

"Get up when you hear the bell after this," he said and slammed the door.

I started to turn over and go to sleep again, but glancing upward I caught sight of the Old Man, his face as solemn as ever. Then slowly he closed his one eye and nodded his head as if wanting me to do the same. But I had enough of that for one night. My dreams could wait, but breakfast couldn't.

To-morrow night should solve the mystery of the barrel, but when I hear the bell buoy ringing again, I'm going to jump out of the boat and swim ashore as fast as I can.

—JOHN S. MACDONALD '49

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## PAPER BOY DAYS

About ten years ago I used to spend my Saturdays delivering a weekly paper. I would start about nine o'clock in the morning and would not be finished until four. I usually spent about an hour uptown, around the stores and offices, and the rest of the time around the railroad yards, the ships and the wharves. Of course an hour would have been sufficient for me to deliver all my papers, but I spent the remainder of the time watching the men working on the ships, on the docks and sheds, in the railway yards and shops. Even though I invariably received a tanning when I got home for wasting time, I always considered it was worth it. Now that it is all behind me, I am glad I did it.

I remember how I used to think I was an authority on any question, that I was the smartest kid on the block, and knew more than any of the others. I knew all about the repairing and building of boats, steam engines and locomotives, about cattle-loading, dredging, ore-smelting, sail-making, turnip-waxing, unloading railway cars, and all sorts of things—yes sir, I guess I knew more than any other kid on the block.

I remember the kind men who, to me, were the most wonderful people in the world. They were always glad to see me, and always bought a paper—even though they really didn't want one. They would sit me down and ask me what I was going to be, and tell me to work hard and study so that when I grew up I would not have to slave as they did. Then they would tell me about the kids they had, and always they seemed to have one just my age, and just like me. I remember the wicked lies they told about when they went to school, the things they did to their teachers and



truant officers. A favorite trick was to put mice into the teachers desk and to lead the truant officer on a merry chase up alleyways, over fences, across vacant lots, and so on. But the truant officer had a trick of his own—he would take their clothes when they were in swimming so that they would have to face their parents wearing evidence of their truancy. They told me all sorts of tricks they did—smart tricks—but when I tried them I could never get them to work.

Then there were the men on the dredge with their little tap-dancing dummy. It was a little man, (he was supposed to be the cook's son, Oscar,) made out of a flat piece of wood, with the limbs wired to-gether so that they would dangle freely; a handle was attached to the back of Oscar and a shingle was provided for him to dance on. When one of the crew played the mouth-organ, he danced, and, judging from the impish grin he wore, it seemed that he was having more fun than any of us.

I remember, too, the big engines down in the bottom of the ships. I was always afraid of them and of all the cat-walks and steps in the engine room, but of course I couldn't be a coward, so I went down anyway. The men used to explain their machines to me—all about their pistons, condensers, cams, shafts, and packings—and I'd nod my head and say "Yes" even though I hadn't the slightest notion of what they were talking about. I could only imagine that there were little men, or something, inside the machines making them go, instead of the steam I saw floating around; the angry snorts and grunts that came out of the machine were just like noises men would make.

The foreigners I met on the boat were the most interesting. They would sing by the hour, fight by the hour, go back to singing, then fighting, and then eat. The big meals they ate puzzled me, but they were big men, and could sing and fight, so I guess they needed all they ate.

As in all things, I had to pay the price: sooner or later I had to go home, and there I knew there would be a warm reception awaiting me. Besides other effective tactics, my mother would tell me that if I spent all my time around the wharves, I would soon become a wharf-rat, but I thought that if the rats had as much fun as I had, then it wouldn't be so bad being one.

These were certainly wonderful days, and I learned much. Yes, they were happy days, interesting days, unforgettable days — in short, paper-boy days.

—ROBERT KELLY