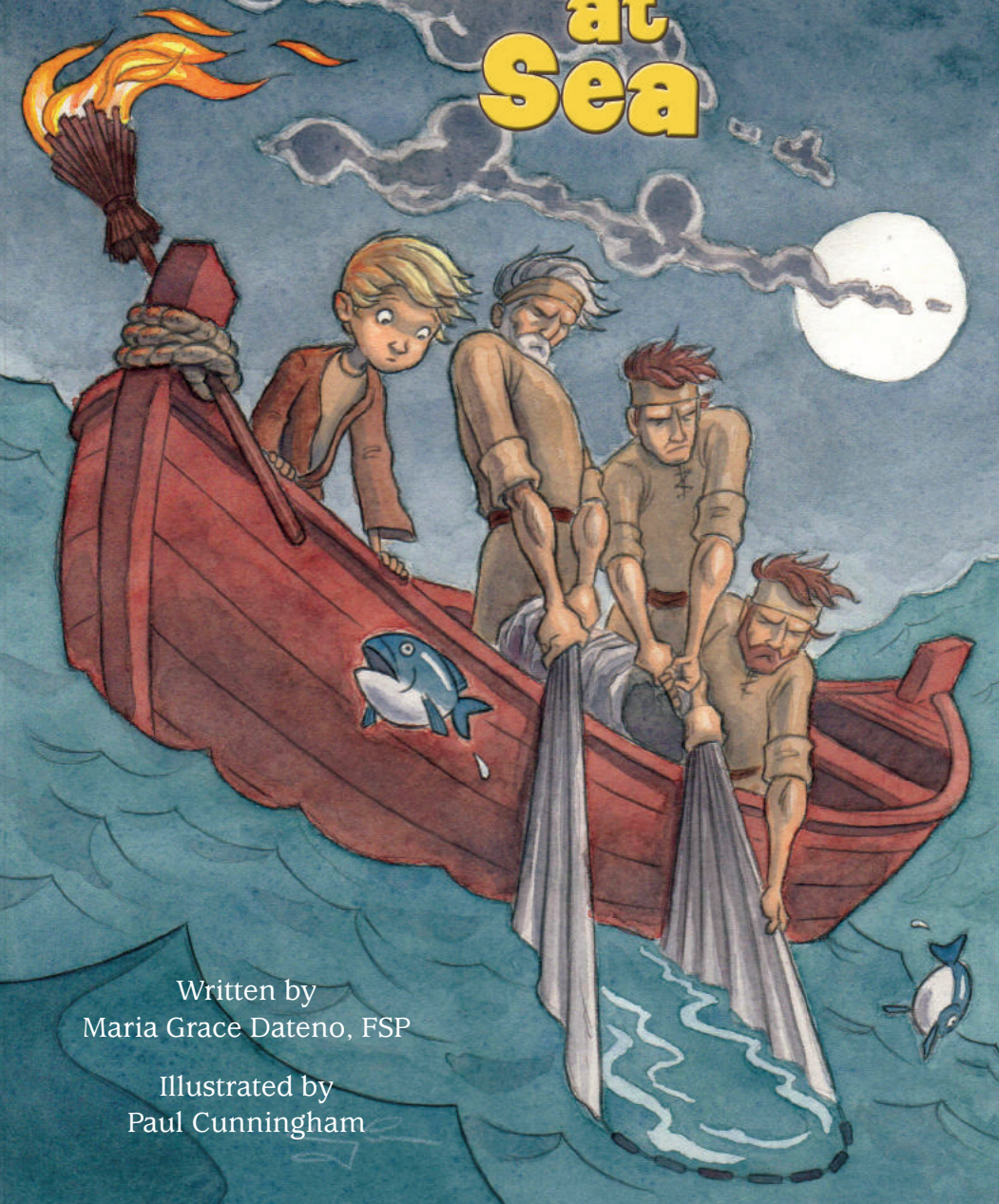
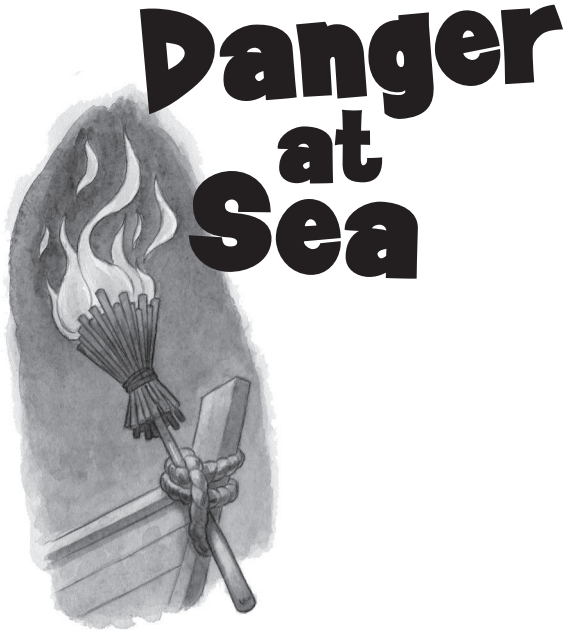


Danger at Sea



Written by
Maria Grace Dateno, FSP

Illustrated by
Paul Cunningham



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*Dedicated to my niece and goddaughter,
Bernadette, in the hope that she will do
the same thing for me one day.*

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Chapter One



Weeds and More Weeds

It was a hot day late in June, and I wasn't planning on going outside that afternoon. But then I heard Dad talking to Mom in the kitchen.

"The weeds are getting pretty thick," he said. "Maybe the kids could do some work in the garden this afternoon."

My older sister Hannah, who had just turned eleven, was standing there in the living room too. We looked at each other. Neither of us likes weeding, so we quietly slipped out the front door.

As we snuck around the side of the house *opposite* the garden, we ran into my little brother, Noah. He looked all excited.

“Caleb! Hannah! I have an idea!” he said.

Noah is only six, so I wasn’t expecting any really great idea from him. But anything was better than weeding.

“Okay, Noah,” I said. “Let’s hear it.”

“I have an idea for how we can go there again!”

“Go where?” said Hannah. “Oh, never mind. I get it.”

I got it, too. Noah was saying he had an idea for how we could go back in time. It might sound unbelievable, but it had happened twice before. Noah and Hannah and I went back to the time of Jesus and had great adventures! For weeks, we had been trying to figure out how to go there again.

The first time we had been riding our bikes down a hill. The second time we had jumped off a tree branch together. We had tried riding our bikes everywhere, and jumping off everything. (Except the roof. Dad wouldn’t let us try that.) Nothing had worked. So I was willing to

try anything, even one of Noah's ideas.

Hannah was, too.

"Okay, what's your idea?" she asked.

"I think we should try rolling down the hill together!" said Noah.

Hannah looked at the hill in our front yard. It's barely a hill, really, and not very steep.

"Well," she said, "I'm game."

"I guess it can't hurt to try," I said.

We lay down in a row and started rolling down the hill. Noah immediately banged into Hannah.

"Ow!" Hannah yelled. "Your foot!"

"Sorry!" said Noah.

It wasn't steep enough for us to really get going, though. We had to keep pushing off to keep rolling. I started laughing at how ridiculous we were. Soon all three of us were laughing. At the bottom of the hill, we sat up. Hannah's ponytail was lopsided. Noah's sand-colored hair had pieces of grass in it. I guess mine looked the same.

"Oh!" said Noah, looking disappointed. "We're still wearing our clothes!"

That made Hannah laugh even more.

“I should hope so!” she said.

What Noah meant was, we were still wearing the *same* clothes. When we went back in time, the way we could tell it happened was that our clothes turned into tunics, like they wore back in the time of Jesus.

At that moment, Mom stuck her head out the front door.

“What are you guys doing?” she asked.

“We’re trying to go back in time,” said Noah. “But it didn’t work!”

That made me and Hannah laugh even harder!

“Well, if you have nothing better to do than roll down the hill, could you please go and do some weeding in the garden?”

“Ugh!” I said.

“Yuck!” said Noah.

“Oh, Mom!” said Hannah.

None of us liked weeding the garden.

“I did most of the work last time,” I said. “I shouldn’t have to do more.”

“You did not!” said Hannah. “I did all the herbs. And I did all the squash and that’s really prickly.”

“I did all the tomatoes and beans,” said Noah. “I did a lot for my age.”

“I know you all worked hard before,” said Mom, “but weeding a garden isn’t something that you only do once. If the three of you work together, it won’t take you that long. At least you can do a couple rows each.” She went back inside.

“Well, she did say, ‘if you have nothing better to do,’” I pointed out. “I can think of lots of things better to do than weed a garden. Like work on my Space Club project.”

“I have a club project, too, Caleb!” said Noah.

“Well, I have other things to do, too,” said Hannah. “Like the graphic design project Mom asked me to help with.”

We all looked at each other. I knew we should go do what our mom asked, but I just really hated weeding.

“But Mom did ask us to do the weeding,” said Noah.

“Yeah,” said Hannah.

“Well, I guess we should,” I said. We got up and headed toward the garden.

“But I don’t want to do the Swiss chard and beets again,” I said. “I’ll do the squash. I can do it a lot faster than you, Hannah.”

“I can do the beets,” said Noah. “I’ll do a better job than you, anyway, Caleb. You have to really get down and make sure you get the weeds close to the roots.”

“I’ll do the tomatoes,” said Hannah. “They’re easy. I don’t know why you complained about them, Noah.”

As she was talking, Hannah lifted the latch on the chicken wire fence around the garden. It’s to keep out the deer and rabbits. We walked into the garden, and I bent down to pull some weeds at the beginning of the row of squash.

That’s when it happened. I felt like the air became thick and I was moving in slow motion as I bent to the ground. A couple seconds later, I straightened up and looked down at my clothes. My shorts and tee shirt were gone, and I was wearing a long, light brown robe, tied with a belt.

Yes!

