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Opening extract from

# The Extraordinary Adventures of Ordinary Basil

Written by

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# CHAPTER ONE

# Ordinary Basil

IT WAS SNOWING. Again. It always seemed to be snowing on the coast of Maine in January. Being shut indoors was Basil Pepperell's lot, and he accepted it, just as he accepted everything else in his ordinary life.

"Most children would give anything to live in a lighthouse, darling," Basil's mother told him as he sat slumped at his bedroom window, watching the snow pile higher. It was little comfort for a 12-year-old boy longing for adventure.

"That's because they don't live in one," Basil muttered. "They have no idea just how ordinary it really is here. Nothing exciting ever happens."



"Well, what's wrong with ordinary?" Mrs Pepperell shot back in frustration. "If you only had extraordinary events in your life, then nothing would seem special any more. The ordinary things are what make the special moments worth savouring!"



Basil turned away from the window and looked at his mother.

"Think about it," she said as she headed for the door. "You can either sit and mope about how boring your life is, or you can make the most of what life hands you. Things can change. It's your choice."

Basil did think about it, and he had to admit there was truth in her words.

But change meant that he had to do something. He had to go to an adventure, not wait for an adventure to come to him.

As Basil sat at his window, a tune began to play in his mind. It was a tune he couldn't remember hearing before, yet it was in some way familiar. He began to whistle along, first quietly, then louder. Whistling was one of Basil's talents, but he never really thought much of it. "Where is being a good whistler ever going to get me?" he said aloud with a sigh.

A voice unexpectedly wafted through the window. "Farther than you might imagine, dear boy!"

Living in a lighthouse, Basil was used to the occasional fisherman passing by and stopping for some conversation. He looked down to see which fisherman it was, but no one was there. Then he heard the voice again.

"No, dear boy . . . up here!"

Leaning out as far as he could, Basil turned and looked up. He stood motionless at his bedroom window, which was three storeys above the rocks and sea below. His jaw dropped, and his eyes bulged. He blinked in disbelief.

Basil found himself staring directly at the bottom of a boat!