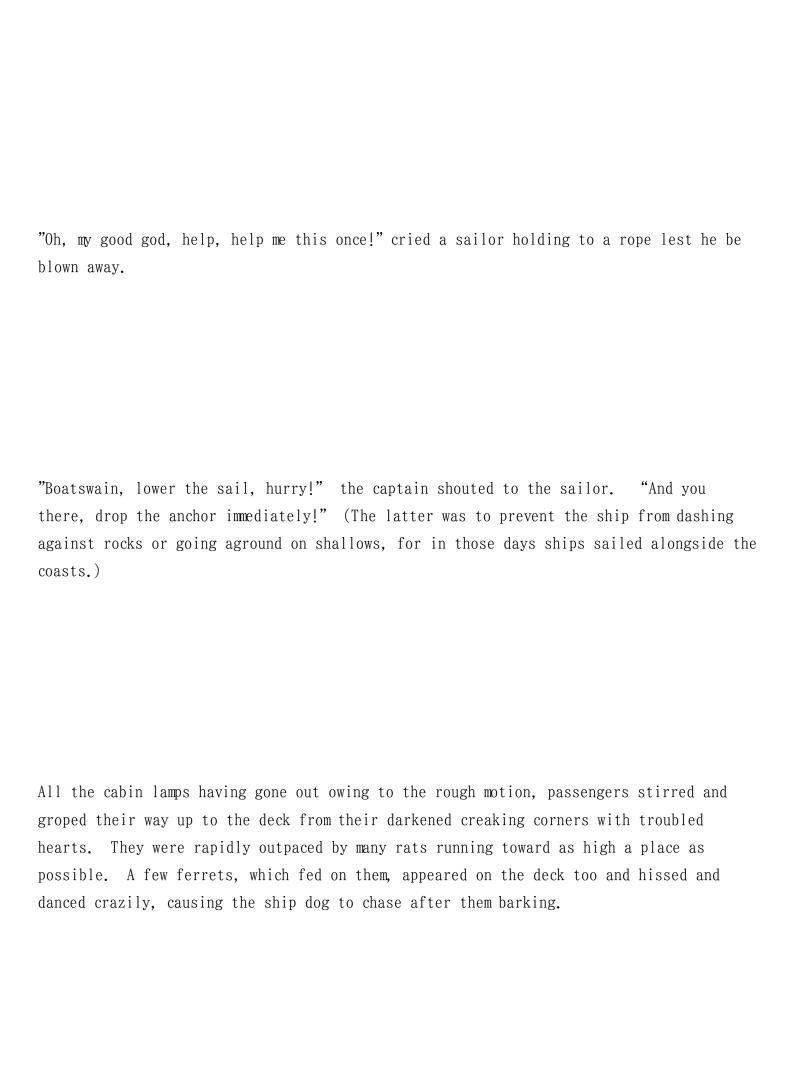
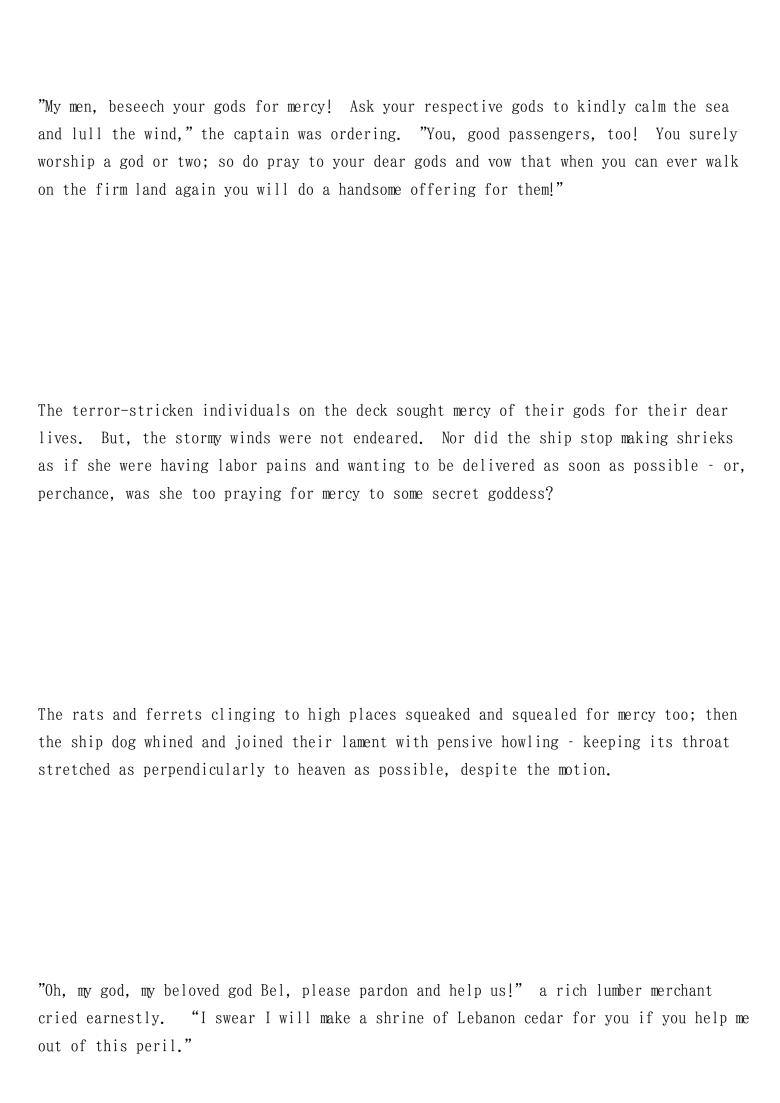


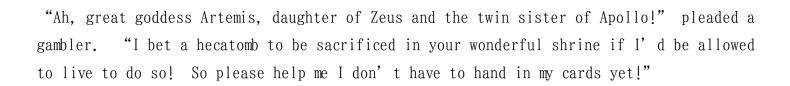
Jonah climbed down into the bottom of the ship and, exhausted from the hasty long journey, immediately fell into a deep sleep.

As the ship sailed outside the harbor, the wind rose and got stronger and pushed her off the course. A gray giant-like cloud far away began to collapse and surge to roof the vast ocean, and soon the sea line was darkened by black rain. Upon a flash of lightening and cracking of thunder, cold rain started to pour on the ship. The waves, pushed high by the strong winds, tackled the ship with such force that she squeaked and rolled dangerously and would topple any moment. Then, a whirl wind rose from nowhere and started twirling her.

"This is a double catastrophe! A storm and tornado at once!" shouted the helmsman, who could no longer hold the spinning helm.

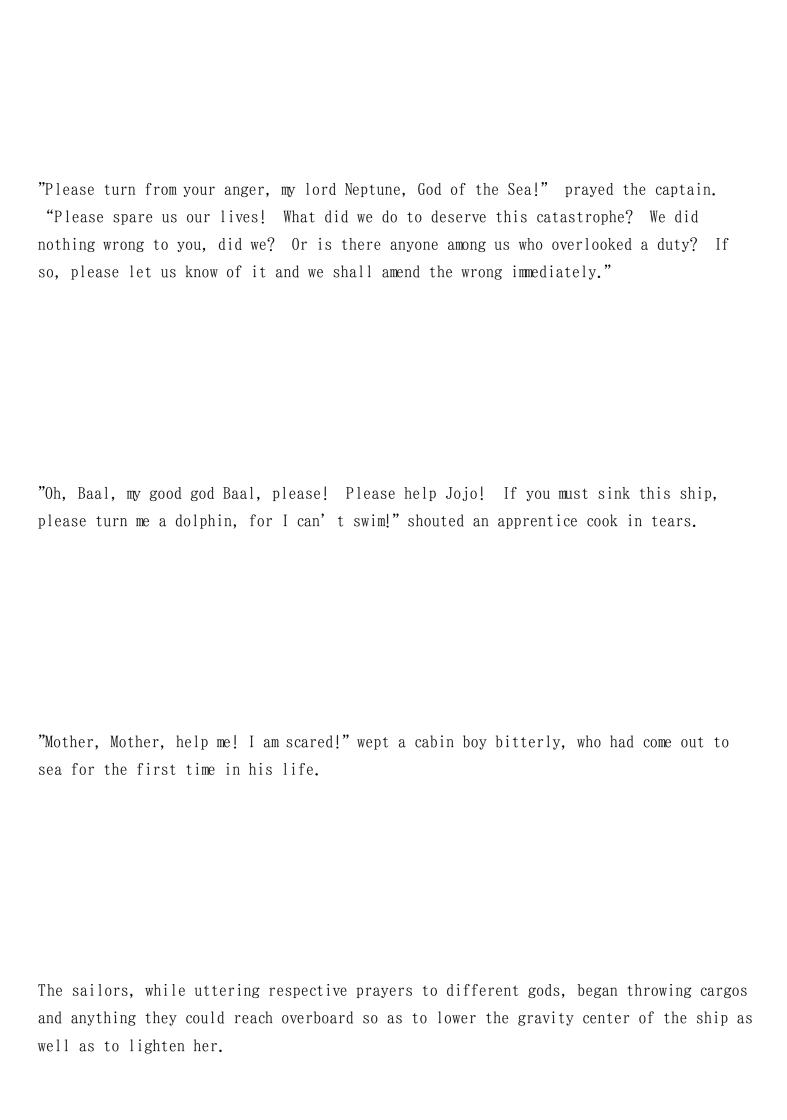


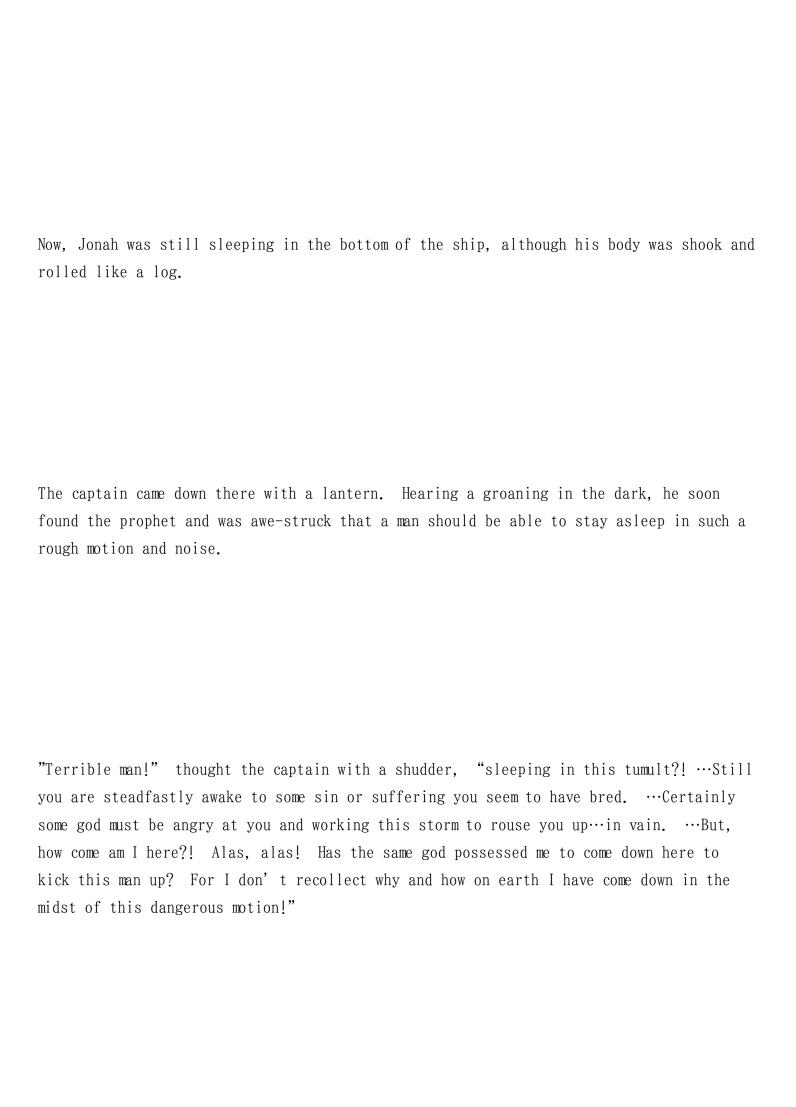




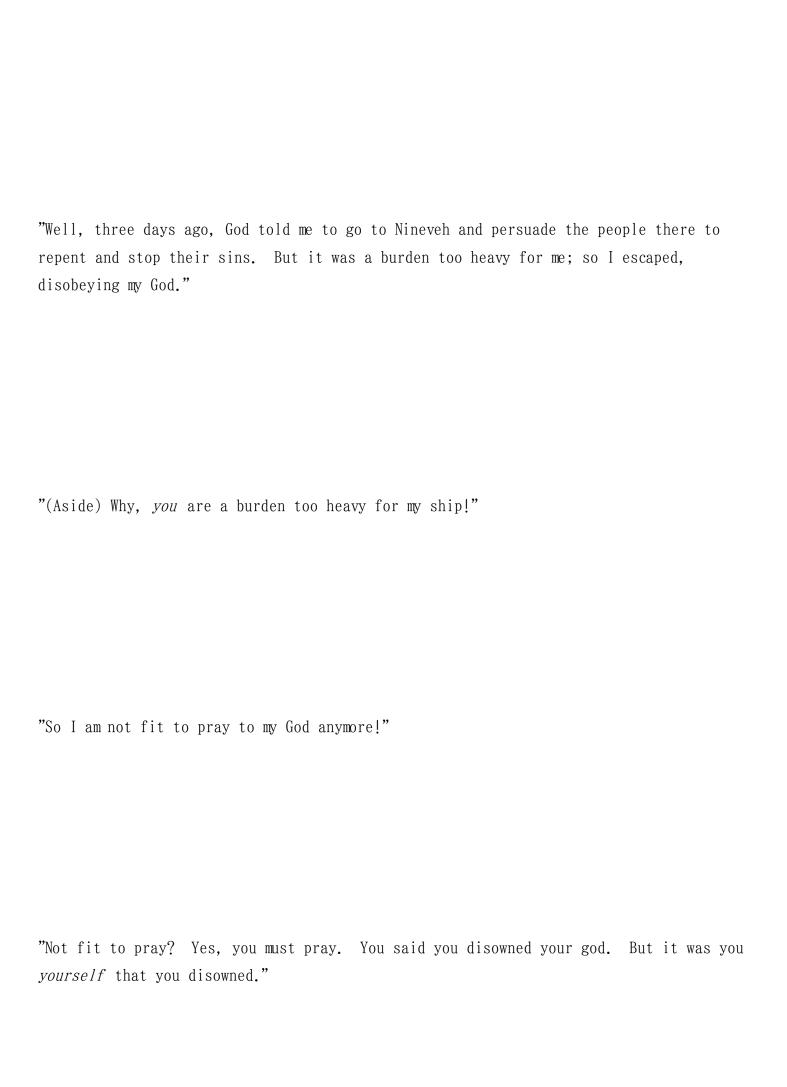
"Alas, my plentiful Dagon, the fish-god and filler of our stomach with corn and wine! Please do not allow our stomach to be filled with salty water and seaweed!" the chef.

"Abba! Jehovah, Lord of nature, heavenly being! Pardon me for the wrongs I have committed in your divine name!" pleaded a sham prophet in a low voice lest he be overheard. "I shall never prophesy again! No, no more fake prophecies in your name or any other god's! So, for mercy's sake, please do not wreck this ship! As you well know, it's exactly to escape from that king of Nineveh that I got on this very ship! His men came and urged me to go back to Nineveh to prophesy...prophesy another fake prophecy of their destruction by you. But this time I repented and took flight so I do not sin again. So, please pardon me, and I will pay back the money I earned wrongfully!

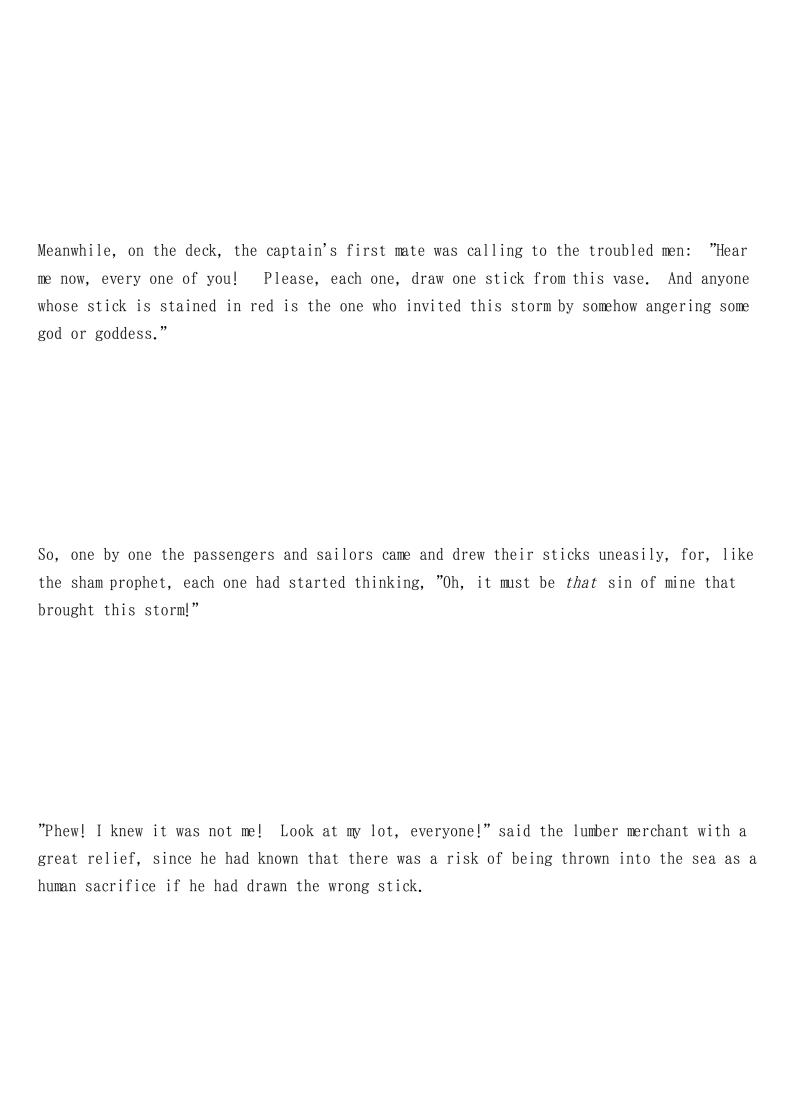


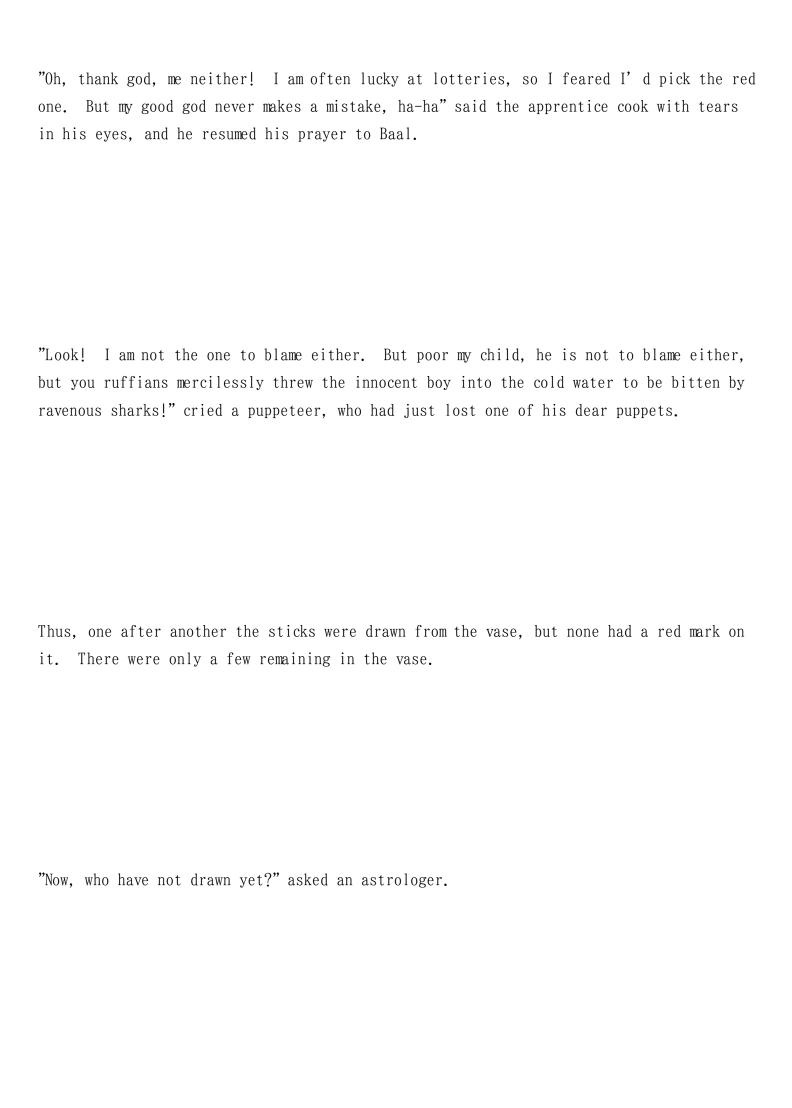


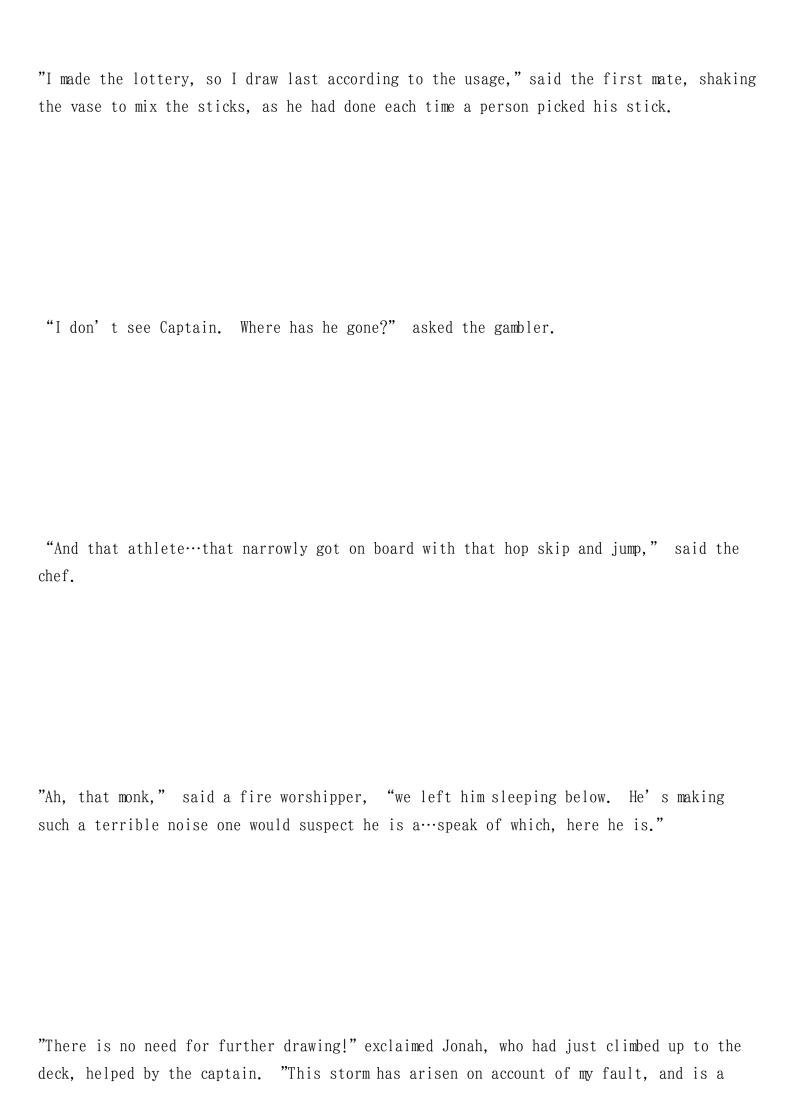


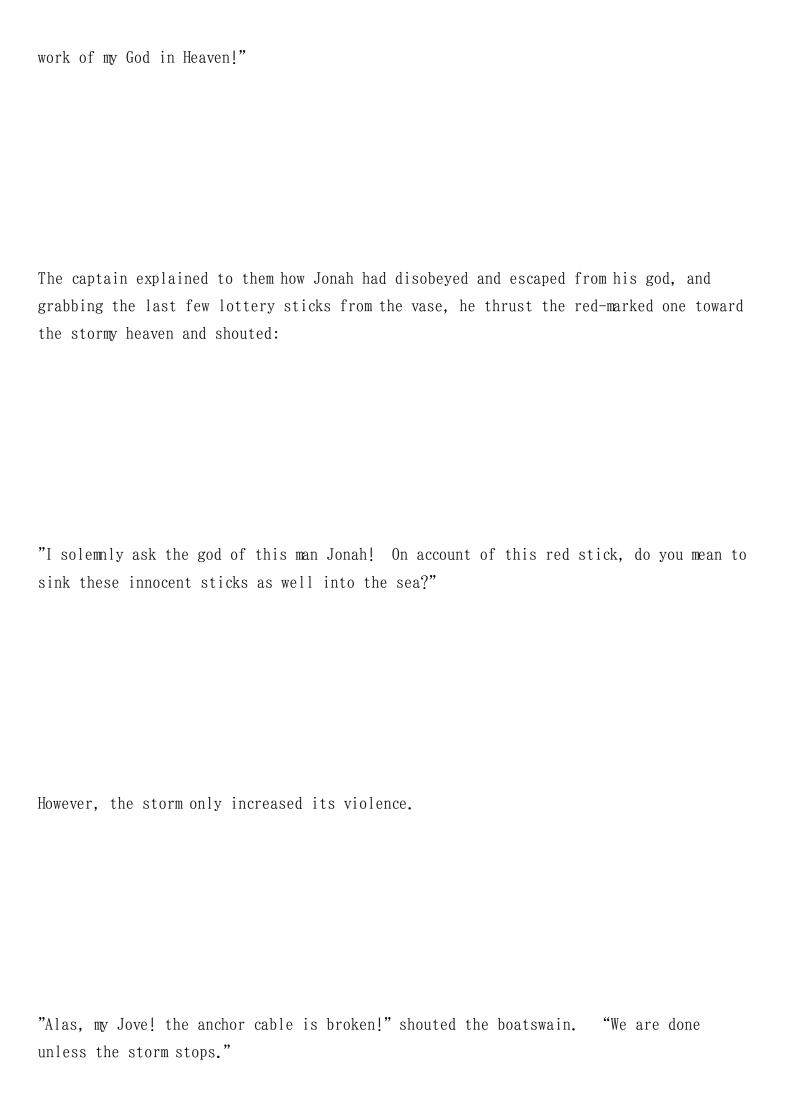


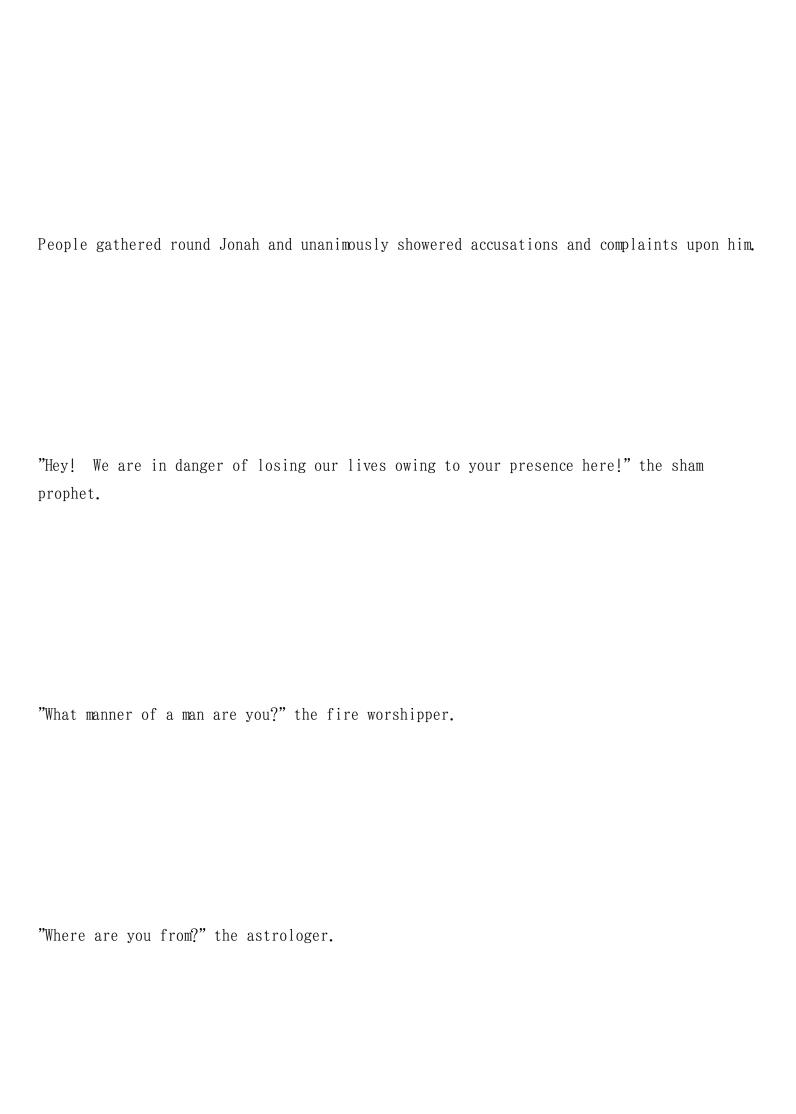


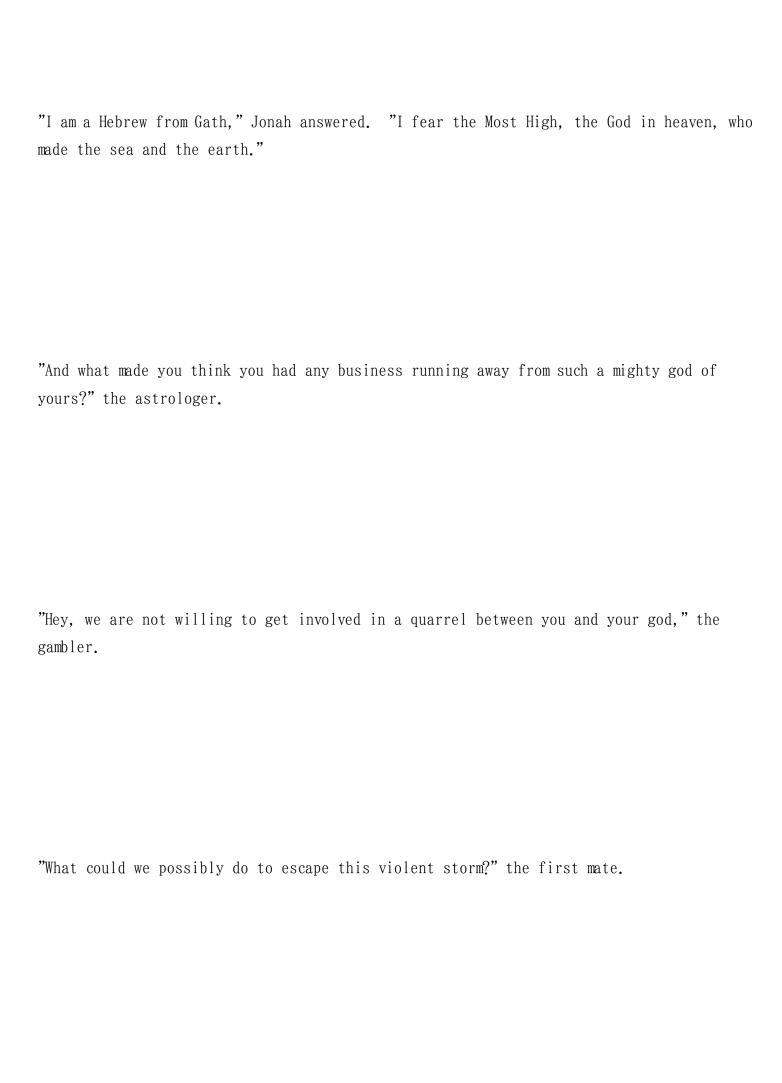


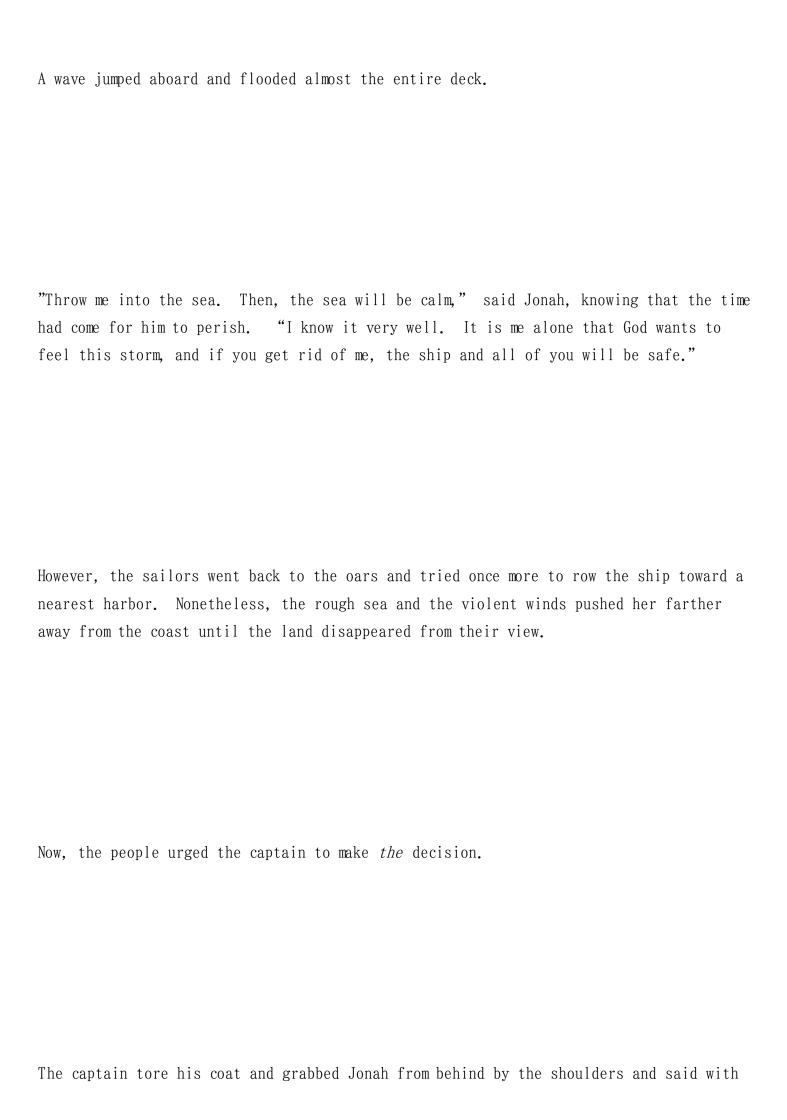




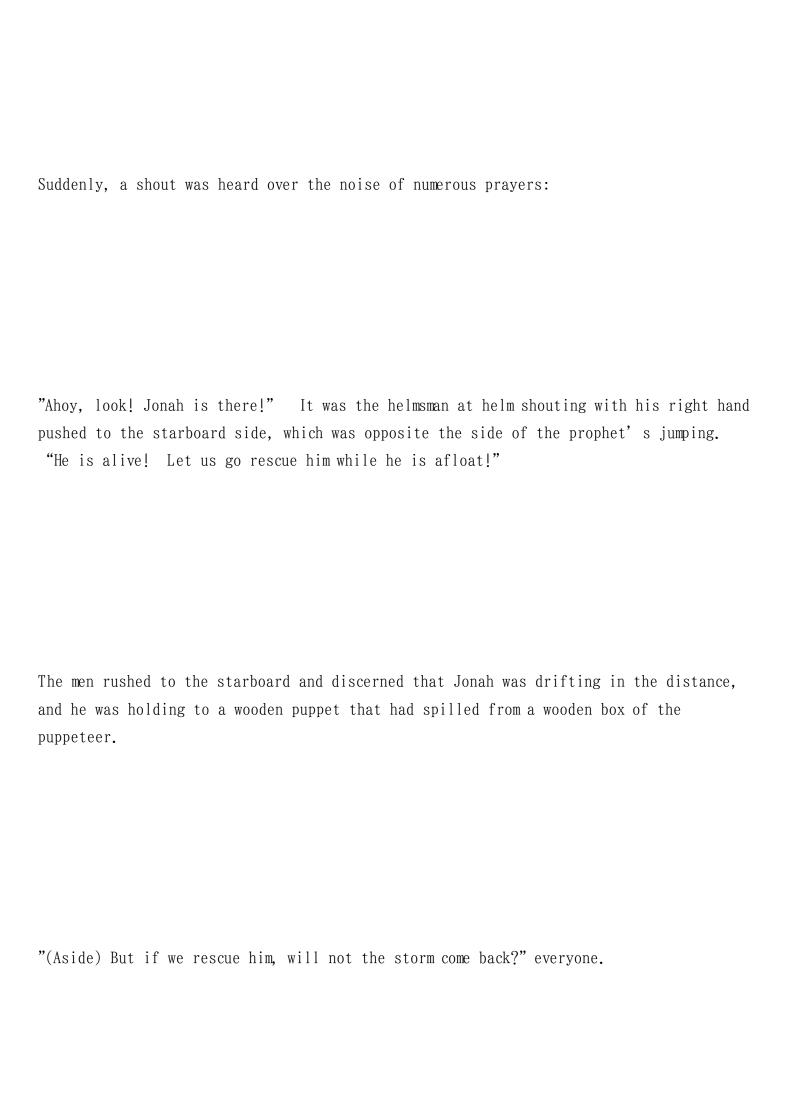




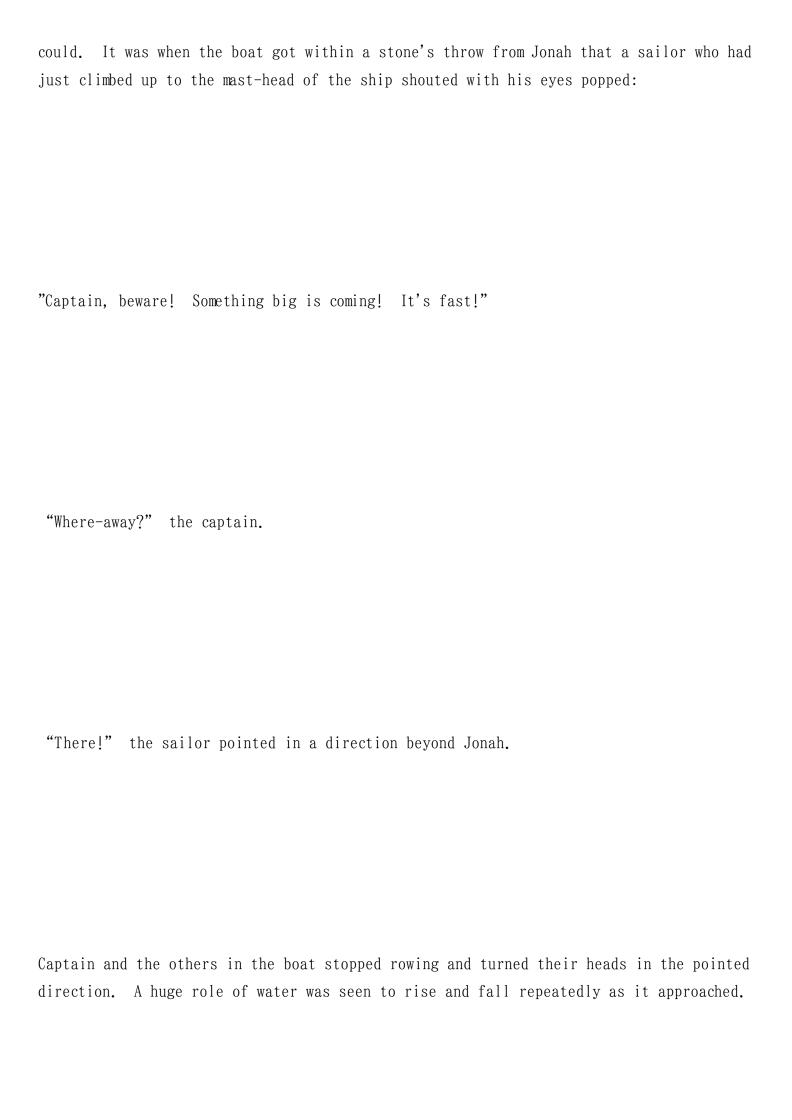




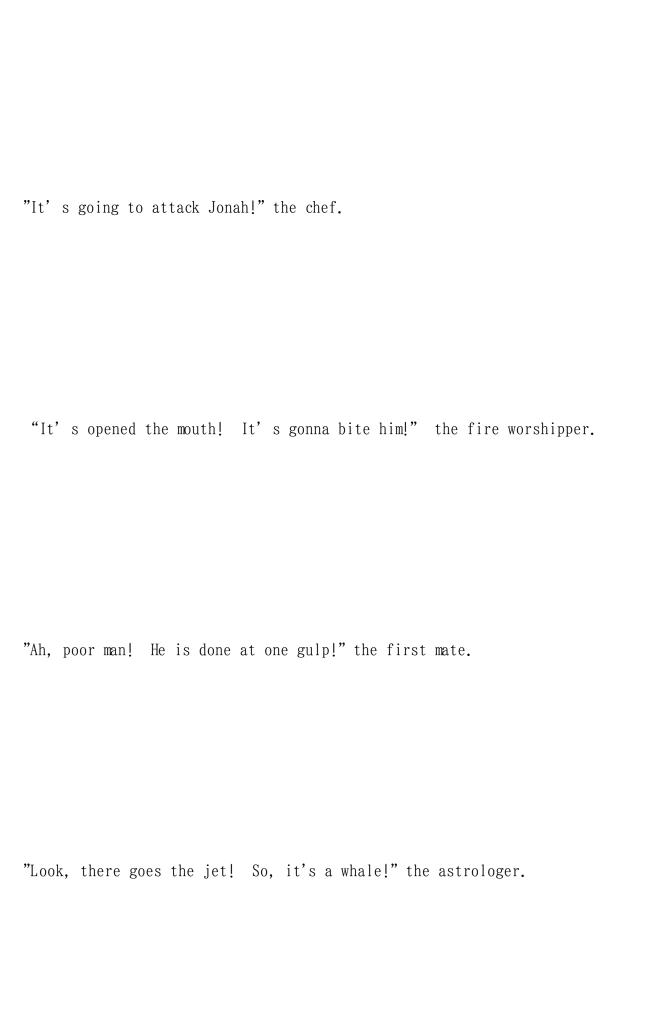
his face looking to the rain-pouring heaven: "Oh, god of this man Jonah, who is said to have created the earth and the sea, if you are not a merciless god, please do not take our lives just because this man is with us! But if you cannot pardon him, then we shall but have to put him into the deep sea, for we cannot go against your will. We can act only as you ordain, and our hands shall be clean of the life of this man. So, please show mercy to us and save at least our lives."
So saying, the captain pushed Jonah forward and Jonah jumped overboard.
In a moment, there shone a bright golden light along the far swelling horizon as if it were a golden bow, and the dark clouds gave way to the blue sky, which expanded quickly from the horizon upwards and over. And, as Jonah had prophesied, the sea grew calm and flat, and it was as if someone had laid a vast blue carpet across the ocean.
At this the people were filled with awe and gratitude, and did not forget to pray and give praise to Jonah's god with thanks for saving their lives. The ship dog resumed barking at the noisy rats and the ferrets, which quickly were absorbed in the hull.















He felt many living things struggling about him, some sneaking into his clothes, and some fixing themselves on the skin of his legs, arms and then face. When something bit him in his foot, he shrieked and kicked it away and writhed desperately. He hoped he were dead. He swore, wept bitterly and called God for help. His voice, however, pitched high sounding funny on account of the atmosphere weighted with extra rich carbon dioxide molecules.

Eventually he collected himself and started praying. However, the acidic air attacked his vocal cord and thus caused his voice hoarser and huskier until it became only hissing. As he was praying earnestly, suddenly his left ear started ringing, and scenes of numerous memories began to run through his mind one after another, and the childhood episodes which had long been lost from his memory returned with such vividness as if they were occurring real-life.

In one scene he was in the holy temple marveling at its grandeur and beauty. His mother handed him a small dove for him to offer. He wanted to keep it for he did not want it killed. But a priest dexterously snatched the bird off his hands and instantly wrenched its head off, dumfounding the boy; and when the priest began draining the blood out against a side of the alter, young Jonah started screaming in tears causing his parents to laugh, and his father hugged him, kissed him, and gave him a ride on his shoulders the child's most favorite position. His father was so tall that he always felt proud there. An older priest, burning the bird on the alter, said to his father, "Mr. Amittai, you have a very clever-looking son!" "Ah, thank you, but whether really clever or not," said his father happily, "we must wait and see!" In the next scene, he was running in a race and was far ahead of other boys. He could see his parents cheering happily beyond the goal line, and he started wondering whether he should or should not run into his mother's bosom as he always had done, for she was expecting a Then flushed a scene of his parents being struck to death by two intruders in "Mother!" hissed their house despite their pleading. Young Jonah cried, "Mother!" the prophet simultaneously in the viscous darkness, and a flying fish jumped into his face, and he swooned, as did the boy then, ... and heard a voice in his dream:

"Hey, Jonnie, howdy? Call me Ben. So, you didn't obey God, did you? Me neither." The voice was a young jolly tenor. "I didn't want to swallow you, or any other monk for that matter. You monks are not for us sperm whales, because, in the first place, we ain't much fascinated about taking big lumpy food, contrary to our size. As you may have noticed, we do not have upper teeth. So we cannot crush and cut things in our mouth. Our teeth are used mainly for capturing and bringing smaller food to our children. So, generally, instead of eating large food, we rather enjoy slurping little ones like shrimps and cuttlefish. Of course we eat giant squid. They are good. They are actually very slim and nicely soft and slippery. There is nothing like the sensation of our throat stroked by one. They digest easily and don't stay long in the stomach unlike you land species. You are not slippery; on the contrary you are so bony and scratchy that there is a danger of choking our throat. Furthermore, your flesh is hard, lean and stringy, and distasteful anyway, and difficult to digest and, on top of these — or bottom of — causes constipation.

"But, God said to me I should go and swallow you alive. I knew he means it when he says a thing; so I said "No thanks, my Lord, no more monks," and I turned around and escaped from the Mediterranean to go beyond his reach.

"And look at what a misery He inflicted upon me the moment I crossed Gib!...the sea gate, you know. He turned me snow white, and since then I have been in trouble one after another. ...How did I know that I turned white? The suckerfish on me were surprised at the sudden change and promptly reported it to me, for they didn't like it either. They said they now looked too inviting to their enemies. But they are so fond of me they have stuck with me.

[&]quot;Incidentally, for your information and for the sake of their honor, those suckerfish

are by no means on me as mere free-riders, but are quite useful and congenial company. They keep watch for me when I am asleep. When it comes to caring for my skin and trimming my body hair, they are unsurpassed specialists. They pick any unwelcome adsorptions off my skin such as parasites but leave useful accessories such as conveniently sized barnacles so as to make me healthy as well as attractive to ladywhales, who love to scratch their itchy body over my skin. The suckerfish proudly say that they are called in Japan - if you know where it is - as oval-gold-coin shark after their oval connector - though they are not actually sharks. Aren't they worth the name?

"And, oh, how they love our stories! You know, we sperm whales have the largest and hence the greatest brain among all the creatures ever created by God. And naturally we are the greatest thinker and think out many great things every day. Then, we need listeners for propagation of our ideas for the enlightenment and welfare of the world. But, why, most of the creatures do not have interest in great things, but are fond of foolish fish stories and tabloid gossips. The suckerfish are different. Oh, they really know what are great and what are not. So they are attached to our talks, especially our non-fiction stories…like this one I am telling you now. Believe it or not, there is even a theory that they came to have their sucking connector through evolution on account of their great love for whale talks; that is, they so disliked to miss any word of our talk that they kept pushing their ears to our body incessantly and God was so touched by their diligence as to allow their ears to develop into the pluggable connecter to help their listening — believe it or not. By the way, God took care of us too in that our nose was allowed to gradually move to the top of our head so we can breathe better.

