

## Other Voices

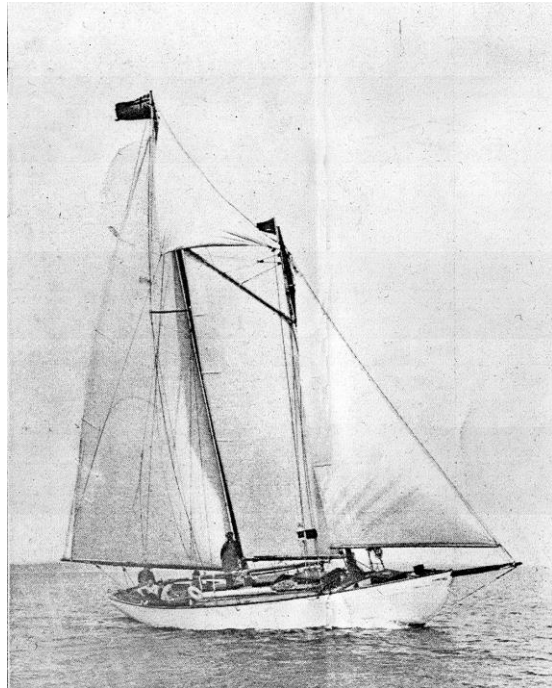
Weston Martyr in *The Perfect Ship* and *How We Built Her* (1928).

Once upon a time the Fates in a tolerant mood, permitted me to set about the shaping of my heart's desire. The Fates of course have made me pay for it ever since, and I'm paying still. But what does that matter? Build a boat and taste heaven, say I. For once upon a time I built a schooner - and that was a blissful time.

Within my mind there had been slowly taking shape, for years and years, the Perfect Ship. Everyone knows her, I expect, that ship. In the minds of every sailor there float pictures of her, each one perfect, each one different; so when I tell you what MY ship was like, and of how she came true at last - Well I can hear you "Very pretty", you will say. "Very nice, and I like that sheer, but if she were mine I'd -". But I will forgive you, for I know I should be just like that too.

To be candid and frank, I will confess I never quite believed the time would ever REALLY come when I should find myself building my ship. The iron hand of circumstance for long held me too firmly, and the project of which I dreamed would seem to me, at times, silly and absurd, and forever unattainable. But down in the bottom of my heart I think I always hoped - a little; and that little spark of hope was a comfort to me. But why enlarge on this; for you, who still can only build your ship in dreams, already understand me. But I can say this to you: Courage, my brothers. Courage - hope on; and some day you may gain your heart's desire. For miracles DO happen. One happened to me!

It seems to be the business of the ruler of my destiny to heap oppressions on me. He likes to watch me squirm perhaps, or else maybe thinks these impositions good for me. Happily though, he



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sometimes has his little joke. I fancy he said to himself, not many years ago: "Now, this fellow of mine is naturally bone-idle. He loves the sun and open air and the sea. He thinks he likes beauty and quietness and peace. Also he abhors commerce and all its works; and he dreams continually about a certain ship. Good. I shall now set him to work in a small, dark, underground room, where he will breath steam-heated air, and toil at figures. As he travels from his miserable den each day and returns to it each night he shall be penned in underground with alien multitudes. Thus he will have no more time to dream, and he will never see the sea or feel the sun. And then - when his soul is sick within him - I will surprise the beggar". Something like this certainly must have been arranged for me, because there is no power that I know of on earth (including hunger) that could force me miserably to toil for years in a New York broker's office. Yet once I did that very thing.

During those horrible years my vision of the Perfect Ship grew very dim: sometimes I nearly lost it altogether. But never quite. And then by chance, one lucky day, I met a fellow creature. He was, it turned out, a fellow countryman too, and he worked in a bank some floors above me. I remember that bank well, for when I first went up there to see my new friend, he showed me how, by craning my neck out his window, it was possible to see the sky. There was very little of it visible, its true between those towering blocks of buildings, but the narrow ribbon of blue, with the small round clouds sailing along up there, looked very cheerful to me, and I envied George his view.

George, it transpired, had been born and bred at Falmouth, so we two had not been friends for long before we began to talk about boats. He, lucky man, had owned in his youth a little yawl, and had sailed about in her alone, exploring on his voyages most of those little harbors that lie on the shores of the west-country.

"Those", said George "were the days. But since then I've never sailed a boat again. And when I think about it, I know I've been wasting my life". And when I heard this my heart leapt, for I knew then at last I had found a kindred spirit. And after that, of course, whenever we met, our talk invariably turned towards the subject which both of us loved. We talked of boats and the sea; so much, indeed, that the sea-fever latent within us broke strongly out again, until at last we felt we should have to get ourselves afloat, somehow or another, or perish.

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Vito Dumas in *Alone Through the Roaring Forties* (1931).

For a long time I dreamt of finding a seaman amongst my ancestors - a pirate, a 'black ivory' merchant; at the very least some one from a romantic seaport in lovely Brittany. No luck: nothing but landsmen ....

Where did I get my love of the sea?

Conspicuous among the memories of my youth are the expeditions we used to make with my father. He took us into the country or to Buenos Aires especially into the La Boca quarter among the Genoese who could not bear to part from their ships, and so cast anchor there. On those calm Sundays I was impressed by the great masts of the sailing ships, the apparently inextricable tangle of rigging; but I cannot say that this sight gave me many very definite ideas on my own future; it was too far away. And though I loved to read tales of pirates and musketeers, I did not feel a serious call to either of these professions ....

When vacation time came round we used to go to the seaside, and we went by sea. Unfortunately the trip took place by night and thus the longed for contact with the ocean meant no more than a visit to the ice-cream merchant on board, after which my father sent me off to bed. No, those trips can hardly be counted as sea voyages .... It must be a great disappointment to those who would like to see in me a reincarnation of some sailor longing to return to his element. No. And never dreamt of exploring fabulous countries either.

What set me off, to throw off all my normal life and tempt fate? Was it to show that I was not lost after all, that dreamers propelled by their inward vision still lived, that romance somehow managed to survive? The young needed examples; maybe, without being too self-conscious, I could



provide one. I was torn between two alternatives; to stay, to lunch at a given hour, to wait for someone, receive guests, read newspapers, and tattle with friends outside working hours: the clock would go on telling the hours and I should be one of those creatures chained to the treadmill of today and tomorrow. Or else - more generous and perhaps even more altruistic - to respond to that appeal which John Masefield expresses so well in "Sea Fever". My decision was made, the first step taken. Nothing would stop me now, I had only to say "Goodbye", perhaps forever. Before me lay

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the unknown of the 'impossible' seas.

[William A. Robinson](#) in *10,000 Leagues Over the Sea* (1932).

We set sail from New York on the evening of June 23rd 1928 pointing the bow of our tiny ketch-rigged yacht southward for Bermuda. I took a last look at the rapidly disappearing shoreline of North America, which I was destined not to see again for forty-two months. Suddenly I realized that I was in for it - that I was irrevocably started on my ambitious plan to live out my dreams of sailing around the world in my own boat in search of remote islands, strange peoples, and the beauty of new landfalls.



I was only twenty-five and most of the money I had saved had gone to buy SVAAP and her equipment. There was enough left for a few months, but after that? .... Perhaps I could make enough from my writing to carry on. If not I'd have to earn it some other way, but carry on I would, sailing new seas, far from hampering schedules or itineraries, leading the life I love. I hoped to study, write explore, do a bit of research, but always enjoy the never-ending adventure with just enough uncertainty to flavor it.

No one, not even my family, knew what I planned to do. I had a dread of starting something I might not be able to finish. There are few things so pitiful as those projects - so numerous recently - which commence in a blaze of glory only to fizzle shortly after.

- - At last we were ready. Ahead lay the sea of my dreams - with its countless coral archipelagos, its fertile volcanic island groups, and their mysterious brown-skinned inhabitants. Ten thousand miles of it lay ahead of us, and for two years we were to explore its every corner.

To me it was the eve of the Great Adventure. Everything else had been mere preparation. The real thing lay ahead, and I was anxious to be off. I live my life like that - looking forward always to what lies ahead. Sometime later, perhaps, I will live in the present. When I am old I will have my past, and if that past measures up at all to the future I dream of now, my life will have been complete.

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[Erling Tambs](#) in *Cruise of the Teddy* (1933).

How I Acquired Independence.

We sailed along the coast as far as Ulvoysund, a pretty little cluster of fishermen's white dwellings among the skerries outside Kristiansand. In the snug shelter of this cove we passed our last night in Norwegian territory, and thence we set out for the freedom and romance of the deep blue sea.

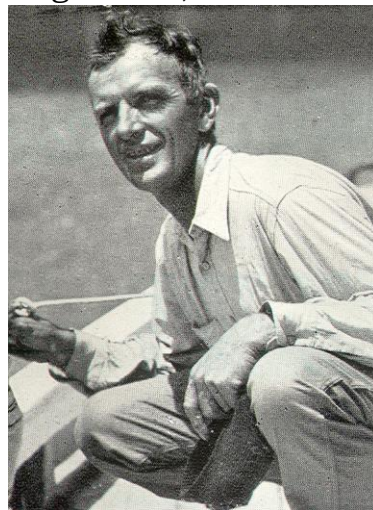
When the rocky coast of our Norwegian homeland disappeared behind the haze and horizon, my wife in truth shed a tear or two, but for me happiness was unalloyed. It was a glorious morning and the world lay open before us. I felt the cheerful jingle of about one shilling and sevenpence in my pocket - not a large purse to be sure, to start with on a cruise around the world, but what did it matter? Our sturdy craft was heeling to wind, responsive and willing, fleeing from cares and winter, heading for the sunny lands of my dreams.

What need for money! I was a free-lancer, dependent for sustenance on whatever loot I could make with my pen. No misgivings felt about the future; I would assuredly make plenty.

As a side issue I would call at some of the treasure islands on the way and carry away the riches that my predecessors had left there and that could hardly be of use to them now. Why, money was entirely superfluous at the start!

Would I have changed places with a king? Not I; for I was a king myself. Mine was the staunchest craft, mine was the pluckiest girl, and mine was the utmost degree of independence that mortal man may attain.

I was responsible to no one. My boat was safe enough for any water; she would transport me wither I willed. Time and Space were at my disposal, seemingly illimitable. I had that feeling of sovereign freedom which fairy tales attribute to kings, as the exclusive privilege of princes. Surely there was excellent reason for my high spirits.



*Epilogue:*

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Never has a finer craft existed.

Graceful were her lines, ever pleasing to the eye, because she was the embodiment of usefulness. Like a true masterpiece, she stood above the fickle taste of fashion.

She was fast. She was an able boat. During the thirty-five years when she served as a pilot boat, surely many a ship's crew and many a valuable cargo would have been lost but for the staunch ability of this boat.

Now she is gone. I have cried over her like a child, wept over her as over the loss of a dear friend. Heartsick have I stumbled about amongst the wreckage washed ashore on Challenger Island the day after the disaster, picking up odd bits of timber here and there and pressing them to my heart. Each piece I recognized, each spoke to me, each told a tale.

In a hidden cove a square piece of planking had driven ashore. I sat down on it to rest, caressing those planks with sorrowing hands, and then, glancing warily lest someone should see me, I bent down and kissed those planks good-bye.

Oh, I am not ashamed of that now.

She has gone, our boat, our home for nigh on four years. Splendid as had been her career as a pilot boat, she ended her days as the plaything of a foolish seeker of happiness, a fool however, with great love in his heart for the boat that carried him as near as it is given mortals to come to ever-elusive happiness. Can you wonder that I loved her?

I have told you the tale of our cruise, and find, now, that the tale of our cruise is in reality a tale of a noble boat; who like a faithful dog, or like an aging horse, showed loyalty and love to the master who misused her. Dear old Teddy!

**Warwick M. Tompkins** in *Fifty South to Fifty South* (1938).

Ships and the sea I have loved passionately longer than I can recall. Why this should be is hard to say, for my ancestors, sturdy landmen who made excellent teachers, engineers and farmers, knew and cared nothing for the sea. Welsh-English they were, and happily they left me a measure of their proverbial tenacity. Without it I should never have cherished for so long my fond and possibly foolish dream of conquest of Cape Horn in my own ship.

Undeniably a Cape Horn voyage today, east to west, under sail is a ridiculous anachronism. Time there was when a California-bound vessel HAD to round the Cape, but the ditch at Panama changed all that. In the bitter winds and angry seas of the Cape there is the same old measure of anxiety and discomfort. Along

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the old, forsaken trail there is some danger, though not as much as people believe. What is to be gained? Wealth? Of that there is not enough down there to support the wildest Chinese trader. Fame? Stouter and bolder fellows years ago exhausted that stock. Of Fame's modern sister Publicity, even, there are but minuscule favors to be won, and Publicity is a cheap bawd whose caresses are more bitter than ashes.

I knew this before we sailed, yet I count the high cost of the voyage a small price to pay for the unquenchable glow, the thrill of deepest satisfaction which is mine forever, regardless of buffets Fate may have in store for me. Aye, though the voyage left me poorer in dollars than I had been before, though I



planted no flag on new lands, laid nothing of importance on the altars of Science, even though accomplishment has robbed me of a motive greater and more vital than I suspected - despite all this the voyage in its conception, planning and execution, was worth far, far more than its price ....

- - Memory does not focus sharply on the awakening of my determination to round Cape Horn. It was an old dream ten years ago when I found WANDER BIRD. Probably it stirred vaguely before I ever set foot on a deck, when I was just another reader of sea stories, following in books the reeling clippers ....

- - A man who loves the sea and ships can aspire to no more searching test than a Horn passage. It is the last word in the lexicon of sailormen. There Nature has arranged trials and tribulations so ingeniously that in the van of all synonyms for sea cruelty and hardship is the ironbound name of Cape Horn. Winds blow elsewhere a times as strongly as they do south of fifty. Seas elsewhere may pyramid as high, break as heavily. There may be places, equally remote and bleakly lonely. Currents in other regions maybe as adverse. These foes the sailorman may encounter separately or in pairs here and there, aye, encounter and best, but always in his heart he will wonder if he could face all combined. If he glories in the unequal contest of human muscles and artifices with the ocean, if the sea shouts an instant challenge, he can never be truly content until he has voyaged Fifty

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South in the Atlantic to Fifty South in the Pacific in his own command. This is the ultimate test, given to very few to know.

Richard Maury in *The Saga of Cimba* (1939).

This is story of adventure, the tale of a cruising schooner at sea, trekking island to island half round the world. To write it has been both painful and pleasant, reviving memories of winds, old sails, faces, and faraway shores; pleasant because of these, but painful also because of disasters, strange, unforeseen and all too true. The story strives to deal directly with the Sea, the spirit of the schooner, and her harbours, and perhaps to tell, without explaining, of the vision young men behold and cannot explain, and the action that must compliment the vision ....

- - at this point in her career Carrol Huddleston and I, both very young, were meeting in New York to hunt down a small hull that could withstand the seas flowing our imaginations - a hull we could drive to the South Pacific, to islands appearing on little-used charts, perhaps even drive all the way round the world. This scheme had lured Carrol, a civil engineer, out of Central American jungles, and had taken me temporarily from an office in which I held a minor post after returning from a sea of freight steamers, an oil tanker, and one memorable sailing ship.

This lure of the sea and a small ship was no light whim; nor was it something formed during listless interludes before fireplaces. Our approach was, rather, cold-blooded and decidedly determined. Regard-

less of what we did find, the quest was not for a life of the sort dreams are made of, and I suppose it might be said that we were seeking a life more vital, or merely for more of life. But at any rate this venture, which Carrol had been driving towards for thirteen years, myself for more than six, remained elusively beyond.

- - and through all this we caught the dim form of Adventure, as only youth may sight it undismayed

-

(Both Carrol Huddleston and Cimba were lost at sea.)



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### **Desmond Holdridge in *Northern Lights* (1939).**

Of the events in this book I have written before; briefly but in excruciating detail .... The account was published in an obscure but excellent yachting magazine now defunct; I have often wondered if the laborious detail of my story did not have much to do with the sudden demise, of that publication, for otherwise it was a very good one.

But I was intent on sounding like the old sea dogs I admired and very sincerely I was fascinated with the technique of sailing and navigating; so complete was the fascination that I had only perfunctory interest in the places I visited with my first boat. To the people who inhabited them I paid little heed; that is when people did inhabit them - often there were inhospitable spots where even a seal or a bear might consider well before taking up residence. As time went on, however, there were other voyages, other vessels, and other lands and peoples; when I remembered this first cruise the images that came to mine were not those which would be entered in a well-kept log book. They were thoughts I enjoyed letting go at odd moments and they had not much to do with the technicalities of sailing. But I devoted little time to them until thirteen years after the cruise had ended.

It was flat heavy package from the American Geographical Society which set me to remembering, remembering in detail and, I fear with a certain nostalgia .... reading the text, I discovered that the absurd voyage of my DOLPHIN was described as a "remarkable cruise" .... That the cruise of the DOLPHIN could possibly have been of any use to anyone had never occurred to me. I got out the old account I had written; half a dozen pages and I was smiling at myself. Thirteen years after the event, I was no longer interested in palming myself off as an old sea dog and expert in all things that concern sailing and navigation .... But I could remember clearly the cold damp folds of fog, the naked grandeur of the rocks and peaks, the desolate beauty of the fjords, the rosy cheeks of the jolly Eskimo girls, the unreasoning fear of nothing which attacked me in the Button Islands, the milky streams of aurora, the wild runs before gathering storms, the smell of drying fish, the unearthly howl of sled dogs, the kittiwakes in Mary's Harbor, the mosquitoes in the long passages among the brown islands, the fiery wake we left astern during the dark nights in early autumn. I could remember a whole host of things that made me glad I had once owned and sailed the

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DOLPHIN.

- - For boats, even the uglier ones, are amongst the loveliest creations of man's hands and though owning them brings a train of debts, hangnails, bruises, bad frights and all kinds of worries not experienced by those who content themselves with the more practical vices, the relation between man and his boat is as personal and intimate as the relation between husband and wife.

Neither relation admits of much outside interference. But just as there are a few members of the human race who like to live their bedroom life in public, so there are a few people who set out for far places in small boats, not from an over mastering urge to see them and wage war with the sea, but only to have their names in the newspapers. These deserve every bit of the ridicule heaped upon them.

There are, however, others who wish to see strange lands over the bowsprit of their own craft, not having enough money to buy or build the best kind of small yacht, they go forth in an unsuitable vessel simply because they would rather go dangerously than not go at all.



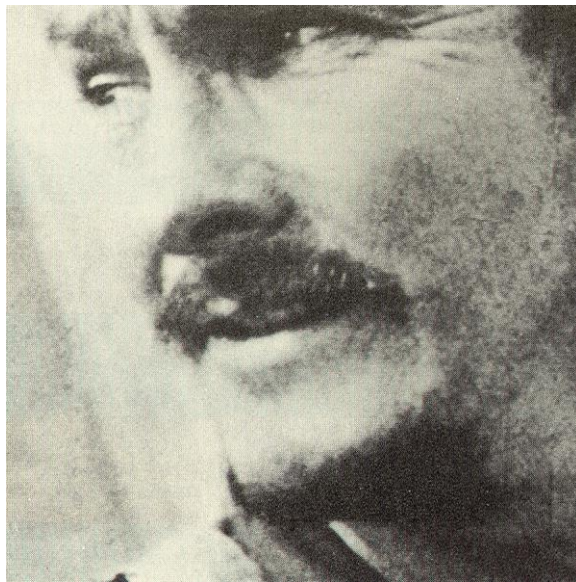
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**Donald Crowhurst** (in a Last Communication to his Wife, appearing in the): ***Strange Last Voyage of Donald Crowhurst*** (1968).

.... I am certain that our life is but the twinkling of a star and can only be characterized by beauty, which is eternal and not by its duration which in eternity is so short as to be meaningless ....

Nothing is certain - least of all life, from day to day, minute to minute, or even second to second. This Was the manner of death. What does it matter? A car crash, a falling slate, thrombosis .... ten thousand alternatives lie ready waiting to sever tenuous links of circumstance that keeps us alive. I do not expect to die. There is no awful pall of fear hanging over my soul, and there will probably never be, because I am not afraid of the consequences to me ....

- - I am going because it is worthwhile, it is my particular challenge; it will most likely bring benefits, but that is not why -I am going because I would have no peace if I stayed. Peace within myself, for no matter how happy a man is made by his wife and family, if he turns down the one major challenge of his life he can never be the same, especially when the challenge is of his own devising! I am going because I must - I cannot turn away, nor do I wish to. I would certainly not go if I thought there was very little chance of success, but I must go because I know I have a very good chance of success .... when one has considered the consequences of an action - - there is no need for reproaches of any sort if our enterprises fail .... we accept the risks in order to claim the rewards ....



(Donald Crowhurst disappeared at sea.)

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[Bernard Moitessier](#) in *The Long Way* (1971).

I have set course for the Pacific again .... last night was too hard to take, I really felt sick at the thought of getting back to Europe, back to the snakepit ....

Sure, there were good sensible reasons. But does it make sense to head for a place knowing you will have to leave your peace behind?

- - I am really fed up with the false gods, always lying in wait, spider like, eating our liver, sucking our marrow. I charge the modern world - that's the Monster. It is destroying our earth, and trampling the soul of man.

'Yet it is thanks to the modern world that you have a good boat with winches, Tergal sails, and a solid metal hull that doesn't give you any worries'.

'That's true, but it is because of the modern world, because of its so-called "civilization" and its so-called progress that I take off with my beautiful boat'.

Well, you're free to split, no one is stopping you; everyone is free here, so long as it doesn't interfere with others'.

'Free for the moment .... but before long no one will be free if things go on. They have already become inhuman. So there are those who go to sea or hit the road to seek the lost truth. And those who can't or won't anymore, who have lost even hope. "Western Civilization" is almost completely technocratic now, it isn't a civilization anymore'.

'If we listened to people like you, more or less vagabonds, and barefoot tramps, we would not have got beyond the bicycle'.

'That's just it, we would ride bikes in the cities, there wouldn't be those thousands of cars with hard, closed people all alone in them, we would see youngsters arm in arm, hear laughter and singing, see nice things in people's faces; joy and love would be born everywhere, birds would return to the few trees left in our streets and we would replant the trees the Monster killed. Then we would feel real shadows and real colours and real sounds; our cities would get their souls back, and people too'.

And I know all that is no dream, everything beautiful and good that men have done they built with their dreams .... but back there the Monster has taken over for men, it dreams in our place. It would have us believe man is the center of the universe, that all rights are his on the pretense he invented the steam engine and lots of other machines, and that he will someday reach the stars if he just hurries a little before the next bomb.

Nothing to worry about there, our hurrying suits the

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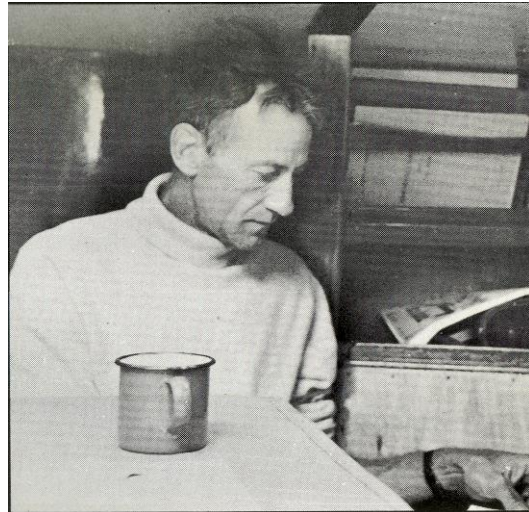
Monster just fine .... he helps us hurry .... time is short .... hardly any time left ....

'Run! Run! don't stop to think, whatever you do; I the Monster am doing the thinking .... run toward the destiny I have planned for you .... run without stopping to the end of the road where I have put the Bomb or the complete degradation of humanity .... we're almost there, run with your eyes closed; its easier, shout all together. Justice - Patriotism - Progress - Intelligence - Dignity - Civilization .... What, you aren't running .... and you dare complain into your tape recorder .... saying what you have in your heart .... just wait, you poor fool, I'm going to shoot you down in flames .... guys who get angry and speak out are very dangerous for me, I have to shut them up .... if too many started getting angry, I wouldn't be able to drive the human cattle as I please, their eyes and ears blocked by Pride, Stupidity, and Cowardice, and I'm in a hurry to get them, bleating and satisfied, where I want them to go ....'

The violent things rumbling within me vanished in the night. I took to the sea, and it answers that I have escaped a great danger. I do not want to believe in miracles too much .... Yet there are miracles in life. If the weather had stayed bad for a few days longer, with easterly winds, I would be far to the north by now; I would have continued north, sincerely believing it was my destiny - - believing it was true .... and being wrong. The essential sometimes hangs by a thread. So maybe we should not judge those who give up and those who don't .... I nearly gave up. Yet I am the same, before as after.

A long, long time ago, the Indians killed the whites who came into their forest. But the white trappers went on deeper and deeper, even if they were fated to fall some day, shot by silent arrows. Some of them were spared. They did not know why; nobody knew why. The Indians let them leave with the precious furs they had come to get in the heart of the deep forest.

- - Of course I will continue towards the Pacific .... I can't remember who said 'There are two terrible things for a man; not to have fulfilled his dream, and to have fulfilled it.



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Maybe I will be able to go beyond my dream, to get inside of it, where the true thing is, the only really precious fur, the one that keeps you warm forever. Find it, or perhaps never return.

Dear Robert: The Horn was rounded February 5, and today is March 18. I am continuing nonstop towards the Pacific Islands because I am happy at sea, and perhaps also to save my soul.

The message is hardly out of my hands when doubt hits me: will they understand back there? Don't worry, even if you don't quite understand .... don't worry, you can't all understand how happy I am right now ....

Now it is a story between Joshua and me, between me and the sky; a story just for us, a great love story that does not concern the others any more.

### **SEA FEVER John Masefield SEA FEVER**

I MUST down to the sea again, to the lonely sea and the sky,  
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,  
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white  
sail's shaking,  
And a gray mist on the sea's face and a gray dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide  
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;  
And all I ask is a windy day with white clouds flying,  
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls  
crying.

I must down to the seas again to the vagrant gypsy life,  
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's  
like a whetted knife;  
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,  
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.



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*After the close of this volume, The author felt obliged to add one further gem from the distaff side; one of the most eloquent of all.*

**Edna St. Vincent Millay** From **Second April: Exiled** (1921)

Searching my heart for its true sorrow,  
This is the thing I find to be:  
That I am weary of words and people,  
Sick of the city, wanting the sea;

Wanting the sticky, salty sweetness  
Of the strong wind and shattered spray;  
Wanting the loud sound and soft sound  
Of the big surf that breaks all day.

Always before about my dooryard,  
Marking the reach of the winter sea,  
Rooted in sand and dragging drift-wood,  
Straggled the purple wild sweet-pea;

Always I climbed the wave at morning,  
Shook the sand from my shoes at night,  
That now am caught beneath great buildings,  
Stricken with noise, confused with light.

If I could see the weedy mussels  
Crusting the wrecked rotting hulls,  
Hear once again the hungry crying  
Overhead, of wheeling gulls,

Feel once again the shanty straining  
Under the turning of the tide,  
Fear once again the rising freshet,  
Dread the bell in the fog outside,

I should be happy!-that was happy  
All day long on the coast of Maine;  
I have a need to hold and handle  
Shells and anchors and ships again!

I should be happy . . . that am happy  
Never at all since I came here  
I am too long away from water.  
I have need of water near.

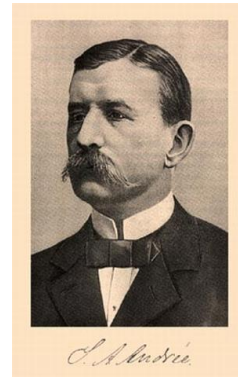


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As a brief aside, I should like to include a quotation from the diary of the leader of a Swedish Polar Expedition in the **ship of the air**: via **Balloon**:

Solomon August Andree (July 12, 1896 after take-off).

*"It is not a little strange to be floating here above the Polar Sea. To be the first that have floated here in a balloon. How soon I wonder shall we have successors? Shall we be thought mad or will our example be followed? I cannot deny but that all three of us are dominated by a feeling of pride. We think we can well face death having done what we have done. Is not the whole perhaps the expression of an extremely strong sense of individuality which cannot bear the thought of living and dying like a man in the ranks, forgotten by coming generations? Is this ambition?"*



*The foregoing have been possessed of some marked destiny, some special qualities having been brought to light in them, yet fashioned with the stuff of ordinary human clay; perhaps what:*

Henry David Thoreau, in **Walden** said, and is oft' quoted:

'If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him keep step to the music which he hears however measured or far away. It is not important that he should mature as soon as an apple tree or an oak. Shall he turn his spring into summer? If the condition of things which we were made is not yet, what were any reality which we can substitute? We will not be shipwrecked on vain reality.....'

