

ASLEEP NOT IN THE DEEP

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

by

Harvey Manning

\*\*\* ONE \*\*\*

Sleep is what I do. Winter sleep, summer sleep, fog sleep, sun sleep, storm sleep, star sleep. All real sleeps I sleep but no stupor sleep, <sup>no</sup> weary sleep. Those are not sleeps but deaths. Work kills. Work in the day and die in the night, resurrected to work again to die again to waste again the sleep life which only is real. I don't work. I sleep. The party also kills. I sleep no wild drunksleeps. Drink and fall and tumble into death life hells where once I was perhaps, do ugly things that once I did perhaps  $\frac{1}{M}$  working daily, dying nightly, suffering dawns of dry blood grating heart, acid air scalding lungs, sun flame scarring eyes. No work, no party, no death, no hell, not for me. I sleep.

No sleeper ever slept such sleeps as <sup>mine</sup> ~~me~~. I was the first sleeper of genius ~~and~~ I am the last. Other <sup>and</sup> bunglers ~~make~~ monsters in fright choose death, sleep crudely spoiled, ~~sleep life cowardly~~ wasted. But not until I came aboard did I sleep my masterpieces. Where I was before the sleeps were fragments, shattered half sleeps, <sup>and</sup> mere sketches, outlines, ~~they were~~ <sup>smashed</sup> ripped and ~~spoiled~~ by bells and shouts, no peace there to sleep a full fine sleep, a museum of sleeps. There is no other brave and skillful sleeper, nor elsewhere peace to sleep the infinite delicious marvels <sup>of</sup> the sleeps unslept I brought aboard.

Ashore all dead they lie under stars and moon, snores  
on nightwinds the sounds of putrefaction, bells and whistles  
the sounds of morning resurrection, bangs and shouts and  
growls the sounds of daylong suicide. Below they waste the  
ships sleep only drunksleep, perversion most foul of art  
most glorious. When first I came aboard, <sup>when</sup> ~~when~~ I lived below,  
then I too made deathlife journeys into death ashore. Where  
I slept down there, in the forecastle with the others, that  
was not sleep, <sup>no sleep there and</sup> the stench of death, the stink of life, the  
struggling deathlife, no quiet bed.

<sup>Here stop the machines?</sup>  
~~this high~~ party noise below and town noise ashore ~~more~~  
~~river~~ river sounds of waves slapping and water flowing  
and willows rustling, sky sounds of wind in the rigging, rain  
on my roof, seagulls squealing, all noise below and ashore  
is far away, not here. When greyfaced drifter from town or  
sick old girl from school falls overboard the splash ~~is one~~  
<sup>intermixes</sup> with splash of waves, the drowning cry ~~one~~ <sup>cries of</sup> with seagulls  
gulping garbage. Bellows and wails weave in the wind with  
moonlight on the brown hills east and white fog on the green  
hills west. ¶ Rarely do ~~the~~ noise<sup>s</sup> cut this high, <sup>each spring</sup> ~~only~~ the dying  
<sup>irresistible</sup> squall downstream of ~~the~~ White One's old baby, the screech of  
~~the~~ Red One ~~when~~ when Cap returns, <sup>just once, the single</sup> ~~the~~ short shriek  
from ~~the~~ Black One, when the boy was born, my first summer  
aboard, ✓ And the dingdong bells from school, the bells that  
smash sleep. ~~Most never stays below and ashore.~~ ¶ No other  
but one climbs this high. No other but one sleeps in my nest.

It's the quietest of beds, my nest, here where I sleep my masterpieces high in clean wind.

Day sleep is best. In summertime, all silent below with Cap away, I never sleep at night. Spooky haunted sleep it is alone in ~~the~~ darkness. In wintertime ~~days~~ <sup>far</sup> are too short for all my sleeps but always there is the party below <sup>to</sup> guard ~~the~~ against the quiet. I dare not sleep on quiet nights.

Summertime is heaven. Sunset ~~in~~ in the long river, green hills ~~are~~ shadowed <sup>west</sup>, brown hills glowing <sup>east</sup>, then ~~the~~ nightbreeze and stars in the sky and stars in the waves, then sunrise ~~in~~ in the river, ship shadowed by brown hills, green hills gleaming. I go ashore then while town and slough lie dead and walk beside the river, where small waves wash, screened from ship and slough and town by willows, and when the bells dingdong <sup>!</sup> go aboard, climb to my nest and sleep.

Morning sleeps are marvels, ~~some~~ <sup>being</sup> the more precious mounted in ~~the~~ agonies of the banging town, crashing town, dingdonging honking town, suffering out of old death to begin new suicide. No dreams run away then, always a crash, clank, beep, or boom ~~to~~ float me loose from deep danger into ~~the~~ safe translucence.

After my morning sleep I go below, but slowly, slowly, not to lose the ~~the~~ flow, and eat some small lunch, a doughnut and a glass of milk, <sup>or</sup> a slice ~~of~~ baloney and bottle of ginger ale, <sup>or</sup> ~~an~~ orange <sup>juice</sup>, and a hardboiled egg. While ~~slowly~~ <sup>and</sup> chewing <sup>and</sup> I review morning dreams and when my eyelids lower climb to my

nest and wash my beard and lie down drowsy, ~~to resume the~~  
~~morning dream or some old favorite from my book.~~

Afternoon sleeps are the purest sleeps of all. Though town noise <sup>drifts</sup> toward death I am fully alive in my sleeping. No danger, ~~not the least~~ <sup>the</sup> of dreams running wild. Just ~~in~~ <sup>at</sup> the surface I sink, where clouds and wind and waves can enter freely, mingling in my dreams. When I choose I sit aside and watch, when I choose I step in and live, freely in and out I wander. Always it is ~~my~~ my creation, my story and my people and my world, no alien spoilers invade from darkness, no enemy wreckers lie in ambush.

When <sup>sunset warms</sup> the brown-fleshed hills ~~glow in sunset~~ I review ~~the~~ afternoon dreams and morning dreams and those deserving I put in my book. ~~Though all are great some exceed mere~~ ~~greatness and these~~ <sup>to</sup> I redream over and over. My favorites all go back many years, back to my first summer aboard, when first I climbed to my nest. ~~They were superb dreams then, perfect from the first, but the mark of a master is to improve on~~ ~~perfection.~~

How <sup>did</sup> I survive before the book, before the nest? ~~It~~ ~~beyond imagination.~~ That turgid winter of phantom faces, and rotten teeth and slimy lips and mouths reeking with decay of entrails, the ~~stink~~ <sup>stink and</sup> of life and stench of death, and I among them dying, my <sup>stink and</sup> stench mingled with theirs.

4  
Strange how from the dark aftercabin Cap stared out at me ~~the~~ day in spring I stood on deck by the gangplank. Until

then I was only one of ~~the~~ many who come aboard and vanish into town or school or slough, none to know where, none to care. Then <sup>I saw</sup> the others ~~come~~, ~~the~~ White One from the forecabin cradling her new baby, both staring, ~~the~~ Black One heavy with child staring from the aftercabin, ~~the~~ Red One with bones stretching skin lifting her skullface from the foredeck, ~~where~~ ~~staring~~ staring, Hawk on his knees in the deckhouse, staring, the Packrats poking their heads from portholes, staring, greyfaced drifters from town and sick old girls from school, staring, and from the slough Old Salt in a rowboat staring, and faces in houseboat windows, staring.

Then I knew I dared not leave, I climbed rung by rung up the ladder of the last remaining mast, to the nest atop the mainmast ~~top~~. Lulled by staring eyes I slept my first good sleep. It was quiet then, Cap went away that night and <sup>during that first</sup> ~~in the~~ long ~~long~~ summer <sup>of sleep I found</sup> ~~I learned~~ my ~~genius~~ genius.

Until the day I climbed the mast no one knew I was aboard. Nor did I. Nor do I know when I came aboard. A long horror there was, a vortex roaring and I spinning and sliding toward black deeps below the deathlife hells. All that is gone now, gone long ago, extinguished utterly by long summer sleeps, and indeed the peace is all the more serene for those rare noises, those small twinges when a shorewind blows aloft the honkhonk of ~~the~~ bus, dingdong from school, howl from taverns closing, crowds swarming down to the slough, and rattling over the plank bridge, coming to the party.

Shaw needs work

\*\*\* TWO \*\*\*

Old parties, old winters, old years, all are swept away by ~~the~~ summer sleeps, as ~~the~~ garbage and ~~bones~~ <sup>corpses</sup> are swept from the slough by springtime floods. ~~the~~ the dreams I save in my booky <sup>but</sup> all else sweeps away, each summer cleans the world. After summer come the autumn fogs, then a long cold rain, then the party begins and Cap returns and the party continues through rain, snow, gales, <sup>and</sup> floods, through the darkness into spring, then Cap goes away and the ~~long~~ summer sleeps begin.

<sup>Today</sup> ~~now~~ another party has begun. <sup>A surprising party</sup> ~~and a surprise~~ it is ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> begin ~~in~~ in fogs before the long cold rain. I don't like surprises, they wake me up. And fog sleeps are superb sleeps, <sup>I was delighted by the</sup> ~~the~~ season of quiet fog sleeps <sup>that</sup> lay ahead before the party. ~~my~~ <sup>but</sup> my good afternoon sleep was shattered at dusk by the rattle of the old plank bridge <sup>a</sup> a welcome rattle in cold rain when nights grow long, but <sup>breaking</sup> now in fog <sup>one</sup> quick leap of terror. <sup>But</sup> ~~only~~ <sup>in</sup> only one, for ~~what~~ <sup>in</sup> climbed to my nest I left fear below. though early the rattle was familiar, only in fog a surprise. all since has been as before.

<sup>Down from town and over the bridge come</sup> The party begins quietly <sup>a</sup> the tall-hatted cooks with their <sup>smoking</sup> ~~smoking~~ wagon, the red-vested bartenders with their clinking wagon the white-coated waiters staggering up the gangplank with steaming pans, the bare-shouldered barmaids tripping aboard with cold bottles.

The Packrats creep from the hold, snatch roasts from platters and scurry away in darkness, <sup>the</sup> Packrats who live below in darkness, always thin <sup>and during</sup> ~~the~~ the long ~~summer~~ <sup>summer</sup> no more than bones. Sometimes by <sup>moonlight</sup> they strip off ~~the~~ jeans and sweatshirts shiny grey with ~~the~~ grease and swim in the slough <sup>searching for</sup> ~~searching for~~ garbage overlooked by seagulls. Sometimes they sink and seem to couple but the slough is ~~opaque and~~ secret. Neither has breasts but one has long hair and ~~the other~~ has a ~~long~~ beard. They never come to the party, <sup>but</sup> they lurk in shadows and snatch food. ~~They carry~~ ~~leads~~ ~~into the hold but never grow fat.~~ By spring ~~when they swim in the slough~~ the one with long hair is beginning to have breasts. But so is the one with the beard. Then comes summer and they shrivel.

Hunger begins the party. In the deckhouse hawk awakes. From the forecastle come Red One and <sup>a lot</sup> White One and her <sup>newest</sup> baby. From the aftercabin, but only briefly, comes Black One and the Boy. From the wheel at the stern comes Old Salt. From houseboats along the slough come the ~~islanders~~ islanders. From town taverns <sup>come</sup> the greyfaced drifters, from school attics and basements the spectral students, a silent trembling crowd trailing ~~the~~ Cooks and Waiters down to the slough and over the plank bridge, chins quivering, mouths oozing.

Late at night I go down to the party. Not in, I never go in. <sup>Once</sup> <sup>late summer</sup> Long ago Cap <sup>blasted</sup> a wall from the deckhouse, ~~disintegrating~~ that night's party in the slough in many pieces <sup>of</sup> ~~the~~ ~~party~~.



see more pages

~~but the darkness is better for~~ parties now. I stand outside in night and eat a small bird and drink a bottle of black ale. A hot bird and a cold bottle, first of the <sup>party</sup> season and good for dreaming, <sup>hot</sup> ripping soft ~~shredded~~ flesh with my teeth, crunching sweet bones, swallowing thick ale, mixing flavors and bubbles in my nose.

no music inside, no wrestling, <sup>all</sup> the <sup>starved</sup> ~~hungry~~ ones with bloated bellies sprawled in gorged stupor, ~~the~~ White One in a corner nursing her baby, ~~the~~ Red One facedown and stiff

<sup>is</sup> Hawk on the throne ~~is~~ <sup>telling a story. This is the story he tells.</sup> ~~he~~ went to war and <sup>appropriated</sup> a truckload of ~~chocolate~~ <sup>Hershey</sup> bars and stocked a castle <sup>with</sup> girls but ran out of ~~chocolate bars~~ <sup>Hershey's</sup> and the girls found other jobs <sup>and abandoned their</sup> ~~children~~ <sup>who were also his and</sup> so he sold the castle to the government <sup>as a completely equipped</sup> orphan asylum and <sup>used</sup> ~~invested~~ the profits <sup>in</sup> olive oil ~~but~~ <sup>but then price of oil was increased</sup> the market went down ~~the town of us~~ and the olive oil went rancid but <sup>though not done on his luck now all he has to do is</sup> if he can scrape up a little cash, he has a fortune waiting in <sup>the storage tanks</sup> a warehouse because ~~there is~~ <sup>is an essential ingredient of</sup> a tremendous demand for rancid olive oil ~~to make~~ rocket fuel <sup>and there's a tremendous demand for that.</sup>

?  
with the  
corner the

Nobody hears Hawk but me. I crunch a smoked pork chop and a stalk of celery stuffed with cream cheese and drink a ~~small~~ glass of chill white wine spiced with nutmeg. Then I climb to my nest and wash my beard and sleep, Hawk's <sup>continuing</sup> stories proof against danger. The party has begun, exactly as all the others began, only this time early, in fog.

Hank is on the throne taking a stamp.  
This is the stamp he took. He went to  
war

Hank is on the throne <sup>with them</sup> ~~with them~~ taking  
the he went to war and stole a load  
of chocolate bars and <sup>with them</sup> ~~with them~~ a Rhode castle  
with Velptores girls... But ran out of  
chocolate bars and the girls found other  
jobs leaving the children behind... So he  
sold the castle to the government as an  
apartment complex and invested the profits in  
olive oil futures... ~~But~~ the market  
went down instead of up and the olive  
oil went soaring... But if he can scrape  
up a little cash he has a future

My people are not from below or from town or school, they are not men and women, except two, I am one, the other is a girl, only one girl. Not from below. Not ~~the~~ white One who always has a new baby but never any old babies. Not ~~the~~ Red One sunbathing on the foredeck wearing dark glasses only, bones stretching skin always white, *oversize* flaccid breasts without nipples. Not ~~the~~ Black One who stares at my nest from the dark aftercabin, ~~.....~~ above all not ~~the~~ Black One. Not the houseboat girls who stroll along the island, looking up to my nest. Not the huntresses from town, dancing around the mainmast with upreaching arms. Nor even the girls from school.

I go below into the noise sometimes. There are fragments of beauty in the noise, briefly, they do not last, but I save such treasures as I can. The young are lovely. Not all perhaps, not spiders and snails and clams. But kittens, fawns, and schoolgirls are lovely, briefly. I go below for an ankle, a careless lock of hair, a forearm soft and downy, a laughing lip, a swelling sweater ~~.....~~ bouncing, an awkwardness of hipswung skirt, a girlish belly bulging bluejeans.

Darling schoolgirls, yet not to follow ashore, for though they ~~.....~~ swear by music and gods, they have no life to give but ~~.....~~ daily suicide, ~~.....~~ nightly grave. Nor do I dream of these brief flowers, rather in them

I see the eternal Brown Girl, mine. Only she comes to my nest. She came the first summer, she is the first page in my book and many following, she is my masterpiece of masterpieces

After she comes I dream no more that day or night. Then, only then, I want no more dreams lest her visit dim. After she comes I go walking, winter or summer, night or day. I walk by the river ~~by~~ <sup>through</sup> the willows, over the plank bridge, and climb the high hills, ~~hills~~ <sup>hills a warm old house</sup> in summer sunsets, in spring sunrise a shimmer of new green, by winter moonlight ~~white~~ phantoms, of ~~the~~ Sweet Snow. I climb the swelling ridges ~~to~~ <sup>there</sup> to the sky-surrounded crest and we walk together ~~under the moon~~ over ~~white~~ hills, smooth as her cheek. We walk together in spring dawn through marigolds and blue lupen and daisies, cornflowers and shooting stars (and columbine) and tiger lilies, her eyes catching the light of each blossom. In autumn sunset ~~we lie~~ we lie ~~in~~ in glowing grass the color of her flesh, the warm round crest of the high brown hill, what sleep, what dreams, a ~~cool~~ quiet wind, the silent river far below, green hills west, beyond green hills the sea, and white fog ~~on~~ on the river, and a time each spring and ~~fall~~ fall when the sun sinks into the river of fire and the sky is green, ~~what sleep, what dreams.~~ what sleep, what dreams.

The second night the noise begins, the third night the schoolgirls come, and when I have slept alone many days I

go down into the noise to save such glimpses of her as I can. By candlelight they sip red wine and sing sweet songs, they sit on deck by starlight playing flutes and strumming guitars, and rise and dance, humming .

A They are young when they come aboard, young as the Brown Girl. They are old by morning, old as Red One, Black One and Boy, White One and baby, Packrats, Hawk, Cap, Old salt. ¶ I am not old. Not young but not old. I feel no wrinkles in my forehead, I see no veins in my hands, my hair and beard grow thick with no touch of grey. I have never seen myself in a mirror. A glimpse in still waters before I can turn away, hair and beard I have seen, never my eyes.

Why do they stare? What <sup>do</sup> they see? Not a horror,  for the huntresses from town dance below, pendant breasts slapping sagging guts, and the old girls from school, young when they came aboard, they dance below, breasts still high and bellies white, dance still awkward yet no longer young, briefly young now old forever.

Something in my eyes, trapped by accident? For I never look into  eyes, I have never seen any eyes but those of the Brown Girl, and she does not stare.

What do they see? Why do they stare? Perhaps they know me from before. They never say. Not  Cap. Nor  Black One who always watches,  Black One silent since that one short shriek when the Boy was born. Nor the Boy, silent at birth and silent since, dank slimy Boy staring at my nest long hours, silent.

\*\*\* FOUR \*\*\*

The dingdong bell and then the plank rattle, through fog the howls and shouts from school and town <sup>crowding</sup> down to the slough trailing the Cooks and Waiters, Bartenders and Barmaids.

~~A fire in the fog,~~  
~~I thought of the fogbow, color, and~~  
~~also color not seen but felt. Now floating in~~  
grey void. Shadows ~~before~~ <sup>dragging</sup> into the hold, with a roast sheep, <sup>A</sup> splash in the slough and a small darkness on deck <sup>water</sup> ~~above~~ <sup>drowning</sup> gurgles,

Waiters with ~~steaming~~ steaming trays and Barmaids clinking bottles, greyfaced drifters, giggling girls from school, grunting huntresses from town. The musicians in the deckhouse play <sup>in</sup> music with powdered wigs and buckled shoes and rouged nipples peeking through lace gowns. ~~Flautists~~ <sup>Flautists</sup> sit crosslegged atop the aftercabin, girls in ~~leotards~~ leotards spinning lightly on their toes. On the larboard deck a ~~farious~~ <sup>farious</sup> guitar strumming and couples struggling. On the starboard deck girls and boys perched on the rail ~~humming~~ <sup>murmuring</sup> old barefoot songs with flowers in their hair. A poet on the bowsprit recites <sup>ing</sup> to seagulls in the slough.

On white sand by a blue ~~sea~~ <sup>strand</sup> sea ~~stand~~ the Brown Girl and I ~~hand in hand~~ <sup>strand</sup> under the curling crest ~~going~~ <sup>looking</sup> looking through green water to the sun, clasping each to each in the

~~This is the story~~  
~~he mumbles.~~

thunder, tumbling together as one in hissing ~~swift streaming~~  
sand, lying together in quiet ~~white~~ foam of spindrift.

Slowly, slowly down the mast <sup>I descend</sup> into noise where ~~the~~  
huntresses are clutching boys, hands ~~stifling~~ stifling songs  
and dragging ~~the~~ girls away, <sup>In the shadows outside</sup> to the deckhouse where the

musicians play nightmares. I nibble barbecued spare ribs  
and sip <sup>lieb fraumilch</sup> ~~pink wine~~ and ~~listen to~~ Hawk mumble <sup>a story</sup> from the throne.

<sup>of how</sup> he taught poker to the natives and won a thousand black  
wives seven feet tall <sup>who proved their love by yanking</sup> ~~the~~ the tusks from all the  
elephants <sup>there are</sup> and the beach was mounded high <sup>with ivory only then</sup> ~~and the pool~~ <sup>was invented</sup>

~~the~~ ~~body~~ ~~invented~~ plastic but the tusks  
are still there and <sup>though he's down on his luck now all he needs is</sup> ~~and he can raise~~ a little cash <sup>and</sup> he'll have  
a fortune because ivory bullets are essential for space pistols.

Nobody ~~knows~~ Hawk but me. Schoolboys hurl deviled eggs  
which smear his face and the girls giggle and drink more wine  
until they get sick and then the boys drag them <sup>away</sup> ~~away~~.

Below the throne ~~the~~ Red One lies facedown, buttocks <sup>flexing</sup> sequentially  
~~twisting~~ ~~to~~ to the music. An old <sup>surgeon</sup> ~~doctor~~ twitches his  
~~the~~ mustaches <sup>in the</sup> ~~with~~ her buttocks and picks his teeth

with a scalpel. Three teachers in tweed suits and bow ties  
sit <sup>in a row</sup> ~~side by side~~ notebooks in hand smoking pipes and sniffing  
brandy. <sup>Then</sup> ~~the~~ ~~signature~~ ~~and~~ the viola player snaps his

bow and the cellist gets his head stuck in the hole and the  
violinists club each other with fiddles and ~~the~~ Red One  
quivers all over and the <sup>surgeon</sup> ~~doctor~~ accidentally <sup>amputates</sup> ~~cuts off~~ his nose  
and the three teachers ~~laugh~~ ~~and~~ whisper back and

forth and scribble in their notebooks puffing clouds of black smoke.

~~White~~ White One is carried out<sup>side</sup> by four department store clerks followed by a bank ~~cashier~~<sup>teller</sup> with the baby. A reporter thumps bongo drums and the young girls, the ~~darlings~~ darlings, are gone, and the old girls and huntresses ~~are~~ stripping off their clothes. I nibble camembert and crackers, green olives and a smoked oyster on a toothpick, drink one small glass of <sup>domestic</sup> champagne. I climb aloft above the appealing arms and wash my beard and lie down in my nest, snugly alone <sup>12</sup> ~~in~~ in fog, fog blurs the noise below, and I go to meet the Brown Girl and we wander ~~hand-in-hand~~ <sup>in</sup> through ~~grass~~ grass cool against our ~~knees~~ knees, beside the tumble ~~and foam~~ of loud ~~white~~ water, and her ~~soft~~ cheek is warm against mine, I have no beard when I walk with ~~the~~ Brown Girl.





No sleep, no dreams, memories of the Brown Girl, feeling with her and for her the cool touch of wind, the warm flow of sun, hearing small sounds of ~~grassblades~~ grassblades brushing, ~~flower seeds~~ flower seeds dropping ~~grains of sand~~ grains of sand trickling ~~birdwings~~ birdwings, ants ~~carrying away~~ crumbs ~~mined~~ mined from my clothes. Under the cloudsea a ~~moaning~~ moaning undertow from the drowning town.

~~the~~ <sup>stare</sup> sun, full in my face, ~~and I open my eyes~~ fog ~~sinking~~ <sup>down and down and</sup> the river, ~~green island hills emerging~~ green island hills emerging. From faraway below <sup>comes</sup> dingdong dingdong. ~~cloudwaves~~ <sup>are</sup> pink ~~above grey~~ <sup>troughs</sup> above grey, now ~~crimson~~ <sup>over</sup> black pits of night, then all is lost, all is night. Under the cloudsea the sunken town glares, then the full moon rises upriver, the fog slips downriver, down wan ~~hills~~ hills I walk, not alone.

The Cooks and Waiters, Bartenders and Barmaids, the silent strays, the laughing boys, the giggling girls, the bridge a steady rattle, the island road a crowd-choked roar, toot-toot on the river and visitors ~~rush~~ rush from excursion steamers, crush through ~~willows~~ willows, coming to the party.

Things in the slough stare out at me, then swim to the ship and ~~climb~~ <sup>climb</sup> into a porthole dragging a ~~sturgeon~~ sturgeon. From the aftercabin ~~the~~ Black One stares as I climb the mast. The orchestra plays music with horns on its head and spears in its hand and golden goblets clinking against tin breastplates.

When withdrawals were requested he handed out

Guitars and banjos and drums and flutes, girls in ~~black~~ leotards ~~dancing~~, girls in ~~hip~~ ~~crowded~~ knee-free skirts and thin loose blouses dancing, huntresses in no clothes <sup>at all</sup> bumping and grinding and counterswinging drifter-clubbing <sup>tassled</sup> dugs, ~~with tassels on the~~ ~~poets~~ poets reciting, artists sketching, teachers taking notes, boys bellowing bawdy ballads ~~as~~ they covet covies of giggling girls, boys quavering <sup>warm</sup> words into quivering ears as their hands tremble under skirts onto trembling thighs.

I eat hummingbird hearts in almond oil and caviar on barley crackers and drink a mug of mulled sherry.

Hawk shouts <sup>a story</sup> from the throne, ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> won a bank in a poker game and <sup>invested</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>deposits</sup> ~~the~~ in defaulted bonds and ~~replaced~~ <sup>of a foreign nation</sup> counterfeit better than government issue except ~~he~~ <sup>the bills</sup> had his picture on <sup>them</sup> ~~so~~ <sup>though he's down on his luck now</sup> the examiners closed the bank but <sup>all</sup> he needs is a little cash to finance a general who will ~~redeem~~ <sup>redeem</sup> the entire country once he overthrows the Reds the bonds ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> it'll mean a fortune because that country has the only remaining herd of <sup>woolly</sup> mammoths and their wool when ground up with ivory dust and mixed with rancid olive oil cures every known disease of man ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~raises~~ <sup>raises</sup> the IQ by an average of 50 points.

by handing over

Nobody hears Hawk but me. The boys throw <sup>banana</sup> cream pies at his face and the prize for a square hit is <sup>one</sup> young girl sipping wine or two old girls gulping gin. A doctor is burning out with a blowtorch the tonsils of a lawyer who is suing the doctor for malpractice in sign language while two salesmen sell the doctor malpractice insurance and the lawyer fire insurance. ¶ I crunch several

¶

butter-fried grasshoppers and rinse my mouth with ~~cool~~ cider  
and then climb to my nest and wash my beard and lie down in  
~~crushed grass~~ <sup>heather</sup> by the loud stream. High on the glacier ~~where~~  
~~dark cliffs~~ <sup>cloud wrack</sup> ~~dodge in and out of~~ I see her running  
down to meet me and I run up through ~~meadows~~ and then it is  
I who ~~stand on the~~ <sup>am running down</sup> ~~old~~ glacier ~~looking down~~ to where she  
waits by a ~~blue~~ ~~ice~~ ~~field~~ ~~with~~ ~~green~~ ~~grass~~  
~~sun sparkling~~ ~~wind rippling~~ ~~ice~~ ~~cracks~~  
droplet of snowmelt caught in white rock, sprinkled with green  
lawns and trim ~~ice~~ ~~cracks~~ ~~cones of alpine fir~~

The screech from deck slices through the dream before  
I reach the lake, but I jot down notes and will meet her there  
later, she will wait ~~until~~ ~~turn~~. Awake I listen to the  
announcement of winter, <sup>this</sup> early winter, in fog, <sup>that comes</sup> Cap has come  
aboard and is raping ~~the~~ Red One. ~~By~~ ~~the~~ ~~time~~ ~~she~~  
he clutches the red hank, shakes the skull, drags the bones  
on deck and rips bare ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> deathsmooth balloons, seagulls  
~~in~~ ~~flight~~ repeat her screeches and abandon ~~stagnant~~ garbage  
to silent swimmers, then he throws her against the rail and  
stomps into the deckhouse and knocks Hawk off the throne and  
sits bellowing and drinking. She crawls ~~moving~~ to his feet  
and he kicks her in the face and <sup>a</sup> lawyer drags her on deck  
and rapes her but she doesn't screech, she crawls back to  
the throne and <sup>there</sup> teacher <sup>in</sup> waiting ~~his~~ turn and also clerks  
and janitors and <sup>disc jockey</sup> ~~announcers~~ and grocers, <sup>she</sup> ~~is~~ ~~waiting~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~kicked~~,  
dragged, raped, but screeching <sup>at</sup> only once.

On the throne Cap drains a bottle at a swallow, and another,

His Spad was blown by  
a storm far from the  
Western Front and

then tours the deck and throws poets overboard and smashes  
banjos on dancers' rumps and <sup>de flowers runaway</sup> ~~rapes only naked girls unoccupied~~  
and returns to his throne. Cap is about six feet tall, within  
a foot or two, and is about as old as I am, or Hawk, and  
has hair that is black or brown or red or blond or some other  
color and has eyes ~~I~~ <sup>is</sup> and weighs one or two or three  
hundred pounds more or less.

Cap sits on the throne and Black One brings <sup>him</sup> a platter of  
ribs and basket of bottles and stands behind the throne staring  
at me. I nibble <sup>chicken</sup> livers and <sup>calves'</sup> brains and sweetbreads <sup>of unborn lambs</sup>  
~~curled soul with~~ <sup>and</sup> sip a small stout. Rib in one hand, bottle  
in the other, Cap roars ~~hey~~ <sup>a story of</sup> crashed on an island and with  
bare hands <sup>new</sup> killed a thousand of the <sup>he from there</sup> enemy and was crowned  
king and given three hundred and sixty-five virgins wearing  
priceless jewels buried by pirates long ago and all the virgins  
proved fertile and bore only triplets and when he sailed away  
he left behind five thousand sons and daughters what with some  
quadruplets and another batch underway and a hundred leagues  
from the island the mourning of his wives and children stilled  
a typhoon and in afteryears they raised a massive temple to  
his godhood all of hammered gold glinting with rubies and  
sapphires and emeralds and from a single piece of white marble  
that cost a thousand lives in the quarrying they carved an  
image of him taller than twenty ancient cedars one atop the  
other and now when missionaries come <sup>bleed them white and</sup> Cap's wives roast them  
on spits in the temple over a volcano vent and gnaw the bones

with their Bibles and brassiers

clean and mix the powdered bones with <sup>the</sup> fermented blood and dance themselves to a frenzy around the marble statue as they drain the last dregs of the missionaries and Cap always knows when missionaries have landed on the island for often as he walks the mountains ~~the~~ <sup>his wives</sup> wails come on the wind and soon he will sail the ship down the river and over the sea to visit his family.

~~Hawk~~ Hawk staggers from a corner and shakes his fist and howls that the bottom is rotten and ~~firmly stuck~~ <sup>firmly stuck</sup> in mud and the ship never will leave the slough. Cap smashes a rib in Hawk's face and breaks a bottle over his head and with one kick lofts him from the deckhouse ~~over~~ <sup>over</sup> the rail ~~far out~~ <sup>far out</sup> into the slough. The party continues but Cap goes off to the aftercabin followed by Black One ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> I climb to my nest and wash my beard and sleep. ~~Like~~ <sup>the</sup> sunrise, Cap's return is always the same but always ~~new~~ <sup>new</sup> ~~identical~~ <sup>identical</sup> this time, so early, it is strange, as if the sun were to rise at midnight.

Cap comes by night, <sup>in the fall</sup> and goes by night, <sup>in the spring</sup> and never, <sup>while</sup> on shipboard sees the day. But sometimes ~~the~~ Black One stands below my nest staring, <sup>and</sup> thus Cap calls me ~~and in~~ the dark aftercabin, he tells me a story of sunshine, <sup>always</sup> ~~the same~~ <sup>story.</sup>

He has a gold mine in the mountains where the river begins. High into ~~blue~~ sky cut shards of ~~rock~~ rock and from the peaks <sup>to the</sup> a glacier <sup>creeps and avalanches</sup> ~~blindingly bright down to the brink~~ <sup>to the brink of a</sup> black wall slashed with <sup>veins of</sup> white quartz <sup>with</sup> in whose ~~crystals~~ crystals gleam yellow <sup>wires</sup> ribbons of gold. From the glacier <sup>boils a torrent,</sup> ~~flows a stream,~~ our river, <sup>in</sup> in one leap clears <sup>the</sup> the black wall where Cap digs gold secret and safe behind the ~~sunspanning~~ curtain thundering in the plungebasin, sweeping then ~~from~~ (iridescent) ~~mists~~ mists in swift meanders through ~~green~~ meadows shot with lilies, columbine, paintbrush, lupen, daisies, and ~~various~~ boulders <sup>flecked with</sup> bearing pale blue blossoms of phlox, ~~and~~ ~~violet~~ ~~campion~~, ~~glinting~~ ~~in~~ ~~lust~~ ~~in~~. In evening Cap comes out from behind the curtain, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~glacier~~, cold as the glacier, and lies down in heather, and wind from the <sup>ice</sup> glacier passes through the heather bells, the white bells, yellow bells, violet bells, he lies amid a swarm of swinging bells, silent bells, and when alpenglow fades from glacier and peaks and a star, <sup>explosive</sup> ~~bursts into sudden fire~~ while still the sky is blue, ~~the~~ Cap sleeps.

which he was fortunately able  
to deduct as a business  
expense and later

darkness of  
the attic.

This is the story Cap tells me ~~in the dark~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~in the dark~~  
~~and~~ Then at nightfall he bellows ~~from the throne~~ <sup>mounts the throne and a story. The throne is on the</sup> how once on  
an arctic beach he found a lump of ambergris larger than  
a bull walrus and spent it all on ice cream cones and ~~soda~~ <sup>Coca</sup>  
~~Cola~~ <sup>and another fruit</sup> for heathen children, ~~how once~~ he shot fifty thousand  
rabbits and thus saved from starvation the sheep of one  
nation and the people of another ~~who paid a fortune for~~ <sup>to whom he donated one hundred and</sup>  
~~canned rabbit stew~~ <sup>twenty five</sup> he clearcut a mahogany jungle <sup>shiploads of</sup>  
and ~~made~~ <sup>chopped</sup> it all into ~~wood~~ pulp for comic books, ~~he~~ <sup>and not long ago</sup> sowed  
grass in ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> desert and fattened cattle countless as the grains  
of sand and dried them ~~into~~ <sup>the</sup> jerky which fed ~~both~~ <sup>the</sup> armies on  
~~in~~ <sup>both sides</sup> three wars and five revolutions <sup>during</sup> which ~~killed~~ <sup>were killed</sup> hundreds of  
thousands of soldiers and unknown numbers of innocent women  
and children ~~as well~~ <sup>helping natives break their ways</sup>

While Cap is drinking and eating and ~~reading~~ <sup>a story of</sup> Old Salt ~~whispers~~  
~~when he owned the ship~~ <sup>a canoe</sup> he sailed around the world  
with rum and salt cod ~~and~~ ~~pepper~~ ~~and~~ ~~silks~~ ~~and~~ ~~calico~~  
and glass beads and tin mirrors and populated with progeny <sup>along the way he</sup>  
scores of ~~beating ports~~ <sup>islands and continents</sup> deserted save for nubile maidens before  
he ~~departed~~ <sup>arrived</sup> but at last his children <sup>fired cannon at him whenever he tried to dock</sup> chased him away so he  
came to the river and <sup>took up his ship and</sup> logged the forests <sup>and school</sup> to build  
a town which he stocked with sons and daughters and ~~a school~~  
~~where they learned their lessons while he was off at war~~  
~~conquering~~ <sup>tree moccasins off overland to</sup> many nations but when he returned, the river had <sup>to</sup>  
~~changed course and washed~~ <sup>flooded</sup> away his town and school <sup>it</sup> and children  
and stranded the ship in the slough <sup>beside</sup> by a new town and school



stocked by some <sup>unknown</sup> wanderer with strange bastards who never heard of Old Salt.

When Cap returns Hawk goes silent and <sup>with beaded face</sup> skulks about the decks ~~his face is~~ trapping ~~the~~ teachers and cheating them at poker.

The fog goes, the gentle mists come, then light rains, then hard rains, then hard cold rains without end. The party <sup>grows louder</sup> ~~continues~~ and I sleep at night lulled by noise below and sleep in day lulled by drumming rain <sup>and</sup> I walk by the river through puddles, <sup>with</sup> the willows ~~black~~ dead sticks rattling in wind. I walk the grey hills above the ~~grey~~ river dim below in scud, the town a tomb.

<sup>Suddenly - at night - Cap hears that</sup> A month of rain is enough rain, ~~scared~~ <sup>and he</sup> ~~to~~ to sail immediately for a desert island where <sup>once</sup> he mined a million tons of <sup>seagull</sup> guano and after his thousand slaves swept it clean and mopped it spotless with tankers of water imported at great cost he posted them with shotguns to keep off the <sup>gulls</sup> birds.

<sup>cool</sup> The <sup>slippery</sup> truck slid off the plank bridge into a houseboat and both sank to the bottom of the slough with the loss of six girls and ten ~~visiting~~ encyclopedia salesmen and all the coal except one sack the driver managed <sup>to</sup> to save while escaping the <sup>amorous</sup> ~~claws~~ drowning girls. The engineers from school fired <sup>up</sup> the boilers and the ship <sup>shakes</sup> ~~shook~~ but the engineers <sup>are</sup> ~~were~~ fatally scalded by live steam and the fire <sup>goes</sup> ~~went~~ out so Cap ~~has~~ <sup>has</sup> decided <sup>to</sup> not to sail until spring because Old Salt says there is no propellor anyway, it was melted down in the war to make medals and lunchbuckets.

\*\*\* SEVEN \*\*\*

of steak and  
kidney pie

The river was high, the island road deep mud, a wagonload <sup>followed by</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>three dozen</sup> ~~of~~ greyfaced <sup>drifters</sup> ~~stage~~ sank without a trace. The  
Cooks and Waiters moored a barge alongside and under a  
circus tent built open fires and roasted turkeys and geese  
and grouse and partridges and quails and pigeons and ptarmigans  
and robins and sparrows and bushtits and bats and dragonflies  
and mosquitoes. The Bartenders and Barmaids shuttled over  
the slough in swift black boats scarred with bullet holes.  
Bankers and butchers and bookkeepers wearing white ducks  
and yachting caps sailed over in yawls and ketches and sloops  
and flatties. Schoolboys came in canoes <sup>and catamarans</sup> and teachers paddled  
<sup>surplus</sup> ~~rubber~~ liferafts some of which sprang <sup>unexpected</sup> ~~sudden~~ leaks and swamped  
with the loss of all hands. A dormitory of schoolgirls rented  
a tugboat and evaded a cordon of housemothers and deans.  
Old huntresses floated across the slough in barrels. ~~and~~

~~Several~~ Drifters  
clung to logs and inner tubes and capsized yawls. A skindiver  
swam ~~underwater~~ <sup>into</sup> underwater to avoid ~~the~~ traffic and was ~~pushed~~ yanked  
~~through~~ a porthole out of which a moment later were thrown the  
air tanks and spear gun and face mask <sup>and</sup> ~~but not the~~ flippers ~~and~~  
~~black~~ <sup>and not the</sup> skindiver. Since it was Thanksgiving, Cap hired  
a derrocked priest and a physicist who did not believe in war  
and at enormous expense imported a score of virgins and every

~~hour~~  
hour on the hour the priest celebrated the black mass and the  
renegade physicist transmuted <sup>uranium</sup> ~~gold~~ into ping pong balls.

One day Cap called me to his cabin and told how he plowed  
the desert and grew corn twenty feet high but the sun  
popped it so he moved into the forest and ~~filled~~ enough trees  
to roof the world but lightning struck ~~and~~ and while  
escaping a popcorn storm and a forest fire he found the gold  
mine which unfortunately was in a park and congress wouldn't  
let him have it so he secretly mined enough gold to buy his  
own congress which gave him the park and gave their  
constituents bags of popcorn and charcoal sketches of Cap and  
then came to the party.

The wind began to blow and the rain beat harder and colder  
and great waves rolled up the river from the sea and broke  
over the island, rocking the ship like a cradle, and high on  
the swaying mast ~~in the howling storm~~ I slept days and weeks  
of ~~storm~~ storm sleeps, page after page with the Brown Girl,  
running ~~hand in hand~~ over cloudswept hills, vaulting over  
valleys, soaring ~~silently~~ with <sup>gales</sup> ~~wind~~ in our teeth, ~~and~~ through  
clouds, ~~and~~ <sup>into</sup> ~~on to~~ sunshine and ~~white mountains~~ the white  
bells, yellow bells, violet bells swarming in glacier wind,  
silent bells.

One night in a ~~moonburst~~ moonburst I saw a mayor ~~in a skiff~~  
rowing a skiff ~~in the flooding~~ in the flooding  
~~out in the strong current of the~~ slough but the wind tore off  
his stovepipe hat and whiskers and it wasn't a mayor at all, it  
was the Boy. Another night thunder without lightning sent

waiting in a warehouse... Cause there's  
a tremendous demand for paricid olive  
to make rocket fuel and he has  
thousands and thousands of barrels.

flights of frightened seagulls squealing unseen by my nest.

<sup>no</sup> ~~After~~ After the storm when the river dropped ~~there was~~ <sup>was</sup> a houseboat missing from the slough and the plank bridge had vanished. ~~The~~ The mayor came leading a delegation and told Cap he hated to ~~bother~~ <sup>be a nag</sup> but towns downstream were threatening to sue because their filtration plants could handle the occasional greyfaced drifter or teacher with crabs eating his ~~bowels~~ <sup>bowels</sup> but all ~~the~~ <sup>these</sup> houseboats <sup>were</sup> clog<sup>ing</sup> ~~up~~ the reservoirs and when people turned <sup>their</sup> on faucets canoes and roast turkeys came out and ~~thousands~~ thousands were dying of thirst. Cap said we were missing only one houseboat, ~~there were shouts for help out on the river~~ ~~after~~ he told the mayor to blame the towns upstream, it was Thanksgiving there too.

Cap told the houseboat crews not to be so sloppy or he'd cut them all adrift. They said it wasn't their fault, they were very careful about their cables, and during the storm they saw a mayor rowing around the slough with a large pair of wire snips and towing a torpedo.

The <sup>mayor and his</sup> delegation returned and said the towns were still upset, it wasn't ~~only~~ <sup>just</sup> the houseboats but <sup>also</sup> the liferaft loaded with detectives who had no fingerprints and the naked women who got into the turbines and ~~overloaded the circuits and~~ blew out all the neon signs <sup>not to mention the</sup> ~~and also there was a~~ tugboat of schoolgirls stranded on a mudbank and they were all crying ~~and wouldn't stop~~ and nobody could get any sleep.

Cap accused the mayor of diverting to his own   
 uses a houseboat complete with a dozen girls all in  
excellent-to-fair condition and if there was any more trouble  
he would sail away and cut the town off without a penny. The  
delegation tied an anchor to the mayor and dropped him  
overboard, which evidence of good faith so pleased Cap he  
promoted every one of them on the spot and gave each a virgin  
left over from the black mass. He also endowed the school  
with a research fund on condition the clappers be removed  
from the dingdong bells and made hawk  accept the IOU's of  
and a dean, <sup>so they could get back to their classes.</sup> Hawk sulked until he found an Indian washed up  
by the flood <sup>who was interested in learning</sup>  poker. Cap is  
a fair man and sees the downstream side of the story so he  
has rounded up all the spare musicians and sent them drifting  
<sup>downstream</sup> on rafts to drown out the weeping schoolgirls <sup>with Christmas carols</sup> and at the  
same time invite all the thirsty towns to the Christmas party.

Weather more than  
real.

\*\*\* EIGHT \*\*\*

~~and~~ <sup>from the east</sup> ~~slid~~ <sup>slid</sup> ~~over~~ <sup>over</sup> brown hills, ~~dense hills~~  
~~and~~ <sup>onto</sup> ~~slid~~ <sup>slid</sup> down ~~onto~~ <sup>onto</sup> school and town and island and ship, all  
 day and night ~~sharp~~ <sup>sharp</sup> crystals ~~danced~~ <sup>fell</sup> by my nest, infinite flakes  
 falling forever, each flake unique until ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> the sky bears  
~~fields~~ identical twins and the clocks ~~stop~~ <sup>stop</sup>. Snow sleeps  
 are rare and splendid sleeps, better even than fog sleeps,  
 snuggled among the floating flakes, gently floating down and  
 down. Cold sleep is ~~calm~~ <sup>and</sup> cozy sleep. ~~With~~ the Brown  
 Girl, I ~~ride~~ <sup>ride</sup> ~~high on white hills~~ <sup>ride</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>clean white</sup> round virgin hills,  
~~the sweet clean snow~~ <sup>of virgin hills</sup> serene swells and dips. ~~By~~ <sup>by</sup> ~~moonlight~~  
~~we~~ <sup>we</sup> ~~ride~~ <sup>ride</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~wind~~ <sup>wind</sup>.

Over the frozen slough the Cooks and Waiters drove herds  
 of cattle, ~~rams~~, sheep, elk, musk oxen, yaks, and suckling  
 pigs and barbecued them on roaring fires of logs rafted  
 downriver. They herded schools of salmon, halibut, flounder,  
 tuna, bass, and eels from the sea and baked them on planks  
 over coals. The Bartenders and Barmaids backed a train <sup>of tank cars</sup> onto  
 the spur and skated back and forth <sup>with bottles</sup> dodging ~~the~~ hockey teams  
 and jumping ~~over~~ <sup>left by</sup> the barrels ~~with~~ <sup>a string ensemble</sup> ~~hunts~~ <sup>concertos</sup> ~~from~~ <sup>from</sup>  
~~the ice~~. At the bow ~~an orchestra~~ <sup>brass</sup> in tails played ~~music~~ <sup>music</sup> from  
~~cathedrals~~ <sup>drawing rooms</sup> and at the stern a band in scarlet uniforms played  
 oompah-pahs from beer gardens. A group of little girls, <sup>wearing</sup> ~~with~~  
 mittens and <sup>frost-bitten</sup> ~~red~~ noses sang Christmas carols on the gangplank

and amidst a choir of  
 early Christian martyrs  
 intoned plainsong from  
 cathedrals @

who hadet music  
 across the slough  
 between the fence-top.

until Santa Claus with <sup>a</sup> jolly ho-ho-ho pinched their cheeks and invited them into the hold to sit on his lap and tell what they wanted for Christmas. Santa came up <sup>later</sup> but not the little girls and his beard fell off and it wasn't Santa at all, it was the Boy.

Teachers came on snowshoes and schoolboys on skis and schoolgirls in sleighs with jinglebells pursued by wolves, several of which were grasped by the scruff of the neck and yanked into portholes. A publisher ~~wearing~~ <sup>with</sup> a fur hat ~~set~~ <sup>and a buffalo laprobe</sup> ~~amidships~~ <sup>set sail</sup> in an iceboat crewed by newsboys who misjudged the wind while coming about and skidded into a rotary snowplow <sup>driven</sup> ~~commandeered~~ by a band of roving huntresses and iceboat and crew all were thrown ashore in small pieces, the only survivor being the ~~publisher's~~ buffalo laprobe. Greyfaced drifters crept over the ice on hands and knees but some dropped <sup>into</sup> ~~through~~ circular holes cleverly camouflaged with white-frosted plum puddings.

From ~~the driver~~ <sup>other</sup> towns came the guests laughing with ~~gaily and shouting~~ cheery greetings of the season. There was a ferryboat with a steam calliope playing ~~the national anthem~~ <sup>of Handel's Messiah</sup> and a submarine ~~with~~ <sup>whose</sup> conning tower <sup>was</sup> trimmed <sup>in</sup> with tinsel and ~~glittering~~ <sup>glittering</sup> baubles and an outrigger canoe paddled by ~~beautiful~~ native girls who wore no shirts but had flowers behind their ears and a shark fin cutting the water behind <sup>them</sup> ~~their~~ canoe. There were explorers <sup>in fur parkas</sup> waving flags and taking photographs of each other on an iceberg driven by an outboard motor and



a garbage scow mounded ~~high~~ with tin cans atop which sat girls in ribboned hats and flouncy dresses twirling parasols ~~flirtatiously~~ in the faces of boys <sup>wearing ice cream</sup> ~~white~~ flannels and striped blazers and straw boaters and plucking mandolins. A balloon passed overhead trailing ropes strung with candy apples and ~~dropped~~ lollipops and peppermint kisses until pierced by <sup>an arrow</sup> fire arrow and ~~the crowd~~ <sup>applauded</sup> the crowd as the bag burst into flames and the basket plummeted into the river.

Cap ~~was~~ <sup>one time</sup> ~~drilled~~ <sup>hit a</sup> ~~an~~ oilwell and <sup>which</sup> ~~the~~ gusher drowned a city so he set fire to the oil and burned out a state so he dug a canal and let in the sea which broke the dikes at high tide and flooded a nation and when winter came the oil smoke blotted out the sun and the sea froze so he put the north pole there and moved south.

One day Black One stood below my nest. In the dark aftercabin Cap told <sup>me</sup> how he was chipping quartz from his mine when the waterfall curtain <sup>abruptly</sup> stopped and a block of ice <sup>hit</sup> ~~crashed~~ his head so he retreated to the meadows and the glacier crept down the cliff over flowers and heather so he retreated to the forest and the glacier bulled into the trees and he barely escaped with <sup>one</sup> sack of gold and it was his last sack of gold and now it was all gone <sup>and his last party was over.</sup>

I climbed <sup>with</sup> to my nest a basket of cold roast beef and baked ham and rye bread with caraway seeds and pickled beets

and a selection of white and pink wines and for a week divided my time between light snacks and washing my beard and lying beside the Brown Girl whose lips are fresh as clover, ~~who~~ carries in her hair ~~the~~ Scent of <sup>cedar</sup> ~~cherry blossoms~~ and cinnamon.

One day Black One stood below my nest. In the dark aftercabin Hawk told me how his newspaper editor spread rumors of plague and his ~~major~~ <sup>health department</sup> required everyone to take <sup>anti-plague</sup> shots only ~~the~~ <sup>needles contained dope</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>from</sup> ~~the~~ teachers ~~to~~ to redeem their <sup>poker</sup> IOU's and the whole town and school is hooked and he has the teachers busy making alcohol and he is going to <sup>run</sup> ~~put~~ the government out of business because he is counterfeiting tax stamps at his printing plant. Hawk is about six feet tall within a foot or two and is about as old as I am, or Cap, and has hair that is black or brown or red or blond or some other color and has eyes I <sup>suppose</sup> ~~think~~ and weighs one or two or three hundred pounds more or less.

Hawk stared at me as I left the cabin and so did Black One and Boy. The Packrats poked up a hatchcover and stared and from the forecastle White One and her baby stared and on the slough Old Salt skated to a stop and stared and in the deckhouse as I ate dill pickles and blue cheese on oat wafers and sipped mead Red One raised her skullface and stared and on the throne Cap stared and mumbled ~~but only muffled sounds~~ ~~came~~ through the bandages. I climbed aloft and washed my beard and went to sleep.

Not the sun, some other light in the east, not yet true dawn, but all the eastern sky ~~blazing~~ <sup>aglows</sup> ~~from~~ <sup>I climb</sup> the white hills and see the ~~sun~~ <sup>distant</sup> mountains now are taller and ~~broader~~ <sup>than before</sup> and ~~purely white~~ <sup>and I have</sup> ~~and there are~~ sounds not wind, <sup>sounds</sup> felt rather than heard but somewhere loud, faraway loud sounds. I lie on my back and close my eyes and slide swiftly down in a private storm, ~~rocketing~~ rocketing down steep rolls, sweeping down sinuous curves of ~~deep~~ icy chutes, <sup>coasting</sup> gently ~~over~~ <sup>down</sup> soft mounds, ~~then one roll~~ plunging down ~~in my~~ <sup>again with my person</sup> blizzard ~~click~~.

Wind from the east whips the river into quick-leaping whitecaps, rips foam <sup>from the crests</sup> and flings it high. And now ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> the sun touching the flying <sup>foam</sup> pink foam, a sun with color but no warmth.

Along the ~~hardfrozen riverpath~~ <sup>sun-fired</sup> black willows drip ~~sun-fired~~ icicles, ~~sun-fired~~ rainbows trapped in crystal. Drowsy from the long cold slide, ~~slowly~~ halfdreaming, ~~then~~ <sup>the corner of</sup> I turn ~~around~~ a willow, <sup>and</sup> terror ~~churns~~ churns from old deeps the forgotten dingdongs and honkhonks and struggling deathlives.

A ~~white~~ <sup>white</sup> foot ~~with toes like blossoms~~ <sup>for</sup> kicks ~~pink~~ foam into ~~the~~ wind, and ~~now~~ another <sup>also</sup> splash<sup>ing</sup> free, and through a cresting wave burst billowing buttocks glistening in the sun, and ~~then the~~ <sup>also</sup> blossom toes ~~leap high~~ and ~~curving~~ curving calves and round thighs with inner warmth,

~~the~~ sleek and ~~swift~~ as a seal <sup>she is</sup> and ~~slender~~ graceful as a dolphin, under the whitecaps and wind, seen then not seen, perhaps only dreamed, the river cold and once more empty.

And now not fear but hope, madness into delirium, for through the whitecaps ~~downstream~~ she floats, arms wide, black hair ~~like~~ seaweed drifting <sup>on</sup> her face, only her nose ~~out~~ in the wind, and red lips, and breasts high in the sun, ~~from the sun~~ waterbright, warm-shining, and long ~~white~~ legs river-rippling. ~~From~~ a flurry of foam ~~and~~ she rises sunpink and dripping ~~with~~ and darkness overwhelms all the pages, all the masterworks, all the ~~long~~ summers, of ~~summer~~ for she is young, and I know her from before, somewhere long ago she was young.

The river <sup>is</sup> ~~now~~ black oil and <sup>the</sup> willows ~~are~~ the bare sticks <sup>rattling</sup> in foul ~~and~~ wind and I am ankledeep in ~~the~~ mud. On cold wind ~~there was~~ scent of clover and <sup>and cedar</sup> cinnamon ~~and~~ <sup>but</sup> now the warm wind stinks of garlic. From the aftercabin ~~the~~ Black One, old again, stares at me as I climb to my nest. I wash my beard and open <sup>my</sup> ~~the~~ book but all the pages are blank.

of wines, whiskeys, rums, gins, cognacs,  
vodkas, brandies, liqueurs, cordials, beers,  
ales, stouts, ciders, apple juice, 7-up, coke,  
olives, onions, cherries, lemon slices, grapefruit  
juice, and ice cubes

\*\*\* TEN \*\*\*

Upstream on the island freighters dock and Cooks and  
Waiters herd ~~catfish, salmon, trout,~~<sup>reindeer,</sup> buffalo, bear, geese,  
rattlesnakes, chickens, ~~ducks,~~ ducks, partridges, moose,  
gnus, turkeys, chamois, and rabbits into the <sup>catering</sup> factory where automated  
~~engines~~<sup>ovens</sup> buzz and clank and ~~stoves~~ belch black smoke and  
hiss white steam. From the factory ~~they~~<sup>the animals</sup> come out piping hot  
with legs in the air and apples in their mouths on ~~the~~ conveyor  
belt that passes the houseboat windows and the portholes with  
~~the busy~~<sup>grasping</sup> hands and then into the deckhouse and <sup>all</sup> around the ~~ships~~<sup>ships</sup>

Downstream on the island tankers dock and bartenders and  
Barmaids pump the cargoes into the <sup>cocktail</sup> factory where ~~machines~~<sup>automated shakers</sup>  
swish and tinkle and slosh. From the factory ~~the~~<sup>scores of</sup> pipelines  
leads to thousands of ~~other~~<sup>conveniently installed throughout the ship,</sup> faucets ~~on the ship~~  
An ~~endless~~<sup>traveling</sup> sidewalk ~~runs~~<sup>bowls and grinds</sup> from school ~~through~~<sup>into</sup>  
town ~~to~~<sup>and down to</sup> the docks where ~~ferryboats land~~<sup>crosses</sup> and ~~high over~~<sup>and</sup> the slough,  
~~the~~<sup>the</sup> board ship ~~and back again.~~ From town and school, from upstream  
and downstream, they come to Hawk's all-in-one Valentine-Easter-  
May Day party. To keep it ~~gay and~~ lively the decks are cut  
in sections, fitted with timers so that anyone standing or lying  
in one place too long trips the coiled spring underneath and is  
automatically flipped into the slough thus making room for  
new arrivals. Hawk dredged the slough to keep the current



crossed the T of  
our ship

signed by the  
master of Indian

Hawk was going to put them through the factory anyway but a fleet of ships arrived with his rancid olive oil and now he has the school busy making rocket fuel.

A steam frigate ~~came~~ <sup>Marines</sup> downstream and trained Gatling guns on the island. The commanding general notified Hawk with signal flags that a herd of woolly mammoths ~~are~~ <sup>was</sup> marching overland trampling thousands of people and making a mockery of the ~~government's~~ <sup>president's</sup> anti-noise campaign. Hawk answered with smoke signals inviting the general to a pow wow. The general admired Hawk's head dress very much and <sup>immediately apologized</sup> once he saw ~~the~~ <sup>the poker JOK</sup> ~~trusty~~ giving to the bearer on demand all these lands and waters as far as eye can see and mammoth can march in a moon, ~~immediately apologized~~. ~~His orders gave him no authority to negotiate with foreign powers and he said it was probably only hundreds of people~~

They smoked the peace pipe and Hawk invited ~~the~~ <sup>everybody</sup> to the party but the ~~traps~~ <sup>Marines</sup> took a wrong turn and came aboard piping hot with apples in their mouths. <sup>the chamber of commerce was complaining</sup>

The new mayor reported to Hawk that nobody in town was buying or selling ~~because~~ <sup>since</sup> everything was free on the ship and ~~on top of that~~ <sup>besides</sup> ~~that~~ ~~there~~ ~~were~~ ~~no~~ ~~one~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~ship~~ ~~or~~ ~~someplace~~ <sup>traveling</sup> downstream ~~or~~ <sup>or</sup> waiting in line to get on the sidewalk and at this rate it was hardly ~~worthwhile~~ <sup>worth the overhead expense</sup> having a town and he didn't know where he'd get another job, all he knew was being mayor. Hawk ~~summarized~~ <sup>summarized with</sup> ~~the~~ ~~problem~~ the mayor ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> but told him the reason the town didn't amount to anything was it never had a Great

all  
the  
citizens  
were  
either

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
Fire so he burned ~~it~~<sup>it</sup> down along with everybody waiting in line  
and also the mayor ~~and~~<sup>and</sup> when the ships arrived with his ivory  
he built a factory on the ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~<sup>ashes</sup> and now his wives are carving  
statues of him to sell tourists as souvenirs of the Great Fire  
and his children are making the ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~<sup>left-over</sup> splinters into cocktail picks.

In my nest I listen to faraway sounds, not wind, sounds  
of giant trumpets, sounds of grinding, crunching, screaming ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
sounds more felt than heard but someplace faraway upstream  
sounds loud.

I listen to noises below of old girls and greyfaced drifters  
struggling until with a poing ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~<sup>of released spring</sup> they splash far out in the slough  
and still struggling are swept away. All one ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ night  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ Red One screeched. All another long night ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ White One  
moaned and in morning cradled a new baby while waving goodbye <sup>good-bye</sup>  
to ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~<sup>her</sup> old ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~<sup>baby</sup> wailing downriver. I cannot leave the nest  
for ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ the dancers claw the mast, leaping and snarling.  
Factory smoke blurs the high hills east, warm wind from the  
west stinks of sulfur and ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ onions and things dead in  
swamps. I crouch alone, awake, in the nest.



\*\*\* ELEVEN \*\*\*

monitors and dreadnaughts  
A squadron of ~~battleships~~ ~~steamed down the river~~ and  
fired broadsides across our bow. Hawk pushed a button ~~which~~ which  
flipped hundreds of struggling couples through the air and  
smashed ~~the~~ hulls and demolished ~~the~~ superstructures and killed  
~~caused great carnage among~~ <sup>several</sup> admirals, <sup>and</sup> humiliating ~~several~~ <sup>the commodore</sup> and  
~~decapitating~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~the chief of naval operations~~ <sup>which blasted a</sup>  
He pushed another button ~~which~~ salvo of  
rockets ~~blasted~~ from ~~the~~ school ~~and~~ <sup>which</sup> riddled the sinking ~~ships~~ <sup>enemy</sup>  
with cocktail picks. ~~Most~~ <sup>All</sup> ~~the~~ ~~ships~~ <sup>Commissioned and petty officers</sup> were eaten by  
wooly mammoths floating downstream on icebergs but ~~some~~ <sup>a few bluejackets</sup> swam  
to the party. They told Hawk his glacier is ~~wrecking~~ ~~ships~~  
~~and~~ ruining real estate values and his counterfeit money is  
so superior to the government's <sup>that</sup> people are calling the  
president bad names and financial empires are tottering.

Hawk has been growing ~~more~~ irritable anyway so he  
fired ~~hundreds~~ of rockets upstream. ~~Some~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~power~~  
~~ships~~ with an ultimatum to stop blaming <sup>everything</sup> ~~his~~ ~~troubles~~  
on him, it isn't his glacier and if they don't leave him alone  
he will sail away and let the government shift for itself.  
A dozen of his tall black wives carried him around the deck  
on his throne and he told us to pack up because soon we may  
~~we~~ leave on a long voyage to happy lands.

Cap leapt from the deckhouse howling that the bottom is  
rotten and the ship will never make it out of the slough.

atop the main mast  
the only mast there

Hawk roared <sup>that</sup> with all his wives to bail the ship doesn't need a bottom. Cap howled that the boilers are sheets of ~~rust~~ rust and there isn't any propellor and if we ever near the sea <sup>if necessary</sup> the ship will swamp crossing the bar. Hawk roared that he <sup>could always</sup> ~~would~~ hoist sails. But Cap stared up at my nest and so did Hawk and <sup>with a minute</sup> was very quiet and then he had his wives thrash Cap and hang him from the bowsprit by his ankles.

~~Black~~ Black One stood below my nest staring. The dancers were clawing at the mast so I dropped onto the conveyor belt into an owl pudding topped with sour porpoise cream and chives between a <sup>bison</sup> ~~buffalo~~ stewed in a sauce of peppered crocodile blood and a roast polar bear stuffed with curried swan <sup>spleens</sup> ~~livers~~ and <sup>pregnant</sup> ~~babies~~ mice.

In the dark aftercabin Hawk told me he is importing whales to tow the ship over the sea <sup>that</sup> to ~~the~~ marble statue <sup>built by Cap's wives so</sup> to replace <sup>he can</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> with a huge souvenir of the Great Fire his wives are carving and he is going to have the school extract all the gold from the seas after which they'll be worthless and he can pick them up for a song and fence them in with no-trespassing signs while he drills a hole straight down to hot rock <sup>which will provide the foundation</sup> for <sup>the</sup> new continent his <sup>landscape</sup> architects are designing and after the <sup>resulting</sup> tidal waves have <sup>left</sup> ~~ruined~~ <sup>peninsula</sup> the other continents, he'll run help-wanted ads ~~in the newspapers~~ for the ten thousand most beautiful virgins left and they'll produce nothing but <sup>quintuplets</sup> ~~children~~ so that in twenty years he'll have over a million children and he doesn't know how many grandchildren yet

because the teachers are still building the ~~machines~~<sup>computer</sup> to figure  
it out but there'll be plenty to conquer ~~the~~<sup>every</sup> other continents  
and on a diet of powdered ivory and mammoth wool<sup>dissolved</sup> in rancid  
olive oil they'll<sup>all be geniuses and</sup> live forever and he'll send rockets to  
the moon and planets and stars and if anybody is around to  
argue they'll be shot dead with ivory bullets ratatat-tat just  
like that.

As I left the cabin Hawk stared at me and so did Black  
One and Boy and Red One and White One and her baby and Old  
Salt and<sup>also</sup> Cap slowly twisting around upside down.

Ashore I walk now by the river listening to mammoths  
trumpeting and glacier<sup>s</sup> grinding and all the weeping people  
floating downstream on chunks of ice.

\*\*\* TWELVE \*\*\*

Each square step expands  
and deepens the sky  
fright of the blue  
eternity was above and  
all around and even  
below.

4  
beneath  
me

~~In the bright sun shadowing~~  
~~the school and~~  
town and ship and river dimmed in yellow haze <sup>the factory</sup>  
~~the sky grew deeper blue and expanded all over~~

4

~~yellow blossom from cold~~  
~~white snow gushing~~  
rills <sup>washing rocks clean</sup> Out of ~~the~~ shadow into ~~the~~  
sun, on soft brown grass and tender green blades, down and  
down to sleep and sleep.

~~And glad rays there, I am not abandoned, she woke me~~  
~~spread half on~~  
traced warm lines from ~~her~~ sweet lips to ~~my~~ fresh

9

And now they are building stars and planets, now they are  
building continents and seas, now a <sup>semi-fish</sup> ~~creature~~ cast up on the sand  
~~drinks~~ ~~gazes~~ air and does not return ~~into~~ the sea, now he builds  
towns and ships, now he builds himself enemies and eats them,  
now he tears down <sup>his</sup> ~~the~~ towns and sinks ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> ships and gazes  
~~greedily - mad~~ at the mortal stars ~~resting - dreaming of~~ new shores, new  
enemies.

his  
conquered  
green  
land  
but  
one

~~Head in hand~~ we <sup>run</sup> from hill to hill kneedeep in flowes  
and she <sup>skips</sup> ahead and I follow  
through ~~the~~ glory into a <sup>comulus</sup> ~~cloud~~ and catch her hand as  
winds ~~sweep~~ us ~~down~~ in <sup>a</sup> tumult ~~blackness~~ where lightning  
and thunder <sup>fling</sup> us ~~into~~ into brightness ~~above~~ above white

~~scribble~~  
500

~~seas~~ and we float ~~down~~ into  
~~soft brown~~ grass and sleep ~~side by side~~  
White <sup>and</sup> sky ~~settles~~ <sup>floods</sup> on the crest and peaceful and safe we  
lie ~~snuggled close in~~ ~~sky~~, no ancient tapestry  
demanding our threads in the pattern, all fresh and new ~~in~~ <sup>within</sup>  
<sup>our</sup> clouds, no old bones from before to bury in sadness, no new  
bones to build in pain, all endless motion in clouds.

~~But now~~ ~~now~~ yet, not glad, for as I sleep <sup>a</sup> sudden  
emptiness awakes me ~~and~~ brown hair and a smile vanish in mist,  
~~one~~ ~~downy~~ arm ~~in~~ ~~the~~ <sup>with</sup> long slim fingers,  
and I leap <sup>as high as I can</sup> and brush fingertips and fall back to earth and now  
alone and afraid <sup>clutch dead flowers and dry grass</sup> under a immense blue sky above the  
~~shrinking~~ wisps and tatters of cloudflame, the sun shrunken  
to a hard red ball <sup>hisses</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>with</sup> a jolt ~~the~~ ~~hill~~ and the  
wizened sun ~~plunges~~ into the river under a thin band of green  
sky too real for mortality, yet when I turn away absolute  
night swallows me into <sup>a</sup> ~~star~~ <sup>a</sup> dreadful star.

Faraway where once rose mountains <sup>bride</sup> ~~blow~~ white in moonlight  
red <sup>flames</sup> ~~flames~~ glimmer. Faraway a roar not wind, a roar of  
furnaces and ~~rivers~~ <sup>hot</sup> and rocks smashing forests. Through ~~yellow~~  
miasma fires glare below. So down again, and down, into  
choking wind, <sup>and</sup> the snow <sup>is</sup> ~~rots~~ <sup>rotting</sup> and with me ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~smears~~ of  
brown sludge.

~~And~~ the roar from faraway follows me to the ship, ~~and~~ I see  
a sawmill on a raft cutting the logs into boards <sup>that</sup> ~~the~~ carpenters  
build into houses which termites eat and they also eat

the carpenters and sawyers and loggers and then a school of smelt gobble up the termites, and I see farmgirls with rosy cheeks and farmboys with straw hats off to ~~see~~<sup>swirl around</sup> the world on a bale of hay but <sup>their</sup> cows eat the hay and sharks eat the cows and farmboys and farmgirls and also the smelt, and I see a band of robbers in a canoe pursued by policemen in a ~~canoe~~<sup>hydroplane</sup> towing lawyers on water skis and a judge and jury on a merry-go-round and bringing up the rear a hangman and a gallows until they all are caught in a whirlpool and cast out together but muddled ~~and~~ and the judge hangs the hangman and the jury sentences the judge and the lawyers convict the jury and the policemen cross-examine the lawyers and the robbers capture the policemen and ~~they~~ they all clasp hands and ~~they~~<sup>lunge</sup> whales surface and eat them up and also the sharks and then woolly mammoths fall from melting icebergs and crawl up on the backs of the whales and ~~lick~~<sup>stamp</sup> them to death and eat them and <sup>then</sup> the mammoths drown and float into the turbines and ~~all the pinball machines go dingdingdingdingding and~~ ~~explode in purple smoke.~~

AS I go aboard I see Old Salt staring at me but his beard falls off and it is the Boy. I take a steaming roast from the conveyor belt but do not eat because through the cloves and glistening globules of hot fat I see an appendicitis scar. I draw a glass of red wine <sup>from a faucet</sup> but do not drink because it clots <sup>in the cup</sup>. I climb to my nest and wash my beard and lie down, awake, no more time for lessons.

\*\*\* THIRTEEN \*\*\*

<sup>rear seat</sup>  
 The faraway ~~is~~ <sup>now</sup> all around, a roar not of wind or  
 water, a roar of fires, a roar of ~~these~~ stars no longer in the  
 sky but hovering <sup>just above the mast,</sup> ~~over the ship,~~ Brown hills dissolved in  
 rotten snow <sup>engulf</sup> ~~clear out in~~ <sup>ruins of the</sup> ~~the~~ school <sup>ruins of the</sup> ~~was,~~ the town.  
<sup>From the</sup>  
<sup>caterina</sup>  
<sup>frigate</sup>  
~~The~~ <sup>traveling</sup> sidewalk ~~leading~~ <sup>along</sup> ~~to the ship~~ stops. The  
 conveyor belt <sup>go by</sup> rattles <sup>and also</sup> and I watch ~~the~~ old schoolgirls piping  
 hot with apples in their mouths, ~~the~~ greyfaced drifters, ~~the~~  
 teachers, ~~the~~ mayors, Hawk's black wives and kabobs of his  
 black children on ivory cocktail picks, and finally ~~the~~ <sup>catering</sup>  
 tall-hatted cooks and white-coated waiters and then the <sup>factory</sup>  
 erupts in a flash of steam ~~as the river reaches the~~  
 in starglare, star roar, I watch ~~the~~ red-vested Bartenders  
 and bare-shouldered Barmaids crawl into ~~the~~ pipeline <sup>and</sup>  
 dribble onto deck from ~~the~~ open faucets <sup>cocktail</sup> and then the <sup>factory</sup>  
<sup>dissolves</sup>  
~~crumples~~ into the river.

<sup>and</sup>  
 On his throne atop the aftercabin Hawk gives the order  
 to cast off ~~the~~ <sup>sick</sup> from the bowsprit Cap howls but the <sup>sick</sup> whale  
 lashed to the larboard and the whale lashed to the starboard  
 flip their tales ~~and~~ and as they die we are underway <sup>downstream</sup> hawk  
 slumps back and a seagull perches on his head and streaks his  
 face with lime <sup>and a</sup> <sup>from a hole in</sup> hand reaches out ~~of~~ the deck and clutches  
 the seagull by the feet and pulls it into the hold.

<sup>9</sup>  
~~Time for one last lesson?~~ Time for one last lesson? Motion

rockabye sleep,  
 sleep is ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ suspended in transit  
 from penalty for ~~the~~ sins of our past, ~~the~~ sins yet to come,  
 borne ever onward downward never to awake until the motion  
 ends. What but sleep is complete? What food, what drink,  
 still<sup>s</sup> hunger and thirst? What love lasts in flesh? What god  
 outlasts his ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ temples? how live ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ dead? Beware black deeps  
 below, beware blue deeps above, dream lightly in white mist,  
 never dive ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ <sup>beneath</sup> the bottom of the sea, never fly ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ <sup>above</sup> the sky,  
 float softly, float safely. Now at long last, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ <sup>five</sup> clouds meeting and  
 mingle <sup>ing</sup> droplet by droplet, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ <sup>now</sup> beyond hunger and thirst and love  
 and dreams, the Brown Girl and I are forever one.

between two dead whales we ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ <sup>drift downstream</sup> through star roar, starglare,  
 to another distant roar. There goes a mayor floating bellyup  
 with an apple in his mouth, there goes a schoolhouse with a  
 clapperless bell, there go clumps of willow and chunks of  
 ice and a bloated mammoth and an ivory rocket leaking a trail  
 of rancid olive oil.

At the stern Old Salt with an albatross around his neck  
 is lashed to the wheel staring but his eyes are gone. Hawk  
 with an apple in his mouth slumps on the throne staring but  
 his eyes are gone. At his feet Red One lies on her back, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
 deathsmooth balloons bare, she stares but her eyes are gone.  
 From a starboard porthole a Packrat with long hair has fingers  
 sunk in a dead whale, from a larboard porthole a Packrat with a  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ beard has fingers sunk in a dead whale, and both stare,



innocent boys left  
our misters and

but their eyes are gone. In the door of the fore-castle  
squats ~~the~~ White One cradling her new baby, both staring but  
their eyes are gone. Hanging <sup>upside down</sup> from the bowsprit ~~cap~~ with a  
stake through his heart turns slowly round and round staring  
~~upside down~~ but his eyes are gone. ~~Created~~ below my  
nest ~~the~~ <sup>squats</sup> Black One staring but she never had any eyes,  
not now as we float downriver between two dead whales in  
starglare, star roar, not when we three came by <sup>hank honk</sup> bus to school,  
not when the dingdong bells drove us to the tavern, not when  
the tavern closed and we followed the Cooks and Waiters,  
Bartenders and Barmaids, <sup>through the town and</sup> down to the slough, to ~~the~~  
~~the~~ not when we came aboard and found her ~~the~~  
awaiting us, still young then.

who  
never  
had

The Boy <sup>is staring</sup> eyes ~~stare~~ up <sup>at me and</sup> patiently ~~the~~  
<sup>sawing down</sup> the mast. ~~The~~ <sup>restful, peaceful sound</sup> <sup>of</sup> mingles  
in star roar and sea roar and lulling waves and gentle wind,  
all misty now my eyes, marvelous sleep in moving fog, now to  
sleep my Brown Girl, now the town is gone upriver and the  
school, now gone upriver are the island and the <sup>brown</sup> hills and  
the green, <sup>and the white</sup> now we are blended in a single sleep my Brown Girl,  
one long light endless sleep beyond dreams we sleep together,  
for gone upriver, gone forever, are all the noisy staring eyes  
and all the pages of the book, all gone upriver, gone forever,  
are the days before we were born.