

THE SANDMAN
His Sea Stories



THEY SAILED ON, IN THE MOONLIGHT

The Sandman
HIS SEA STORIES

BY

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CONTENTS

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY	1
THE FIRE STORY	16
THE PORPOISE STORY	23
THE SEAWEED STORY	30
THE FLYING-FISH STORY	39
THE LOG-BOOK STORY	45
THE SHARK STORY	54
THE CHRISTMAS STORY	64
THE SOUNDING STORY	74
THE TEAK-WOOD STORY	81
THE STOWAWAY STORY	90
THE ALBATROSS STORY	97
THE DERELICT STORY	102
THE LIGHTHOUSE STORY	110

THE RUNAWAY STORY.....	117
THE TRAFALGAR STORY.....	127
THE CARGO STORY.....	132
THE PRIVATEER STORY.....	141
THE RACE STORY	152
THE PILOT STORY.....	161
THE DRIFTWOOD STORY	169

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a wide river that ran into the ocean, and beside it was a little city. And in that city was a wharf where great ships came from far countries. And a narrow road led down a very steep hill to that wharf, and anybody that wanted to go to the wharf had to go down the steep hill on the narrow road, for there wasn't any other way. And because ships had come there for a great many years, and all the sailors and all the captains and all the men who had business with the ships had to go on that narrow road, the flagstones that made the sidewalks were much worn.

That was a great many years ago.

The river and the ocean are there yet, as they always have been and always will be; and the city is there, but it is a different kind of a city from what it used to be. And the wharf is slowly falling down, for it is not used now; and the narrow road down the steep hill is all grown up with weeds and grass.

Once, more than a hundred years ago, when ships

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

still came to that wharf, the brig *Industry* came sailing into that river. For she was one of the ships that used to come to that wharf, and she used to sail from it to India and China, and she always brought back silks and cloth of goats' hair and camels' hair shawls and sets of china and pretty lacquered tables and trays, and things carved out of ebony and ivory and teakwood, and logs of teakwood and tea and spices. And she had just got back from those far countries and Captain Solomon and all the sailors were very glad to get back. For it was more than a year since she had sailed out of the little river, and they hadn't seen their families for all that long time. And a year is a pretty long time for a man to be sailing on the great ocean and not to see his wife and his dear little boys and girls.

So they hurried and tied the *Industry* to the wharf with great ropes and they went away just as soon as they could. And the men that had wives and little boys and girls went to see them, and the others went somewhere. Perhaps they went to the Sailors' Home and perhaps they didn't. But Captain Solomon went to the office of Captain Jonathan and Captain Jacob, who were the owners of the *Industry*. Their office was just at the head of the wharf, so he didn't have far to go. And Captain Jonathan and Captain Jacob were there waiting for him, and they shook hands with him and sent him packing off home, to see his wife and baby. For Captain Solomon hadn't been married much more than a year and he had sailed away on that long voyage after he had been married four months and he had left his wife behind. And the baby had been born while he was gone, so that

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY

he hadn't seen him yet. That baby was the one that was called little Sol, that is told about in some of the Ship Stories. Captain Solomon wanted to see his wife and his baby, so he hurried off when Captain Jonathan and Captain Jacob told him to.

Then the mate of the *Industry* got a lot of men and had them take out of the ship all the things that she had brought from those far countries. And they wheeled them, on little trucks, into the building where Captain Jonathan and Captain Jacob had their office, and they piled them up in a great empty room that smelled strangely of camphor and spices and tea and all sorts of other things that make a nice smell.

At last all the things were taken out of the *Industry*, so that she floated very high up in the water and the top of her rail, which the sailors look over, was high above the wharf. And Captain Jonathan and Captain Jacob came out of their office to speak to the mate. And the mate said that the *Industry* was all unloaded; for he was rather proud that he had got all those many things out so quickly.

And Captain Jonathan answered the mate and said how quick he had been. But Captain Jacob didn't say anything, for he was looking around at the sky. The mate saw that Captain Jacob was looking at the sky, and he looked up, too.

"Looks as though we might have a breeze o' wind," he said. For little white feathery clouds were coming up from the southwest and covering the sky like a thin veil.

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

Captain Jacob nodded. "More than a breeze," he said; for Captain Jacob had been a truly captain and he knew about the weather.

"I've got out double warps," said the mate; and he meant that he had tied the *Industry* to the wharf with two ropes instead of one at each place.

Captain Jacob nodded again. "That's well," he said. "That's just as well."

And the mate said "Good night, sir," to Captain Jonathan and he said it to Captain Jacob, too, and they bade him good night, and he went home.

That evening Captain Jacob heard the wind as he was playing chess with Lois. Lois was Captain Jacob's wife. And Captain Jacob listened to the wind and forgot about the game of chess that he was playing, so that Lois beat him two games. That made Captain Jacob angry, for Lois didn't care much about chess and couldn't play as well as Captain Jacob could. She only played to please Captain Jacob, anyway. And Captain Jacob got so angry that he put the chessmen away and went to bed; but he didn't sleep very well, the wind howled so.

Very early in the morning, long before daylight, Captain Jacob got up. He had been awake for some time, listening to the sound of the rain against his windows and to the howling and shrieking of the wind. And he wondered what was happening down on the river and if the *Industry* was all right. He knew well enough what was happening along the shore, and that they would be hearing of wrecks for the next two weeks. They didn't have the telegraph then, so that they wouldn't read in a

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY

morning paper what had happened far away during the night, but would have to wait for the stage to bring them the news, or for some boat to bring it. So Captain Jacob got more and more uneasy, until, at last, he couldn't stand it any longer.

And he dressed himself as fast as he could and put on his heavy boots and his great cloak, and he pulled his hat down hard, and he lighted a lantern and started down to the wharf. It was hard work, for the wind was so strong that it almost took him up right off the ground, and blew him along. And sometimes he had to hold on to the fences to keep himself from blowing away; and he had to watch for a chance, when the wind wasn't so strong for a minute, to cross the streets. Once he heard a great crash, and he knew that that was the sound of a chimney that the wind had blown over. But he couldn't stop to attend to that.

When he got to the wharf, he was surprised to see how high the hull of the *Industry* was. It wasn't daylight yet, but he could just make out the bulk of it against the sky. And he was surprised because he knew that it would not be time for the tide to be high for three hours yet, and the *Industry* was floating as high as she would at a very high tide. So Captain Jacob made his way very carefully out on the wharf, holding on to ropes and to other things when there were other things to hold on to, and crouching down low, for he didn't want to be blown off into the water.

At last he got to the edge, and he held his lantern over and looked down at the water. And the top of the



SOMETIMES HE HAD TO HOLD ON
TO THE FENCES

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY

water was only about three feet down, for the wind was blowing straight up the river from the ocean, and it was so strong that it had blown the water from the ocean into the river. And it was still blowing it in, and was getting stronger every minute.

Captain Jacob looked at the water a minute. "Hello!" he said. But nobody could have heard him, there was such a noise of the wind and of the waves washing against the wharf. He didn't say it to anybody in particular, so he wasn't disappointed that nobody heard him. And he listened again, and he thought he heard a noise as though somebody was on the *Industry*. So he climbed up the side, with his lantern, and there he saw the mate, for it was just beginning to be a little bit light in the east. The mate was trying to do something with an anchor; but the anchors were great, enormous, heavy things, and one man couldn't do anything with them at all.

Captain Jacob went close beside the mate. "What you trying to do?" he yelled, as loud as he could.

"What, sir?" asked the mate, yelling as loud as he could.

"What—you—trying—to—do?" asked Captain Jacob again. The wind was playing a tune on every rope on the ship and singing a song besides, so that the noise, up there on the deck, was fearful.

"Trying to get an anchor out in the river," yelled the mate, putting his hands to his mouth like a trumpet. "Wharf's going to be flooded as the tide rises. Afraid she'll capsize!"

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

“You can’t do it alone,” yelled Captain Jacob.

“No,” yelled the mate. “Can’t! Get some men!”

“Good!” yelled Captain Jacob. And the mate climbed down the side.

But the mate didn’t have to go far, for some men were already coming as well as they could, holding on by the fences on the way, and the mate met those men. And they came on the *Industry*, and lowered the biggest boat that she had into the water, and they all managed to get in, somehow or other, and to hold the boat while Captain Jacob and the mate lowered the anchor into the boat, winding the chain around the capstan. The anchor was so heavy that it nearly sunk the boat, but it didn’t quite sink it. The end of the boat that the anchor was on was so near the water that water kept splashing in.

Then the men all rowed very hard and the boat went ahead slowly, while Captain Jacob and the mate let out more of the anchor chain. But they couldn’t go very far, for the wind was so strong and the waves were so high and the heavy anchor chain held them back near the ship. When they had got as far as they could, they managed to pry the anchor overboard. It went into the water with a tremendous splash, wetting all the men; but they didn’t mind, for they were all wet through already with the rain and the splashing of the waves. And the boat turned around and went back to the shore. But the men didn’t try to row it back to the *Industry*. The wind blew them up the river, so that they got to the shore three or four wharves up, beyond the railway where they pulled ships up out of the water to

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY

mend them. They then walked back as quickly as they could.

Captain Jacob and the mate had been working hard, taking in some of the anchor chain. They put two of the bars in the capstan head and pushed as hard as they could, and they had managed to get a strain on the anchor by the time the men got back. It was daylight, by this time, and the tide had risen so much that the men had to go splashing through water that was up to their ankles all over the top of the wharf. But they didn't care, and they got up on the ship, and some of them put more bars in the capstan head and pushed, and some of them let out more of the great ropes that held the ship to the wharf. They wanted to get her away from the wharf and out in the river, for they were afraid that the wind might blow her right over upon the wharf and tip her over. Then it would be very hard to get her into the water again.

When the anchor chain was pulled in enough, they fastened it and went to the stern and down one of the great ropes that held the *Industry* to the wharf. They went down, half sliding and half letting themselves down by their hands, and Captain Jacob and the mate and all the men that were on the ship went down that way. They all had been sailors, and a sailor has to learn to do such things and not to be afraid. And they all splashed into the water that was on the top of the wharf. Then they let out the ropes from that end, but they didn't let them go. And the *Industry* lay out in the river, at anchor, about five fathoms from the end of the wharf.

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

A fathom is six feet, and sailors generally measure distances in fathoms instead of in feet.

As soon as Captain Jacob had got to the wharf he yelled to the men and waved his hand to them, for he was afraid that they could not hear him if he tried to tell them anything. And he started very carefully across the wharf, holding on to anything he could get hold of, and all the men followed him. It was very hard work and very dangerous, too, going about on top of the wharf, for the water was nearly up to the men's knees, and it was all wavy. And Captain Jacob led the way to the office and opened the door and they all went in.

As soon as they were inside, they began taking all the things that were piled up in that great room that had the nice smell, and they carried them up stairs. They didn't wait to be told what to do, for they knew well enough that Captain Jacob was afraid that the tide might rise so high that the floor of that room and of the office would be covered with water and all the pretty things would be wet and spoiled. Of course, water wouldn't spoil the china and such things, but it would spoil the shawls and the silks and the tea and the spices. So they worked hard until they had all the things up stairs.

And, by that time, the water was beginning to come in at the door and to creep along over the floor; and Captain Jacob and the mate and all the men went outside, and stood where they were sheltered from the wind, and they watched the river, that stretched out very wide indeed, and they watched the things that



THEY SAW ALL SORTS OF THINGS
GOING UP THE RIVER

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

were being driven up on its surface by the wind, and they watched the *Industry*.

They were all standing in the water, but they didn't know it. And they saw all sorts of things going up the river, with the wind and the waves: many small boats that had been dragged from their moorings or off the beaches; and some larger boats that belonged to fishermen; and some of the fishermen's huts that had stood in a row on a beach; and a part of a house that had been built too near the water; and logs and boards from the wharves and all kinds of drifting stuff. It was almost high tide now, and the wind was stronger than ever. None of the men had had any breakfast, but they didn't think of that.

"About the height of it, now," said the mate to Captain Jacob. They could hear each other speak where they were standing, in a place that was sheltered by the building. "Not so bad here, in the lee of the office. And the wind 'll go down as the tide turns, I'm thinking."

Captain Jacob nodded. He was watching the *Industry* pitching in the great seas that were coming up the river.

"She ought to have more chain out," he said anxiously. "I wish we could have given her more chain. It's a terrible strain."

"If a man was to go out to her," began the mate, slowly, "he might be able to give her more. He could shin up those warps——"

"Don't think of it!" said Captain Jacob. "Don't think of it!"

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY

As he spoke, the ship's bow lifted to a great sea, there was a dull sound that was scarcely heard, and she began to drift, slowly, at first, until she was broadside to the wind. The anchor chain had broken; but the great ropes that were fastened to the wharf still held her by the stern. Then she drifted faster, in toward the wharves. There was a sound like the report of a small cannon; then another and another. The great ropes that had held her to the wharf had snapped like thread.

“Well,” said Captain Jacob, “now I wonder where she'll bring up. We can't do anything.”

So they watched her drifting in to the wharf where the railway was, where they pulled ships up out of the water to mend them. And Captain Jonathan was coming down to the office just as the *Industry* broke adrift, and he saw that she would come ashore at the railway. So he stopped there and waited for her to come. They had there a sort of cradle, that runs down into the water on rails; and a ship fits into the cradle and is drawn up out of the water to be mended. And Captain Jonathan thought of that, and he thought that it wouldn't do any harm to lower the cradle and see if the *Industry* wouldn't happen to fit into it. It might not do any good, but it couldn't do any harm; and the *Industry* was all unloaded, and floated very high in the water.

So Captain Jonathan and two other men, who belonged at that railway, lowered the cradle as much as they thought would be right, and the *Industry* drifted in and she did happen to catch on the cradle. She didn't fit into it exactly, for she was heeled over by the wind,

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

and she caught on the cradle more on one side than the other; but Captain Jonathan thought that she would go into the water all right when the tide went down a little and the cradle was lowered more. And he was glad that he had happened to think of it.

Then, pretty soon, the tide began to go out again, and the wind stopped blowing so hard. And, in an hour, there was not more than a strong gale blowing, and men began to go out in row boats that hadn't broken adrift, and to pick things up as they came down with the tide. The sea was very rough, but they were afraid that the things would drift out to sea if they waited.

And, in a couple of hours more, Captain Jonathan and Captain Jacob and the mate and all the men had the *Industry* afloat again and were warping her back to her wharf. There was no great harm done; only some marks of scraping and bumping and the anchor down at the bottom of the river.



Then Captain Jonathan and Captain Jacob went home to dinner, and pretty soon all the men went, too. And they saw a great many chimneys blown over into yards and a great many fences blown down; and they came to a great tree that was blown down across the street, and then they saw another and a third. And they had to go through somebody's yard to get around these trees. And, when

THE SEPTEMBER-GALE STORY

they got home, they heard about an old woman who had tried to go somewhere, who had been picked up by the wind and carried a long way and set down again on her own doorstep. And she had taken the hint and gone into the house.

That great wind, they called the Great September Gale, for it happened in the early part of September. That is the time of the year that such great winds are most apt to come. And all the people had it to talk about for a long time, for there wasn't another such gale for more than twenty years.

And that's all.

THE FIRE STORY



ONCE upon a time there was a wide river that ran into the ocean, and beside it was a little city. And in that city was a wharf where great ships came from far countries. And a narrow road led down a very steep hill to that wharf, and anybody that wanted to go to the wharf had to go down the steep hill on the narrow road, for there wasn't any other way. And because ships had come there for a great many years and all the sailors and all the captains and all the men who had business with the ships had to go on that narrow road, the flagstones that made the sidewalk were much worn. That was a great many years ago. The river and the ocean are there yet, as they always have been and always will be; and the city is there, but it is a different kind of a city from what it used to be. And the wharf is slowly falling down, for it is not used now; and the narrow road down the steep hill is all grown up with weeds and grass.

One day, in the long ago, the brig *Industry* sailed away from that wharf, on a voyage to India. And she

THE FIRE STORY

sailed down the wide river and out into the great ocean and on and on until the land was only a dim blue streak on the horizon; and farther on, and the land sank out of sight, and there was nothing to be seen, wherever Captain Solomon looked, but that great, big water, that was so blue and that danced and sparkled in the sunshine. For it was a beautiful afternoon and there was just a gentle wind blowing, so that the *Industry* had every bit of sail set that could be set: mainsail and foresail and spanker, main-topsail, and fore-topsail, main-topgallantsail and fore-topgallantsail and main-royal and fore-royal and main-skysail and fore-skysail and staysails and all her jibs and a studdingsail on every yard, out on its boom. She was sailing very fast, and she was a pretty sight, with that cloud of canvas. She looked like a great white bird. I wish that you and I could have seen her.

And the crew didn't have much to do, when they had got all those sails set. They had already been divided into watches, so that every man knew what his duty would be, and when he would have to be on deck, ready to work, and when he could sleep. And they stood at the rail, mostly, and they leaned on it and looked out over the water in the direction of that little city that they were leaving behind them and that they wouldn't see again for nearly a year. They couldn't see the little city because it was down behind the roundness of the world; but they saw the sun, which was almost setting. And the sun sank lower and lower until it sank into the sea. And there were all sorts of pretty colors, in the west,

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

which changed and grew dim, and disappeared. And the stars came out, one by one, and it was night.

Captain Solomon didn't have any of those many sails taken in, because he knew that it would be pleasant weather all night, and that the wind would be less rather than more. And it was such a beautiful night that he didn't go to bed early, but stayed on deck until it was very late; and he watched the stars and the water and he listened to the wash of the waves as the ship went through them and he saw the foam that she made; and he felt the gentle wind blowing on his cheek, and it all seemed very good to him. Captain Solomon loved the sea. Then, when it was very late, and they were just going to change the watch, he went into the cabin to go to bed.

Before he had got his clothes off, he heard a commotion on deck, and the mate came running down.

"The ship's on fire, sir," he said. "There's smoke coming out of the forward hatch."

Captain Solomon said something and threw on his clothes that he had taken off and ran out on deck. It was less than half a minute from the time the mate had told him. And he saw a little, thin column of smoke rising out of the forward hatchway, just as the mate had said. They had the hatch off by this time, and the sailors were all on deck. The hatchway is a square hole in the deck that leads down into the hold, where the things are put that the ship carries. It has a cover made of planks, and

THE FIRE STORY

the cover fits on tightly and can be fastened down. It usually is fastened when the ship is going.

Captain Solomon spoke to the mate. "Put her about on the other tack," he said, "and head for Boston, while we fight it. If we get it under, as I think we will, we'll lose only a couple of hours. If we don't, we can get help there. We ought to make Boston by daylight."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the mate. And he gave the orders in a sharp voice, and most of the crew jumped for the sails and the ropes and pulled and hauled, and they soon had the ship heading for Boston. But the second mate and a few of the sailors got lanterns and lighted them.

And, when they had lighted their lanterns, the second mate jumped down the hatchway into the smoke, and four sailors jumped down after him. And they began tumbling about the bales of things; but they couldn't tumble them about very much, for there wasn't room, the cargo had been stowed so tightly. And the second mate asked Captain Solomon to rig a tackle to hoist some of the things out on deck.

"Doing it, now," answered Captain Solomon. "It'll be ready in half a minute."

And they got the tackle rigged right over the hatchway, and they let down one end of the rope to the second mate. This end of the rope that was let down had two great, iron hooks that could be hooked into a bale, one on each side. And the second mate and the sailors that were down there with him hooked them into a bale and yelled. Then a great many of the sailors, who

THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

already had hold of the other end of the rope, ran away with it, so that the bale came up as if it had been blown up through the hatchway. Then other sailors caught it, and threw it over to one side and unhooked the hooks, and they let them down into the hold again.

They got up a great many bales in this way, and they did it faster than the *Industry* had ever been unloaded before. And the sailors that ran away with the rope sang as they ran.

“What shall we do with a drunken sailor?”

was the chanty that they sang. And, at last, the second mate and the four sailors came out of the hold, and they were choking with the smoke and rubbing their eyes.

“Getting down to it, sir,” said the second mate, “but we couldn’t stand any more.”

So the first mate didn’t wait, but he took the second mate’s lantern and jumped down.

“Four men follow me!” he cried; and all the other sailors, who hadn’t been down yet, jumped for the lanterns of the four sailors who had been down, and Captain Solomon laughed.

“That’s the way to do it!” he cried. “That’s the sort of spirit I like to see. We’ll have it out in a jiffy. Four of you men at a time. You’ll all have a turn. Man the pumps, some of you, and be ready to turn a stream down there if it’s wanted.”

So the four who had been nearest to the lanterns went down, and some of the others tailed on to the

THE FIRE STORY

rope, and still others got the pumps ready and rigged a hose and put the end of it down the hatchway. But they didn't pump, because Captain Solomon knew that water would do harm to the cargo that wasn't harmed yet, and he didn't want to pump water into the hold unless he had to.

Then they all hurried some more and got out more bales, until the mate and his four men had to come up; but there were more men waiting to go down, and, this time, Captain Solomon led them.

He hadn't been there long before he called out. "Here she is!" he said. And the sailors hoisted out a bale that was smoking. As soon as it was on deck, out in the air, it burst into flames.

Captain Solomon had come up. "Heave it overboard!" he cried. And four sailors took hold of it and heaved it over the side into the water. The *Industry* was sailing pretty fast and quickly left it astern, where it floated, burning, for a few minutes; then, as the water soaked into the bale, it got heavier, and sank, and the sailors saw the light go out, suddenly.



THE SANDMAN: HIS SEA STORIES

Captain Solomon drew a long breath. “Put her on her course again, Mr. Steele,” he said to the mate. “We won’t lose any more time. You can have this mess cleared up in the morning.”

And the sailors jumped for the ropes, although they were pretty tired, and they swung the yards around, two at a time, with a chanty for each. The *Industry* was sailing away for India again. And, the next day they cleared the smoke out of the hold, and they stowed the cargo that had been taken out in the night, and they put on the hatch and fastened it.

And that’s all.