

1 We did not stop at this place, and we were soon on our way toward the mountainous Island of
2 Capri. The walls of the mountains stand plumb from the sea, and the precipices are fearfully
3 high. This place was the favorite home of the Emperor Tiberius, and it is said that he built 12
4 palaces on the island and had a habit of pushing those who had incurred his displeasure from
5 the highest precipice into the sea. The st.-boat passed the landing place half a mile and
6 stopped opposite the rat hole which is pointed out as the entrance to the celebrated “blue
7 grotto.” A number of small boats came alongside for the purpose of conveying any of the
8 passengers who desired to try the little hole to see the interiors of the grotto. Had the water
9 been still, it would have been an easy matter, but the waves were dashing against the rocky
10 wall and at times nearly reaching the arch of the entrance which is only 3 feet above still water.
11 There was one advantage in the billowy motion of the water: if it rose above the ordinary level
12 at one movement, it fell below it in the next movement. Mrs. Van, Martha, and I, after some
13 little figuring, were safely in the little boat which was bobbing up and down at the side of the
14 steamer. We pushed off and were soon amongst the spray of the breakers against the rocks.
15 We were to sit flat in the bottom of the boat and hold our head below the gunwale. The rise
16 and fall of the water in the cave caused the air to rush in and out of the little entrance with
17 great violence. When our little egg shell neared the hole, a few large waves nearly shut it up.
18 Mrs. Van & Martha became frightened and begged the boatman to turn back. He did not
19 understand a word they said, and watching his opportunity when some smaller waves
20 approached him, thrust the boat at a bound through the opening and clapping his hand gave an
21 Italian whoop of exultation, and we found ourselves safely inside of the wonderful grotto. The
22 water was a deep sky blue, and everything else had a blue tinge. We felt a little blue when we
23 thought of passing out of that contracted hole which looked smaller than ever. However, after
24 sailing around a few minutes, another boat entered having Mr. and Mrs. Van Wyck and Julia on
25 board and another lady friend of Van Wycks. Two or three other boats followed them – made
26 quite a party, all having safely entered. Our boat neared the opening ready to leave, and the
27 skillful boatman, watching his opportunity, quickly pushed the boat out upon the open sea. We
28 were soon safely on the deck of our steamer and watching the hole with a good deal of anxiety
29 to welcome the emergence of our fellow passengers. No accident happened, and now that I
30 am safely out, I will confess that it was a reckless, daredevil of an undertaking, but we saw the
31 grotto. Returning to the landing, our craft came to anchor, and, leaving in small boats for the
32 shore, we rambled about the island for two hours – but it would require two days to visit all the
33 places of interest on the island. We walked a couple of miles, stopped at an orange farm and
34 plucked the fruit from the trees, then, returning on board, were wafted safely home at 6
35 o’clock, just in time for dinner.

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