

James, his sister Sally, and Mark, their BFF (Best Friend Forever) were bored. They had played all day but now that it was dark and difficult to see, they had nothing to do.

They couldn't play soccer because they couldn't see the ball. They didn't want to go inside and play a game because it was a beautiful springtime night and they liked being outside, especially after having to play inside all winter long. They just didn't know what to do and it was a little too early for them to go home.

"I guess I'll just go home," Mark said in a sad voice. "Aww come on," replied James. "We still have time for another game of – of something."

Then Sally said, "I have an idea! Let's play Hide-and Seek."

"I was just going to say that," James said. "Yah, I'll bet," replied his sister. "You always say you were thinking of whatever I think of," she snapped. "Do not!" James said in a loud voice. "Do too," yelled Sally.

Mark just looked down at the ground and shook his head from side to side. "They are at it again," he mumbled to himself. Then he yelled, "Okay, let's play Hide-and-Seek I'll be the seeker!"

He turned, faced a big tree, closed his eyes, and started counting out loud. "100 – 99 – 98 – 97" Sally and Mark stopped arguing, looked at each other, and ran off in different directions to find a hiding place.

In the distance they could still hear Mark counting "4 – 3 – 2 – 1. Ready or not, here I come!" Then he turned and began looking for places where they could be hiding.

Finding Sally was easy.

She always ran off and then circled back so she would be close to "base," the safe place to get to before being tagged.

Mark looked for the biggest tree

and ran towards it.

But she wasn't there.

"I'll bet she's behind that big bush,"

he said to himself.

So he ran to it and was ready to tag her, but she wasn't there either.

As he turned around, he saw James running towards "base" and darted after him. Just before

he touched James' shoulder, James tagged the "base" and yelled out "SAFE!" "Did you get Sally yet?" James asked. "No," said Mark.

"I haven't been able to find her and it's getting late and we need to be heading home."

So both boys yelled out "Come on out Sally, it's late." But there was no reply.

Not even a little snicker from

somewhere in the darkness.

They yelled again. "Come on out Sally, it's late."

Still there was no reply from Sally.

They began to worry and started searching for her. As they walked around the area they called out "Sally, come on, we give up; you're safe."

But no matter where they looked, or how much they called out, Sally didn't answer.

It was as if she disappeared.

Sally was wondering what had happened.

All she could remember was crawling under the big trunk of a fallen tree to hide.

Now, as she looked up, she saw

several stars through a small hole above her head.

She had fallen into a hole

when she crawled under the tree trunk. "Help!" she yelled and heard her voice

echo throughout what must have been a cave. "HELP! Help, help, help!"

"Did you hear that, James?" Mark said excitedly.

"Sally just yelled for help." "Keep yelling Sally," James screamed.

"That way we can find you."

Sally heard her brother and

kept screaming. After a short while the boys were standing next to the big tree trunk.

"Hey! Are you stuck under this tree?" asked James. "Kind of," Sally yelled. "When I crawled under it to hide, I fell into a cave. Please help me, I'm scared. It's dark and I can't get out."

Mark said,

"James you stay with Sally and

I will go get my dad."

Then he dashed off into the darkness.

"Don't be scared," James said. "I am right here with you." "No, you're not," Sally sobbed.

"You're up there and I'm down here."

As Sally turned in the darkness of the cave, she bumped into something, screamed, and began to cry.

"What's wrong?" James yelled. "There's something down here with me,"

Sally replied in a shaky voice.

Just then, Mark and his dad came running through the woods.

Mark's father knelt down and asked Sally

if she was okay. He could hear her crying and sobbing. "Sally, are you hurt?"

he asked. "No," she said. "But I'm scared and there is something down here with me."

"Stand back Sally.

I am lowering a rope and

will be down with you in a second."

Mark's dad tied the rope to the tree, found the hole under the tree trunk, wiggled a bit, and lowered himself into the cave.

Sally could see him coming down the rope and stopped crying.

Not only was he there but the cave became brighter from the beam of his flashlight as it danced across the cave's floor and walls.

As he reached the floor of the cave, he shone the light on Sally and gave her a big hug. "Don't be frightened,"

he said. "I'll have you out of here in no time."

Then he shone the light around

and saw that she had fallen into a small cave.

And very close to her, in the middle of the cave,

was something wrapped in layers

of old blankets.

"Mark, James, there's something down here.

I am going to tie it to the rope and I want you to pull it out." "Okay," they replied.

The boys pulled out the object, untied it,

and let the loose end of the rope fall back into the cave. The cave wasn't deep and Marks'

dad boosted Sally over his head so she could crawl out. He then grabbed the rope and with a little jump, was able to grab the opening and pull himself out.

“Let’s go back to my house for a cup of hot tea. I’ll call your parents so they aren’t worried, and we’ll see what treasure Sally found.” He said.

When they got to Mark’s house, they sipped their tea and began unwrapping the treasure.

They carefully peeled off layers of old blankets and cloth to reveal a wooden box.

They slowly opened it and stared in amazement.

“Oh my,” Sally said in disbelief. “I don’t believe what I am seeing.”

The boys and Mark’s father just stared.

Inside the box were jewels of every color you could imagine.

There were diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds of all shapes and sizes. Intermixed they could see several gold coins and strands of pearls. “We’re rich,” the boys

screamed. “Not quite,” interrupted Mark’s father. “Someone could have lost this and I don’t think you should plan on spending any of it until we find out a little more. Besides, Sally found it.” “I’ll share it,” Sally said happily. “That’s nice Sally,” replied Mark’s dad. But the right thing to do is contact the authorities.”

The next day, the four of them and Sally’s mother drove to the police station, explained what had happened, and gave the treasure to the police to hold while they conducted their investigation.

They left the police station sadly and even the double dipped ice cream cones Mark’s father bought for them didn’t make them smile. They drove back in silence.

Several weeks passed with no word from the police.

Then, one evening, Mark’s father called James, Sally, and their parents. “The police just called and I think you should come over right now,” he said. “I’m afraid there is some

bad news about the treasure.

The police are on their way and

will explain everything when you get here.”

Sally and James didn’t say much during the ride to Mark’s house.

Sally thought that since it was “bad news” the treasure belonged to someone else, even though they probably lost it.

“Whatever happened to ‘finders-keepers’?” she mumbled. “What did you say Sally?” her mother asked. “Oh, nothing.”

Sally replied. Then she let out a long, sad sigh that echoed through the car.

When they arrived at Mark’s house,

the police were there with the treasure box.

As Sally entered,

the captain introduced himself and said,

“Sally, this is yours.

Your parents need to sign

some papers but the box and its

contents are yours.”

Sally, Mark, and James

shrieked with joy and danced around the room. Then Sally said, “What is the bad news?”

The captain smiled and said.

“The treasure is worth more money than

you can imagine and with your new found wealth comes

great responsibility.” Sally didn’t quite understand what the captain was talking about and right now it really didn’t matter.

Mark asked,

“Are you going to share?” “Of course,” Sally said.

“If you and James didn’t help me I might still be there.”

Several days later Sally asked everyone over to her house.

“I have decided what to do with

the money from the treasure after it is sold,”

she said.

“I am giving $\frac{1}{6}$ to our Mom and Dad, $\frac{1}{6}$ to Mark’s Mom and Dad,

$\frac{1}{6}$ to Mark, $\frac{1}{6}$ to James, and $\frac{1}{6}$ for me.” “There is an extra $\frac{1}{6}$,”

Mark proudly stated. He loved math and was right on top of Sally’s calculations.

“No there’s not,” Sally said. “Is too,” James said. “Is not,”

Sally said in an angered voice. Just as Mark was going to say,

“They are at it again,” Sally said, “This is why there isn’t an extra $\frac{1}{6}$! I am giving it to the local charity, so it can be given to those less fortunate and in need.”

Her mother and father said

it was a caring and responsible thing to do.

They were very proud of her and knew that she understood what the captain meant when he had turned the treasure over to her just days before.