

Part 1: Abandon Ship

I fear my eyes have failed me
With before me such a sight.
It seems the vagrant day has turned
Into the solemn night.

Not but a breathless moment
Did it take for tides to turn.
The bow it rocked with fury
As I stifled up the stern.

The captain's quarters empty,
And no seamen to be found.
Had all of them forgotten
That this wasn't solid ground?

Abandoned on this vessel
With no insight to control
The oscillating hull,
As dear Poseidon took his toll.

I pondered "Is it wise to leap
Before it is too late?"
"If I but sit here on this ship
Will I regret my fate?"

With weary heart and stoic mien
I mustered up the poise
To leave behind the splintering wood:
A symphony of noise.

One final glance I spared the vessel,
Pitiful at best.
One breath I took.
One final look.
Then water filled my chest.

Part 2: The Seas' Assault

The salty brine about me
Did conjure quite a shock.
Quite different from the crackling ship,
Bereft of but a dock!

Oh Captain, my dear Captain,
What deception could this be?
Disembodied, tangled in the ropes,
You're dangling with the sea!

I warned the others, ay I did,
To leap both broad and high,
"Detach yourselves as best ye can
From this decrepit sty!"

"But where from here" I pondered still
In quarrelling unrest,
As oil leached into my skin.
"Or is this but a test"?

A pebbled shore may wait for me
Beyond there yonder wave.
The challenge now to ward off death
And hope that I can stave
The utter terror, pain, and dread,
That ever softly brims,
Inside the lungs of every soul
Who bends to earthly whims.

Transcended nearly from this place,
I gaze up at the sky.
The galaxy in all its awe,
I know the end is nigh.

Like coddling her restless child,
The sea's emotions torn.
She can't conceive a worse betrayal
Than drowning one she's borne.

So all at once the waters ceased
Their tormenting assault.
My body drifted to the top.
No longer was my fault,
Disillusionment that lead my crew

To perish at the hands
Of misanthropic penitence,
And dreams of distant lands.

Part 3: Corrosive Circumstance

Fortnights I drifted on the planks
Of what was once a home.
Or so I thought in ignorance,
My sanity could roam,
Without the cost of murdered cells
Within my fractured head.
Quite unbeknownst to anyone,
I was already dead.

Not manifested yet in me
Was rational dispute
Of whether I could last this long
In quarters so acute.

In retrospect I must dispute
How quarters were defined
By other extroverted men.
Contorted in my mind,
The things that sought to keep me whole
Throughout my stifled youth.
Berated by a vapid haunt
Who labeled me uncouth.

“Are those the fabled winds of change
I oft hear tell about?”
Above the sudden gale force
Impulse lead me to shout!
“Why have you stricken me with this,
This cross upon my back?”
“This cursed world has destined me
To dwell on what I lack!”

But aye, no use is it to yell,
Imploding at each seam.
When will the waters drown this flesh
And every crevice ream.

So once again my turgid lips
Receded in their folds.
‘Twas useless to convulse with rage
And cultivate the molds,
Which festered in the many cracks
About my bodice weak.
I clench my muscles uselessly,

as fecal matters leak.

*I nod into a listless sleep
With hope to ne'er return.
Yet forces there beyond my reach
Decide it's not my turn:*

I wake from slumber void of rest,
As twilight is the norm.
Then aye before me apparates
A pale, illusive form.

At first I shudder with the thought
My mind at last has gone,
But once assuaged by choking warmth
I choose to be the pawn
In some wise being's selfish plot
To test the will of men.
So out it I reach to burnished hands
And dare to dream again.

No sound escapes from either one,
Not I and not the shroud,
And yet there's something with no name
Which screeches from the cloud.

“Please listen well my sickly friend,
I hold no keys to fate,
But chances are the seas will calm
If you but merely wait.
And true there is no guarantee
That splendor lies in store.
Would you believe me if I said
Close by you'll find a shore?”

So that was that, the vision gone,
Once more my spirits wilt.
Like holly in the winter worn
I nestle in the silt.

For now I'll heed the queer advice.
Of sense it seems deprived.
What choice have in these affairs?
The clock shan't be contrived.

Part 4: The Lesser Evil

Once more I wake without an ounce
Of comfort to my name.
I sense no more can I withstand
This ever tiresome game.

As salty waters stain my flesh,
My pupils softly sere.
The sight before me gaily culls
A single stranded tear.

There it is, the sanguine rock,
Accompanying the shore.
Now halted for the time at least
The circumstance that tore
Remaining shreds of inner-self,
A many vital node,
From deep inside my being still
I feared would yet erode.

That cursed wretch who'd bid me hope,
Whose wisdom I deemed faint,
Clandestinely deciphered all
Like some clairvoyant saint!

The shore of course was bounded south,
While I had drifted north.
Unknowingly had deeper senses
Brought my visage forth?

For lengthy leagues my frame did glide,
Impervious to death.
And yet I was, in better terms,
Quite worthy of my breath.

Oh no...I thought. It towers now,
An island not an isle.
From one despair, to one as bare,
My skeletons beguile.

What more is left for me to do
But gather fruit and reed?
Each night my dreams will stir with
thoughts of some majestic steed,
With auburn curls of satin touch

And eyes of battered earth.
I pray, that soon, the day will come
Where I rejoice in mirth.

Part 5: Survival

Now foraging amid this land,
My only life pursuit.
No matter how I craft the barge
I cannot thus transmute.

Each solemn night (aye still it seems)
I rest afore the stars,
But little comfort do they bring
To detrimental scars,
Which fester less, I will admit,
Compared to whilst at sea.
Though without any herbal fix
I'll be an amputee!

One evening, sober, there I lay,
On mattresses of frond,
While voices quivered in response
To tormenting despond.

To quote the voices in my head
Would lack real purpose though,
As algorithms circulate
The secrets that I stow.
Perpetuated years at hand,
The stealthy thoughts exist,
Pertaining to my lack of worth
And cherished time I've missed.

Then louder than my chorus line,
A rustle in the weed.
The noise provokes a stalwart thought,
"My dear majestic steed?"

To my dismay a panther stalks
Not ready for the kill.
Degrading his fine savory
Works best to break its will.

"Please show yourself my hungry friend",
I canter to the grass.
A shudder starts within my throat,
"This threshold we must pass".

So from his lair of foliage

He saunters to my feet.
I back away abruptly
As my confidences pleat.

"You've known of me, for years at hand,
Not gifted with a face,
On which to blame your many fears,
But now I bid you grace.
You see, my fool, to writhe and run
Is but a fodder rich
To fuel my chase for blushing flesh.
My pet, there is a hitch.
The grace of which I'm here to grant
Will void beyond this eve.
If you embrace me without pause
I'll take eternal leave."

My answer would seem obvious!
How gracious a request!
To pass an offer so discreet
Would prove a foolish jest!

My fingers stretched like talons
As I quivered with dismay:

An inch from hills of terror,
But also sweet release.
An inch from no more second guessing
every fall and feat.
An inch from no more hiding in the shadows
like a clod.
An inch from no more laying catatonic in
the sod.

"I CAN'T, DEAR GOD, FACE YOU
HEAD ON,
I STILL REMAIN TOO WEAK.
FOREVER DO I SEAL MY FATE
AS ONE SO MILD AND MEAK!"

How pitifully I crumple down.
The panther starts to laugh.
To his delight he'll conquer me
And slaughter like a calf.

With all the strength left in my bowels

(Resilience from the storm)
A dagger sharp I plummet through
His back to so deform.

"SO CHASE ME TO THE MOUTH OF
HELL,
WHEREVER YOU SO PLEASE!
AS I STILL BREATHE SO
RHYTHMICALLY
YOU WON'T HAVE ME WITH EASE!"

As tears contort my furrowed brow
I wrap him in a vine.
His screeches provide witness;
He's a prisoner of mine.

Forever shall he grovel
In a cage of bamboo reed
To never plot a clean escape,
No matter how he'll plead.

So there.
That's that.
Defenses down.
My choice is set in stone;
To spend my life in weary guard
Of everything I own.