



If Yunus had been calm enough, he would have chosen to come ashore and run away by the trail, but he had lost his head so much that he waded toward the river mouth and placed himself into the muddy current as he had planned to do to escape from the bear.

Then, as he had calculated, the flow of the muddy water pushed him toward the center of the lake, where the ebbing current fetched him and carried him with the puppet toward the tunnel slowly. But as soon as Yunus had been brought in the lake, an alligator which had been hiding beneath the surface of the muddy water in the river entered the lake and started to follow him stealthily. The prophet did not see it, for he was now attracted by the bottom of the lake, which had begun to be visible by then and on which were tremendous amount of bones lying. They were the remnants of the animals killed by the alligator or its ancestors. The alligator came close to Yunus from behind and when it opened its jaws wide enough to bite both the puppet and the prophet at once, the first wave arrived from the sea through the tunnel and raised Yunus so much that the alligator missed Yunus, though it scratched the puppet's head a little, and, as the alligator was opening its mouth to try the bite again, Yunus and his lifesaver were safely sucked inside the tunnel. The alligator was stopped at the entrance as the upper one of his jaws agape hit the upper edge of the tunnel, nor did it enter there for it belonged to a species that has low tolerance with salty sea water and had been told by its father not to go in it. The bears saw the alligator fail to capture the puppet and look around toward them, whereupon the cubs went out of the water in fear of it.

Now in the tunnel, the waves arriving from the sea encouraged Yunus very much, for it meant that this tunnel was fairly horizontal and had no part of it entirely flooded with water at least when the water level was this low or lower.

Yunus was carried by the current at a speed of a walking man. He tried to balance his body such that his face would come out of the water as much as possible. To do this, he bent his head backward and looked upward and incessantly waved his arms and legs to counteract the turbulence caused by the waves from the sea. At first the water level was so close to the ceiling of the tunnel that he had to dive frequently to avoid hitting his head against the irregular ceiling whenever the waves raised him. This was possible for a while for the dim light from the lakeside entrance of the tunnel illuminated the ceiling dimly. But, then the tunnel became pitch dark and he had to use his hand to sound the passing ceiling, which soon became unnecessary, though, for the space between the water and the ceiling had widened so much that his hand began to fail to reach the ceiling and occasionally even his feet began to touch the bottom of the tunnel, which was also uneven.

By the time the water level came down to his breast (when he was standing on the floor of the tunnel), he

stopped floating in the water but started wading in the direction of the current, for the flow of the water was too slow for him. As he went, he touched the side wall of the tunnel with his left hand for it was yet pitch dark in the tunnel.

About the time the water level got to his loin he felt his weight more on his bare feet and they ached so much against the irregular tunnel floor that he began to crawl or rather walk on his hands, that is, to touch and push the bottom of the tunnel backward with his hands while flapping his legs. This way, thanks to the buoyancy of his body, his hands ached much less than the feet did when walking on them. Actually this was the manner Yunus moved in the shallows of the sea when he was staying on the beach.

Then, he started hearing the sound of wind blowing from the direction of what he thought was the sea.

Next, dim light from the seaside at last began to illuminate where Yunus was. Then, the water got so low that it became hard to crawl in the water, and again he stood up and walked on his feet but very slowly in fear of injuring them for he could not yet see the floor clearly enough. After going for several minutes, he found in the distance a strong light in the shape of a circle truncated in the bottom by the surface of the sea water. It was the exit of the tunnel. He was very glad and thanked Allah. But the bad tidings was that the tide had turned. Now, the fresh sea water had begun coming into the tunnel. He had to reach the exit before the entire exit got below the water level or he would drown. But, although now he could see the floor much clearer thanks to the light from the exit, he had to walk very cautiously, at a pace of an infant, for now he found there were oysters and barnacles on the floor and even slippery sea cucumbers as he went closer to the exit.

Then another difficulty arose. The sea water was not the only thing that started coming in. A strong wind began to blow against Yunus with a sonorous sound and he had to stop and crouch once in a while to wait for the wind to pass by.

Then, finding a recess in the wall, he let his tired body fall in it and waited for an especially strong wind to pass by. As he waited, he sat, and soon his eyes closed before he was aware of it and he fell asleep. He had a dream and in the dream he was in that white whale, and in it he was asleep too and hearing the voice of the whale, who was saying something about his having made a mistake in disobeying Allah his god. No sooner had the whale finished saying that he was to be pardoned for it if he helped Yunus return to Ninuwa, Yunus heard a thunderous sneeze of the whale whereby he was at once awoken – awoken through the two dreams at once. He was trembling and could not rise for his body was paralyzed. He thought at first he was yet in the whale and then he realized that he was in the underground tunnel. The tunnel had gotten darker and the water level higher. He thought he had slept too long and that he had already lost his chance of penetrating the tunnel. But then he recollected the dream and wondered if it was not a loving hand from Allah using the whale again to wake him up in time. It was apparent that he had slept so fast that if it had not been for that

tremendous sneeze he would have slept too long to avoid drowning. As his paralysis gradually left him, he drained the water from the puppet and bound the kelp band firmly to seal the empty eye socket of the puppet anew and stepped into the water, which was now above his belly, to fight his way to the exit.

Now, he saw the exit was only half above the water. He had to force himself against the counter-current and waves to make progress in addition to the strong counter wind. When the water level got breast high, he went to the left side wall of the tunnel and floated himself and scrambled forward grabbing and pushing back the irregular side wall. He gradually went higher on the wall, as the water level rose, until he eventually came to the ceiling. He was now crawling on the ceiling using his feet as well as hands with the puppet on his back supporting him to stay afloat. Now that he was in the nearly pure sea water, he could float better too. But the space between him and the ceiling was becoming narrower and the incoming waves were covering his head at intervals. Between the waves he looked and saw the exit was now about 10 meters to go.

In spite of his firm determination to penetrate the tunnel, his body did not seem to have the enough stamina to finish this distance in this posture. He was losing the grip power and it was apparent that sooner or later he would let go of the ceiling, and would be carried deeper back into the tunnel by the current and drown.

Then, he heard a strange sound, and it was nearby. It reminded him of many doves flying, but not exactly that. He did not know what they were but it was clear they were not in the tunnel for there appeared no wide space in the vicinity for any things to fly through; but the sound was not too far away either - even closer to him than the exit of the tunnel. Yunus thought that they must be in some space nearby outside the tunnel – and not outside the exit of the tunnel - that they must be just beyond the ceiling he was clutching at. Then, he thought, there might be some way out nearer than the exit of the tunnel.

He exerted his last strength and managed to make progress, and after a couple of strokes toward the exit he found himself facing upward a large hollow in the ceiling. Then something warm and fluid fell on his forehead. It smelled awful. The hollow was dark but there was a crevice at a higher end of it, which produced an animated silhouette of numerous bats flying out through it. He now knew what had fallen on him. It was droppings from bats.

The crevice seemed wide enough for Yunus to pass through. So, he tried to climb into the hollow, but the immediate slope was too steep for him; besides the bat dung made it slippery too. He thus waited for about half an hour, floating in the water, during which the tide slowly raised him high enough to reach and move onto a moderate slope. From there he could see there were enough footholds to crawl up and reach the crevice. By this time all but a few bats had gone out from the hollow, and the slope began to be occupied by thousands of sea slaters coming from nowhere and feeding on the droppings of the bats.

Though he was exhausted, Yunus needed to escape the smell so bad that he promptly climbed to the crevice and, after removing the puppet from his body and pushing it out through the crevice, he made through it scratching his body against the rough surface of lava.

Coming outside, Yunus found himself standing on the brow of a narrow peninsula of lava, jutting out from the land. There were numerous bats in the air flying landward. He explored around a little and could barely see a part of the beach he had been on the left side, as he looked landward, and on the right was a bay, which was so deeply concave that he could see only a part of the shoreline. He knew it was impossible to return to the beach he had been for on that side the peninsula was entirely a cliff. On the other side, it looked possible to get to the beach on foot for the steepness of the landscape was moderate near the water's edge, and there was even a lava bridge to help his walk.



Lava bridge

The tunnel opened at the end of the peninsula, unseen to him, and had he come out there, he would have been either drawn away from the land by the speedy current and lost, or carried back by the waves and crushed against the lava.

So, he walked on the peninsula toward the beach as far as it was possible to go on foot, and then jumped into the water and waded to the sandy shore. Then, to his great surprise and happiness, he saw a handsome ship one-third drawn up on the sand near the farthest end of the beach, where surfs were less violent. Its white sails were hoisted.

This bay-like beach was so concave that the ship was hidden from the ocean. Hoping to find some civilized people, Yunus looked around but saw or heard no person or no domestic animals round there, although, besides the ship, there were signs of human habitation such as a shell mound, a dunghill, remnants of bonfire, and several honey bee boxes. He also found a pool which looked at least partly contained by manpower, on the far end of the beach, in which fish could have been trapped for catching or a person could have bathed safe from sharks.

Although there was no water fall there unlike the beach he had been on, there was a spring of fresh water under the cliff from which a narrow rivulet ran into the ocean. Yunus drank water and washed his body in this rivulet.

Not far inland from the beach he could find familiar trees that bear fruits such as fig, grape, apricot, and pomegranate. They must have been planted by men. There were also tilled fields where barley and rice could have been planted. But, Yunus could see not a person there. It appeared the place was deserted long ago.

Having eaten some of the fruits from the trees, he went to inspect the ship. Its appearance convinced him that it was not made by Hebrew or any other people he knew, for it had such a strange build that he had never seen the like in reality or in picture before. It had also a beautiful profile. There were no windows for rowing, and the mast and sails seemed the only system for the drive. A rope ladder was hanging on the larboard side of the ship. He waded into the sea, climbed the ladder, and went on board the ship.

He called and asked if anyone was there, but there was no response. He searched everywhere but found no one dead or alive. Nor could he find any food or drink preserved; not a rat was seen or heard either. The ship was completely deserted, to his discouragement. He could not even find trash so that it was as clean as a temple.

Although he was no specialist at ship, even he could tell the ship was excellently built. There were few cracks and loose parts, and the bottom of the hull was virtually free of leaked-in water. He looked for any written record or map that might tell him where the ship came from or where she was now. But there was not a stroke of scribble on the walls nor on the gunwale.

However, it chanced that when he leaned over the gunwale on the starboard side to inspect the hull of the ship, his eyes caught sight of something unnatural through the transparent sea water. Only a small part of it was exposed from the sand, but it was enough to tell him that the substance had a rectangular shape, something hard to find in nature. It looked like a plate of some metal, probably copper or brass, for it was mostly rusted in pale green color. He went to the larboard side and climbed down the rope ladder and went round the front of the ship to the spot, and dived and got the plate. It was thinner than he had thought. He went to the shore with it and scrubbed off the rust carefully with fine sand and discovered letters engraved on it. To his great gladness, the letters were Hebrew, his native language.

On one side of the plate were engraved many names of men in small letters. It was a sort of genealogy and started with the name "Joseph," with an explanation of him reading "who was the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt, and who was preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all

his household from perishing with famine...” Yunus instantly knew that this Joseph was the one who became the second powerful man in Egypt next to Pharaoh, the king. He felt affection toward the people that created the brass plate, for he was a Benjamite, an offspring of Benjamin, the younger brother of this Joseph from the same mother Rachel.

The fact that the writing was in Hebrew encouraged him too, for he thought the land he had been spewed on by the white whale was either somewhere on the Israeli coast or somewhere across a sea from it, instead of anywhere he had never heard of. But he was wrong, for he was on the eastern coast of a continent which is now called North America.

He went into the plantation to pick some fruits from the trees, for he had decided to pass the night in a cabin of the ship. It was much safer to be on the ship, for at night various animals might come for food from the inland, which was far deeper here than at the beach he had landed. Besides, on the land side he had not been able to find a shelter, which was not strange, for if the people who had once inhabited there were indeed Israelites, they would normally use tents for their shelter and remove them upon departure.

The trees in the plantation seemed not to have been harvested for a long time, for there were lots of fallen decayed fruits and seeds on the ground. Birds fed on these fruits but there were plenty left on the trees. There were some birds which had nests in the trees. So, Yunus could get some eggs from them and cooked them sunny-side up on the brass plate in the sun.

He sharpened the longer side edges of the plate by grinding each edge over a rough surface of a shell, and used the plate to cut several kinds of fruits off the trees or vines. He picked more watermelons than any other for water supply, although they were small and not ripe yet.

When he had collected fruits of his choice, he brought them by the bow of the ship and threw them into the ship so they would land in it. Had Yunus known that in the morning next day he would find himself in the midst of the vast ocean with no lands in view, he would have collected and stored food in far greater amount. But he had picked only enough for the day and the next morning.

The sun was setting beautifully in the far ocean horizon, and the full moon appeared just above his head. (This meant that the waters of the seas were being pulled towards where Yunus was, and this fact might have contributed to what would happen over the night.)