

The Good Ship - Forgotten

by Jake DeVries

As I gripped the wheel and stared at the expanse above my head, my compass spun wildly. Something wasn't quite right but I couldn't place it. The thing pestering my otherwise sober brain had to have been that devils concoction that old man gave me before I shoved off.

"Here boy, drink this down, it'll set you straight" He grinned with a dervish glimmer.

"What is it?" I asked, hesitantly taking the drink.

"Just a wee bit of something to get you started!" He laughed the laugh of a thousand oceans that tinkered and broke against far distant shores.

I smiled and swallowed the witches brew, coughing and gagging as it burned its way down.

"Ha! Good stuff! Ha....." I choked out, feeling strangely less nervous about the delivery ahead.

This all started just a few days prior as I cleaned the foredeck of my 32 foot ketch, a swarthy business fellow hollered out from a few fingers down, "You there! Do you have some spare time to move a boat for me? I can pay!" Being the ever broke pirate, I jumped at the offer to lick my chops as a delivery captain. It wasn't until the contract was signed did I find out just how many of it's crew his ship had bucked to the briny depths over the years. The weight of it sank deep as I learned the old ladies sorted tale.

The ship in question was a 45 foot sloop built during the late prohibition to be a pleasure cruise rum-runner. Dark brazilian cherry wood with a rich teak interior, it had seen more shores than a wave.

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It's rum-running days lasted just 2 years before freedom rang out across pubs and taverns country wide and the pleasure ship "Forgotten" had become just that. 10 years passed before a traveling salesman layed eyes on her and bought her up without a moments hesitation, selling his wife on a promise of a life on the sea. Forgotten had other ideas and soon washed up crewless on a lonely atoll just south of Tortuga. She was redeemed by a crabber and his crew not but a year later and after a proper refit set sail for Bermuda from Miami, once again washing up crewless shy of her destination. The cycle continued to repeat itself for a few more generations until the great grandson of it's designer bought her at auction to keep as a family heirloom. The man lived in California and wanted Forgotten brought around to serve as his weekender and floating cocktail party.

That was when I decided a drink wouldn't be a bad idea.

The seas grew choppy and and the compass continued spinning, up came my lunch for the first time in 30 years on the sea. Rough would be a gentle way to describe the dominatrix way Neptune was treating me today. I steadied myself against the helm and leaned into the wind, trimming the mast and falling off the wind to ride out the swells. My kerosene lamp swung ominously below beating the walls with every roller.

"Damn you old man!" I cried into the night.

"Damn you Forgotten!" my voice was lost against Davy Jones' collecting another soul for his eternal gruel.

