

**THE CONCORD EDITION  
OF THE WORKS OF JOSEPH  
CONRAD. 'TWIXT LAND  
AND SEA: TALES; PP. 1-236**

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**JOSEPH CONRAD**

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G. L. N.

**'TWIXT LAND AND SEA**



CONRAD'S FIRST COMMAND  
THE BARQUE OTAGO



THE CONCORD EDITION  
OF THE WORKS OF  
JOSEPH CONRAD  
'TWIXT LAND AND SEA

TALES



Life is a tragic folly  
Let us laugh and be jolly  
Away with melancholy  
Bring me a branch of holly  
Life is a tragic folly.

A. SYMONS

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK  
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MCMXXIII

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TO  
CAPTAIN C. M. MARRIS  
LATE MASTER AND OWNER  
OF THE  
*ARABY MAID*: ARCHIPELAGO TRADER  
IN MEMORY OF THOSE  
OLD DAYS OF ADVENTURE

Replacement  
w-a-h  
10.31.40  
4.1871

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE only bond between these three stories is, so to speak, geographical, for their scene, be it land, be it sea, is situated in the same region which may be called the region of the Indian Ocean with its off-shoots and prolongations north of the equator even as far as the Gulf of Siam. In point of time they belong to the period immediately after the publication of that novel with the awkward title "Under Western Eyes" and, as far as the life of the writer is concerned, their appearance in a volume marks a definite change in the fortunes of his fiction. For there is no denying the fact that "Under Western Eyes" found no favour in the public eye, whereas the novel called "Chance" which followed "Twixt Land and Sea" was received on its first appearance by many more readers than any other of my books.

This volume of three tales was also well received, publicly and privately and from a publisher's point of view. This little success was a most timely tonic for my enfeebled bodily frame. For this may indeed be called the book of a man's convalescence, at least as to three-fourths of it; because *The Secret Sharer*, the middle story, was written much earlier than the other two.

For in truth the memories of "Under Western Eyes" are associated with the memory of a severe illness which seemed to wait like a tiger in the jungle on the turn of a path to jump on me the moment the last words of

that novel were written. The memory of an illness is very much like the memory of a nightmare. On emerging from it in a much enfeebled state I was inspired to direct my tottering steps toward the Indian Ocean, a complete change of surroundings and atmosphere from the Lake of Geneva, as nobody would deny. Begun so languidly and with such a fumbling hand that the first twenty pages or more had to be thrown into the waste-paper basket, *A Smile of Fortune*, the most purely Indian Ocean story of the three, has ended by becoming what the reader will see. I will only say for myself that I have been patted on the back for it by most unexpected people, personally unknown to me, the chief of them of course being the editor of a popular illustrated magazine who published it serially in one mighty instalment. Who will dare say after this that the change of air had not been an immense success?

The origins of the middle story, *The Secret Sharer*, are quite other. It was written much earlier and was published first in *Harper's Magazine*, during the early part, I think, of 1911. Or perhaps the latter part? My memory on that point is hazy. The basic fact of the tale I had in my possession for a good many years. It was in truth the common possession of the whole fleet of merchant ships trading to India, China, and Australia: a great company the last years of which coincided with my first years on the wider seas. The fact itself happened on board a very distinguished member of it, *Cutty Sark* by name and belonging to Mr. Willis, a notable ship-owner in his day, one of the kind (they are all underground now) who used personally to see his ships start on their voyages to those distant shores where they showed worthily the honoured house-flag of their owner. I am glad I was not