

"Some people's are, 'specially when you eat too much; it drops, and you die," Dick answered comfortingly. The unfortunate Jim wailed afresh. Dick's foot felt something; he stooped and picked up the shell of a Brazil nut. There was a small heap of them under Jim's bed. Instantly a most diabolical idea came into Dick's head. "Never mind, old man," he said, "I don't think it's your heart; your heart is nearer your neck. What's the pain like?" "Like something eatin' me all up inside, and twistin' an' jumpin'," said Jim, as he rocked his bent-up body. "My uncle died of something just like that," said Dick in horror; "no, it couldn't be that that you have," he continued, musingly; "it was in Brazil." "Brazil? Oh! Brazil! I've got it! What is it? Oh!" "No, you couldn't have it," said Dick firmly, "I'll tell you about it. It's called the Borer Horrificus. It's a little insect that lives in Brazil nuts—what's the matter, Jim?" he asked, as Jim howled afresh. But Jim only blubbered and sobbed. Dick continued: "The only way you can swallow Borers alive is to eat Brazil nuts in the dark and in a hurry. If you eat more than six nuts there is very little hope of—" "I ate 'leven! I ate 'leven! an' two seemed bad!" roared the terrified Jim. "What! Eleven of those terrible things? O, poor Jim! Wait till I get my book, though, there may be hope!" said Dick, and he hurried over to his locker.

By this time all the boys of the dormitory were gathered in a delightful horror around the writhing Jim. If Jim died, they would have a holiday and a funeral, and they could talk sadly of "poor Jim who had died." Besides, his mother might write to them to describe his last moments, and might even ask them to dinner. And each boy began to feel responsible and important.

Dick returned with a book—I afterwards found it was Robinson Crusoe—and going to the window turned over the pages till he pretended to find what he wanted. Then he read a moment and ejaculated: "This is awful! I'd better not read it!" Jim began to sob louder, and little Simpson commenced to sniff. The others eagerly begged Dick to read. Then he began, in rather quaint language for a medical book:

"Borer Horrificus is one of the most deadliest of things. It is an awful insect sometimes found in Brazil nuts. But it is not dangerous unless they are bolted in the dark. Then the terrible creatures can't be seen, and are not chewed up. They get into a fellow alive, and soon eat him so that he's only a hollow shell. They eat everything up. If more than six nuts are eaten there's very little hope for the dying victim." Here Jim's roaring became so loud that Dick feared the master would hear, so he continued: "Yet there is a chance left!" At this Jim's groans ceased, so that he might hear his salvation. Dick proceeded:

"When the Borers have started work, the best plan is to cut the fellow open and burn sulphur in him!" Jim screamed, and a hand was laid on Dick's shoulder. He turned and looked into the master's face. "Richard," said the doctor, "come to my study at ten, and," he added with a face trying hard not to smile, "prepare for an external attack of *Birchus Rodicus*. Now go to bed. And, James, a little castor oil will be good; there's nothing like it for Borer Horrificus"

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