps worked more

rapidly, and the sea was sent from the tank in great volumes, the boat fairly shot to the surface. Tom was ready to open the conning tower and let in fresh air as soon as the top was above the surface.

With a bound the *Advance* reached the top. Tom called up his last bit of strength and frantically worked the worm gear that opened the tower. In rushed the fresh, life-giving air, and the treasure hunters filled their lungs with it. Garret started up the circulating air pump that normally brought in air to the engines, but had been bypassed so that the air blew directly into the engine room.

It was only just in time, for John Sharp was almost gone. He quickly revived, as did the others, when they could breathe the glorious oxygen-rich sea air.

"That was a close call," commented Mr. Swift as they all sat in the main room, recovering. "We'll not go below again until I have provided for all emergencies. I should have seen to those air tanks and the emergency one before going below. We'll sail home on the surface now."

The submarine was put about and headed for her dock. On the way she passed a small steamer, and the passengers looked down in wonder at the strange craft.

By the time the *Advance* reached the secluded creek where she had been launched, her passengers had fully recovered from their terrible experience, though the

nerves of Mr. Swift and Mr. Damon were not at ease for a few days.

"I should never have made a submerged test without making sure that we had a reserve supply of air," remarked the aged inventor. "I was a fool once but will not be caught that way again. I can't understand how the pump valve got out of order."

"Maybe some one tampered with it," suggested Mr. Damon. "Could Andy Foger, any of the Happy Harry gang, or the rival gold seekers have done it?"

"I hardly think so," answered Tom. "The place has been too carefully guarded since Berg and Andy once sneaked in. I think it was just an accident. However, I have thought of a plan to avoid such accidents in the future. It needs a simple device."

"Better patent it," suggested John with a smile.

"Maybe I will," replied the young inventor. "But not now. We haven't time, if we intend to get fitted out for our trip."

"No. I should say the sooner we started the better," remarked Captain Weston. "That is, if you don't mind me speaking about it," he added gently, and the others smiled, for his validating comments were only a matter of habit.

The first act of the adventurers, after tying the

submarine at the dock, was to proceed with the loading of the food and supplies. Tom and Mr. Damon attended to this, while Mr. Swift and John made some necessary changes to the machinery. The next day the young inventor attached his device to the pump valve.

It consisted of a small, pressurized air tank and a pipe fitting attached to one side of the valve. Tom's idea was that anything clogging the opposite, or seaward, side of the valve could be cleared by a quick injection of the compressed gas. The valves in both the conning tower and the pilothouse were outfitted.

As he completed the installation the loading of the craft continued.

All was in readiness for the gold-seeking expedition five days later. Captain Weston had carefully charted the route they were to follow, and it was decided to move along on the surface for the first day, so as to get well out to sea before submerging the craft. To fool any onlookers, they would head almost straight out to sea then turn toward the north an hour or so before submersing. The submarine would sink below the surface, turn to a southerly course and run along under the water until the wreck was reached, rising as needed to renew the air supply.

They placed sufficient stores and provisions aboard to last several months, if necessary, though they did not



expect to be gone more than sixty days at most. The adventurers arose early one morning and went down to the dock. Mr. Jackson was not to accompany them. He did not care about a submarine trip, he said, and Mr. Swift desired him to remain at the seaside cottage and guard the shops and their valuable machinery. The airship was also left there.

"Well, are we all ready?" asked Mr. Swift of the little party of gold seekers as they were about to enter the conning tower hatchway of the submarine.

"All ready, Dad," responded his son.

"Then let's get aboard," proposed Captain Weston. "But first let me take an observation."

He swept the horizon with his telescope, and Tom noticed that the sailor kept it fixed on one particular spot for some time.

"Did you see anything?" asked the lad.

"Well, there is a boat lying off there," was the answer. "And some one is observing us through a glass. But I don't believe it matters. Probably they're only trying to see what sort of an odd fish we are."

"All aboard, then," ordered Mr. Swift, and they went into the submarine. Tom and his father, with Captain Weston, remained in the conning tower. The signal was given, the electricity flowed into the positive and negative

plates, and the *Advance* shot ahead on the surface.

The sailor raised his telescope once more and peered through a window in the tower. He uttered an exclamation.

"What's the matter?" asked Tom.

"That other ship—it's a small steamer—is weighing anchor and seems to be heading this way," was the reply.

"Maybe it's someone hired by Berg to follow us and trace our movements," suggested Tom.

"If it is we'll fool them," added his father. "Just keep an eye on them, Captain, and I think we can show them a trick or two in a few minutes."

Faster shot the *Advance* through the water. She had started on her way to get the gold from the sunken wreck, but already enemies were on the trail of the adventurers.

The ship the sailor had noticed was steaming after them.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XIV

#### IN THE DIVING SUITS

THERE WAS no doubt that the steamer was coming after the submarine. Several observations Captain Weston made confirmed this, and he reported the fact to Mr. Swift.

"Well, we'll change our plans, then," said the inventor. "Instead of sailing on the surface we'll go below. But first let them get near enough that they may have the benefit of seeing what we do. Tom, go below, please, and tell John to get every thing in readiness for a quick descent. We'll slow up a bit now, and let them get closer to us."

The speed of the submarine was reduced, and in a short

time the strange steamer had approached her, coming to within hailing distance.

Mr. Swift signaled for the machinery to stop and the submarine came to a halt on the surface, bobbing about like a half-submerged bottle. The inventor opened a small window in the tower, and called to a man on the bridge of the steamer, "What is your purpose for following us?"

"Following you?" repeated the man, for the strange vessel had also come to a stop. "We're not following you."

"It certainly looks like it," replied Mr. Swift. "I strongly suggest that you give it up."

"I guess the waters are free," was the quick retort. "We'll follow you if we like."

"Will you? Well then, come on!" cried the inventor as he quickly closed the heavy glass window and pulled a lever. An instant later the submarine began to sink, and Mr. Swift could not help laughing. Just before the tower went underwater he had a glimpse of the astonished face of the man on the bridge. The latter had evidently not expected such a move.

Lower and lower in the water they dropped, until they were about two hundred feet below the surface. Mr. Swift left the conning tower, descended to the main part of the ship, and asked Tom and Captain Weston to take charge of the pilothouse.

"Send her ahead, Tom," his father said. "That fellow up above is rubbing his eyes yet, wondering where we are, I suppose."

The *Advance* raced forward under the water, her powerful electrical plates pulling and pushing her on the way to secure the sunken gold.

All that morning a fairly moderate rate of speed was maintained, as it was thought best not to run the new machinery too fast.

Lunch was eaten about a quarter of a mile below the surface, but no one inside the submarine would ever have known it. Electric lights made the place as brilliant as could be desired, and the food, which Tom and Mr. Damon prepared, was equal to any that could have been served on land. After the meal they opened the shutters over the windows in the sides of the craft, and looked at the myriads of fish swimming past, when the creatures were illuminated in the glare of the searchlight.

"Tom," John commented. "That system of retractable red lenses of yours is just the trick. You pushed the activation button and everything went red inside, but I can still see quite clearly outside."

"Yes, Son. Great work," his father complimented him.

That night they were already several hundred miles into their journey. Leaving Tom and Captain Weston to take

the first watch, the others went to bed.

"Bless my soul, but it does seem odd to go to bed under the water, like a fish," remarked Mr. Damon as he prepared to go to his bunk. "If my wife knew this, she would worry herself to death. She thinks I'm off automobiling. Bless my swimming costume but this isn't half as dangerous as riding in a car that's always getting out of order. A submarine for me, every time."

"Wait until we get to the end of this trip," advised Tom. "I think we'll find almost as many things happen in a submarine as can in an auto."

Future events were to prove the young inventor to be right.

Everything worked well that night, and the ship made good progress. They rose to the surface just before dawn the next morning to take a reading of their position, and to get fresh air. They did not really need it as the reserve supply had not been used, and was sufficient for several days, now that the oxygen machine had been put in running order. It did serve, however, to air out the smell of a dead mouse John found in the back of the engine room.

He went out on the rear deck and gave it a burial at sea.

On the second day the ship descended to the bottom and stopped there. Mr. Swift wished to try their new

diving suits. These were made of a new, light, but very strong metal to withstand the pressure of a great depth. Each suit included dozens of small interior ribs that provided even greater strength against the crushing pressures to be found at the seabed.

Tom, John and Captain Weston donned the suits, the others agreeing to wait until they saw how the first trial resulted. Then, too, it was necessary for someone acquainted with the machinery to remain in the ship to operate the door and water chamber the divers had to use to get in and out.

The prescribed plan was followed in letting the three out of the boat and onto the bottom of the sea. They entered the chamber in the port side of the submarine, and water was gradually admitted until it equaled in pressure that outside. Mr. Swift made a check of each of their suits to assure himself that all was well. He gave the thumbs-up sign to Tom and the captain, and then the outer door was opened by means of levers. They stepped out and dropped the remaining few feet to the muddy surface below.

It was a curious sensation to Tom and the others to feel that they were actually walking along the bed of the ocean. All around them was the dark water. As they turned on the small electric lights in their helmets—fed by storage batteries in a watertight compartment on the

diving suits—they saw dozens of fish, big and little, swarming them, doubtless astonished at the odd creatures which had entered their domain. On the sand of the bottom, and in and out among the shells and rocks, crawled great spider crabs, big eels and other odd creatures seldom seen on the surface of the water.

The three divers found no difficulty in breathing, as there were air tanks fastened to their shoulders, and a constant supply of oxygen was fed through pipes into the helmets. The pressure of water did not bother them, and after the first sensation Tom began to enjoy the novelty of it. At first the inability to speak to his companions seemed odd, but he soon got so he could make signs and motions, and be understood.

Tom made a mental note to work with John to translate his number code system of communication into something they could all use when in the water.

They walked about for some time, finding that it required considerable force to move; the water provided an incredible amount of resistance.

A few minutes later Tom came upon a part of a wrecked vessel buried deep in the sand. There was no telling what ship it was, nor how long it had been there, and after silently viewing it, they continued on.

"It was great!" were the first words Tom uttered when he and the others were once more inside the submarine

and had removed the suits. "Now that we can walk around the wreck of the *Boldero* that way, we'll have all the gold out of her in no time. There are no life lines nor air hose to bother with in these diving suits."

"They certainly are a success," conceded John.

"Bless my topknot!" cried Mr. Damon. "I'll try it next time. I've always wanted to be a diver, and now I have the chance."

The trip was resumed after the diving chamber had been closed and drained.

On the third day Captain Weston announced, after a look at his chart, that they were nearing the Bahaman Islands.

"We'll have to be careful not to run into any of the small keys," he said, that being the name for the many little points of land, hardly large enough to be dignified by the name of island. "We must run much closer to the surface and still keep a constant lookout."

Fortune favored them, though once, when Tom was steering, he narrowly avoided ramming a coral reef with the submarine. The searchlight showed it to him just in time, and he veered away with a thumping in his heart.

The course was changed from south to southeast, so as to get ready to swing out of the way of the big shoulder of Brazil in the central portion of South America.

As they proceeded farther and farther toward the equator, they noticed that the waters teemed more and more with fish, some beautiful, some ugly and fear-inspiring, and some such monsters that it made one shudder to look at them, even through the thick glass of the bullseye windows.

"Warmer waters make for more types of fish," the captain told Mr. Damon. "Some of them quite tasty, and," he added with a glint in his eye, "some of them more than ready to taste you!"

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XV

#### THE TROPICAL ISLAND

IT WAS ON the evening of the fourth day later that Captain Weston, who was steering the craft, suddenly called out into the main room, "Land ho!"

"Where away?" inquired Tom quickly. He had read that this was the proper response to make.

"Dead ahead," answered the sailor with a smile. "Shall we make for it, if I may be allowed to pose the question?"

"What land is it likely to be?" Mr. Swift wanted to know.

"Oh, some unnamed tropical island," replied the seafaring man. "Unless we are far off course, which we are

not, it is about here on our charts." He pointed to a small dot. "Probably too small for anyone to be interested in. No indication of a population.

Barton Swift asked, "Is it even worth bothering with? Will we find anything other than rock and dirt?"

"I would say it is an old coral island, and if it's old enough, we may be able to find a spring of fresh water there, and perhaps some trees."

"Then we'll land there," decided the inventor. "We can top off with some fresh water, though our distilling and ice apparatus is performing very well."

They made the island just before dusk, and anchored in a little lagoon, where there was an acceptable depth of water. The island proved to be slightly crescent shaped, about three-quarters of a mile long and about 800 feet wide. Seen from the deck of the submarine, it appeared to slope upward to a height of about fifty feet and was covered with trees of several varieties.

"Now for shore!" cried Tom, as the submarine swung slowly around on the anchor chain. "It looks like a fine place. I hope there are coconuts and oranges here. Shall I get out the electric launch, Dad?"

"Yes, and then we'll all go ashore. It will do us good to stretch our legs a bit."

Carried in a sealable indentation on the deck of the

submarine was a small electric boat, capable of holding six. Weighing just one hundred pounds, it could be slid from its berth and into the water without the use of davits. With John to aid him, Tom soon had the little craft afloat. The batteries were fully charged, and just as the sun was going down the gold-seekers entered the launch and were soon on shore.

They found a small but potable spring of water close at hand. While Barton Swift and Mr. Damon filled several collapsible jugs and stored them in the boat, Tom went exploring with John. His wish regarding the cocoanuts was realized, though there were no oranges or any other fruits to be seen. He harvested several of the delicious nuts, and breaking one open, poured the milk into a collapsible cup he carried, drinking it eagerly. The others joined him and followed his example, pronouncing it the best beverage they had tasted in a long time.

Not wanting to waste the rest of the nut, Tom scooped out the white "meat" using his pocket knife, and stored it in a tight leather bag he carried.

The island was a typical tropical one, not very large, and it did not appear to have been often visited by man. There were no animals to be seen, but myriads of birds flew here and there amid the trees, the trailing vines and streamers of moss.

"Let's spend a day here tomorrow and explore it,"

proposed Tom, and his father nodded an assent. They went back to the submarine with their water and coconuts as night was beginning to gather. In the cabin, after a supper that included some of Tom's coconut, they talked over the happenings of their trip so far.

"Do you think we'll have any trouble getting the gold out of the wrecked vessel?" asked Tom of Captain Weston, after a pause.

"Well, it's hard to say. I couldn't learn just how the wreck lays, or whether it's on a sandy or a rocky bottom. If the latter, it won't be so hard, but if the sand has worked in and partly covered it, we'll have some difficulties, if I may be permitted to say so. However, don't ask for trouble and it won't hunt you down. The biggest question will be if she is upright or turtle or even in one piece. She may have broken up and scattered the gold over a wide area. We're not there yet, though at the rate we're traveling it won't be long before we arrive. Then we'll see."

Mr. Damon wanted to know about the location of the wreck. "Is it very deep. Bless my life ring but I hope it is no deeper than the water that almost claimed us during our test sailing."

The captain looked at the man and pondered how to word his answer. Finally he said, "It may well prove to be a bit deeper. However, that is of no consequence.

Anything below a depth of about two hundred feet is as near to being insurmountable as makes no real difference, if you'll pardon my candor. Two hundred feet or two miles. It makes for the same level of danger."

Mr. Damon tried to suppress a shudder and was unsuccessful.

Seeing his reaction, the captain added, "Of course, the benefit of finding treasure is much greater at the deeper depths. I suggest that we all keep that goal in mind."

They all agreed that it was a good idea.

No watch was set that night, as it was not considered necessary. Tom was the first to arise in the morning, and he went out on the deck for a breath of fresh air before breakfast.

He looked off at the beautiful little island, and as his eye took in all of the little lagoon where the submarine was anchored he uttered a startled cry.

And well he might, for, not a hundred yards away, and nearer to the island than was the *Advance*, floated another craft—another submarine similar in shape and size to the one built by the Swifts. Tom rubbed his eyes to make sure he was not seeing double. No, there could be no mistake about it. There was another submarine at the tropical island.

As he looked, someone emerged from the conning tower

of the second craft. The figure seemed strangely familiar. Tom knew in a moment who it was—Addison Berg. The agent saw the lad, too, and taking off his cap and making a mocking bow, he called out, "Good morning! Have you got the gold yet?"

Tom did not know what to answer. Seeing the other submarine, at an island where he had supposed they would not be disturbed, was disconcerting enough, but to be greeted by Berg was altogether too much.

His fears that the rival boat builders would follow had come true.

"Rather surprised to see us, aren't you?" went on Mr. Berg, smiling at Tom in the same way a crocodile smiles at a fish before devouring it.

"Rather," admitted Tom, choking over the word.

"Thought you'd be," continued Berg. "We didn't expect to meet you so soon, but I'm glad we did. I don't really like hunting for sunken treasure with such indefinite directions as I have."

"You—are going to—" stammered Tom, and then he concluded it would be best not to say anything. But his talk had been heard inside the submarine. His father came to the foot of the conning tower stairway.

"To whom are you speaking, Tom?" he asked.

"They're here, Dad," was the youth's answer.



"Here? Who are here?"

Tom pointed away from the submarine at something his father couldn't yet see.

"Berg and his employers. They've followed us, Dad."

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XVI

#### "RACE YOU FOR IT"

MR. SWIFT HURRIED up on deck. He was accompanied by Captain Weston. At the sight of Tom's father, Mr. Berg, who had been joined by two other men, called out, "You see we also concluded to give up the trial for the Government prize, Mr. Swift. We decided there was more money in something else. But we still will have a good chance to try the merits of our respective boats. We hurried and got ours fitted up almost as soon as you did yours, and I think we have the better craft."

"I don't care to enter into any competition with you,"

said Mr. Swift coldly.

"Ah, but I'm afraid you'll have to, whether you want to or not," was the insolent reply.

"What's that? Do you mean to force this matter upon me?"

"I'm afraid I'll have to—my employers and I, that is. You see, we managed to pick up your trail after you left the Jersey coast, having an idea where you were bound, and we don't intend to lose you now."

"Do you mean to follow us?" asked Captain Weston softly.

"Well, you can put it that way if you like," answered one of the two men with Mr. Berg.

"I forbid it!" cried Mr. Swift hotly. "You have no right to sneak after us."

"The ocean is free," continued the rascally agent.

"Why do you persist in keeping after us?" inquired the aged inventor, thinking it well to find out, if possible, just how much the men knew.

"Because we're after that treasure as well as you," was the bold reply. "You have no exclusive right to it. The sunken ship is awaiting the first comer, and whoever gets there first can take the gold from the wreck. We intend to be there first, but we'll be fair with you."

"Fair? What do you mean?" demanded Tom.

"I mean this. We'll race you for it. The first one to arrive will have the right to search the wreck for the gold bullion. Is that fair? Do you agree to it?"

"We agree to nothing with you," interrupted Captain Weston, his usual diffident manner all gone. "I happen to be in partial command of this craft, and I warn you that if I find you interfering with us it won't be healthy for you. I'm not fond of fighting, but when I begin I don't like to stop," and he smiled grimly. "You'd better not follow us."

"We'll do as we please," shouted the third member of the trio on the deck of the other boat, which, as Tom could see from the painted name on her tower, was named the *Wonder*. "We intend to get that gold if we can."

"All right. I've warned you," went on the sailor, and then, motioning to Tom and his father to follow, he went below.

"Well, what's to be done?" asked Mr. Swift when they were seated in the main room, and had informed the others of the presence of the rival submarine.

"The only thing I see to do is to sneak away unobserved, go as deep as possible, and make all haste for the wreck," advised the captain. "They will depend on us, for they have evidently no chart of the wreck, though of course the

general location of it may be known to them from reading the papers. I hoped I had thrown them off the track by the false chart I dropped, but it seems they were too smart for us."

"Have they a right to follow us?" asked Tom.

"Legally, but not morally. We can't prevent them, I'm afraid. The only thing to do is to get there ahead of them. With the ship in international waters we can't even try to get the Government of Uruguay to step in. It will be a race for the sunken treasure, and we must get there first."

"What do you propose doing, Captain?" asked Mr. Damon. "Bless my shirt-studs, but can't we pull their ship up on the island and leave it there?"

"I'm afraid such high-handed proceedings would hardly answer," replied Mr. Swift. "No, as Captain Weston says, we must get there ahead of them, and we must do it legally. I do not relish finding the treasure only to have it ripped from our hands for having perpetrated any foul deeds. What do you think will be the best scheme, Captain?"

"Well, there's no need for us to forego our plan to get fresh water. Suppose we go to the island, that is, three of us, leaving the others guard here. We'll fill our tanks with more fresh water, and return. At night we'll quietly sink below the surface and speed away."

They all voted that an excellent idea, and little time was lost putting it into operation.

All the remainder of that day not a sign of life was visible about the *Wonder*. She lay inert on the surface of the lagoon, not far away from the *Advance*; but, though no one showed himself on the deck, Tom and his friends had no doubt but that their enemies were closely watching them.

As dusk settled down over the tropical sea, and as the shadows of the trees on the little island lengthened, those on board the *Advance* closed the conning tower. No lights were turned on, as they did not want their movements to be seen, but Tom, his father and John took their positions near the various machines and apparatus, ready to open the tanks and let the submarine sink to the bottom, as soon as it was possible to do this unobserved.

"Luckily there's no moon," remarked Captain Weston, as he took his place beside Tom. "Once below the surface and we can defy them to find us. It is odd how they traced us, but I suppose that steamer gave them the clue."

It rapidly grew dark, as it always does in the tropics, and when a cautious observation from the conning tower did not disclose the outlines of the other boat, those aboard the *Advance* rightly concluded that their rivals were unable to see them.

"Send her down, Tom," called his father, and with a hiss

the water entered the tanks. The submarine quickly sank below the surface.

But alas for the hopes of the gold seekers, no sooner was she completely submerged, with the drive plates energized to send her out of the lagoon and to the open sea, than the waters all about were made brilliant by the phosphorescence phenomenon.

In southern waters this frequently occurs. Millions of tiny creatures, which swarm in the warm currents, give an appearance of blue fire to the ocean, and any object moving through it can plainly be seen. It was so with the *Advance*. The motion she made in shooting forward, and the undulations caused by her submersion, seemed to start into activity the dormant phosphorus, and the submarine was afloat in a sea of fire.

"Quick!" cried Tom. "Speed her up! Maybe we can get out of this patch of water before they see us."

But it was too late. Above them they could hear the electric siren of the *Wonder* as it was blown to let them know that their escape had been noticed. A moment later the water, which acted as a sort of sounding board brought the noise of the engines of the other craft to the ears of Tom Swift and his friends. She was coming after them. The race for the possession of three million dollars in gold was already under way. Fate seemed against those on board the *Advance*.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XVII

#### THE RACE

DIRECTED BY Captain Weston, who glanced at the compass and told him which way to steer to clear the outer coral reef, Tom sent the submarine ahead, signaling for full speed to his father and John in the engine room. The big dynamos purred like great cats, as they sent the electrical energy into the positive and negative plates, pulling and pushing the *Advance* forward. On and on she rushed underwater, but even as she shot ahead, the disturbance in the phosphorescent water showed her position plainly. She would be easy to follow.

"Can't you get any more speed out of her?" asked the captain of the lad.

"Yes," was the quick reply; "by using the auxiliary screws I think we can. I'll try it."

He signaled for the propellers, forward and aft, to be put in operation. The motor moving the twin screws was turned on. At once there was a perceptible increase to the speed of the *Advance*.

"Are we leaving them behind?" asked Tom anxiously, as he glanced at the speed gauge, and noted that the submarine was now about five hundred feet below the surface.

"Hard to tell," replied the Captain. "You'd have to take a look to make sure."

"I'll do it," cried the youth. "You steer, please, and I'll go in the conning tower. I can look forward and aft there, as well as straight up. Maybe I can see the *Wonder*."

Springing up the circular ladder leading into the tower, Tom glanced through the windows all about the small pilothouse. He saw a curious sight. It was as if the submarine was in a sea of yellowish-blue liquid fire. She was immersed in water which glowed with the flames that contained no heat. It provided so much light that there was no need of the incandescent lamps in the tower. The young inventor could have read a paper by the light of the

phosphorus. But he had something else to do than observe this phenomenon. He wanted to see if he could catch sight of the rival submarine.

At first he could make out nothing save the swirl and boiling of the sea, caused by the progress of the *Advance* through it. But suddenly, as he looked up, he was aware of some great, black body a little to the rear and about ten feet above his craft.

"A shark!" he exclaimed aloud. "An immense one, too."

But the closer he looked the less it seemed like a shark. The position of the black object changed. It appeared to settle down, to be approaching the top of the conning tower. Then, with a suddenness that unnerved him for the time being, Tom recognized what it was; it was the underside of a ship. He could see the plates riveted together, and then, as he noted the rounded, cylindrical shape, he knew that it was a submarine. It was the *Wonder*. She was close at hand and was creeping up on the *Advance*.

What was more dangerous, she seemed to be slowly settling in the water. Another moment and her great screws might crash into the conning tower of the Swifts' boat and shave it off. Then the water would rush in, drowning the treasure-seekers like rats in a trap.

With a quick motion Tom yanked over the lever that allowed more water to flow into the ballast tanks. The

effect was immediate. The *Advance* shot down toward the bottom of the sea. At the same time the young inventor signaled to Captain Weston to notify those in the engine room to put on a little more speed. The *Advance* fairly leaped ahead. Looking up through the bull's-eye window in the ceiling of the conning tower, Tom had the satisfaction of seeing the rival submarine left behind.

He hurried down into the interior of the ship to tell what he had seen, and explain the reason for opening the ballast tanks. He found his father and John somewhat excited over the unexpected maneuver of the craft.

"So they're still following us," murmured Mr. Swift. "I don't see why we can't shake them off."

"It's on account of this luminous water," explained Captain Weston. "Once we are clear of that it will be easy, I think, to give them the slip. That is, if we can get out of their sight long enough. Of course, if they keep close after us, they can pick us up with their searchlight. I assume they carry one."

"Yes," admitted the aged inventor, "they have as strong a one as we have. In fact, their ship is second only to this one in speed and power. I know because Bentley & Eagert showed me some of the plans before they started it, and asked my opinion. This was before I had the notion of building a submarine. Yes, I am afraid we'll have trouble getting away from them."

"I can't understand this phosphorescent glow keeping up so long," remarked Captain Weston. "I've seen it in this area several times, but it never covered such an extent of the ocean in my time. There must be changed conditions here now."

For an hour or more the race continued, and the two submarines forged ahead through the glowing sea. The *Wonder* remained several hundred feet above and to the rear of the other, the better to keep sight of her. Though the *Advance* was run at her top speed, her rival could not be shaken off. Clearly the *Wonder* was a speedy craft.

"It's too bad that we've got to fight them, as well as run the risk of lots of other troubles which are always present when sailing underwater," observed Mr. Damon, who wandered about the submarine like the nervous person he was. "Bless my shirt-studs! Can't we blow them up, or cripple them in some way? They have no right to go after our treasure."

"The problem is that they've got as much right as we have," declared Tom. "It goes to whoever reaches the wreck first. But what I don't like is their mean, sneaking way of doing it. If they went off on their own and looked for it I wouldn't say a word. But they expect us to lead them to the wreck, and then they'll most likely rob us if they can. That's not fair."

"Indeed, it isn't," agreed Captain Weston, "if I may be

allowed the expression. We ought to find some way of stopping them. If I'm not mistaken," he added quickly, looking from one of the portholes, "the phosphorescent glow is lessening. I believe we are running beyond that part of the ocean."

There was no doubt of it, the glow was growing less and less, and ten minutes later the *Advance* was speeding along through a sea as black as night. Then, to avoid running into some wreck, it was necessary to turn on the searchlight.

"Are they still after us?" asked Mr. Swift of his son as he emerged from the engine room where he had gone to make some adjustments to the machinery, with the hope of increasing the speed.

"I'll go look," volunteered the lad. He climbed up into the conning tower again, and for a moment, as he gazed back into the black waters swirling all about, he hoped that they had lost the *Wonder*. But a moment later his heart sank as he caught sight, through the liquid element, of the flickering gleams of another searchlight, the rays undulating through the sea.

"Still following," murmured the young inventor. "They're not going to give up. But we must make 'em—that's all."

He went down to report what he had seen, and a consultation was held. Captain Weston carefully studied

the charts of that part of the ocean, and finding that there was a great depth of water at hand, proposed a series of maneuvers.

"We can go up and down, shoot first to one side and then to the other," he explained. "Our best bet may be to shut off our lights, drop down to the bottom and rest there for a while. Perhaps, in that way, we can shake them off."

They tried it. The *Advance* was sent up until her conning tower was out of the water, and then she was suddenly forced down until she was but a few feet from the bottom. She darted to the left, to the right, and even doubled and went back over the course she had taken. But all to no avail. The *Wonder* that had proved to be as speedy, now seemed to anticipate their every move. Every maneuver of the *Advance* was duplicated. Their rival could not be shaken off.

This was kept up all night. When morning came, though only the clocks told it in the eternal night below the surface, the rival gold seekers were still on their trail.

"They won't give up," declared Mr. Swift hopelessly.

"No, we've got to race them for it, just as Berg proposed," admitted Tom. "But if they want a straightaway race we'll give it to 'em. Let's run her to the limit, Dad."

"That's what we've been doing, Tom."

"No, not exactly. We've been submerged a little too deep to get the best speed out of our craft. As the pressure increases it takes more and more power to push us through it. We've been swimming in syrup. Let's go a little nearer the surface, and give them the best race they'll ever have."

The *Advance* rose to within a few feet of the surface. Then, the race began, and a contest of speed as it was! With her propellers working to the limit, and every volt of electricity that was available forced into the drive plates, the *Advance* surged through the water. But the *Wonder* kept after her, matching her knot for knot. The course of the leading submarine was easy to trace now in the morning light which penetrated ten feet down.

"No use," remarked Tom again, when, after two hours, the *Wonder* was still close behind them. "Our only chance is that they may have a breakdown."

"Or run out of air, or something like that," added Captain Weston. "They are crowding us pretty close. I had no idea they could keep up this speed. If they don't look out," he went on as he looked from one of the aft observation windows, "they'll foul us, and—"

His remarks were interrupted by a jar to the *Advance*. She seemed to shiver and careened to one side. Then came another bump.

"Slow down!" cried the captain, rushing toward the pilothouse.

"What's the matter?" asked Tom, as he threw the engines and electrical machines out of gear. "Have we hit anything?"

"No. Something has hit us," cried the captain. "Their submarine rammed us."

"Rammed us!" repeated Mr. Swift. "Tom, bring out the electric cannon! They're trying to sink us! We'll have to fight them. Bring out the stern electric cannon and we'll make them wish they'd never followed us."



## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XVIII

#### THE ELECTRIC CANNON

THERE WAS much excitement aboard the *Advance*. The submarine came to a stop in the water, while the treasure-seekers waited anxiously for what was to follow. Would they be rammed again? This time, stationary as they were, and with the other boat coming swiftly on, a hole might be driven through the *Advance*, in spite of her powerful sides.

They didn't have long to wait. Again there came a jar, and once more the Swifts' boat careened. But the blow was a glancing one and, fortunately, did little damage.

"They certainly must be trying to sink us," agreed Captain Weston. "Come, Tom, we'll take a look from the stern and see what they're up to."

"And get that stern shock gun ready to fire," repeated Mr. Swift. "We must protect ourselves in case they take to the water. Mr. Sharp and I will go to the bow. There is no telling what they may do. They're desperate, and may ram us from in front."

Tom and the captain hurried aft.

The shock gun was designed along the same lines as a portable shocking device Tom had built to ward off the patent thieves a few months earlier. Where Tom's used a pair of electrodes on the device to course about 600 volts into an attacker, the *Advance* sported a gun that fired either barbed or magnetic electrodes attached to the boat's electrical system.

Marine life such as sharks or even larger fish of prey could be pierced by the barbs and shocked into submission or even to death.

Metal boats and submarines could have thousands of volts pumped into them incapacitating all but the more thoroughly-insulated electrical equipment.

Through the thick plate-glass windows Tom and Captain Weston could see the blunt nose of the *Wonder* not far away, the rival submarine having come to a halt.

There she lay, black and silent, like some monster fish waiting to devour its victim.

"There doesn't appear to be much damage done back here," observed Tom. "No leaks. Guess they didn't rupture us."

"Could it be due to an accident that they rammed us?" asked the captain.

"Hardly. They wouldn't have done it if they hadn't followed us so close, and they hit us twice," was the opinion of the young inventor. "That's no accident. We've got to stop 'em."

"What is this cannon your father speaks of?"

"Why, it's almost like a regular cannon. It fires a solid ball weighing about twenty-five pounds, but instead of powder, which would hardly do underwater, and instead of compressed air, which is used in the torpedo tubes of the Government submarines, we use a current of electricity. Sort of like the drive plates that push us through the water. Magnetic forces move the ball faster and faster until it exits the gun at over five hundred miles per hour. It forces the cannon ball out with great energy. Even underwater, it should travel a few hundred feet before dropping. At this close range it could puncture their hull."

"I wonder what they will do next?" observed the

captain, peering through a porthole.

"We can soon find out," replied the youth. "We'll go forward, and if they try to follow I'm going to fire on them."

"Suppose you sink them?"

"I won't fire to do that, only to disable them. They brought it on themselves. We can't risk having them damage or possibly kill us. Help me with the cannon, will you please, captain?"

The electric cannon was a long, steel tube in the aft part of the submarine. It projected a slight distance from the sides of the ship, and by an ingenious arrangement could be swung around in a ball and socket joint, thus enabling it to shoot in almost any direction.

It was the work of but a minute to get it ready and, with the muzzle pointing toward the *Wonder*, Tom adjusted the electric wires and inserted the solid shot.

"Now we're prepared for them!" he cried. "I think a good plan will be to start ahead, and if they try to follow or ram us, to fire on them"

"Correct," spoke Captain Weston.

Tom called forward to tell his father of this plan.

"We'll do it!" cried Mr. Swift. "Go ahead, Mr. Sharp, and we'll see if those scoundrels follow."

The young inventor turned on the electric cannon. There was a whirl of machinery, and the *Advance* moved forward. She increased her speed, and the two watchers in the stern looked anxiously out of the windows to see what their rivals would do.

For a moment no movement was noticeable on the part of the *Wonder*. Then, as those aboard her appeared to realize that the craft on which they depended to lead them to the sunken treasure was slipping away, word was given to follow. The boat of Berg and his employers shot after the *Advance*.

"Here they come!" cried Captain Weston. "They're going to ram us again!"

"Then I'm going to fire on them!" declared Tom savagely.

On came the *Wonder*, nearer and nearer. Her speed was rapidly increasing. Suddenly she bumped the *Advance*, and then veered off to one side.

"They're at it again!" cried Tom, and peering from the porthole he saw the *Wonder* shoot past the mouth of the electric cannon. "Here it goes!" he added.

He shoved over the firing lever. There was no explosive report, for the cannon was noiseless, but there was a slight jar as the projectile left the muzzle. The *Wonder* could be seen to heel over.

"You hit her! You hit her!" cried Captain Weston. "A good shot!"

"I was afraid she was too far past me when I pulled the lever," explained Tom. "She went like a flash."

"No, you caught her on the rudder," declared the captain. "I think you've put her out of business. Yes, they're rising to the surface."

The lad rapidly inserted another ball, and recharged the cannon. Then he peered out into the water, illuminated by the light of day overhead, as they were not far down. He could see the *Wonder* rising to the surface. Clearly something had happened.

"Maybe they're going to drop down on us from above, and try to sink us," suggested the youth, while he stood ready to fire again. "If they do—"

His words were interrupted by a slight jar throughout the submarine.

"What was that?" cried the captain.

"Dad fired the bow gun at them, but I don't believe he hit them," answered the young inventor.

"I wonder what damage I did? Guess we'll go to the surface to find out."

Clearly the *Wonder* had given up the fight for the time being. In fact, she had no weapon with which to respond

to a fusillade from her rival. Tom hastened forward and informed his father of what had happened.

"If her steering gear is out of order, we may have a chance to slip away," said Mr. Swift "We'll go up and see what we can learn."

A few minutes later Tom, his father and Captain Weston stepped from the conning tower, which was out of water, on to the little flat deck a short distance away lay the *Wonder*, and on her deck was Berg and a number of men, evidently members of the crew.

"Why did you fire on us?" shouted the agent angrily.

"Why did you ram us?" retorted Torn.

"Well, you've broken our rudder and disabled us," went on Berg, not answering the question. "You'll suffer for this! I'll have you arrested."

"You only got what you deserved," added Mr. Swift. "You were acting illegally, following us, and you tried to sink us by ramming my craft. We retaliated by firing on you."

"It was an accident, ramming you," said Berg. "We couldn't help it. I now demand that you help us make repairs."

"Well, you've got nerve!" cried Captain Weston, his eyes flashing. "Once is an accident. Twice is a bad coincidence. Three times is attempted murder! You could hang for

this."

Berg turned away, scowling, but did not reply. He began directing the crew what to do about the broken rudder.

"Come on," said Tom in a low voice, for sounds carry very easily over water. "Let's get below and leave while we have a chance. They can't follow now, and we can get to the sunken treasure ahead of them."

"Good advice," commented his father. "Come, Captain Weston, we'll go below and close the conning tower."

Two minutes later the *Advance* sank from sight, the last glimpse Tom had of Berg and his men being a sight of them standing on the deck of their floating boat, gazing in the direction of their successful rival.

The *Wonder* was left behind, while Tom and his friends were soon once more speeding toward the treasure wreck.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XIX

#### CAPTURED

"DIVE DEEP," advised Captain Weston, as he stood beside Tom and Mr. Swift in the pilothouse. "As far as you can manage her, and then onward. We'll take no more chances with these fellows."

"The only trouble is," replied the young inventor, "that the deeper we go the slower we have to travel. The water is so dense that it holds us back."

"Well, there is no special need of hurrying now," went on the sailor. "No one is following you, and two or three

days difference in reaching the wreck will not amount to anything."

"Unless they repair their rudder, and take after us again," suggested Mr. Swift.

"They're not very likely to do that," was the captain's opinion. "It was more by luck than good management that they picked us up before. Now, having to delay to repair their steering gear, while we can go as deep as we please and speed ahead, it is practically impossible for them to catch up to us. No, I believe we have nothing to fear from them."

As they maneuvered southward, Tom took his father aside. "Dad? Were you shooting to hit them back there?"

"Yes, I was. I was so angry at their third ramming that I aimed a shot right at their conning tower. I am not sure why it missed. Could you check on the forward cannon for me?"

Tom checked the gun out and discovered that the aiming mechanism had been bent. "Unless somebody like Andy Foger did it when he snuck aboard, then it must have happened when we got rammed," he thought.

It was much different from sailing along in the airship, Tom thought, for there was no blue sky and fleecy clouds to see, and they could not look down and observe, far below them, cities and villages. Nor could they breathe

the bracing atmosphere of the upper regions.

But if there was lack of the rarefied air of the clouds, there was no lack of fresh atmosphere. The big tanks carried a large supply, and whenever more was needed the oxygen machine would supply it.

As there was no need to remain underwater for any great stretch of time, it was their practice to rise every day and renew the air supply as they scooted along on the surface for awhile. They also speed along periodically with only the conning tower out, in order to afford a view, and to enable Captain Weston to take observations.

Care was always exercised to make sure no ships were in sight when emerging on the surface, for the gold seekers did not want to be hailed and questioned by inquisitive persons.

It was about four days after the disabling of the rival submarine, and the *Advance* was speeding along about a mile and a half underwater. Tom was in the pilothouse with Captain Weston, Mr. Damon was at his favorite pastime of looking out of the glass side windows into the ocean and its wonders, and Mr. Swift and the balloonists were, as usual, in the engine room.

"How near do you calculate we are to the sunken wreck?" asked Tom of his companion.

"Well, at the position calculation we made yesterday, we

are within about a thousand miles of it now. We ought to reach it in four more days, if we don't have any accidents."

"And how deep do you think it is?" went on the lad.

"Well, I'm afraid it has to be pretty close to two miles, if not more. It's quite a depth, and of course impossible for ordinary divers to reach. But it will be possible to get to it in this submarine and in the strong diving suits your father has invented. Yes, I don't anticipate much trouble in getting out the gold once we reach the wreck of course —"

The captain's remark was not finished. From the engine room there came a startled shout, "Tom! Tom! Your father is hurt! Come here, quick!"

"Take the wheel!" cried the lad to the captain. He jumped from the seat and ran aft. It was John's voice he had heard.

Arriving in the engine room, Tom saw his father doubled up over a dynamo. To one side, his hand clutching a copper switch, stood John.

"What's the matter?" shouted the lad.

"He's held there by electricity," replied the balloonist. "The wires are crossed."

"Why don't you shut off the current?" demanded the youth, as he prepared to pull his parent from the whirring machine. Then he hesitated. he could see something in his

friend's eyes that indicated trouble. Plus, Tom feared that he might complete a circuit and would be glued fast by the terrible current, and so be unable to help Mr. Swift.

"I'm stuck here, too," replied the balloonist. "I started to cut out the current at this switch, but there's a short circuit somewhere, and I can't let go. Quick, shut off all power at the main switchboard forward."

Tom realized that this was the only thing to do. He ran forward and with a yank cut out all the electric wires. With a sigh of relief John pulled his hands from the copper where he had been held fast as if by some powerful magnet, his muscles cramped by the current. Fortunately the electricity was of low voltage, and he was not burned.

The body of Mr. Swift toppled backward from the dynamo, as Tom sprang to reach his father.

"He's dead!" he cried, as he saw the pale face and the closed eyes.

"No, only badly shocked, I hope," spoke John. "But we must get him to the fresh air at once. Start the tank pumps. We'll rise to the surface."

The youth needed no second bidding. Once more turning on the electric current, he set the powerful pumps in motion and the submarine began to rise. Then, aided by Captain Weston and Mr. Damon, the young inventor carried his father to a couch in the main cabin. John took

charge of the machinery.

Spirits of ammonia, a restorative for fainting victims, were held under his nose. There was a flutter of the eyelids of the aged inventor and he suddenly inhaled sharply.

"I think he'll come around all right," said the sailor kindly, as he saw Tom's growing panic. "Fresh air will be the thing for him. We'll be on the surface in a minute."

Up shot the *Advance*, and John stood ready to open the conning tower as soon as it came out of water. Mr. Swift seemed to be rapidly reviving. With a bound the submarine, forced upward from the great depth, fairly shot out of the water. There was a clanking sound as the aeronaut opened the airtight door of the tower, and a breath of fresh air came in.

"Can you walk, Dad, or shall we carry you?" asked Tom solicitously.

"Oh, I—I'm feeling better now," was the inventor's reply. "I'll soon be all right when I get out on deck. My foot slipped as I was adjusting a wire that had gotten out of order, and I fell so that I received a large part of the current. I'm glad I was not seriously burned." He lifted his shirt up to show Tom that he had received only a slight reddening of the skin. "Was John hurt? I saw him run to the switch just before I lost consciousness."

"No, I'm all right," answered the balloonist. "But let us to get you out to the fresh air. You'll feel much better then."

Mr. Swift managed to walk slowly to the ladder leading to the conning tower, and from there up to the deck. The others followed him. As they emerged from the submarine they uttered a cry of astonishment.

There, not one hundred yards away, was a great warship, flying a flag that Tom recognized as that of Brazil. The cruiser was lying off a small island, and all about were small boats, filled with natives, who seemed to be bringing supplies from land to the ship. At the unexpected sight of the submarine, bobbing up from the bottom of the ocean, the natives uttered cries of fright. The attention of those on the warship was attracted, and the bridge and rails were lined with curious officers and men.

"It's a good thing we didn't come up under that ship," observed Tom. "They would have thought we were trying to torpedo her. Do you feel better, Dad?" he asked, his wonder over the sight of the big vessel temporarily eclipsed in his anxiety for his parent.

"Oh, yes, much better. I'm all right now. But I wish we hadn't exposed ourselves to these people. They may demand to know where we are going, and Brazil is too near Uruguay to make it safe to mention our mission.

They may guess it, however, from having read of the wreck, and probably about our departure."

"Oh, I guess it will be all right," replied Captain Weston. "We can tell them we are on a pleasure trip. That's true enough. It would give us great pleasure to find that gold."

"There's a boat, with some officers in it to judge by the amount of gold lace on them, putting off from the ship," remarked John.

"Ha! Yes! Evidently they intend to pay us a formal visit," observed Mr. Damon. "Bless my gaiters, though. I'm not dressed to receive company. I think I'll put on my dress suit."

"It's too late," advised Tom. "They'll be here in a minute."

Urged on by the strong arms of the Brazilian sailors who manned the oars, the boat, containing several officers, neared the floating submarine rapidly.

"Ahoy theer!" called an officer in the bow, his accent betraying his unfamiliarity with the English language. "What craft are you?"

"Submarine, *Advance*, from New Jersey," replied Tom. "Who are you?"

"Brazilian cruiser *San Paulo*," was the reply. "Wheer are you bound?" went on the officer.



"On pleasure," answered Captain Weston quickly. "But why do you ask? We are an American vessel, sailing under American colors. Is this Brazilian territory?"

"This island is—yes—along with the surrounding waters," came back the answer, and by this time the small boat was at the side of the submarine. Several of the rowers grabbed the side of the submarine. Soon, the four officers had scrambled to the deck.

With a flourish, the officer who had done the questioning drew his sword. Waving it in the air with a dramatic gesture, he exclaimed, "You're our prisoners! Resist and my men shall cut you down like dogs! Agárrelos! Seize them, men!"

The sailors sprang forward, each one stationing himself at the side of one of the *Advance's* crew, and grasping an arm.

"What does this mean?" cried Captain Weston indignantly. "If this is a joke, you're carrying it too far. If you're in earnest, let me warn you against interfering with Americans!"

"We know what we air doing," was the answer from the officer.

The sailor who had hold of Captain Weston tried to secure a tighter grip. The captain turned suddenly, and seized the man about the waist. With an exercise of

tremendous strength he hurled the unwanted man over his head and into the sea, the man making a great splash.

"That's the way I'll treat anyone else who dares lay a hand on me!" shouted the captain, who was transformed from a mild-mannered individual into an angry, modern giant. There was a gasp of astonishment at his feat, as the ducked sailor crawled back into the small boat. And he did not again venture on the deck of the submarine.

"Seize them, men!" cried the gold-laced officer again, and this time he and his fellows, including the crew, crowded so closely around Tom and his friends that they could do nothing. Even Captain Weston found it impossible to offer any resistance, for three men grabbed hold of him but his spirit was still a fighting one, and he struggled desperately but uselessly.

"How dare you do this?" he cried.

"Yes," added Tom, "what right have you to interfere with us?"

"Every right," declared the gold-laced officer. "You air in Brazilian territory, and I arrest you."

"What for?" demanded John.

"Because your ship is an American submarine, and we have received word that you intend to damage our shipping, and may try to torpedo our warships. I believe you tried to disable us a little while ago, but failed. We

consider that an act of war and you will be treated accordingly. Take them on board the *San Paulo*," the officer went on, turning to his aides. "We'll try them by court-martial here. Some of you remain and guard this submarine. We will teach these Americans a lesson."

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XX

#### DOOMED TO DEATH

THERE WAS NO room on the small deck of the submarine to make a stand against the officers and crew of the Brazilian warship. In fact, the capture of the gold seekers had been effected so suddenly that their astonishment almost deprived them of the power to think clearly.

At another command from the officer, who was addressed as Admiral Fanchetti, several of the sailors began to lead Tom and his friends toward their small boat.

"Do you feel all right, Dad?" inquired the lad anxiously, as he looked at his parent. "These scoundrels have no right to treat us like this."

"Yes, Tom, I'm all right as far as the electric shock is concerned, but I don't like to be handled in this fashion."

"We ought not to submit!" burst out Mr. Damon. "Bless the stars and stripes! We ought to fight."

"There's no chance," said John. "We are right under the guns of the ship. They could sink us with one shot. I guess we'll have to give in for the time being."

"It is most unpleasant, if I may be allowed the expression," commented Captain Weston mildly. He seemed to have lost his sudden anger, but there was a steely glint in his eyes, and a grim, set look around his mouth that showed his temper was kept under control only by an effort. It boded no good to the sailors who had hold of the captain if he should once get loose, and it was noticed that they were on their guard.

As for Tom, he submitted quietly to the two Brazilians who had hold of either arm, and Mr. Swift was held by only one, for it was seen that he was feeble.

"Into the boat with them!" cried Admiral Fanchetti. "And guard them well, Lieutenant Drascalo, for I heard them plotting to escape," and the admiral signaled to a younger officer, who was in charge of the men guarding

the prisoners.

"Lieutenant Drascalo, eh?" murmured Mr. Damon. "I think they made a mistake naming him. It ought to be Rascalo. He looks like a rascal."

"Silenceo!" exclaimed the lieutenant, scowling at the odd character.

"Bless my spark plug! He's a regular fire-eater!" went on Mr. Damon, who appeared to have fully recovered his spirits.

"Silenceo!" cried the lieutenant, scowling again, but Mr. Damon did not appear to mind.

Admiral Fanchetti and several others of the gold-laced officers remained aboard the submarine, while Tom and his friends were hustled into the small boat and rowed toward the warship.

"I hope they don't damage our craft," murmured the young inventor, as he saw the admiral enter the conning tower.

"If they do, we'll complain to the United States consul and demand damages," said Mr. Swift.

"I'm afraid we won't have a chance to communicate with the consul," remarked Captain Weston.

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Damon. "Bless my shoelaces, but will these scoundrels—"

"Silenceo!" cried Lieutenant Drascalo quickly. "Dogs of Americans, do you wish to insult us?"

"Impossible. You wouldn't appreciate a good, genuine United States insult," murmured Tom under his breath.

"What I mean," went on the captain, "is that these people may carry the proceedings off with no authorization. You heard the admiral speak of a court-martial?"

"Would they dare do that?" inquired John.

"They would dare anything in this part of the world, I'm afraid," resumed Captain Weston. "I think I see their plan, though. This admiral is newly in command; his overly ornate and gaudy uniform shows that he is trying to make a name for himself, and he seizes on our submarine as an excuse to show his assumed power. He can send word to his Government that he destroyed a torpedo craft that sought to wreck his ship. Thus he will acquire a reputation."

"But would his Government support him in such a hostile act against the United States, a friendly nation?" asked Tom.

"Oh, he would not claim to have acted against the United States as a power. He would say that it was a private submarine, and, as a matter of fact, it is. While we are under the protection of the stars and stripes, our

vessel is not a Government-owned or sponsored one," and Captain Weston spoke the last in a low voice, so the scowling lieutenant could not hear.

"What will they do with us?" inquired Mr. Swift.

"Have some sort of a court-martial, perhaps," went on the captain, "and confiscate our craft. Then they will send us back home, I expect for they would not dare harm us."

"But take our submarine!" cried Tom. "The villains—"

"Silenceo!" shouted Lieutenant Drascalo and he drew his sword although Tom could see that his arm was shaking slightly. He could not tell if this was from the weight of the weapon or put of fear or nerves.

By this time the small boat was under the big guns of the *San Paulo*, and the prisoners were ordered, in broken English, to climb up a companion ladder that hung over the side. In a short time they were on deck, amid a crowd of sailors, and they could see the rowboat going back to bring off the admiral, who signaled from the submarine.

Tom and his friends were taken below to a bunkroom that looked like a prison, and there, a little later, they were visited by Admiral Fanchetti and several officers.

"You will be tried at once," said the admiral. "I have examined your submarine and I find she carries two torpedo tubes. It is a wonder you did not sink me at once."

"Those are not torpedo tubes!" cried Tom, unable to keep silent, though Captain Weston motioned him to do so.

"I know torpedo tubes when I see them," declared the admiral. "I consider I had a very narrow escape. Your country is fortunate that mine does not declare war against it for this act. But I take it you are acting privately, for you fly no flag, though you claim to be from the United States."

"There's no place for a flag on the submarine," went on Tom. "What good would it be underwater?"

"Silenceo!" cried Lieutenant Drascalo, the admonition to silence seeming to be the only command of which he was capable.

"I shall confiscate your craft for my Government," went on the admiral, "and shall punish you as the court-martial may direct. You will be tried at once."

"But, we are not military," said Mr. Swift weakly.

It was useless for the prisoners to protest. Matters were carried with a high hand. They were to be allowed a spokesman, and Captain Weston, who understood Spanish, was selected. But the defense was a farce, for he was scarcely listened to.

Several officers testified before the admiral, who was judge, that they had seen the submarine rise out of the

water almost under the prow of the *San Paulo*. It was presented that the *Advance* had tried to wreck the warship, but had failed. In vain, Captain Weston and the others told of the reason for their rapid ascent from the ocean depths—that Mr. Swift had been shocked, and needed fresh air.

Their story was dismissed.

"We have heard enough!" suddenly exclaimed the admiral. "The evidence against you is over-whelming—er—what you Americans call conclusive," and he was speaking then in broken English. "I find you guilty, and the sentence of this court-martial is that you be shot at sunrise, three days from today!"

"Shot!" cried Captain Weston, staggering back at this unexpected sentence. His companions turned white, and Mr. Swift leaned against his son for support.

"Bless my stars! Of all the inhuman—" began Mr. Damon.

"Silenceo!" shouted the lieutenant, waving his sword once more.

"You will be shot," proceeded the admiral. "Is not that the verdict of the honorable court?" he asked, looking at his fellow officers. They all nodded gravely.

"But look here!" objected Captain Weston. "You don't dare do that! We are citizens of the United States, and—"

"I consider you no better than pirates," interrupted the admiral. "You have an armed submarine—a submarine with torpedo tubes. You invade our harbor with it, and come up almost under my ship. You have forfeited your right to the protection of your country, and I have no fear on that score. You will be shot in three days. That is all. Remove the prisoners."

Protests were in vain, and it was equally useless to struggle. The prisoners were taken out on deck, for which they were thankful, for the interior of the ship was stuffy and hot, the weather being intensely disagreeable. They were told to keep within a certain space on deck, and a guard of armed sailors was stationed near them. From where they were they could see their submarine floating on the surface of the little bay, with several Brazilians on the small deck. The *Advance* had been anchored, and was surrounded by a flotilla of the native boats, the brown-skinned paddlers gazing curiously at the odd craft.

"Well, this is miserable luck!" murmured Tom. "How do you feel, Dad?"

"As well as can be expected under the circumstances," was the reply. "What do you think about this, Captain Weston?"

"Not very much, if I may be allowed the expression," was the answer.

"Do you think they dare carry out that threat?" asked

John.

The captain shrugged his shoulders. "I hope it is only a bluff," he replied, "made to scare us so we will consent to giving up the submarine, which they have no right to confiscate. But these fellows look ugly enough for anything," he went on. "And full of false bravado enough to be stupid."

"Then if there's any chance of them attempting to carry it out," spoke Tom, "we've got to do something."

"Bless my gizzard, of course!" exclaimed Mr. Damon. "But what? That's the question. To be shot! Why, that's a terrible threat! The villains—"

"Silenceo!" shouted Lieutenant Drascalo, coming up behind them at that moment.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XXI

#### THE ESCAPE

EVENTS HAD happened so quickly that day that the gold-hunters could scarcely comprehend them. It seemed only a short time since Mr. Swift had been discovered lying disabled on the dynamo, and what had transpired since seemed to have taken place in a few minutes, though it was, in reality, several hours. This was made worse by the feeling of hunger on the part of Tom and his friends.

"I wonder if they're going to starve us?" asked John, when the irate lieutenant was beyond hearing. "It's not fair to make us go hungry and shoot us in the bargain."

"That's so, they ought to feed us," put in Tom. As yet neither he nor the others fully comprehended the meaning of the sentence passed on them.

From where they stood on deck they could look off to the little island. Small boats manned by natives were constantly putting off, bringing supplies to the ship. The place appeared to be a sort of calling station for Brazilian warships, where they could get fresh water and fruit and other food.

From the island the gaze of the adventurers wandered to the submarine, which lay not far away. They were chagrined to see several of the bolder natives clambering over the deck.

"I hope they keep out of the interior," commented Tom. "If they get to pulling or hauling on the levers and wheels they may open the tanks and sink her, with the conning tower open."

"Better that, perhaps, than to have her fall into the hands of a foreign power," commented Captain Weston. "Besides, I don't see that it's going to matter much to us what becomes of her after we're—"

He did not finish, but every one knew what he meant, and a grim silence fell upon the little group.

A welcome diversion came in the shape of three sailors bearing trays of food which were placed on the deck in

front of the prisoners who were sitting or lying in the shade of an awning, for the sun was very hot.

"Ha! Bless my napkin ring!" cried Mr. Damon with only a hint of his former gaiety. "Here's a meal, at all events. They don't intend to starve us. Eat hearty, everyone."

"Yes, we need to keep up our strength," observed Captain Weston.

"Why?" inquired John.

"Because we're going to try to escape!" exclaimed Tom in a low voice, when the sailors who had brought the food had gone. "Isn't that what you mean, Captain?"

"Exactly. We'll try to give these villains the slip, and we'll need all our strength and wits to do it. We'll wait until night, and see what we can do."

"But where will we escape to?" asked Mr. Swift. "The island will afford no shelter, and—"

"No, but our submarine will," went on the sailor.

"It's in the possession of the Brazilians," objected Tom.

"Once I get aboard the *Advance* twenty of those brown-skinned villains won't keep me prisoner," declared Captain Weston fiercely. "If we can only slip away from here, get into a small boat, or even swim to the submarine, I'll make those blaggards on board her think a hurricane has broken loose."

"Yes, and I'll help," said Mr. Damon.

"Me, too," added Tom and the balloonist in unison.

"That's the way to talk," commented the captain. "Now let's eat, for I see that upstart lieutenant coming this way, and we mustn't appear to be plotting, or he'll be suspicious."

The day passed slowly, and though the prisoners seemed to be allowed considerable liberty, they soon found that it was limited. Once Tom walked some distance from that portion of the deck where he and the others had been told to remain. A sailor with a gun ordered him back. Nor could they approach the rails without being directed, harshly enough at times, to move back amidships.

As night approached the gold seekers were on the alert for any chance that might offer to slip away, or even attack their guard, but the number of Brazilians around them was doubled in the evening. After supper, which was served to them on deck by the light of swinging lanterns, they were taken below and locked in the stuffy cabin. They looked helplessly at each other.

"Don't give up," advised Captain Weston. "It's a long night. We may be able to get out of here."

But this hope was in vain. Several times he and Tom, thinking the guards outside the cabin were asleep, tried to



force the lock of the door with their pocket knives, which had not been taken from them. But one of the sailors was aroused each time by the noise and looked in through a barred window, so they had to give it up. Slowly the night passed, and morning found the prisoners pale, tired and discouraged. They were brought up on deck again, for which they were thankful. It was only marginally better than inside the ship, but at least the tropical climate provided a small breeze unavailable below.

During the day they saw Admiral Fanchetti and several of his officers being rowed out to visit the submarine. They went below through the opened conning tower, and were gone some time.

"I hope they don't disturb any of the machinery," remarked Mr. Swift. "That could easily do great damage."

Admiral Fanchetti seemed much pleased with himself when he returned from his visit to the submarine.

"You have a fine craft," he said to the prisoners. "Or, rather, you had one. My Government now owns it. It seems a pity to shoot such good boat builders, but you are too dangerous to be allowed to go free."

If there had been any doubt in the minds of Tom and his friends that the sentence of the court-martial was only for effect, it was dispelled that day. A firing squad was mustered in plain view of them, and the men were put through their paces by Lieutenant Drascalò. He had them

load, aim and fire blank cartridges at an imaginary line of prisoners. Tom could not repress a shudder as he noted the leveled rifles, and saw the fire and smoke spurt from the muzzles.

"Thus we shall do to you at sunrise tomorrow," said the lieutenant, grinning, as he once more had his men practice their grim work.

"And, you'll get yours before that," grumbled the captain.

It seemed hotter than ever that day. The sun was fairly broiling, and there was a curious haziness and stillness to the air. They all noticed that the sailors on the *San Paulo* were busy making fast all loose articles on deck with extra lashings, and hatch coverings were doubly secured.

"What do you suppose they are up to?" asked Tom of Captain Weston.

"I think it is coming on to blow," he replied, "and they don't want to be caught napping. They have some fearful storms down in this region at this time of the year," he stated looking toward the horizon, "and I think one is about due."

"I hope it doesn't wreck our submarine," spoke Mr. Swift. "They ought to close the hatch of the conning tower, for it won't take much of a sea to make her ship considerable water."

Admiral Fanchetti had thought of this, however, and as the afternoon wore away and the storm signs multiplied, he sent word to close the submarine. He left a few sailors aboard on guard.

"It's too hot to eat," observed Tom, when their lunch had been brought to them, and the others felt the same way about it. They managed to drink some cocoanut milk, prepared in a palatable fashion by the natives of the island, but then, much to their dismay, they were taken below again and locked in the cabin.

"Whew! But it certainly is miserably hot!" exclaimed Mr. Damon as he sat down on a couch and fanned himself with an open hand. "This is awful!"

"Yes, something is going to happen pretty soon," observed Captain Weston with a far-away look in his eyes. "The storm will break shortly, I think."

They sat languidly about the cabin. It was so oppressive that even the thought of the doom that awaited them in the morning could hardly seem worse than the terrible heat.

They could hear movements going on about the ship, movements which indicated that preparations were being made for something unusual. There was a rattling of a chain through a hawse hole, and Captain Weston remarked, "They're putting down another anchor. Admiral Fanchetti had better get away from the island,

though, unless he wants to be wrecked. He'll be blown ashore in less than no time. No cable or chain will hold against the type of storms they have here."

There came a period of silence. They all sat around the cell room lost in their individual thoughts. Their solitary thoughts were suddenly broken by a howl as if some wild beast were lurking just outside the ship.

"What's that?" cried Tom, springing up from where he was stretched out on the cabin floor.

"Only the wind," replied the captain. "The storm has arrived. Now we may get our chance for escape. Once we find our opportunity I hope we all can act as one." He looked meaningfully at Mr. Swift.

Barton Swift was a fairly frail man for his fifty years, but even a life spent in work sheds and not in exercise would not prevent him from rallying when the time came. He nodded to the captain. "We'll *all* be ready, sir."

The howling kept up, and within five minutes the ship began to rock. She would heel over to the leeward side and then slowly right herself before being caught by another gust of wind and repeating the process.

Soon, the ship was rocking as if on the open sea in a storm gale.

The wind increased, and they soon heard through an opened port in the bulkhead opposite their prisoners'

cabin, the dash of rain.

"It's going to be a regular hurricane!" exclaimed the captain. "I wonder if the anchors will hold?"

"What about the submarine?" asked Mr. Swift anxiously.

"I haven't much fear for her. She lies so low in the water that the wind can't get much hold on her. I don't believe she'll drag her anchor."

Once more came a fierce burst of wind, and a heavier dash of rain. Then, suddenly above the outburst of the elements, there sounded a crash on deck. It was followed by excited cries.

"Something's happened!" yelled Tom. The prisoners gathered in a group in the middle of the cabin. The cries were repeated, and then came a rush of feet just outside the cabin door. In seconds the footsteps disappeared.

"Our guards! They're leaving!" shouted Tom.

"Right!" exclaimed Captain Weston. "Now's our chance! Come on! If we're going to escape we must do it now, while the storm is at its height, and all is in confusion. Come on!"

Tom tried the door. It was locked.

"One side!" shouted the captain, and this time he did not pause to say "by your leave." He rushed at the portal

on the run, and his shoulder struck it squarely. There was a splintering and crashing of wood, and the door burst open.

"Follow me!" cried the valiant sailor, and Tom and the others rushed after him. They could hear the wind howling more loudly than ever, and as they reached the deck the rain dashed into their faces with such violence that they could hardly see.

But they were aware that something disastrous had occurred. By the light of several lanterns swaying in the terrific blast they saw that one of the auxiliary masts had broken off near the deck.

It had fallen against the chart house, smashing it. A number of sailors were laboring to clear away the wreckage to get at the men trapped inside.

"Fortune favors us!" cried Captain Weston. "Come on! Make for the small boat. It's near the side ladder. We'll lower the boat and pull to the submarine."

There came a flash of lightning, and in its glare Tom saw something that caused him to cry out.

"Look!" he shouted. "The submarine. She's dragged her anchors!"

The *Advance* was much closer to the warship than she had been that afternoon. Captain Weston looked over the side.

"It's the *San Paulo* that's dragging her anchors, not the submarine!" he shouted. "We're bearing down on her! We must act quickly. Come on, we'll lower the boat!"

In the rush of wind and the dash of rain the prisoners crowded to the accommodation companion ladder, which was still over the side of the big ship. No one seemed to be noticing them, for Admiral Fanchetti was on the bridge, yelling orders for the clearing away of the wreckage.

But Lieutenant Drascalo, coming up from below at that moment, caught sight of the fleeing ones. Drawing his sword, he rushed at them, shouting, "The prisoners! The prisoners! They escaping!"

Captain Weston leaped toward the lieutenant, fists clenched and ready for action.

"Look out for his sword!" cried Tom. But the old sailor had no fear the weapon. Catching up a coil of rope, he cast it sharply at the lieutenant. It struck him in the chest, and he staggered back, lowering his sword.

Captain Weston leaped forward, and with a terrific blow sent Lieutenant Drascalo to the deck. After kicking the sword from the man's hand, he reached down and plucked the man from the deck with one hand and hurled him overboard.

"There!" cried the sailor. "I guess you won't yell 'Silenceo!' for awhile now."

The lieutenant began struggling and yelling something in Spanish. Captain Weston smiled and turned away, murmuring to himself, "Good. I'm glad you can't swim!"

There was a rush of Brazilians toward the group of prisoners. Tom caught one with a blow on the chin, and felled him, while Captain Weston disposed of two more. John and Mr. Damon managed to club one each with bits of rigging they found on the deck. The savage fighting of the Americans—who had their very lives hanging in the balance—was too much for the foreigners, and they drew back.

"Come on!" cried Captain Weston again. "The storm is getting worse. The warship will crash into the submarine in a few minutes. Her anchors aren't holding. I didn't think they would. Stupid mistake by a stupid landlubber!"

He made a dash for the ladder, and a glance showed him that the small boat was in the water at the foot of it. The craft had not been hoisted on the davits.

"Luck's with us at last!" cried Tom, seeing it as well. "Shall I help you, Dad?"

"No, I think I'm all right. Go ahead."

There came such a gust of wind that the *San Paulo* was heeled far over, and the wreck of the rolling mast crashed into the side of another deckhouse, splintering it. A crowd of sailors led by Admiral Fanchetti had renewed their

attempts at rushing the escaping prisoners, had to leap back out of the way of the rolling mast.

"Catch them! Don't let them get away!" begged the commander, but the sailors evidently had no desire to close in on the Americans.

Twice more the broken mast made the group jump and dodge, but it caught three of the sailors a harsh blow knocking them down and another directly into the admiral.

Through the rush of wind and rain Tom and his friends staggered down the ladder. It was hard work to maintain their footing, but they managed it. Thanks to the fairly high side of the ship, the water was comparatively calm under her lee. Though the small boat was bobbing about, they got aboard. The oars were in place, and in another moment they had shoved off from the landing stage that formed the foot of the accommodation ladder.

"Now for the *Advance!*" murmured Captain Weston.

"Come back! Come back, dogs of Americans!" cried a voice at the rail over their heads, and looking up, Tom saw Admiral Fanchetti. He had snatched a carbine from a marine, and was pointing it at his recent prisoners. He fired, the flash of the gun and a dazzling bolt of lightning coming at the same time. The thunder swallowed up the report of the carbine, and shooter's aim was put off by the blinding flash. Even so, the bullet whistled uncomfortable

close to Tom's head.

The blackness that followed the lightning shut out the view of everything for a few seconds, and when the next flash came the adventurers saw that they were close to their submarine.

A fusillade of shots sounded from the deck of the warship, but as the marines were poor marksmen at best, and as the swaying of the ship disconcerted them, our friends were in little danger.

They found themselves in quite a rough sea once they were beyond the protection of the side of the warship, but Captain Weston, who was rowing, knew how to manage a boat skillfully. He soon had the craft alongside the bobbing submarine.

"Get aboard, now, quick!" he cried.

They leaped to the small deck, casting the rowboat adrift. It was the work of but a moment to open the conning tower. As they started to descend they were met by several Brazilians coming up.

"Overboard with 'em!" yelled the captain. "Let them swim ashore or to their ship!"

With almost superhuman strength yanked the leaning sailor up and out of the hatch, and then he tossed over the side. Another sailor exited from a hatch on the small deck. He saw that he was outnumbered so he dove overboard

and set out for the small rowboat.

Another showed fight as first, but he soon climbed out and was sent to join his companion in the swirling water. The final man rushed came from the deck hatch and rushed at Tom, seeking to draw his sword. But the young inventor, with a neat left-hander, sent him to the deck. He rolled into the water and sank from view, but came sputtering to the surface seconds later. Tom was slightly relieved that he could be seen in the frequent lightning flashes swimming toward the warship that was now closer than ever to the submarine.

"Get inside and we'll dive below the surface!" called Tom. "Then we don't care what happens."

They closed the steel door of the conning tower. John went down the deck hatch and had it secured almost before his feet hit the floor below. As they made ready they heard the patter of bullets from carbines fired from the *San Paulo*.

Then came a violent tossing of the *Advance*; the waves were becoming higher as they caught the full force of the hurricane. It took but an instant to sever the cable attached to the anchor, which was one belonging to the warship. The *Advance* began drifting.

"Open the tanks, John!" cried Tom. "Captain Weston and I will steer. Once we get below we'll start the engines."

Amid a crash of thunder and dazzling flashes of lightning, the submarine began to sink. Tom, in the conning tower had a sight of the *San Paulo* as it drifted nearer and nearer under the influence of the mighty wind. As one bright flash came he saw Admiral Fanchetti leaning over the rail and gazing at the *Advance*.

A moment later the view faded from sight as the submarine sank below the surface of the troubled sea. She was tossed about for some time until deep enough to escape the surface motion. Waiting until she was far enough down so that her lights would not offer a mark for the guns of the warship, the electrics were switched on.

"We're safe now!" cried Tom, helping his father to his cabin. "They've got too much to attend to themselves to follow us now, even if they could. Shall we go ahead, Captain Weston?"

"I think so, yes, if I may be allowed to express my opinion," was the mild reply, in strange contrast to the strenuous work in which the captain had just been engaged. Although soaked with rain, the seaman showed no sign of exertion. Tom was amazed.

Tom called down the voice tube to John in the engine room, and in a few seconds the *Advance* was speeding away from the island, going under and away from the hostile vessel.

Deep as she was now, there was no sign of the

hurricane. In the peaceful depths she was once more speeding toward the sunken treasure.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XXII

#### THE WRECK

"WELL," remarked Mr. Damon, as the submarine hurled herself forward through the ocean, "I guess that firing squad will have something else to do tomorrow morning besides aiming those rifles at us."

"Yes, indeed," agreed Tom. "They'll be lucky if they save their ship. I've never been in so much wind. Wherever the rain hit stings like the dickens!"

"You're right," put in Captain Weston. "When they get a hurricane down in this region it's no pussy cat, it roars

and strikes like a hungry lion. By Neptune's beard but they were a mighty careless bunch of sailors. The idea of leaving the ladder over the side, and the boat in the water. Sloppy!"

"A good thing for us, though," was Tom's opinion.

"Indeed it was," came from the captain. "But as long as we are safe now I think we'd better take a look around the craft to see if those goons did any damage. They can't have done much, I suppose, or she wouldn't be running so smoothly. Why don't you go take a look, Tom, and ask your father and Mr. Sharp what they think. I'll steer for a little, until we get well away from the island."

The young inventor found his father and the balloonist busy in the engine room. Mr. Swift had already begun an inspection of the machinery, and so far found that it had not been disturbed. A further inspection showed that no damage had been done by the foreign guard men that had been in temporary possession of the *Advance*, though the sailors had made a mess of the cabins, and had broken into the food lockers, helping themselves plentifully. But Mr. Swift had insisted on bringing along much more than they required for the gold-seeking trip, so there was still enough for them.

"You'd never know there was a storm raging up above," observed Tom as he rejoined Captain Weston in the lower pilothouse, where he was piloting the craft. "It's as still

and peaceful down here as one could ever wish."

"Yes, the extreme depths are seldom disturbed by a surface storm. But we are over a mile deep now," the captain told him. "I sent her down a little while you were gone, as I think she rides a little more steadily."

All that night they sped forward, surrounded by darkness and the occasional glimpse of strange and mysterious fish. Early that morning, when Mr. Swift had taken the helm for a few hours, a giant squid could be seen jetting along in front of them.

Fearing that the deep sea monster might hit them, he slowed the craft. The curious tentacled monster veered toward the *Advance* and brushed its arms along the port side. Touching one of the electrified plates it jerked away and shot out of sight.

The next day, rising to the surface to take a position reading, they found no traces of the storm, which had blown itself out. Using his telescope, Captain Weston slowly swept the horizon three times from atop the conning tower. They were now several hundred miles away from the hostile warship, and there was not a vessel in sight on the broad expanse of blue ocean.

The air tanks were refilled, and all of the air in the submarine was recycled bringing in the fresh smell of the ocean around them.



After sailing along on the surface for an hour or two, the submarine was again sent below. Captain Weston had opted to remain perched on the conning tower's small deck. As soon as he sighted the smoke of a distant steamer in his telescope, he sang down the hatchway, "Surface contact on the aft starboard quarter."

"As long as it isn't the *Wonder*, we're all right," said Tom coming up the ladder to take a look. "Still, we don't want to answer a lot of questions about ourselves and our object." They left the conning tower and closed up the boat. He told John to take the submarine down a few hundred feet.

"No. I fancy the *Wonder* will give up the search," remarked the captain, as the *Advance* was sinking to the depths.

"We must be getting pretty near to the end of our journey ourselves," ventured the young inventor.

"We are within five hundred miles of the intersection of the forty-fifth parallel and the fifty-second meridian," said the captain. "That's as near as I could locate the wreck. Once we reach that point we will have to search around underwater. We're unlikely to find that the crew ejected any buoys to mark the spot before they abandoned her."

It was two days later, after uneventful sailing, partly on the surface, and partly submerged, that Captain Weston, taking a noon observation, announced, "We're here!"

"Do you mean at the wreck?" asked Mr. Swift eagerly.

"We're at the place where she is supposed to lie, in about two miles of water," replied the captain. "We are quite a distance off the coast of Uruguay, about opposite the harbor of Rio de La Plata. From now on we shall have to either devise a specific search pattern or nose about underwater, and trust to luck."

All agreed that a pattern of search would be more effective than just zigging and zagging around at depths where visibility could be measured in millimeters. Being the best suited for the task, the captain, Mr. Swift and John set a chart of the local area on the main table and spend several hours developing a methodology.

They knew that the searchlight on the bow and stern could be swiveled about 75 degrees to each side. Added to the searchlight on, say, the starboard side, the accumulated light could be expected to pierce about one hundred feet away from the boat. So, they charted out an expanding circular search pattern that would see them making ever-extending trips around a center point until they would have covered about two square miles of the seabed in just over five days.

Their search would be made at about one-quarter knot per hour. Any faster and the captain said that he feared they might miss small clues.

They hoped that their search hit success in that time,

because the near-exponential nature of continuing the search out further would mean an additional thirteen days to double that search area.

With her air tanks filled to their capacity, and Tom having seen that the oxygen machine and other apparatus was in perfect working order, the submarine was sent below on her search.

Though they were in the neighborhood of the wreck, the adventurers realized they might still have to do considerable searching before locating it. Lower and lower they sank into the depths of the sea. As they neared the ten thousand foot level Mr. Swift suggested pausing to allow the submarine to acclimate to the pressure.

After an hour they continued down and down, until they were deeper than they had ever gone before. The pressure was tremendous, but the steel sides of the *Advance* withstood it.

Then began a search that lasted nearly a week. Back and forth they cruised, around in great circles with the powerful searchlights focused to disclose the sunken treasure ship. Once Tom, who was peering out into the depths from the conning tower, thought he had seen the remains of the *Boldero*. When a misty shape loomed up in front of the submarine, and he signaled for a quick stop. It was a wreck, but a close look showed that it had been on the ocean bed for many years; only a few of the largest

timbers remained of what had been a great ship.

Disappointed, Tom called for forward speed again, and the current was sent into the great electric plates that pulled and pushed the submarine forward.

For two days more nothing happened. They searched around under the green waters, on the alert for the first sign, but they saw nothing. Great fish darted or languidly moved about them, sometimes in small schools racing in circles around the *Advance*. The adventurers found several deep, dark holes on the ocean floor—great ocean caverns or possibly the remains of ancient volcanoes.

Many times their track required that they skirt immense rocks and strange dirt mounds.

Once a great octopus tried to do battle with the submarine and crush it in its snaky arms. Tom saw the great white body, with saucer-shaped eyes, in the path of light and called to John to man the forward electric gun. The twin barbs entered the giant body just as John shot high voltage down the connecting wires. The creature turned a dark color and swung its arms wildly about, but within seconds, it died.

They were beginning to despair of finding anything when a full week had passed and they were seemingly as far from the wreck as ever. They went to the surface that night to enable Captain Weston to take another celestial observation. It only confirmed their position, and showed

that they were in the right vicinity. But it was like looking for a glass needle in a water haystack.

"Well, we'll try again," said Mr. Swift, as they sank once more beneath the surface.

It was toward the evening on the second day after this, that Tom, on duty in the conning tower, spotted a black shape looming up in front of the submarine, the searchlight revealing it to him far enough away so that he could steer to avoid it. At first he thought that it was another huge rock—they had been passing many of them in the last few hours—but the peculiar shape of it soon convinced him that this must be something else.

Tom slowed to a snail's pace and crept the submarine forward. The shape came more clearly into view as the submarine approached it. Suddenly, out in the illumination from the searchlights, the young inventor saw the steel sides of a ship. It looked like some type of steamer. His heart gave a great thump, but he would not call out yet, fearing that it might be some other vessel than the one containing the treasure.

He steered the *Advance* in a wide circle around it. As he swept past the bow he saw in big letters near the sharp prow the word, *Boldero*!

"The wreck! The wreck!" he cried, his voice ringing through the craft from end to end. "We've found the wreck at last!"

"Are you sure?" cried his father, hurrying to his son, Captain Weston following.

"Positive," answered the lad. The submarine was almost at a stop now, and Tom turned her around so the bow faced the front of the wreck. By carefully controlling the drive places he was able to maneuver the submarine around to one side of the ship, keeping the nose pointed right at it. They had a good view of the sunken ship.

It seemed to be intact with no gaping holes in her sides. The rough seas had obviously battered her savagely on her port side evidenced by the bent hull plates, but they had mostly held. Tom pointed out three bent plates at what would have been her waterline that showed signs of missing rivets. He postulated that water had entered the ship at this point faster than they could pump it out, allowing her to sink gradually.

"At last," murmured Mr. Swift. He was breathing in deep strong breaths. "Can it be possible we are about to get the treasure?"

"That's the *Boldero*, all right," affirmed Captain Weston. "I recognize her, even if the name wasn't on her bow. Settle right down on the bottom, Tom, and we'll get out the diving suits and go out to look her over."

The submarine settled to the ocean bed. Tom glanced at the depth gauge. It showed over 2,200 fathoms—two and a half miles. Would they be able to venture out into water

of such enormous pressure in the comparatively frail diving suits, and wrest the gold from the wreck? It was a serious question.

The *Advance* came to a stop. In front of her loomed the great bulk of the *Boldero*, vague and shadowy in the flickering gleam of the searchlight.

They joined Mr. Damon in the main room and took a look out the portholes.

"Bless my—" but words failed the eccentric man.

As the gold seekers looked at her through the windows, several great forms emerged from beneath the wreck's bow.

"Deep water sharks!" exclaimed Captain Weston, "and monsters, too. But they can't bother us. Now to get out the gold!"

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XXIII

#### ATTACKED BY SHARKS

FOR A FEW minutes after reaching the wreck—the one point that had so occupied their thoughts for the past weeks—the adventurers did nothing but gaze at it from the ports of the submarine. The appearance of the deep-water sharks gave them no concern, for they did not imagine the ugly creatures would attack them. The treasure-seekers were more engrossed with the problem of getting out the gold.

"How are we going to get at it?" asked Tom, as he looked at the high sides of the sunken ship, which

towered well above the comparatively small *Advance*.

"Why, just climb in and get it," suggested Mr. Damon. "Where is gold in a cargo usually kept, Captain Weston? You ought to know, I should think. Bless my pocketbook!"

"Well, I should say that in a case where less money was to be found, it would be kept in a safe in the captain's cabin," replied the sailor. "In this case the sheer bulk and weight of the bullion means that it would be kept in some after part of the vessel, away from where the crew is quartered. Most probably low in the ship. If so, it is going to be quite a problem to get at it. We can't climb the sides of the wreck, and it will be impossible to lower her ladder over the side. However, I think we had better get into the diving suits and take a closer look. We can walk around her."

"That's my idea as well," put in John. "But who will go, and who will stay with the ship?"

"I think Tom and Captain Weston had better go," suggested Mr. Swift. "Then, in case anything happens, Mr. Sharp, you and I will be on board to manage matters."

"You don't think anything will happen, do you, Dad?" asked his son with a laugh, but it was an uneasy one. Tom was thinking of the shadowy forms of the ugly sharks.

"Oh, no, but it's best to be prepared," answered his father.

The captain and the young inventor lost no time in donning the diving suits. They each took a heavy metal bar, pointed at one end, to use in assisting them to walk on the bed of the ocean, and as a protection in case the sharks might attack them.

Entering the diving chamber, they were shut in, and then water was admitted until the pressure was about equal to one mile in depth. Tom and the captain had agreed that they would pause at that pressure to test the suits.

Ten minutes later the water was turned back on. As they watched the gauges, they saw that the pressure neared and then equaled that outside the submarine. Then the sliding steel door was opened. At first Tom and the captain could barely move, so great was the pressure of water on their bodies. They would have been crushed but for the protection afforded by the strong diving suits.

In a few minutes they began to get used to it, and stepped out on the floor of the ocean. They could not, of course, speak to each other, but Tom looked through the glass plates of his helmet at the captain, and the latter motioned for the lad to follow. The two divers could breathe perfectly. By means of small, but powerful lights on the helmets, the way was lighted for them as they advanced.

Slowly they approached the wreck, and began a circuit

of her. They could see several other places where the pressure of the water and the strain of the storm had 'opened the plates' of the ship, but in no case were the openings large enough to admit a person. Captain Weston put his steel bar in one crack, and tried to pry it farther open, but his strength and constricted motion at the depth was not equal to the task. He made some peculiar motions, but Tom could not understand them.

They looked for some means by which they could climb up to the decks of the *Boldero*, but none was visible. It was like trying to scale a fifty-foot smooth steel wall. There was no place for a foothold or handhold. Again the sailor made some peculiar motions, and the lad puzzled over them.

Knowing that sound should travel through solid objects, Tom motioned that they should bring their helmets together. Although greatly muffled, he believed he could hear the captain saying something about "breaking in." They moved apart and Tom nodded at the older man.

They had gone nearly around the wreck now, and as yet had seen no way in which to get at the gold. As they passed around the bow, which was in a deep shadow from a great rock, they caught sight of their submarine lying a short distance away. Red streamed from many portholes, and Tom felt a sense of security as he looked at her; it was lonesome enough in that great depth of water, unable to

speaking to his companion, who was a few feet in advance.

Suddenly there was a swirling of the water, and Tom was nearly thrown off his feet by the rush of some great body. A long, black shadow passed over his head, and an instant later he saw the form of a great shark launched at Captain Weston. Tom involuntarily cried in alarm, but the result was surprising. He was nearly deafened by his own voice, confined as the sound was in the helmet he wore.

The sailor, too, had felt the movement of the water, and turned just in time. He thrust upward with his pointed bar. But he missed the stroke. A moment later, Tom saw the great fish turn over so that its mouth, which is far underneath its snout, could take in the queer shape which the shark evidently thought was a choice morsel. The big fish did actually get the helmet of Captain Weston inside its jaws, but probably it would have found it impossible to crush the strong steel.

Still it might spring the joints or crack the glass, and water would have entered, which would have been immediately fatal. Tom realized this and, moving as fast as he could through the water, he came up behind the monster and drove his steel bar deep into its back.

The water around the shark's back went crimsoned with blood, and the savage creature opened its mouth. Thrashing, it let go of the captain and turned on Tom, who again harpooned it. Then it darted off and began a

wild flurry, for it was dying. The rush of water nearly threw Tom off his feet, but he managed to make his way over to his friend and got him to his feet. A confident look from the sailor showed the lad that Captain Weston was uninjured, though he must have been frightened. As the two turned to make their way back to the submarine, the waters about them seemed alive with the horrible monsters.

It needed but a glance to show what they were. Sharks! Scores of them, long, black ones, with their ugly, undershot mouths. They had been attracted by the blood of the one Tom had killed. Realizing there would be a feeding frenzy and that the dead shark was not a meal for all of them, the young inventor and his companion moved as quickly as they could. Neither wished to have the swarm of sharks decide to turn on them.

The two shrank closer toward the wreck. They might get under the prow of that and be safe. But even as they started to move, several of the sea wolves darted quickly at them. Tom glanced at the captain. What could they do? Strong as were the diving suits, a combined attack by the sharks, with their powerful jaws, would do untold damage.

At that moment there seemed some movement on board the submarine. Tom could see his father looking from the conning tower, and the aged inventor seemed to

be making some motions. Then Tom understood. Mr. Swift was directing his son and Captain Weston to crouch down. The lad did so, pulling the sailor after him. Then Tom saw the bow electric gun run out, and aimed at the mass of sharks, most of whom were congregated about the dead one. Into the midst of the monsters was fired a number of small wired projectiles, which could be used in the gun in place of the smaller barbs.

These were energized and high voltage coursed through the surrounding waters. Though Tom and Captain Weston felt some of it, the rubber coating on the inside of their suits insulated them from all but a tingle. The sharks went crazy. Several were stunned by the shock and began drifting to the sea floor, but most darted away faster than they had come. Tom and Captain Weston were saved. They were soon inside the submarine again, and depressurizing the water lock.

An hour later they sat sipping hot coffee and telling their thrilling story.

"It's lucky you saw us, Dad," remarked the lad, blushing at the praise Mr. Damon bestowed on him for killing the monster which had attacked the captain.

"Oh, I was on the lookout," said the inventor. "But what about getting into the wreck?"

"I think the only way we can do it will be to ram a hole in her side," said Captain Weston. "That was what I tried

to tell Tom by motions, but he didn't seem to understand me."

"No," replied the lad, who was still a little nervous from his recent experience. "I thought you meant for us to turn it over, bottom side up," and he laughed. "Or to break it," he added remembering their brief helmet-to-helmet communication.

"Bless my gizzard! Upside down? Just like a shark," commented Mr. Damon.

"Please don't mention them," begged Tom. "I hope we don't see any more of them."

"Oh, I fancy they have been driven far enough away from this neighborhood now," commented the captain. "But now about the wreck. We may be able to approach it from above. Suppose we try to lower the submarine onto it? That will save ripping it open."

This was tried a little later, but would not work. There were strong currents sweeping over the top of the *Boldero* and very little flat, open space. What might have once been there was covered by broken rigging. It was a delicate task to sink the submarine on her decks, and with the deep waters swirling about was found to be impossible, even with the use of the electric plates and the auxiliary screws. Once more the *Advance* settled to the ocean bed, near the wreck.

"Well, what do we do now?" asked Tom, as he looked at the high steel sides.

"Ram her, tear a hole, and then use dynamite," decided Captain Weston promptly. "You have some explosives, haven't you, Mr. Swift?"

"Oh, yes. I came prepared for emergencies."

"Then we'll blow up the wreck and get at the gold."



## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XXIV

#### RAMMING THE WRECK

FITTED WITH a long, sharp steel ram in front, the *Advance* was peculiarly adapted for this sort of work. In designing the ship this ram was calculated to be used against hostile vessels in wartime, for the submarine was at first, as we know, destined for a military boat. Now the ram was to serve a good turn.

To make sure that the attempt would be a success, all of the machinery of the boat was carefully gone over. It was found to be in perfect order, save for a few minor adjustments.

As it was night, though there was no difference between night and day this far below the surface, it was decided to turn in and begin work in the morning. It was decided that it would be safer to remain submerged rather than go to the surface, for they feared they might encounter a storm.

"We had trouble enough locating the wreck," said Captain Weston, "and if we go up we may be blown off our course. We have air enough to stay below, haven't we, Tom?"

"Plenty," answered the lad, looking at the gauges.

After a hearty breakfast the next morning, the submarine crew got ready for their hard task. The ram was extended and the propeller in front dismounted to keep it from damage. The craft was backed away several hundred feet, and then, running at full speed, she rammed the wreck. The shock was terrific. At first it was feared some damage might have been done to the *Advance*, but she stood up to the strain.

"Did we open up much of a hole?" anxiously asked Mr. Swift.

"Pretty good," replied Tom, observing it through a conning tower porthole, once the submarine had backed off again. "About the size of a car tire. Let's give her another shot."

Once more the great steel ram hit into the side of the *Boldero*, and again the submarine shivered from the shock. But there was a bigger hole in the wreck now. After Captain Weston had viewed it he decided it was large enough to allow a person to enter and place a charge of dynamite so that the side of the treasure ship could be blown out.

Tom and the captain placed the explosive. Again, the pressure of the depths made the work slow and arduous. They needed to pause for a rest several times during the four hours it required to complete the task.

Once they had returned and were back in their clothes, the *Advance* was withdrawn to a safe distance. Mr. Swift had rigged an explosive cap to the electric gun so that they might use the current from that device to set off the explosives. He looked around at the other members of the *Advance's* crew and nodded. "Here goes, men." He pressed the fire button.

There was a dull rumble, a great swirling of the water, which was made murky, and the *Advance* rocked for a few moments; but when the water cleared, and the submarine went back, it was easy to see that the wreck was effectively broken apart. It was in two parts, each one pushed far enough away from the other to allow easy access.

"That's the stuff!" cried Tom. "Now to get at the gold!"

"Yes, get back into the diving suits," added Mr. Damon.

"Bless my watch-charm, I think I'll chance it in one myself! Do you think the sharks are all gone, Captain Weston?"

"I think so. If the shock before didn't get them, the pressure waves from the explosion will have driven them off by thousands of yards or farther."

In a short time Tom, the captain, John and Mr. Damon were attired in the diving suits. Mr. Swift was feeling so nervous that he opted to not venture into such a great depth of water. Besides, it was necessary for at least one person to remain in the submarine to operate the diving chamber.

Walking slowly along the bottom of the sea the four gold seekers approached the wreck. They looked on all sides for a sight of the sharks, but the monster fish seemed to have deserted that part of the ocean. Tom was the first to reach the now bisected steamer. He found he could easily climb up since boxes and barrels from the cargo holds were scattered all about by the explosion.

Captain Weston soon joined the lad. The sailor motioned Tom to follow him, and being more familiar with ocean craft the captain was permitted to take the lead. He headed aft, seeking to locate the captain's cabin. They were not long in finding it. He motioned for the others to enter, that the combined illumination of the lamps in their helmets would make the place bright

enough so a search could be made for the gold.

Tom suddenly seized the arm of the captain, and pointed to one corner of the cabin. There stood a small safe. At the sight of it Captain Weston moved toward it and looked it over. It had tilted over to one side and was leaning against the wall. He used his pry bar to right it and then used his hands to wave away the silt that lightly covered it.

The door was not locked, probably having been left open when the ship was deserted. Swinging it back the captain leaned down so his helmet light could illuminate the interior.

It was empty. There was no gold bullion in it.

There was no mistaking the dejected air of Captain Weston even though he knew inside that such a small safe could never hold three million dollars in bullion. The others shared his disappointment, but though they all felt like voicing it, not a word could be spoken.

John Sharp, by vigorous motions, indicated to his companions to seek further. One by one they recalled an earlier conversation when it had been discussed that a large, heavy load of gold would more likely be kept low in the ship.

They left the cabin and began the search anew, spending all the rest of the day in the wreck, except for a

short interval for lunch.

But no gold rewarded their search.

Late that afternoon Tom wandered away from the others, and found himself in the captain's cabin again, with the empty safe showing its lack of treasure.

"Hang it all!" thought the lad, "we've had all our troubles for nothing! They must have taken the gold with them and then lied to the authorities. I'll bet they are all gone and the treasure divided up amongst them."

In frustration, he raised his steel bar, and slammed the end into the wall just above the safe. He yanked it back out, wanting to vent more frustration when, to his astonishment, part of the wall behind the safe seemed to fall inward.

Tom used his bar to pry and shove the safe out of the way and then reached out and tore off wall board after board until he revealed a large secret compartment. He leaned forward to bring the light from his helmet to play on the recess. He saw a number of boxes, piled one upon the other.

Shining his light about he could spot no doorway in the room. He had accidentally opened a secret room. But what did the boxes contain?

Tom reached in and tried to pull out one of the boxes. He found it beyond his strength, even with the water

lightening the load by a great deal. He edged into the room through the hole he had created and tried to pick up a box using both hands.

He was barely able to lift it. He let it drop back to the floor.

Trembling from excitement, he went in search of the others. He found them delving through the after part of the wreck. By hand motions and trying to show them each a huge smile on his face, Tom eventually convinced them to follow him.

Captain Weston showed the excitement Tom felt as soon as he caught sight of the boxes. He and John lifted one out, and placed it on the cabin floor. They pried off the top with their steel bars.

There, packed in layers, were small yellow bars; dull, gleaming, yellow bars! It needed but a glance to show that they were gold bullion. Tom had found the treasure. He tried to dance around there in the cabin of the wreck, nearly three miles below the surface of the ocean, but the pressure of water was too much for him.

Their trip had been successful.

## TOM SWIFT and His Submarine Boat

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### CHAPTER XXV

#### HOME WITH THE GOLD

THERE WAS NO time to lose. They were in a treacherous part of the ocean, and strong currents might at any time further break up the wreck making it difficult or even impossible to bring out the gold.

It was decided, by means of hand motions, to at once transfer the treasure to the submarine. The boxes were too heavy to carry easily, especially as two men were required to lift one, and two could not walk together in the uncertain footing afforded by the wreck. After many minutes of motioning and a few helmet-to-helmet

shouted messages, another plan was adopted.

The boxes were opened and the bars, a few at a time, were dropped down onto several packing cases that had been moved together. These had been found to contain canned foods so they were very strong and could withstand the plummeting bars with ease.

Tom and Captain Weston did the work of moving and dropping the bars, while John and Mr. Damon carried the bullion back to the diving chamber of the *Advance*. They put the yellow bars inside, and when quite a number had been inserted, Mr. Swift, closing the chamber, pumped the water out and removed the gold. Then he re-flooded and opened the chamber to the divers, and the process was repeated, until all the bullion had been moved into the submarine.

Tom would have been glad to make a further examination of the wreck, for he thought he could get some of the rifles the ship carried, but Captain Weston signed to him not to attempt this. He pointed at his wrist and then at the tank hanging on his back.

Tom immediately understood; they had limited air in their tanks and it was time to get back inside to replenish it. Before they went back inside they reattached the forward propeller to the bow shaft.

They were the final two to enter the boat and were soon shed of their diving suits and woolen under suits—a

necessity for diving at depths where the water was colder than ice, the pressure keeping it fluid—and back into warm clothes. Tom hadn't realized how cold he had really become. They gratefully accepted sandwiches and mugs of steaming cocoa from Mr. Swift.

After a brief rest, the lad went to the pilothouse, while his father and John took their places in the engine room. The gold had been safely stowed in Mr. Swift's cabin.

Tom took a last look at the wreck before he gave the starting signal. He started by raising the submarine a few dozen feet off the sea floor and then starting to back away. He wanted to remember the sight of the broken ship.

As he gazed at the bent and twisted mass of steel that had once been a great ship, he saw something long, black and shadowy moving around from the other side, coming across the bow.

"There's another big shark," he observed to Captain Weston. "They came back for us."

The captain did not speak. He was staring at the dark form. Suddenly, from what seemed the pointed nose of it, there gleamed a light, as from some great eye.

"Look at that!" cried Tom. "That's no shark!"

"If you want my opinion," remarked the sailor, "I should say it was the other submarine—that of Berg and his associates—the *Wonder*. They've managed to fix up

their craft and are after the gold. It is amazing that they found the site."

"But they're too late!" cried Tom excitedly. "Let's tell them so."

"No," advised the captain, placing a hand on the arm of the impetuous youth. "We don't want any trouble with them."

Mr. Swift came forward to see why his son had not given the signal to start the boat moving forward. Even though they were backing slowly away and the hulk of the wreck was becoming indistinct, it was easy to discern the other submarine, for now that the *Wonder* had turned on several searchlights. There was no doubt as to the identity of the craft.

"Let's get away unobserved if we can," he suggested. "Shut off all interior lights. We have had trouble enough."

It was easy to do remain undetected. The *Advance* was both far enough away and also at an angle that kept it mostly hidden behind the wreck. Then, too, those in the other submarine were most probably so excited over the finding of what they supposed was the wreck containing the treasure, that they paid little attention to anything else.

"I wonder how they'll feel when they find that the gold is gone?" asked Tom as he pulled the lever starting the

pumps. The submarine began to rise and was soon high enough so that the lights of the searching submarine below were no longer visible.

"Well, we may have a chance to learn, when we get back to civilization," remarked the captain.

The surface was soon reached, and then, under fair skies and on a calm sea, the voyage home was begun. Part of the time the *Advance* sailed on the top, and part of the time submerged.

They met with but a single accident. As they were cruising along the surface near the island nation of Cuba, they struck a floating piece of wood. It barely missed the forward propeller but struck on the foremost of the port side drive plates. With a rifle shot-like noise, the electrical plate broke. But with all the others still in commission, and the auxiliary screws running, they continued to make good time.

Just before reaching home it was decided to make a small detour up to the coast of Maine. They settled down to the bottom and donned the diving suits again, even Mr. Swift taking his turn.

Mr. Damon caught some large lobsters, of which he was very fond. To be more correct, the lobsters caught him. When he entered the diving chamber there were four fine ones clinging to different parts of his diving suit. Some of them were served for lunch.

The adventurers safely reached the New Jersey coast, and the submarine was docked early the following afternoon.

Mr. Swift at once communicated with the proper authorities concerning the recovery of the gold. He offered to divide with the actual owners, after he and his friends had been paid for their services.

He was informed by his Department of State contact that the revolutionary party to whom the bullion was intended had been crushed by the country's legitimate Government. Effectively, they had gone out of existence so there was no one to officially claim the treasure. The Government official asked that Mr. Swift deposit it in a special account to be held for sixty days in case anyone came forward with a legal claim, but that it would be all theirs once that period elapsed.

"And, Barton, I will do the paperwork to identify the start date as being the date you actually recovered the gold, so you will only be waiting forty-six more days."

The *Advance's* crew was ecstatic. The gold would all go to Tom and his friends with each receiving a 1/6th share.

In all they had recovered just under two point six million dollars in gold, so each would receive a share with a value of over four hundred thirty thousand dollars. The young inventor would not forget to buy Mrs. Baggert a fine diamond ring, as he had promised.

That evening, Barton received another phone call. It was the same Government official. "Uh, I am not sure how to bring this up, but we may have a problem. It seems that the firm of Bentley & Eggert have filed an official complaint against you. They claim that you attempted to sink their submarine and are demanding payment of ninety percent of the recovered gold."

Barton Swift practically choked he was so indignant. "Let me tell you what happened. And *I'll* tell you the truth!" With that he filled in the Government official with what had transpired.

The other understood the entire issue by the end of the call and promised to bring the full weight of his department on the other submarine firm for filing a false claim and for ramming the *Advance*.

In the end, Berg and his employers were greatly chagrined first at finding the wreck valueless and then again once the truth of their actions became public record. They retracted their complaint. Barton and Tom heard weeks later that their attempts to get the Government to consider their submarine for late entry in the competition had been rejected.

A few days after arriving at the seacoast cottage, Tom, his father and Mr. Damon went to Shopton in the airship. Captain Weston, Garret Jackson and Mr Sharp remained behind in charge of the submarine. It was decided that the

Swifts would keep the craft and not sell it to the Government, as Tom said they might want to go after more treasure some day.

They did, however, offer to build a second one for the Government, should it ever want one.

"I must first deposit this gold," said Mr. Swift as the airship landed in front of the shed at his home. "It won't do to keep it in the house overnight."

Tom helped him take it to the bank. As they were making perhaps the largest single deposit ever put in the institution, the bank president, Mr. Prendergast, and Ned Newton came out.

While Mr. Swift went about the business, Tom talked to Ned.

"Well, Tom," he said to his chum, "it seems that you are never going to stop doing amazing things. You've conquered the air, the earth and the water."

"I wish you could have gone with us. What have you been doing while I've been underwater, Ned?" asked the young inventor.

"Oh, the same old thing. Running errands and doing all sorts of work in the bank."

Tom had a sudden idea. He whispered to his father and Mr. Swift nodded. A little later he was went to a room to speak privately with Mr. Prendergast.

It was not long before Ned and Tom were called in.

"I have some good news for you, Ned," said Mr. Prendergast, while Tom smiled. "Mr. Swift er—ahem—one of our largest depositors, has spoken to me about you, Ned. I find that you have been very faithful to our bank and should be rewarded for your work. You are hereby appointed assistant cashier, and of course you will get a much larger salary."

Ned could hardly believe it, but he knew then what Tom had whispered to Mr. Swift. The wishes of a depositor who brings much gold bullion to a bank can hardly be ignored.

"Come on out and have some soda to celebrate," invited Tom, and when Ned looked inquiringly at the president, the latter nodded an assent.

As the two lads were crossing the street to a drug store, something whizzed past them, nearly running them down.

"What sort of an auto was that?" cried Tom.

"That? Oh, that was Andy Foger's *new* car," answered Ned. "He's been breaking the speed laws every day lately, but no one seems to bother him. It's because his father is rich, I suppose. Andy says he has the fastest car ever built."

"He has, eh?" remarked Tom, while a curious look came into his eyes. "Well, maybe I can build one that will beat



his."

Three minutes later Tom and Ned rounded a corner and broke into gales of laughter. There was Andy Foger's car stopped by the side of the street with a policeman leaning on the driver's door. He was giving the wild driver a ticket. Handing it to the embarrassed boy, the officer then proceeded to write out a second and even a third ticket.

As Andy drove off, slowly, the policeman called after him, "If you keep driving like a fool, the Chief Constable will impound that car for a full month. *And, I'm notifying your father!*"

Tom and Ned walked into the local drugstore and had their sodas while Tom told his friend about their adventures.

"Well, Tom, I certainly appreciate what you did for me in getting me a better position," remarked Ned as they left the drug store. "I was beginning to think I'd never get promoted. Say, do you have anything to do this evening? If you haven't, I wish you'd come over to my house. I've got a lot of pictures I took while you were away."

"Sorry, Ned, but I can't," replied Tom. His face turned a rosy red color.

"Why? Are you going to build another airship or submarine?" his friend asked with feigned innocence.

"No, but I'm going to see— Oh, what do you want to

know for, anyhow?" demanded the young inventor with an even brighter blush. "Can't a fellow go see a girl without being cross-examined?"

"Oh, of course," replied Ned with a laugh. "Please give Miss Nestor my regards," and at this Tom blushed still more if that were possible.

But, as he said, that was his own affair.

## THE END

Tom Swift will next be seen in his forthcoming story  
TOM SWIFT and HIS ELECTRIC RUNABOUT  
A new adventure for today's science minded boys.

This story will be available from all reputable booksellers and  
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