

V. HE PURCHASES HIS SEA-WARDROBE, AND ON A DISMAL RAINY DAY PICKS UP HIS BOARD AND LODGING ALONG THE WHARVES

The first thing I now did was to buy a little stationery, and keep my promise to my mother, by writing her; and I also wrote to my brother informing him of the voyage I purposed making, and indulging in some romantic and misanthropic views of life, such as many boys in my circumstances, are accustomed to do.

The rest of the two dollars and a half I laid out that very morning in buying a red woolen shirt near Catharine Market, a tarpaulin hat, which I got at an out-door stand near Peck Slip, a belt and jackknife, and two or three trifles. After these purchases, I had only one penny left, so I walked out to the end of the pier, and threw the penny into the water. The reason why I did this, was because I somehow felt almost desperate again, and didn't care what became of me. But if the penny had been a dollar, I would have kept it.

I went home to dinner at Mr. Jones', and they welcomed me very kindly, and Mrs. Jones kept my plate full all the time during dinner, so that I had no chance to empty it. She seemed to see that I felt bad, and thought plenty of pudding might help me. At any rate, I never felt so bad yet but I could eat a good dinner. And once, years afterward, when I expected to be killed every day, I remember my appetite was very keen,

and I said to myself, "Eat away, Wellingborough, while you can, for this may be the last supper you will have."

After dinner I went into my room, locked the door carefully, and hung a towel over the knob, so that no one could peep through the keyhole, and then went to trying on my red woolen shirt before the glass, to see what sort of a looking sailor I was going to make. As soon as I got into the shirt I began to feel sort of warm and red about the face, which I found was owing to the reflection of the dyed wool upon my skin. After that, I took a pair of scissors and went to cutting my hair, which was very long. I thought every little would help, in making me a light hand to run aloft.

Next morning I bade my kind host and hostess good-by, and left the house with my bundle, feeling somewhat misanthropical and desperate again.

Before I reached the ship, it began to rain hard; and as soon as I arrived at the wharf, it was plain that there would be no getting to sea that day.

This was a great disappointment to me, for I did not want to return to Mr. Jones' again after bidding them good-by; it would be so awkward. So I concluded to go on board ship for the present.

When I reached the deck, I saw no one but a large man in a large dripping pea-jacket, who was calking down the main-hatches.

"What do you want, Pillgarlic?" said he.

"I've shipped to sail in this ship," I replied, assuming a little dignity, to chastise his familiarity.

"What for? a tailor?" said he, looking at my shooting jacket.

I answered that I was going as a "boy;" for so I was technically put down on the articles.

"Well," said he, "have you got your traps aboard?"

I told him I didn't know there were any rats in the ship, and hadn't brought any "trap."

At this he laughed out with a great guffaw, and said there must be hay-seed in my hair.

This made me mad; but thinking he must be one of the sailors who was going in the ship, I thought it wouldn't be wise to make an enemy of him, so only asked him where the men slept in the vessel, for I wanted to put my clothes away.

"Where's your clothes?" said he.

"Here in my bundle," said I, holding it up.

"Well if that's all you've got," he cried, "you'd better chuck it overboard. But go forward, go forward to the forecabin; that's the place you'll live in aboard here."

And with that he directed me to a sort of hole in the deck in the bow of the ship; but looking down, and seeing how dark it was, I asked him for a light.

"Strike your eyes together and make one," said he, "we don't have any lights here." So I groped my way down into the forecabin, which smelt so bad of old ropes and tar, that it almost made me sick. After waiting patiently, I began to see a little; and looking round, at last perceived I was in a smoky looking place, with twelve wooden boxes stuck round the sides. In some of these boxes were large chests, which I at once supposed to belong to the sailors, who must have taken that method of appropriating their "Trunks," as I afterward found these boxes were called. And so it turned out.

After examining them for a while, I selected an empty one, and put my bundle right in the middle of it, so that there might be no mistake about my claim to the place, particularly as the bundle was so small.

This done, I was glad to get on deck; and learning to a certainty that the ship would not sail till the next day, I resolved to go ashore, and

walk about till dark, and then return and sleep out the night in the fore-castle. So I walked about all over, till I was weary, and went into a mean liquor shop to rest; for having my tarpaulin on, and not looking very gentlemanly, I was afraid to go into any better place, for fear of being driven out. Here I sat till I began to feel very hungry; and seeing some doughnuts on the counter, I began to think what a fool I had been, to throw away my last penny; for the doughnuts were but a penny apiece, and they looked very plump, and fat, and round. I never saw doughnuts look so enticing before; especially when a negro came in, and ate one before my eyes. At last I thought I would fill up a little by drinking a glass of water; having read somewhere that this was a good plan to follow in a case like the present. I did not feel thirsty, but only hungry; so had much ado to get down the water; for it tasted warm; and the tumbler had an ugly flavor; the negro had been drinking some spirits out of it just before.

I marched off again, every once in a while stopping to take in some more water, and being very careful not to step into the same shop twice, till night came on, and I found myself soaked through, for it had been raining more or less all day. As I went to the ship, I could not help thinking how lonesome it would be, to spend the whole night in that damp and dark fore-castle, without light or fire, and nothing to lie on but the bare boards of my bunk. However, to drown all such thoughts, I gulped down another glass of water, though I was wet enough outside and in by this time; and trying to put on a bold look, as if I had just been eating a hearty meal, I stepped aboard the ship.

The man in the big pea-jacket was not to be seen; but on going forward I unexpectedly found a young lad there, about my own age; and as soon as he opened his mouth I knew he was not an American. He talked such a curious language though, half English and half gibberish, that I knew not what to make of him; and was a little astonished, when he told me he was an English boy, from Lancashire.

It seemed, he had come over from Liverpool in this very ship on her last voyage, as a steerage passenger; but finding that he would have to work very hard to get along in America, and getting home-sick into the bargain, he had arranged with the captain to' work his passage back.

I was glad to have some company, and tried to get him conversing; but found he was the most stupid and ignorant boy I had ever met with. I asked him something about the river Thames; when he said that he hadn't traveled any in America and didn't know any thing about the rivers here. And when I told him the river Thames was in England, he showed no surprise or shame at his ignorance, but only looked ten times more stupid than before.

At last we went below into the fore-castle, and both getting into the same bunk, stretched ourselves out on the planks, and I tried my best to get asleep. But though my companion soon began to snore very loud, for me, I could not forget myself, owing to the horrid smell of the place, my being so wet, cold, and hungry, and besides all that, I felt damp and

clammy about the heart. I lay turning over and over, listening to the Lancashire boy's snoring, till at last I felt so, that I had to go on deck; and there I walked till morning, which I thought would never come.

As soon as I thought the groceries on the wharf would be open I left the ship and went to make my breakfast of another glass of water. But this made me very qualmish; and soon I felt sick as death; my head was dizzy; and I went staggering along the walk, almost blind. At last I dropt on a heap of chain-cable, and shutting my eyes hard, did my best to rally myself, in which I succeeded, at last, enough to get up and walk off. Then I thought that I had done wrong in not returning to my friend's house the day before; and would have walked there now, as it was, only it was at least three miles up town; too far for me to walk in such a state, and I had no sixpence to ride in an omnibus.