

## **The Mystery of the Lobster Thieves**

**By Elaine Macmann Willoughby**

**Published in 1978, the story takes place in New Castle, NH**

I had never thought much about girls and boys getting kidnapped before we moved to Blue Shutters. Blue Shutters is a little white cottage with blue shutters that we rented on an island – just off the coast of New Hampshire.

The cottage is on a little cove, and you can fish and swim and everything. There are apple trees to climb and late in the summer we use the apples for pies. Sometimes we use the apples for ammunition in an apple war. Getting hit with a rotten apple doesn't hurt as much as the good ones, but it is very messy.

Besides all the apple trees there is a big oak tree. Wallace, my ten year old brother, hung a swing from it. Then there is a rowboat anchored about ten feet from the house. Good and bad things happened with that rowboat. In the end I guess you'd say that the rowboat was the reason the mystery was solved. But after what we went through because of it sometimes makes me not so sure.

We turned down a little dirt lane, and just before we got to the water there was the white house with blue shutters. The moving van was in front getting itself unloaded. And in the back of Blue Shutters was the sparkling blue salt water. Wallace and I ran down to the tiny beach. We took off our shoes and socks and waded into the water.

"The cold water makes my skin tingle," said Wallace.

"Mine, too," I answered. It was a nice tingle, though.

Two sea gulls glided up and down in the air currents. They were beautiful big birds. Mostly white with pearly grey mantels and black wing tips. It looked as though they were having fun gliding up and down and around the tiny cove. I know I was having fun. Wallace had found some sea shells here and there on the beach. Some pretty pebbles, too. I was stuffing the best ones into my pockets when Mom called us to come in and help unpack. Well, I figured we'd be there all summer to explore.

By dinner time we were all moved into our little house.