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Seascope

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Seascope

What is the sea? Follow!
I'll show you a mystery . . .

Come, stand with me.
We'll let the stinging waters
Swirl between our feet
And watch the foam-tipped waves
Nodding and shaking their long, gray beards
Like old men dozing by the fire.

The tide, that moody stranger,
Is high tonight, a warm and coiling snake
Whose black-green scales
Suck away each tawny grain of sand
Heaped upon the luminous shore.

I've heard some say that those lost souls
Who are locked beneath the waves
Scream as the roaring combers
Crash against the barren rock.
I would rather think that wild sound is laughter,
The laughter of all free men
Exploding at last into vibrant song.
And sometimes when I stand out here,
Close enough to heaven to pull down the moon,
I wonder if the phantom sky
Is one with the waves.
Perhaps then the stars
Are but clipperships and schooners
Spreading their soft-winged veils
On a far distant and billowing sea.

GAIL WHITE