

The Perfect Storm

SEBASTIAN JUNGER

- 1
 - 1 The word “romantic” here means “beautiful and exciting to look at and to think about”. The ocean in Gloucester is not romantic because the water in the harbour is very dirty. It is full of empty beer cans and pools of diesel oil from boat engines. Also the fishermen on the boats in the harbour do not look romantic because their clothes are always covered with fish blood. *Student’s own answer to the second part of question.*
 - 2 Bobby owes his wife a lot of money for child support. He wants to get a divorce and marry Chris Cotter. But he doesn’t want to marry Chris until he has paid his wife. The only way he can earn a lot of money quickly is to take a job on a swordfishing boat, although he has never done this work before.
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 - 1 Lightsticks are clear plastic tubes which give out light. They are attached to the gangions, close to the bait, so that swordfish will be attracted to the bait during the night. Swordfish eat at night, so fish which are searching for food will see the lights. When they come close to the gangions, they will see the bait.
 - 2 Billy Tyne is the captain of the *Andrea Gail*. He has had problems with the crew of the boat. It is difficult to find good men to work on the boat so late in the year. One member of his usual crew—Doug Kosco—has refused to work on the trip. Billy has asked another man—Adam Randall—to come on the trip instead of Doug. Adam has come to Gloucester and he has looked at the boat, but he has also refused to go on the trip. Billy has now found a fishermen who *will* go on the trip instead of Doug—David Sullivan. But Billy is also worried about the other crew members. Alfred Pierre is not happy about leaving his girlfriend. Michael “Bugsy” Moran is unhappy because he doesn’t *have* a girlfriend. And Dale “Murph” Murphy is sad because he is thinking about his young son. Bobby Shatford and Bugsy have been arguing. Nobody really *wants* to go to sea on this day, and Billy knows this. He is worried because the members of his crew are so unhappy.
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Everybody knows that Bobby and Chris do not want to leave each other. They have not known each other for very long, and they are in love.
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 - 1 On a boat or ship, one crew member is always on watch at any time of the day or night. This person sits in the pilothouse of the boat. He/she checks the navigational instruments. He/she watches the sea. The crew member makes sure that the boat is not in danger. This person does this while the other crew members work or sleep. Each “watch” is two hours long. On the *Andrea Gail* there are six crew members, so each person is on watch twice in 24 hours.
 - 2 We have learned that after the extra equipment was added to the *Andrea Gail* a few years previously, she became heavier. Now more of her hull was always under the water. We are told that, “If a large wave knocked her onto her side, she would take much longer to roll upright again.” Albert Johnson must be thinking about this when he hears Billy’s report about the big wave.
 - 3 The *Andrea Gail* has not been catching enough fish on the Grand Banks. Billy thinks that if he doesn’t catch a lot more fish, there will be no money to pay the crew after the boat’s expenses have been paid. He believes that there will be more swordfish at the Flemish Cap.
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 - 1 Billy will need to stay at the fishing ground for longer because he must catch fewer fish each day. Each day, he must only catch the amount of fish that he can freeze with one ton of ice. But he still needs to catch a lot of fish, or he and his crew will lose money. So he needs to fish for more days. *The student will guess that* the crew will attach fewer gangions to the mainline than usual, so that they do not catch too many fish each night.
 - 2 If Billy is the first fisherman to return to Gloucester, the price for his catch will be high. When the other boats return and there are more swordfish to buy, the price for each pound of fish will be lower.

- 3 The *Andrea Gail* is entering Canadian national waters at this time. When a boat wants to leave international waters and enter a country's national waters, that country's Coast Guard has to be asked. The Coast Guard will give permission for the boat to enter those national waters.
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- 1 Bob Case looks at the satellite photos of the weather systems on his computer screen. He can see three systems moving towards each other. He knows that, when the three systems collide, the perfect storm is going to happen.
 - 2 When the storm begins the *Andrea Gail* is close to Data buoy 44139. And from the buoy's data, we know about the speed of the wind and the height of the waves near the *Andrea Gail* at 2 p.m. on September 28th.
 - 3 On the evening of September 26th, Ray Leonard told his crew that, if the weather gets bad, they will sail into Buzzard's Bay. They will shelter there, near the shore. But it is now two days later, and the weather has become really bad and Ray says that they cannot shelter near the shore. He has changed his mind because he is afraid that they will collide with a large ship while the *Satori* is crossing the shipping lanes.
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- 1 In the nineteenth century, boats often collided in bad weather because their crews could not see very far. They could not see other boats which were dangerously close to them. And they could not get information about the positions of other boats. But in the twentieth century, boats started to have radios and their captains could speak to each other and they gave each other information. They could tell each other their positions and they could warn each other about the weather and other dangers. By the late twentieth century, captains could also get accurate information about their positions using radio navigational equipment, as well as weather faxes. And when boats got radar equipment, the captains could see the positions on their radar screens of other boats which were very close to them. If the *Andrea Gail*'s radio and radar has been destroyed in the storm, Billy Tyne would not have had any of this information. He would have been like a captain in the nineteenth century.
 - 2 The EPIRB equipment does not use the boat's radio to send out its signal. The EPIRB has its own small radio inside the machine. The machine only has to be switched on, then it starts to work. An EPIRB cannot easily be destroyed.
- 8
- 1 After Karen tells the crew to abandon the yacht, Sue looks for the life raft on the deck. But it has disappeared.
 - 2 The first plan is to send three men from the *Tamaroa* in a raft to collect the crew of the *Satori*. This plan is tried, but the *Satori* is pushed over onto the raft by a huge wave and the raft is damaged. Now six people need to be rescued, and the second plan is to use a rescue swimmer from the helicopter. The swimmer jumps into the sea, and puts each of the six people into the helicopter's rescue basket. In turn they are pulled up into the helicopter, and finally the rescue swimmer is pulled up too.
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- The sea is too rough, and the wind is too strong. The helicopter cannot drop a rescue basket. And the helicopter does not have enough fuel to stay near the men for very long. The helicopter pilot gives the commander of the *Tamaroa* the men's exact position.
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- 1 Doug tells the Coast Guard the names of some of the *Andrea Gail*'s crew. But he does not know if Billy Tyne found another crew member when he (Doug) refused to go on the trip. So Doug can't tell the Coast Guard the name of the sixth crew member.
 - 2 Albert Johnston finds some of the *Andrea Gail*'s fuel drums in the ocean. He finds three groups of drums, a few miles apart. They are about 100 miles from Sable Island. Then a Canadian Coast Guard boat finds one of the *Andrea Gail*'s fuel tanks near Sable Island. Finally the Coast Guard finds her EPIRB on the shore of Sable Island.
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- Student's own answer.*