

CHAPTER XVII -The circus boys in dixie Land

Following their victory in Corinto, the Sparling Circus enjoyed booming business, spurred by Phil Forrest's success in thwarting a rival circus. Phil discovers his lost money and attempts to return it to Mr. Sparling, who refuses it, offering a reward instead for Phil's bravery. The circus moves on, leaving Canada for the United States, with excitement about their upcoming Southern tour. Meanwhile, a traitorous employee leaking show secrets to rival Sully Circus is discovered and dismissed, heightening tensions.

In Memphis, Tennessee, the Sparling Circus continues to thrive with Phil honing his trapeze skills, though he remains reluctant to perform publicly unless necessary. The show's journey through the South leads them to Clarksdale, Mississippi, where an unexpected incident occurs post-performance. Monkeys escape their cage due to an attendant's oversight, causing chaos under the big top. Their curiosity and mischief lead to the theft and destruction of spectators' belongings, including a lady's hat which Phil ensures is compensated by Mr. Sparling.

The situation escalates when Teddy Tucker, another Circus Boy, volunteers to round up the mischievous monkeys. Using his climbing skills, he attempts to shoo them down, but his plan backfires when the monkeys pull up his escape rope, leaving him stranded amongst them. The audience, engulfed in the unusual spectacle, ignores the scheduled concert, captivated by the unfolding monkey chase. Mr. Sparling and the circus performers watch anxiously, concerned for Teddy's safety while the crowd is entertained by the commotion.

This chapter captures the essence of circus life – the unpredictability, the camaraderie among performers, and the ever-present chance of danger, all while maintaining the

show's allure and excitement for the audience. Through these events, the spirited and resourceful nature of the Circus Boys is showcased, highlighting their ability to adapt to and manage the chaotic and often humorous challenges that arise in their nomadic life of performance.

