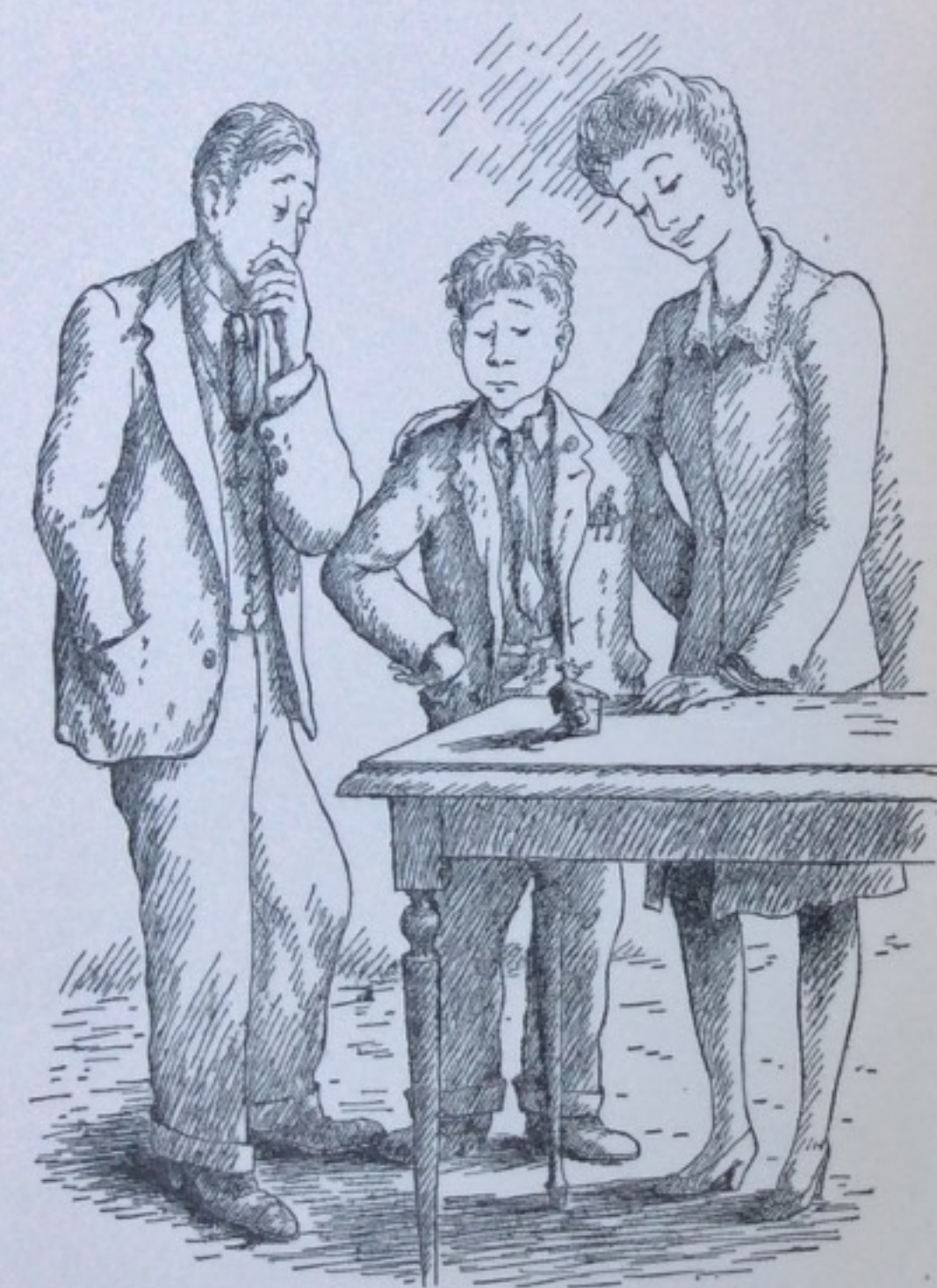


and interspersed with vineyards; and in the midst of this slope the Merchants have fixed their country seats, which help to form the agreeable prospect. There is but one considerable town in the whole Island, it is named *Fonchiale*, and is seated on the South part of the Island, at the bottom of a large bay. This is the only place of trade, and indeed the only one where it is possible for a boat to land. *Fonchiale*, towards the sea, is defended by a high wall, with a battery of cannon, besides a castle on the *Loo*, which is a rock standing in the water at a small distance from the shore. Even here the beach is covered with large stones, and a violent surf continually beats upon it; so that the Commodore did not care to venture the ships long boats to fetch the water off, as there was so much danger of their being lost; and therefore ordered the Captains of the squadron to employ *Portuguese* boats on that service.

We continued about a week at this Island, watering our ships, and providing the squadron with wine and other refreshments. And, on the 3d of *November*, Captain *Richard Norris* having signified by a letter to the Commodore, his desire to quit his command on board the *Gloucester*, in order to return to *England* for the recovery of his health, the Commodore complied with his request; and thereupon was pleased to appoint Captain *Matthew Mitchel* to command the *Gloucester* in his room, and to remove Captain *Kidd* from the *Wager* to the *Pearl*, and Captain *Murray* from the *Tryal* Sloop to the *Wager*, giving command of the *Tryal* to Lieutenant *Chrap*. These promotions being settled, with other changes in the Lieutenancies, the Commodore, on the following day, gave to the Captains their orders, appointing St. *Jago*, one of the *Cape de Verd* Islands, to be the first place of rendezvous in case of separation; and directing them, if they did not meet the *Centurion* there, to make the best of their way to the Island of St. *Catherine's*, on the coast of *Brazil*. The water for the squadron being the same day compleated, and each ship supplied with as much wine and other refreshments as they could take in, we weighed anchor in the afternoon, and took our leave of the Island of *Madera*. But before I go on with the narration of our own transactions, I think it necessary to give some account of the proceedings of the enemy, and of the measures they had taken to render all our designs abortive.

When Mr. *Anson* visited the Governor of *Madera*, he received information from him, that for three or four days, in the latter end of *October*, there had appeared, to the westward of that Island, seven or eight ships of the line, and a *Patache*, which last was sent every day close in to make the land. The Governor assured the Commodore, upon his honour, that none upon the Island had either given them intelligence, or had in any sort communicated with them, but that he believed them to be either *French* or *Spanish*, but was rather inclined to think them *Spanish*. On this intelligence, Mr. *Anson* sent an Officer in a clean sloop,¹ eight leagues to the westward, to reconnoitre them, and, if possible, to discover what they were: But the Officer returned without being able to get a sight of them, so that we still remained in uncertainty. However, we could not but conjecture, that this fleet was intended to put a stop to our expedition, which, had they cruised to the eastward of the Island instead of the westward, they could not but have executed with great facility. For as, in that case, they must have certainly fallen in with us, we should have been obliged to throw overboard vast quantities of provision to clear our ships for an engagement, and this alone, without any regard to the event of the action, would have effectually prevented our progress. This was so obvious a measure, that we could not help imagining reasons which might have prevented them from pursuing it. And we therefore supposed, that this *French* or *Spanish* squadron was sent out, upon advice of our sailing in company with Admiral *Balchen* and Lord *Catchcart's* expedition: And thence, from an apprehension of being over-matched, they might not think it advisable to meet with us, till we had parted company, which they might judge would not happen, before our arrival at this Island. These were our speculations at that time; and from hence we had reason to suppose, that we might still fall in with them, in our way to the *Cape de Verd* Islands. And afterwards, in the course of our expedition, we were many of us persuaded, that this was the *Spanish* squadron commanded by *Don Joseph Pizarro*, which was sent out purposely to traverse the views and enterprizes of our squadron, to which, in strength, they were greatly superior. As this *Spanish*

¹ This "clean sloop" was not the *Tryal* Sloop but a small fore and aft rigged vessel, hired locally for the occasion.



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