

GO NOW !

Π CREDENTIALS. ATAVIST GO NOW!



Credentials

Sinbad?; not I. Nor Lord Jim, Wolf Larsen; Redburn or Ishmael; Able Seaman, or deck hand; Nay!

Seaman recruit; Aye!

As a youngster, I might have scrambled o'er the gun'ull of a rowboat or canoe. I might have gawked at the ocean, hardly comprehending it - beyond a larger pond.

When all 'growed-up' (at eighteen, one is all growed-up), one is qualified to become a warrior in a bona fide WAR. Like the ocean, WAR has been with us throughout the duration of our recorded history, if you can believe the record (if you can believe any of it, [WAR, I mean]) So as not to bias the record, I'll account that we have managed to remain at peace for 10% of the time - WHICH MEANS, we have been at WAR for 90% of our recorded history. Of course its not always the same people - for lotsa reasons. Resurrection sucks!

Sum guvamints empower denselves to abscond wit da livin (the young) (the promise and hope of the future) as fodder for deez WARS (you don't think for a minute dose ole guvamint geezers wud faht dare own WAHS wood ya, HUH?). Mah guvamint wuz wun o' dem. HOORAY! for the Status Quo.

I am possessed of many unkind thoughts regarding WAR and GOVERNMENTS (even without being 'wildly indignant about everything [else]'), and could spend the rest of my life (damned little left - could go any day now) haranguing you with my frustrations regarding both; and my feeling of IMPOTENCE in dealing with either; my utter -did I say frus...., I mean - castration!

Drafted! ?

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Not me, bah gud; I ain't gonna be no fodder. But they were after me with the old 1-A; they had my number; they wanted to put my ass in the ringer, an' smear it with rayd, whyat and blooo.

They might have told me about the Red Coats and the Declaration and the Bill of Rights; George, Abe; Deer and Antelope; Nazis, Japs and Commies (them's bad dudes); they might have Star Spangled me and waved it all over the place, but my little computer didn't get the message. I was no patriot, that chest-full of pride and righteous indignation; least-wise as far as Korea was concerned; I suspect I was a pacifist without knowing it. I learned later Korea had something to do with Xenophobia; and that the U.N. was some kind of window dressing. HOORAY! for the Status Quo.

But, at the time, some big mutha with a rubber stamp was looking for my *gluteus maximus* upon which to affix: U.S. ARMY. I enlisted in the U.S. NAVY. It was a sorry day for both of us. They needed me like they needed another deadeye.

Seaman recruit - Aye!; very soon to become Airman, then Aviation Electronic Technician, then Guided Missleman, all a good many miles away from the WAR Zone.



This rather brief recitation of my credentials establishes an impertinent *non sequitur* as preparing one for the nautical life. While there are memories, they are mostly bad memories, not in the tradition that might appear in White Jacket, or Two Years Before The Mast, but a kind which might be appropriately symbolized by my rank of **PETTY** Officer.

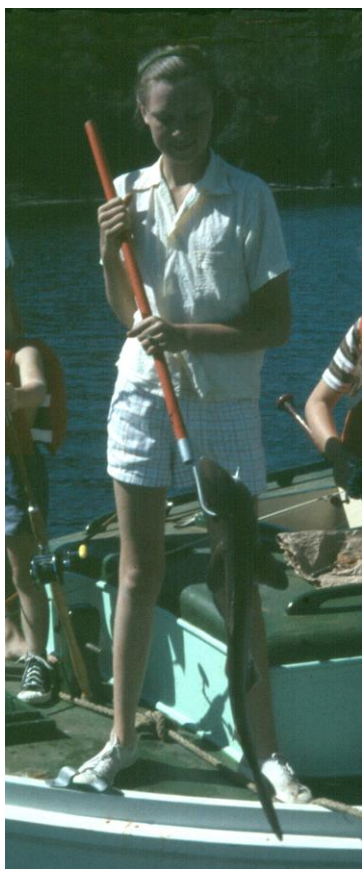
Following my Naval experience, which included spending many hours of 'liberty' swimming and body-surfing in the Atlantic Ocean at Jacksonville Beach, Florida, and climbing aboard a few Huckins power yachts moored under cover in Jacksonville, my sea experience pales before the Word.

The First Mate had more exposure to the cruising life than I, having spent her early years accompanying her father and family on many cruises throughout Puget Sound and the 'American' San



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Juans. She took naturally to the surroundings, enjoying every aspect of the water experience. She loved fishing, rowing, and was an excellent swimmer. She loved all marine life, but learned from her father how to dispatch dogfish: un sentimentally. To her, the proposed adventure was anticipated with great relish, furthering



and enhancing something very close to her heart. Our first boating adventures together were aboard her father's Reinell 21, a plastic speed boat.



Aspiring to fulfill, in part, my FATHER'S ambitions for me, the Sea was as remote to me as it was during my 'tour of duty' in the Navy.

While still a young man, travelling about with another young lady, I lighted upon an island off the coast of Maine, remaining there for a period of three months during late winter to early spring. Perhaps it was there, in that wondrously sea-oriented place, that some seed was sown within or, as Plato has speculated, something borne in one was merely recollected. Perhaps a touch of gill quivered within, or some trace of my mother's Irish-English-New England stock emerged; Aye!, and 'twas in New England I was conceived; Revere, no less.

While residing upon said island one had occasion to ride the passenger ferry some ten miles thereto and from. While there, upon the island, one day I rode out to sea in open dory with a fellow to 'old 'er 'ead' into the sea as its owner hauled his lobster traps laboriously, by hand, from the briny deep. A northwest breeze was blowing. Gud only knows what the wind-chill factor might have been, but, wholly of whollies I was never so

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cold - and there were damned few lobster to show for all the pains. As the sole work force for the highway department, the highway consisting of a short network of dirt roads which led from the ferry dock, it was my task to fill bushel baskets with sea shell fragments, gleaned from the seashore, to be hauled away on my shoulders to an awaiting flat-bed truck, transporting the shell fragments to the sites of the largest potholes, depositing them therein. Some contact with the sea, eh wot?. Still, who knows? Had something stirred as catalyst, had something been recalled?

During my stay upon that Atlantic island I experienced one other vital contact with the sea that has stood me in good stead ever since. In the wilderness, the unaccountable becomes ordinary fare; one adapts to the more primitive aspect. As with most islands, its residents necessarily account and adjust to its existing conditions. The water supply for the island consisted of wells from which water was obtained with buckets; this being accomplished on a year-round basis. During the warmer weather, water was siphoned and pumped from ponds by a variety of means and with all degrees of sophistication. But in the end, when the ponds froze during the winter, other adjustments were in order. Many of the residences were equipped for summertime use only, for which it was generally understood they would be equipped with indoor plumbing that would be decommissioned and drained during the winter. The year-round residences would of course be provided with outhouses in addition. I happened to be staying at a summer place, not equipped with an outhouse. The contingency for living in summer places during the winter is to make use of someone else's privy, or employ the services of a 'honey-bucket'. Circuitous I may be, but often when one stalks his game, he frightens the quarry away by too direct an approach; and truly, it might also be said, he that tarries might find the game long departed upon his arrival. Though both of these statements may abide the truth, and though I may be circuitous, it is none the less true as well that I did benefit from my experiences with the 'honey-bucket', one in particular which I have not forgotten to this day, that has been etched into my memory for all time. When the honey-bucket became full (there's a limit to what one may put in one, and no matter how big, they usually fill, and must be light enough to be carried to the sea where they are unceremoniously emptied. I had been emptying ours from the dock as I had been instructed to do. During the winter there were very few people about. There was, therefore, little danger of encountering anyone during this

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somewhat furtive operation, or causing any particular offense if one happened to be seen carrying it out. It had been my custom to execute this delicate operation early in the morning; it had also been my custom to discharge the contents of the pail from the seaward side of the dock rather than the side that face towards the bay between the main island and its smaller, neighboring island. One can hardly be unselfconscious about such things, given our training and circumspection with regard to such matters. As mentioned already, ordinarily I would discharge the contents of the pail seaward, usually early in the morning when it was most likely I would not encounter anyone else while carrying out my delicate mission. After a while, it became a matter of routine, and as it is with all routines, one tends to become lax and comfortable therein. Hi Ho the Merry-O, Skip-ta-ma-loo and away we goo. One cold, crisp, morning, bright and early, the sun not having yet arisen, a chilling northwest wind blowing, one tended to quicken his pace; honey bucket in hand, I headed for the dock to execute what I had done many times before, now a matter of routine, Heave! Well, I've never done that again, not in my life, not in all the fifteen years I've been boating, even though we use the honey bucket all the time (mostly to save wear and tear on the plumbing which is a pumping sort of affair like most other marine heads we know, which we tend to save for special occasions - like when we are underway, or.. you know what I mean)...nope, I've never done it again; I never emptied a honey bucket, into the wind, ever again. A Cardinal Rule aboard our bark, *ATAVIST: NEVER INTO THE WIND*.

Later, living inland, in Oregon, being dutiful, responsible, acting out some prescription for existence, still haunted by the *SPECTER* of *FATHER*, attempting to do it all, and dreaming of the water, even thinking of building a boat - until the children came along, the property, building the little gingerbread house on the prairie. Sure, there were the trips to the Pacific shore, the dreamy, dreamy trips, especially in the winter, when the storms 'raged', tormenting the ocean, riling her up, driving her upon the shore in huge swells, hoving her thundering and clapping mass over and over, 'pitilessly', upon the land - all to quite exhilarate one, to give rise to most unrealistic fantasies, imagining oneself riding out the storm - Ayel; one's spirit perhaps. Fancy!, Oh! Boundless, Incredible Fancy!

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Yes! I exhibited my credentials; for dreaming. Then all the role-playing, the following of the prescription suffered a rupture; some aspect of 'Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness' changed.

For those who filch through the record, I had, over the years, fallen out of love with the one and had most surely fallen in love with the other, the latter gaining great preeminence within my being. I speak now, not of a mode of life, but of the fairer sex. A special kind of healing took effect, and a new annealing, and some kind of alteration to one's person, a realization of something within, that some crass, formula-oriented psychoanalyst might opine as SEX, without knowing much of life beyond an endless string of setpieces. We had better be more than we appear, more than sex, I say. Was this traumatic upheaval (for it was something not lightly done) a liberation from something, or was it a moving towards something? Another page was turned despite all the advice one received. Thirty-eight years old; Hah!, many of the romantics in literature, music and the Arts have been long buried before even approaching such a venerable old age.

Then it happened! The San Juan Islands, and the Canadian Gulf Islands; the inception of the insidious unquenchable thirst had set in. Those first ten days we vacationed on the wee island of Matia. I remember the feeling when returning to the urban life and to the patterned existence, a feeling I hadn't had since a child, when left by my parents with the Nuns at the Catholic boarding school, that feeling which might be most aptly described as 'homesickness'. That latter taste of 'reality' served notice to my dream-making machinery, inflaming it to an inferno of desire - not to be denied. A thirty-eight year old in a sailor suit?

Yes, 'twasn't long before we were sailing the length of Waldo Lake and back, the four of us, plus "Billy Budd", our Pomeranian; all four of us with pooch upon a Sunfish. Then with friends we sailed in a Thistle on Fern Ridge Reservoir; then, again, with other friends, in the Coos



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Bay ocean swells in a Catalina twenty-two. Then I sailed the Sunfish in the Gulf Islands, alone, driving the boat so hard, causing the bow to nose under until the whole hull become completely submerged, buoyantly popping to the surface as soon as 'she' came to feel that utter inertness below, resolving to near deadness in the water.

The search for our own vessel had begun. For a year we had scoured the boat shows, marinas and brokerages, hesitating before the scandalous prices appended to all those pretty little yachties. It was a lesson in another kind of reality...er ...making dreams commensurate with one's pocketbook. Finally in Coos Bay, a wan and neglected ATAVIST became the object of our purchasing power, and the fiberglass bark in which we would conduct most of our nautical adventures. We were to become her fifth legal owner, she having been traded a couple of times, on paper, for 'ten dollars and other considerations'. The aging playboy who sold her to us, having left Portland to sail to Australia, ended his sojourn in Coos Bay, where he could but abandon her to the whims of the likes of us.

Herein began our serious endeavor to obtain our credentials for?. We have become Latter Day Sailors - Seafaring, the Opiate of our lives.



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Atavist.



Our ship, a sloop (rigged yawl; some might muse 'toy'), was designed as a 'family cruising' boat, yet pretended to preserve other qualities which made it a seaworthy craft. At some point in time the 'itness' of a boat becomes infused with a personality, usually sometime after they are Christened and launched; they, regardless of their appellation, acquire a femininity, being referred always, and one might add, deferentially, as "SHE" or "HER".

Our "She", "She's pretty sound"; "She goes to weather pretty good", "She's a stiff boat"; "She doesn't track worth a damn"; "We've had her for fifteen years"; "She costs plenty to keep and maintain". Somewhere, in her longish life - long - as far as insurance companies and actuarial tables are concerned, who would classify her a tramp after ten years (she's now twenty-eight (forty for this edition)); somewhere, early on, she acquired the distinctive appellative "ATAVIST". Truly not a very feminine sounding name. Yet, you might rightly ponder that configuration of letters from our enduring alphabet. Not some star-studded Constellation, or Greek legend, nor some mood of the sea, or wind or flower, seabird, nor a serenade, or some allusion to time well

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spent, or the 'good life', or some other whimsicality, but instead, this awkward expression: '**Atavist**'.

While in the U.S. Navy, I served on no ship, lest one call an airplane a ship-of-the-air. Such involvement would hardly qualify as a 'service', except to say I was airborne for short periods of time. But life is full of its little twists and turns. Stationed in the North on the fabled, yet real, island of Iceland I was a member of a small land-based service squadron that was installed to provide the wherewithall for a squadron of Naval reconnaissance aircraft. While 'standing' watch as a messenger, I had occasion to deliver a message 'off base' to some military unit located near an embayed wharf and anchorage area. The delivery necessitated and involved the use of an Army jeep. While in transit, during a wet, stormy, blustery day, I was obliged to pass by a sea wall over which copious quantities of heaving seawater would periodically cascade. My timing was not what it could have been, for the jeep was suddenly deluged by one of these surges resulting in a very drenched and stalled inanimate object which I could not persuade to 'run' again. Stranded, I looked about for shelter, and discover some way to make contact with the base to inform them of my predicament. This eventually led me to a wharf, to which was tied a British Ship, perhaps a destroyer escort, named H.M.S. Truelove. I obtained my shelter there, made contact with the base, drank 'refreshments' and partook of an American-made movie in the process of being projected for the entertainment of Her Majesty's crew. I was on board this huge steel floating machine (doubtlessly another, rather robust, 'she') for a few hours before being retrieved by a fellow sailor in yet another jeep. The H.M.S. Truelove was the only ship this one sailor set foot upon during his entire tour of duty.

When we purchased ATAVIST I had proposed renaming it (her): TRUELOVE. The suggestion did not chime or wear well with the other half; "Whose true love?", one might well inquire, to receive only a vague answer. One might well receive a vague answer as to the meaning of ATAVIST, since we did not supply the name, nor did we investigate the origin and history behind such an odd-sounding morpheme: "I Christen thee 'ATAVIST'". Changing the name would have involved removing three painted ATAVISTs on her fiberglass hull, one on each side of the bow, the other on the stern; and with much more difficulty the ATAVIST sewn into 'her' mainsail. Also changing her name would have required the

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supplying of a new one. Her transom felt the brush change her home port from Seattle to the facetious 'eugene' (now GAEA).

What's in a name? Some euphemism for the failure of dreams? Some glorious epitaph to dreams? A phantom ark to transport one's spirit to the faraway places where one no longer sees, hears, feels and speaks of strife amongst men?

Cassiopeia, Ursa Major, Southern Cross, Polaris; Argo; Proteus; Windsong; Zephyr, Mistral; Blossom, Bryony, Sea Lilly; Halcyon; Tern, Ocean Bird, Albatross I, Nomad II, Wanderer V; Charlene C., Mary Lou, Gypsy Girl, Gallant Lady, True Love, Native Girl; China Cloud; Happy Hour, Mon Ami, Paid 4, Crime Pays, His Extravagance, Kwitcherbellyachin'; Shangri-La, Jericho, Eldorado, Sweet Felicity; Atavist. And Carpe Diem.

In a way this whole subject of naming boats, those happy, though inanimate configurations of matter, becomes sufficient unto an essay.

Define **ATAVIST**. What possible connection or correlation or euphemism could exist, between or in, the meaning and the application thereof, to a sailing vessel? Is it a person, place or thing?

Webster: (It appears to be) a person or thing characterized by atavism. Atavism, from **ATAVUS [L]**.

Cassell's Latin Dictionary: *Atavus* [L] (*Avus* [L]: (grandfather or ancestor) beyond grandfather; the father of the great, great grandfather or grandmother.

Webster's New World Dictionary: atavism: resemblance to a remote ancestor in some characteristic which nearer ancestors do not have.

O.E.D. atavism: Resemblance to grandparents or remote ancestors rather than parents. 1833, J. Rennie (Scientific Gardening): children often resemble their grandfathers or grandmothers more than immediate parents; this is properly called ATAVISM by Duchesne. 1872, Bagehot (Physics and Politics): some mysterious atavism, some strange recurrence of a primitive past.

Websters New World Dictionary: (a second meaning) reversion to a primitive type.

American Heritage Dictionary: atavism: the reappearance of a characteristic in an organism after several generations absence, caused by a recessive gene. Also loosely called "reversion" or "throwback".

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Larousse Illustrated International Dictionary: atavism: 1) appearance of certain forms derived from an ancestor, which had not manifested themselves in intermediate generations, 2) (of man), a reversion to primitive instincts.

The Columbia Encyclopedia: atavism: reversion to type; the sudden appearance in a group of organisms of an individual resembling some remote ancestor, rather than the members of the immediate preceding generation.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary: atavism: Biol. the recurrence in a descendant of characteristics of a remote ancestor as a great grandparent; renewed manifestation of heredity after remaining latent during one or more generations; reversion to a more primitive type.

The World Book Encyclopedia: atavism: or REVERSION, is the sudden reappearance in a plant or animal of a trait which has before only existed in remote ancestors; certain varieties may revert eventually to the appearance of their wild ancestors.

Little and Ives Webster's Dictionary and Home Reference Library, International Edition: (wow!) atavism: *atavisme* [F], fr. *atavus* [L], fr. *at* 'beyond' + *avus* 'grandfather', *avus* and *ava* 'grandmother' belong to a primitive Aryan group of relationship words. Biol. recurrence in a descendant of some physical character or mental trait, derived from a remote ancestor rather than from the immediate progenitors.

Encyclopaedia Britannica: (finally) atavism: the term given in Biology to the reproduction in a living person or animal of the characteristics of an ancestor more remote than his parents. Loosely used, it connotes reversion to an earlier type. Individuals reproduce unexpectedly the traits of earlier ancestors, and ethnologists and criminologists frequently explain by "atavism" the occurrence of degenerate species of man, but the whole subject is complicated by other possible explanations of such phenomena, included in the scientific study of normal "variation".

And when we call a man a 'son-of-a-bitch' or a 'ucking bastard' we are just simply not being polite. A brief excursion into genetics.

In the Latin there isn't any suggestion of "throwback", "reversion", or the "primitive" or degeneracy. Our thinking is peculiar in this way; we tend to view ourselves at the pinnacle, or higher on an ascending slope, than from whence we started. What has taken place before is relegated to some lesser, lower,

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primitive place. Oddly though, as I am fond of reiterating, "it is claimed we have 'descended' from the apes".

Surely he who named his ship ATAVIST could hardly be assumed to be making her the butt of a joke. He had obtained her as a hull and deck with engine, ballast, bulkheads, hatches and chainplates installed, shipwrighting the remainder with such as was bred in him. It is possible he realized he had foundered into a pile of junk, thus sardonically applied, in vengeance, some obtuse euphemism, in vain.

Nay! I think 'tis more; a symbol. Aye! To be sure, a hearkening back to another time, a time of man, wind, sea, and sail; all in unison. Aye!, some recurrent theme that reappears in this two-legged brute, from the time of his very beginnings; his fondness for, and attachment to, the sea; and his desperate need to find a place for his spirit in the three dimensional Universe.

Shall we proclaim ATAVIST to mean: man and the sea, *in saecula saeculorum*? Aye!, in a small ship where he tests himself, finds himself, feels the wonder of space, time and cosmic truths; where he looks beyond, yet yearns for roots - oh, where?, oh, where?

Shall we settle upon some theme or symbol then, that recurs, and, in the end, ennoble man?

'...I am the Master of my fate
I am the Captain of my soul'

Then let it be so: ATAVIST, A Recurrence, Rebaptized, Rechristened, Resurrected; Another Coming; It must be so.....



Go now !

Whither thou goest? An antiquated question? Stirred by some unseen force, a time arrives when we must depart, unavoidably, to attempt to fulfill certain unrealized aspirations or ambitions. Insidiously, as we develop a strengthened fiber, perhaps naturally enough, gained through our repeated exposure to the elemental, gaining confidence thereby, our resolve to break the bonds that bind us develops also. Hand in hand, these two push the envelop, expanding the envelopment, as it were.

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It has been intoned often enough, by one authority or another, or by some indulgent friends, that one ought not 'go off, half cocked'; indeed, one apprehensively contemplates when one ought go off at all. My inclination is to abide the prudent men in matters involving the design and safety of one's vessel and in planning the timeliness of one's voyages to avoid encountering mother nature athwartships; but in other matters, certain decisions become the rightful property of oneself.

In truth we had decided, within, to go beyond ourselves, to go North; in short, to go to Alaska. We had decided to go alone. Our plans were tentative for at least a year, although the dream had been restively stirring for a much longer period.



One group, known to us, comprised of local salts and friends alike, had completed the northward circuit in the space of one relatively wet summer. It appeared, deducing from their experiences, that travelling as a group, although their dockside encounters abounded in conviviality before their sojourn, given the proximity of one another's laggardness, impetuosity, deviousness, and sundry other recognizably human traits, proved uncompanionable to the point of contemptuousness. Our own experiences involving 'rendezvous' with other boaters and friends, although auspicious on the surface, in the end, proved rather testy after some period of time, seldom terminating before conviviality developed into a strained tolerance. If I was to interject a cautionary note, that is, if my drift is not already apparent, it would be to advise against any tendency to o'erburden oneself in like manner. While there may be advantages, and perhaps even noble impulses, serving to beget these travel arrangements, one ought, simply, not become so encumbered. If you hanker to enter into protracted discussions upon where to anchor, whether to anchor separately, whether to 'tie to', whose anchor to use, whose anchor design is best, or whose rode is longer or stronger; Alas!, whose fish is to prevail in the evening repast, and whose galley and whose dinette; all to shore up, repair and not offend conviviality when it ought be left alone, then, by all means, seek travelling companions. A word to the wise.....

Departing this uncharted hazard to one's better cruising enjoyment, let us consider what one ought do, and when one

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ought do it. During our yearly cruise, which, through hard experience, we learned was best conducted after the regular cruising season, it was our good fortune to meet two diverse couples who were returning from such a northward adventure to Alaska. One pair of these mariners was returning from their sixth summer cruise of Southeast Alaska. In their early sixties, they had spent their lives, until some seven years previous, engaged in business activities through which they had made their small fortune. With fortune in hand, their lives nearly eclipsed, with health problems nudging them this way and that, awaking to yet other options in life style, they entered the world of boating and cruising. Their wealth permitted a style different than ours, part of which was dictated by the infirmities and decrepitudes associated with their various encroaching illnesses, and their age and remaining physical strength. However, in treating of our common dilemmas encountered while at sea, their advice, through a hard won realization was: **'GO NOW'**, Go in anything, if you have to, but **GO!**...he who hesitates...

That this explicit message may be amplified and further enhanced I will reiterate some of my own perceptions.

While you might propose to argue with me, that your time has had its lot cast to the Social Contract, that your means are limited, I could only listen to your persuasions, offering, in rebuttal, persuasions of my own.

Yes, perhaps there is a 'right' time; as long as your heart is set upon a time and you not allow that time to become bartered away (**tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow**); then, perchance, I could recognize and abide your procrastination; but shall I hold in reserve many salvos that would attempt to dissuade you from your societal entrenchments?

Surely, I remember the hours walking the beaches, gazing afar. I had imagined the building of a boat, taking to the High Seas. Instead I set about to fulfill some indistinct dream emanating from the equally indistinct Social Contract. Nothing in particular appeared explicitly distinct as its objective; none the less, some basic consideration had qualified to occupy my issuance.

Alas!, it had never been clearly spelled out, this other phantom, the American Dream, this seeming purposefulness of Twentieth Century North America.

Truly, as a life, one needed. Some needs were clearly distinguishable from others. The apparent needs had required some dependency from the very first day at our birth: the need for

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sustenance, for shelter from the elements, for our bodily health, and perhaps for clothing as an extension of the latter. Ah!, but then, the task became one's own; but the dependency still existed; out of convenience we thus adopted the Social Contract.

One could not plant the seed on ANOTHER'S LAND, could not harvest ANOTHER'S CROP, could not build his shelter on ANOTHER'S LAND.

MY GOD !!!, MY GOD !!!

Well, it is a SHOCK !! if you haven't been inculcated and disciplined to "The Way Things Are Done Around Here".

Just sign on the 'dotted line'. What a relief!. I can eat, I can be warm, secure in my bed, and healthy. "Blessed art they who are meek, for they shall inherit the earth".

First things first, eh what? This dream, this American Dream, the Social Contract, had been adept at furthering its own Dreams of: Consumerism, under the guise of making This A More Perfect Union, and The World Safe For Democracy.

Thus, your indistinct Dream, extracted from this Social Contract, was to eventuate in becoming a slave to a social system, in exchange for your enhanced welfare. In the North American Promised Land, a concurrent Horatio Alger mythology tended to obscure the bonded indenturism of the Social Contract.

Somehow the acquisition of things, the 'substance', the materiality, evinced proof of the Bargain, the Contract, the Program.

We were ON LINE, ON TRACK, in the milieu, nearly unconscious, like Pavlovian entities, in pursuit of the World Class, Fast Track, Yuppie Global Culture, promoted by those Particles appearing on the Boob Tube, that horror of this day and this age. Suckers one and suckers all. We are overwhelmed in our boredom.

But we are MORE, are we not? Are we Not? We are not merely some integer on file, 'substance' for some actuarial table; we have imaginations; we have awarenesses, we seek an identity for Self. The terrible sameness of Consumerist-Materialism is a brutal persecution.

Those who feel, are aware, who imagine, who step out of this time and place, wondering upon their origins, where we are headed, eventually they must Depart; Yes, eventually, they Must Depart. In the end they overthrow the system; they risk the security to escape the persecution of the engineers and manipulators of the Social Contract.

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Surely they seek the distant horizon, some distance from the oppressive world of the Contract, and their indenturism. To Feel oneself, to become acquainted with one's Self; to partake of the Joys of the Self. Yes! they will accuse you of being Selfish; does that hurt you; does that bring you to 'HEEL!'?

We measure the one against the other; our fears (our anxieties) against our joys.

We fear our nothingness in our non-materiality. Yet, that Joy of which I speak, the Joy of Self, as it witnesses the Universe, sensing one's Unity with it - surely I cannot go on - these are individual matters, private matters, taking place within; the words become grunts to the Soul. Should I berate you then; one more time - "What profit a man if he gain the World and lose his.....?"

When the man uttered, emphatically, "GO NOW", I needed no special urging; I knew precisely the meaning; it came not as a surprise, or mystery; already the words were on my lips as well.

Who amongst all the sages in the world could have impressed me? Especially when I was young, burgeoning, Powerful? Life seemed to possess no end; there was time for everything. Such ELAN!. If these sages had all held me down, as my sailor mates had done while I was in the Navy, when I proved recalcitrant to their sociality, they having, en masse, detained me, to stencil my name and serial number upon my bare *gluteus maximus*; Aye!, if they had held me thus, and had imprinted upon my brain 'the end of the world will come sooner than you know - forever', would I have been persuaded? If I had been not persuaded, through embarrassment, to sociality and conformity, by my sailor mates, how would I have responded to the more elusive 'wisdom' of the sages?

Alas!, these lessons, that are not transmuted into the flesh, how they must go begging.

As I have mentioned, *GO NOW!.*, sounded the clarion knell to my Soul. And found accompaniment to the oft-cited dithyramb of the 'different drummer'.

And, as if it was not sufficient enough for this aged couple to convince us, shortly thereafter we encountered the second pair of homeward bound Alaskan cruisers. This had been their first junket beyond the confines of the Social Contract and life's little routines. Being much more akin to us, in their later forties, they, too, had imparted their enthusiasms and enjoyments, and, quite naturally, encouraged us to GO as well. They had taken a six-

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month leave from their urban confinements, and were soon to return to them.

Both couples travelled 'solo'. They marked our charts, advised us of the good anchorages, the resplendent sights, and whereof was located nature's bounty, even including cautionary words, but mostly encouraging our earliest departure.

We needed no further encouragement. While I had informed my employer a year earlier of my untoward inspiration, he exhibited an indifferent shrug in response. Now, with added assurance, I reminded him of my previous foretelling, informing him the next boating season would find us engaged in an early departure for a six-month sojourn, northward to Alaska. He, himself, being a latter-day mariner, though harboring this seldom-pursued inclination, for reasons one imagines rather than discusses at length, pretended to understand, but still registered an incredulous, though less indifferent, shrug.

To our ears, **GO NOW!** possessed a credible ring..

