All.

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Abstract

There is always an endlessness about the ocean...
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THERE is always an endlessness about the ocean. There is always a windblown way across the pathless waters. The little boat follows to the sky. The shores fade behind; forests become dark rims and cliffs shrink to miniature sandhills. Life is the sky and the sea and the proud tall sail above. The heart is the easy pounding of the planking rising and falling on the rolling water; the breath is each little puff that chases a host of tiny ripple-winkles across the sea's face; the food is the clear air, rushing in the sturdy canvas. But the motion is consummate of all. The motion is ecstasy, gliding high on the crest of the wave, plunging again into the depthless trough between lofty water-falls.

Lying on the fore-deck, peering over the bow into the profound greenness, I feel the descent an eager rush toward the very soul of the sea. The dark waters divide to absorb me deeper and deeper. The cold water closes around me, descends, drenching me in a breathless surge. The sky, the sail, the ocean itself drown in the cataract of snowy spume, and I, a lost soul, am pressed harshly against the stark planking of the deck and down into the depths, by the weight of a world above me, by the vacuum of eternity below me. Sublimely submissive, I do not resist. My mind blackens; thoughts are squeezed out by the crushing load, leaving nothing but the glorious sinking, the swirling void and the cold of water.

Then the sun is shining again, soaking my wet body with a warmth that filters deeper than the wetness. High on the wave I glimpse the vast shimmering expanse of greenness, with the white foam-horses parading to the sky. The bow slashes water aside, blazing a fleeting trail. The weight of the world lifts. The boat is a cloud wisp daubing a water peak and I a fleck of dust in the ether, the great near sky and the great wide of sea.

This is the dizzy ecstasy, the deletion of thought, the destruction of care; utter, unfettered freedom—a small boat on a great ocean.

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