

1st draft,
early Feb, '81

Karlsson's face could have served as figurehead for the craft,
if it can be imagined that a Kolosh canoe would go to sea with a *Skane*
parson's profile at its front. Everything of ~~him~~ ^{Karlsson oriented to. Twin grips} was ~~focused inward,~~ ^{of his hands}
_{o. paddle}
toward the portioning-out of effort he knew was needed to survive.

Set him down in the Sahara, he would know that one step after another
added up to the route to oasis. Put him on a mountain, it would
foot-hold-handhold-foothold-handhold until there was no further
elevation. Before that mechanism of pace in him gave out, his body
would.

Wennberg was at war with a swarm of fears (foes?). The tipping
water was bad enough, and the steady exertion demanded, and the
terrible absence of land, but the nausea was worse because it was so
insidious, within him as if it were a fault of his body. He felt
weaker than he could ever remember, yet the work of paddling had to
be constant. He too fell into an automatic rhythm with the paddle,
jab-lift-pull back-jab, but for a different reason than Karlsson's.
Overswarmed with doom, he could think of nothing to do against it
but move his arms, which happened to have a paddle at their end.

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Among the bigger men, Braaf sat like an urchin. He was the one among them most in place in this situation, for at deep, this crossing of Dixon was an act of theft--of stealing life from a hazard which had every intention of claiming it. Braaf then understood the situation better than any of them and did what had to be done against odds, fended to keep them from him for as long as possible, poked the paddle to the water as if using a stick to discourage a large dog...

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Afloat, you are balanced between great distances. Above you,
the sky and the down-push of the forces of the universe. Beneath, the
thickness of ocean, a compressed universe of its own, with its upward
law of gravity, buoyancy. But in time the greater deep, that of the
sky, will win the pushing contest in which you are the point of contention,
and you will go down. The game is to scamper to neutrality, land,
before this can happen...

plate

"You need to know a thing, Wennberg. Braaf, Karlsson, you ~~two~~ also.

I heard it from Mishkin, the engineer on the Nicholas. Once he came with a trading mission the Russians tried, before they left this part of the coast to the English. There was a feast--the Russians finally figured out that the natives were trying to make more face--and Mishkin

found himself ~~sharing a bottle~~ ^{sharing a bottle} with a canoe chief. The native wanted to know,

as best Mishkin could understand, how many heads the Tsar had. # One,

like you and me, Mishkin told him. # No, the native made him understand,

not how many heads. How many skulls? # Skulls, said Mishkin, what would

^{the Tsar} ~~he~~ do with ^{skulls} ~~them~~? # Sleep on them, the way OO does, the native said. He

pointed out ^{to} ~~him~~ Mishkin the chief in the middle of all this carousing.

Why does he sleep on them, Mishkin asked. # For strength, the native

said. Anybody who sleeps on a pile of skulls is a strong man, is he

not?"

Melander had not meant to tell them this. He was not certain

he should have. But no more objections were heard about care over

camp
fire smoke.

How many heads?

Who - you - may call him.

Wennberg pointed to the horizon.

"You've sighted Cape Flyaway," Melander said. "Clouds. Sometimes

they sit down on the water like brood hens, and you'd swear they're

land. ^{couldn't be anything but} That Finn skipper spent half ^{of one} morning ^{searching our charts for} once, ~~trying to find~~

^{he thought was a piece of Hawaii} ~~this coast'd gladly~~ ^{stand us} ~~trick us.~~ ^{on our ears.} a thunderhead ^{on his charts.} Aye, we need to be careful, Read the

compasses, read the ~~inland~~ points of land, and not go

chasing clouds. That'll fetch us Astoria. ^{Aye?"}

"What'll it be like?" This was Braaf. "Another ^{wet} woodpile like New

Mrchangel?"

^{I've heard} "The sailors' buzz is that it's a proper port. Sits on a fat

^{Has 00} ^{of 00...} river. The Americans...

foreshore
of Hawaii

W: What would you do, Melander, if the Nicholas came around that point over there just now?

M: After I emptied out my trousers, ^{do you mean? So then,} ~~All right,~~ Wennberg, the Nicholas is much on your mind. What about you other two? What's your guess? Are the Russians on their way after us? Ayy?

K: No. They think we can't survive.

W: Why do you think we can?

K: Because we're still alive, and closer to Astoria with each stroke of the paddle.

M: Your prediction, Braaf. Are the Russians on the scent, or not?

B: No. They don't think of us at all by now.

W: We sashay out of New Archangel practically under their noses and they don't even think about us? Braaf, your head is mud.

B: They have to forgett us, or we'll mean too much to them.

You learn that fast in the streets. (B's first reference to being a thief)
They may regret the canoe. They may regret the provisions I took from them.
But us, we're wisps by now.

after us
like
hounds
onto
haves

trim to: So M's plan had
slipped team... Now all it needed...

↓
So they had slipped themselves from the seven-year shackle of
New Archangel. Melander's escape plan had tutored them through the
months of wait and watch and filch and cache, had steered them around
the night-black maze of Sitka Sound's isles, had nerved them to face
down the Kolosh bountymen. Now all it needed to do was somehow to
conquer ~~a vast wilderness of coastlines.~~
ten hundred miles of
one of the earth's ~~longest~~ most wild coastlines.

*at
Melander's
100
most wild
10 hundred*

Melander let everyone sleep for three hours after that first stop,
then had them back into the canoe for an afternoon of paddling. He knew,
as sailors must, that time must be seized whenever it can; any distance
gained here early in their voyage was that much less to be ground out
later, when they were wearier.

dialogue

He brought them to ~~the~~ near 00 before stopping for the night. Braaf,
the least accustomed to labor, looked particularly done in. He said
nothing, however, and lent a hand in hefting the canoe...

So, the matter came down to distance and speed, speed and distance.

Melander preached to his crew like a prophet now. "Dig that paddle, Wennberg. You're strong as bran wine now...Braaf, can you find it in your heart to stroke along with the rest of us?...We're doing it, Karlsson. No water is wide as forever..." The canoe moved southeast at a steady pace. They had no timepiece, but an onlooker could have clocked Melander's periods of paddling to within two minutes. Each rest period, one man would continue to paddle to keep the canoe from backsliding. He then rested briefly while the other three resumed, then plunged in again. Wennberg grumbled and Braaf ^{once in a while} shirked out of sheer habit when he wasn't reminding himself otherwise, but their strokes added up. Karlsson was a human piston at the bow of the canoe. Dixon Entrance began to swallow them--they were farther from land than they yet had been since leaving New Archangel, and were not quite halfway across--and Melander consulted a compass more often. They moved their arms and tried to put from mind the numbing of their knees, and across cedar-colored Dixon Entrance they came, a creature on gray, four broad-hoofed legs working at the water, running on the sea.

*black-painted
snowed*

striking

A low wall of reassurance lay behind them: the outline of Mall Island and its neighbor, Prince of Wales. Distant as it was, the island shoreline seemed a foothold, a place to return to. Then, just after ~~the~~ Melander reckoned and announced ~~the midway crossing~~ they might be a third of the way across, Braaf glanced back and saw that the land-wall was gone. In place of the islands stood a sheet of fog.

They were now in a ^{basin?} bowl of sea, nothing but water or its air-allies, fog and cloud, all about them.

Near to what Melander estimated must be the mid-point of the channel, waves began to chop harder than at any other time of their voyage, as if annoyed that anything frail as a canoe would dare onto ^{this far} ~~the~~ plateau of water. There was a new sound against the side of the canoe, and a more stinging spray.

While Melander was noting these additions, Braaf noticed an absence. The gulls which cruised in curiosity beside them in the island waters were gone. He discovered too that the air felt different, more biting, and that a curtain off to the west did not look like fog, nor rain. Braaf turned his head enough to say softly over this shoulder to Melander, as if it were their secret, "Snow."

"Jesu Maria," Melander said back.

The storm hit them first with wind. Gusting, it took the canoe ~~broadside~~ at an angle from the northeast (?), as if sneaking behind the range of vision of the prow designs. Then the snow arrived, flakes ~~spinning~~ kiting on the drafts to them. The flakes were fat and wet, like spume blown off the clouds. Melander hoped it meant the storm was a squall, the unloading of a few clouds which had got too heavy for themselves, rather than a settling-in blizzard.

fewer

Now

Wind streaks lay on the water, long ropey crawlers of white.

30 Anots

"Neptune's snakes," Melander knew them as from his shipboard years.

← if
used,
have a
later
ref ce
to
"snakes"
sea"

"Rye-cakes," Wennberg burst out one night beside the fire.

The other three broke into laughter.

"Laugh yourselves crooked, you bastards, but you'd give as much for a rye-cake right now as I would."

"Mister Blacksmith is right," Melander admitted with a chuckle.

"Though with me it's not rye-cakes, but a featherbed in a sailors' inn I know at Danzig. ~~Sink~~ I could bob in that for a week and never open an eye except to look for more sleep, aye?"

Karlsson nominated next. "A woman I knew in our village in Skane," he said ~~in a slow~~ slowly...

Braaf blinked as the other three looked at him. "I'll settle ^{just} for three paces of headstart on each of you."

Her name was OO,
of her hair was fox-red.

more!

"Karlsson?"
slender man nominated next...

Melander let his breath out with great slowness and said:

"Yes, I have heard of that. "

Braaf nodded above his armload of wood. "I thought they did,"

he said, and turned back toward camp.

in the evenings, and so would feed us supper catch-as-catch-
could at home, with Harold arriving ^{to eat by himself} whenever he found space
between waiting repairs. Once after he made his wordless come
and go, I went to the kitchen and joked to Gertie: Harold
must've been here for his supper, hmm? I heard the kitchen
door slam twice. She whooped with ^{appreciation} laughter, and to my alarm
retold the lines to Harold when he came home after closing.
He looked across at me ^{in surprise as I waited warily, and then gave me a great} dark silent grin.

And Tom: Tommy Chad, as the townspeople sometimes
lilted about this boy-man.

~~Don't know if this is the one~~ The one uneasiness I felt about Grandma's
instant deposit of me with the Chadwicks was the news that they had a son
of their own. Ever since my winter with the Kelsos, when their son Eric
was my classmate in the third grade, my boardings had been without such
a complication, and I had been free to get by with my learned habit of
walking into a strange living room, opening a book and disappearing into
it until the weekend. But now I stood shaking hands with Tom, his eyes
great with curiosity about me, but saying almost as little as I did. It
turned out that we ^{never did} ~~would not~~ need to say much aloud, but, like a Brazilian
and a Laplander somehow falling into step in the same forest, we could
appreciate each other by instinct.

His mother's thick-set look
had rebuilt itself on Tom: anvil shoulders and solid beams
of arms, his neck a collar of heft, blocky power everywhere
you looked on him. ^{however,} ~~But~~ you looked first at his ~~eyes~~
eyes, bright under their dark thatches of brow as mountain
ponds beneath a ridge of timber.

written 2-11-81

"Tumble up!" ⁴ Melander roused them as rapidly as if they were

the crew of a schooner aiming into storm, and for the same reason:

-to steal minutes,

~~time~~. He knew, as a sea veteran must, that time had to be snatched

whenever it could be. Any distance gained here early in their voyage

was that much less to be ground out later, when they were wearier.

Accordingly, Melander captained them to near 00 before stopping

for the night. Braaf, the least accustomed to muscular labor, looked

particularly done in. He said nothing, however, and lent a hand in

hefting the canoe into shelter among a shore-touching stand of spruce.

Wennberg was cajoled into building a fire, Melander apportioned

beans and salt meat into a kettle, Karlsson spread the sail-cloth

~~taps~~ which would serve as ground-~~cloth~~. ^{taps, Dark brought} Night two of their leaving

of New Archangel ~~had commenced.~~

*As dark
settled,*



"Cheery as a long gravestone, isn't it? The Russians deserve such country." They were into their second day of paddling beside the gray rock shoreline of Baranof Island, and Melander was trying to brighten the situation.

relentless
down
till -
naked
thought
it time
to

fracture

"Maybe we should have pointed north." Karlsson was going along with the try. "I've been up the coast ~~looking~~ with the bear-robbers"-- the hunters--"and the cliffs are white as cottages there." ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~

"You'd see enough white, all right, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ sooner than soon. Icebergs and glaciers. It's the north slope of hell up there. No, credit me with knowing enough to aim us the other way."

at least

"Does that mean you're taking us down ^{hell's} the south slope, Melander?"

(Wennberg)

Melander sighed. "Wennberg, your soul is as gray as those rocks. Shut up and paddle."

your
soul

... gradually, things gradually...
... gradually, things gradually...

Braaf and Wennberg and Melander now realized, though it never would have occurred to the first two to offer it aloud and even Melander found it a matter to unwieldy to frame into words, that in all their time at New Archangel they never truly had seen the Alaskan forest. Pinched onto its site as it was, New Archangel ^{stood} ~~was~~ grand as Stockholm ^{when compared} ~~in comparison~~ with this vastness of standing wood. Oh, ~~and~~ ^{a black-} the green flow hedged the fort and settlement, furred the isles of Sitka Sound and the humped back ^s of ~~OO Island to the west,~~ ^{mountains all around.} but now the forest stretched ^{steadily} beside them ^{canoemen} like some boundless garment of time ^{itself.}

The horizon on their left ~~constantly~~ juttred with trees, ^{trees, trees} ~~as steadily~~ ^{wherever} ~~as~~ there was firmament for them to fasten themselves upright on, where soil ran out at the shore edge, they ^{teetered on} ~~would try~~ rock. Each tree ^{pyrad} ~~offered~~ dozens of branches in ~~it~~ its long pointed pile of shape

- green
regions
of time

It took them the next day and most of the one after to reach the southern tip of Baranof Island, Cape Ommaney. In that time they saw not another human--which was what Melander had banked on--nor even any sealife, for the Russian-American Company's hunters long since had harvested these waters bare of otters and seals. But birds were constant. Baleful crows sometimes circled them. Eagles rode the air above the coastal lines of bluff, making their ^{great} watchful glides before letting the air spiral them high again. Seagulls, cormorants, ducks of a dozen kinds; at times, every ^{breathing} ~~living~~ thing of this coastline except the four paddlers seemed to take wing.

Cape Ommaney stood as the land's sentry against the open ^{all} water around it, a promontory which rose as it went until it had hunched itself into a stony bluff nearly half a mile high. Perhaps it ^{put} ~~reminded~~ ^{in mind} Wennberg of the humped mountains around New Archangel, for that evening after supper he nodded out toward the bay between them and the cape and asked: "What would you do, Melander, if the Nicholas came around that point just now?"

stepped up-airing

P. 107, Coast Pilot

"After I emptied my ^{britches} ~~trousers~~, do you mean? So then, Wennberg, the Nicholas is in your dreams tonight. Me, I think she's still

written 2-14-81

By now they were at the southern tip of Kuiu, off a rocky point which looked more ~~down~~ ^{unwelcoming} than any profile of the island yet. Clumps of timber stood in the water beyond. Melander looked at his map; a thread of line ~~was stretched~~ ^{hung in} this channel, indicating a ~~the~~ ship had navigated through here. They set off for the islands, and pulled to shelter on one just short of full dark.

Too dark to see? rocks or help.

It had been a day of stumble, two ~~stairsteps~~ ^{treads of island} when ~~the~~ they had ~~intended~~ ^{but one had been} ~~one~~ but they ~~were safe~~ had alit still secure.

In the next days, they worked southeast ~~through~~ ^{amid} constant ~~small~~ islands.

The ~~big~~ ^{major} island called Prince of Wales rests in this topography like a long platter, and the scatter of land is as if its western rim has been shattered to bits. They ~~could~~ ^{canoeists now} cut a course which, while Melander said a snake would break its back trying to follow their wake, kept them steadily shielded from the ocean's weather. With the days ~~now~~ merely steady paddling, they ~~now~~ ^{four} began to be a kind of floating household.

names of several natives - Kuiu had marked on map to native, it was long among local

consistency was sheltered water

holds

The North Pacific has its own logic of existence; is, in a way,

a shard-shaped planet unto itself. ^{Waterward} Its special law of gravity is

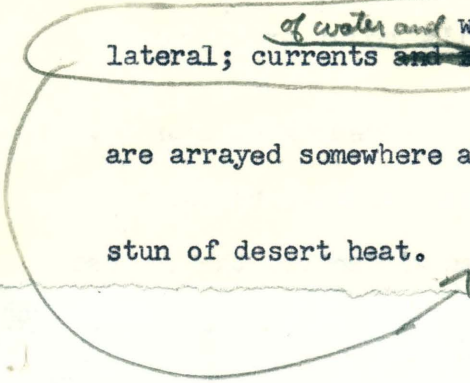
Seaward

lateral; ^{of water and weather} currents and ~~climate~~ fronts rule. Most of the world's climates,

imaginable reign supreme

are arrayed somewhere along ^{its rim of} this coastline, from polar ~~chill~~ ^{cold} to the

stun of desert heat.



Written 2-18-81

Karlsson had suggested they try trolling, so a line ~~is~~ and hook baited with salt pork was let out of the canoe behind Melander. On their second day, the line whirred behind Melander, and he struggled to pull in their catch.

detail
dialogue

line
accers 7/10
his
- M yelped
Dood (whale or
star boat, he
boomed happily

Melander ^{tugged} got the head of the fish out of the water ^{against} at the side of the canoe, then stopped ^{his pull} tugging. "Mother of Moses," he ^{swore} ~~swore~~ in wonder.

. other 3 peered

"Ugly pig of a thing," Wennberg observed. "What the devil is it?"

"Looks like a shark fathered by a toad," Melander muttered. None of them had ever seen the species of small shark called dogfish. "Well, what do you say? Do we try to eat it?"

change

No one wanted to be the first to admit how repellent the dogfish

looked. At last Karlsson said, "I'm the chef, and I'll give it a try. But I don't know..."

"Hunger is good sauce," Braaf said dubiously.

"It better be," said Wennberg.

"At least cut ~~it~~ off its head first," Braaf prompted. "Else it looks like it'll be gnawing on us before we can get to it."

"Somebody reach the hatchet and conk the bastard," Melander ordered.

A twenty-nosed sea creature poked abruptly from the water, ~~gave~~^{delivered}
them a thunderous burp, and sank. # "Sea lions," M said. When the school
surfaced again, each head making quick thrusts as if puncturing the water,
they swam beside the canoe... "Mermaids," OO said...

silver break
of water
pig noses -

Their faces were becoming barbed with beard--Melander's and Karlsson's blonde, like barley chaff, and Wennberg's a surprising sorrel shade--except for Braaf's. His cheek-coverlet was a downy fuss. "Angel whiskers," Wennberg said derisively.

rewritten 2-17-81

A moment of each of these dusks, cherish with Melander the scroll

uncompromised
night

he fetches from its snug place in the canoe. [#] Hunkered within the circle

of firelight, one by one he polishes four biscuit-sized stones against

Wipes his
fingers across
his chest.
Finds pencil
tube

his pant-leg. ~~Now~~, like a Muslim ^{with} unfurling a prayer rug, ^{unfurls.} he rolls ^{and} out

more
detail?

the Tebenkov maps, ~~and~~ ^S setting a scrubbed stone to weight each corner.

There is not much that Melander is reverent about, but these maps

map

qualify. Each of them seemed ^S not just a line rendering, but a miniature

country in itself. Tiny shrubs indicated forest. Tideflats ^{are} ~~were~~ delicately

dotted, as if speck-sized clams ~~were~~ ^{are} breathing beneath. The rises in

underneath

elevation, in which ^{the} ~~the~~ coastline abounded, ^S ~~were~~ shown as scalloped

carapace

plateaus with shadow-lines fanning down. ^{them. oo} Proven sailing routes ^{run} ran

thread-like, as if an exploring spider ^{has} ~~had~~ tested out the journeys.

The total of engraver's strokes upon each map ^{is} ~~was~~ astounding, thousands.

Melander ^{cannot} ~~could not~~ imagine who, among the Russian pen-jabbers in the

Castle, had the skill and energy for such work.

rewritten 2-17-81

In our time, a poet has offered the thought that it is ~~in~~ within the civilized portions of maps now that the injunction should be inked, Here be monsters. Melander's maps represent a point of balance in humankind's relationship with the North Pacific--an era beyond sea serpents, and before dismay. They were, in short, an intelligently drawn ~~guess~~ estimate of the waters and the stubs of land.

~~As craftsmanship, the maps would have pleased a king.~~ Governor Tebenkov wrenched the information from Russian captains who had at last begun to think themselves modern men, and turned it over to a gifted one of the New Archangel Creoles, a gifted copper-worker, ~~named Terentev.~~

The Creole's ~~Terentev's~~ linecraft would have pleased a king. Casting a glance onto these maps was like looking suddenly beneath the skin of this coast, ^{down} to the bones and ligaments: ledges of rock, clots of rock...

fog of cloud

The frame of this coastline was what Melander needed to know, and the Tebenkov maps delivered it.

to him steadily.

A moment of these encamped nights, cherish with Melander the scroll he fetches from its snug place in the canoe.

Hunkered within the firelight as Braaf and Wennberg and Karlsson settle to sleep, one by one he ~~is~~ polishes four biscuit-sized stones against his pant-leg. Wipes his fingers down his shirt front. Digs from a pocket a stub of pencil. Now like a Muslim with a prayer rug, unfurls the roll and sets a scrubbed stone to weight each corner.

cut? There is not much that Melander is reverent about, but the Tebenkov maps qualify with him.

Each of them unfolds as almost a tiny country in itself.

spring Miniscule shrubs indicate forest. Tideflats are delicately dotted, as if speck-sized clams breathe beneath. Wherever the land rises-- and this coastline abounds in up and down--the elevation is shown as a scalloped plateau with shadow-lines fanning down. Threaded among the shores and islets are the proven sailing routes, as if ~~an~~ an exploring spider has tested out each journey. The total of engraver's strokes on each map is astounding, thousands. Melander cannot imagine who among the Russian pen-jabbers in the Castle had the skill and energy for such work. (In actuality, none. After Governor Tebenkov

spin

possessed

wrenched the navigational information from his Russian captains, he
turned it over to a gifted copper-artist among the New Archangel Creoles.)

engraver

In our time, a poet has offered the thought that it is within
~~the~~ civilization's portions of maps now that the injunction should be

might

inked, Here be monsters. Melander's ^{fractal} maps in the firelight represent

~~a point~~ ^{an instant} of balance in humankind's relationship with the North Pacific:

an era after sea serpents were discounted, and before towns and cities

proliferated. To cast a glance onto these functional maps was like

looking abruptly beneath the fog-and-cloud skin of this coast, down

shore,

to ~~the~~ bone, and muscle, and ligament. The frame of this coastline

stencil
1. NPac

is what Melander needs to know, and the Tebenkov maps deliver it to

peel it
into
sight
for him.

him steadily.

Pac's

avidly

~~But~~ the coastscape at hand ^{here} is not Sitka, ^{however} but the country of the
in furl of
third ~~of~~ Melander's maps. The ~~canoeists were~~ among a lingual stew
here--islands ~~known~~ dubbed Heceta and Noyes, Baker and Suemez--which
represented the contention of British explorers with Spanish.

see it
any way

Yet when you came to think of it, everything of these maps was
in pieces; dabs, driblets, chunks...The entire coastline was something
like a school of sea things--jellyfish and barnacles and ...

It ~~took~~^{takes} an effort of will, to believe they actually would hold still,
either on the map or in actuality, to permit voyage among them.

even for M
and
going

~~Just here~~, as Melander permits a few hours of champagne-~~aided~~ ^{mixed}

~~admitted~~
~~mixed~~

sleep before an afternoon of paddling, another picture is needed in the mind, large as you can manage

to make it. Perhaps larger yet, for this image must be of the northmost arc of the Pacific Ocean: the chill ascendant quarter-moon of that

hemisphere of water, ~~the rough curve of expanse~~ from the islands of

Japan ^{up} past the Siberian coast and ~~then~~ ^{next} the Alaskan, then downcurving

south and east along the continental extent of Canada and America.

This rough vault of outline and the tremendous water in between

~~This~~ ^{the} is section of the planet the Europeans were uncustomarily

~~slow~~ ^{tardy} to get to. Something ~~far~~ beyond the ordinary ^{imperial impulse} was required to carry

their curiosity into the ^{weathers and distances of the} North Pacific, the Englishman Cook's obdurate

genius as a floating expeditionary, ^{with pointing} the Spaniards' ~~religious enclaves~~ ^{pointing}

~~weathers~~
~~distances~~

^{in hope north through} ~~in southern~~ California, ^{the} the Russians' almost hypnotic curiosity as to

what would happen if they inched farther and farther out onto the limb

of the Aleutians, ^{archipelago. Even so,} By the time the United States of America had come

into being and the French were beheading Bourbons, ^{only} ~~fewer than~~ a dozen (?)

ships of Europe are known to have ventured as far as the Gulf of Alaska.

detail

Of this Pacific-planet, these four Swedes in a Tlingit canoe
are attempting a thousand-mile fraction. Not all that much, ^{you might say,} In
forty or fifty sturdy days ^{one} you could walk the distance, ^{or perhaps still have leather on yr sole} Except that
this particular version of it is broken into archipelago, ^{How are you at wooding?} or barbed
with forest where not broken.

Marlsson was the bow paddler; behind him, Wennberg; behind
Wennberg, Braaf; Melander in the stern. Melander had thought through
this placement, and as ever had his reasons. Karlsson was the strongest
paddler.... Wennberg, behind K's example and with the eyes of the
other two on him, would try to keep pace with K. Braaf, Melander
wanted under his own scrutiny, to see that he didn't shirk.

Almanman

*Describe
how
things
are
stowed?*

X

2-11-81

edited 2-18-81

Melander, as would be expected, had made it his business before they left New Archangel to gather what he could of lore about the southerly coast.

W. it has been easier now he could

Indeed, some of what he had heard of the people of the coast he would have given much not to know.

"Too much smoke," he said on ~~the~~ ^{one} ~~fourth~~ evening, and dropped to his knees to fan the fire into purer flame.

"You'd never have lasted over a forge," Wennberg ^{jeered} ~~rumbled~~. "A bit of smoke tans the soul."

Melander calculated; ~~it was the third night~~ ^{Three} ~~in a row~~ ^S of this smokey debate with Wennberg. The tall man made his decision, ~~and~~ began.



X

written 2-14-81
edited 2-18-81

readied in the morning

The next morning, they prepared to cross the channel from Cape
east Ommaney to Kuiu, the first of the island stairsteps onward ~~southward~~ from
Kuiu could have been the mapmaker's attack of palsy,
Baranof and on Melander's map a spatter of crooked shores and hedging
rocks. Melander said nothing of this to the other three, simply told

seemed to
have some
palsy;

them that he judged ~~that~~ there'd be stout current up this passage and
they would need to aim mostly south to end up east. # It worked out that way,

Kuiu, snow-decorated peaks rising behind his beyond shore

and by noon the canoe was nearing ~~the shore of Kuiu~~. Here, however,
and squiggles the muss of dots on the map became real, and the coastline shore stood to them

"No hole in the shore, aye?"

with ~~the~~ a threatening headland and snow-decorated

peaks behind. Surf hit blasted whitely onto rocks not far off south of the point. "Let's

blasted

stay away from that horse market," Melander decreed decided, and avoiding the

decreed

channel between headland and rocks, the canoe aimed south again. # In

a few miles, they found a cove, but at which faced open to the weather from

the west, and vetoed it. The next break in the shore was more exposed yet.

"Jesus Maria," Melander said, "is this whole damn island unbuttoned
Finally, near dusk, Melander steered them into a rock-rimmed bay

unbuttoned

like this?" # Two further inhospitable coves answered him.

Dusk was not far by now, and the work of paddling against the
becoming terrible. From weariness, 1500
current was wearying. They nearly blundered into a big patch of kelp

before Dr Karlsson spotted it shades in the gloom.

glimpsed

edited 2-18-51

X

Butterfly
candle lantern

By now the canoe had reached the southern tip of Kuiu, off a rocky point which ~~looked~~ ^{badly less} more unwelcoming than any profile of the island yet. What looked like clumps of timber stood in the water beyond. Melander peered close at his map. A thread of line hung through this channel, indicating a ship had navigated it; that testimony was needed, because ~~in some~~ ^{and shoals} rocks could hid^e themselves ^{easily} in this dusk. Melander set the^{craft} off for the timber clumps, and the canoeists pulled to shelter on one of the narrow islands just short of full dark.

This had been a day of stumble, two stairtreads of island when but one had been intended. But ~~Melander and company~~ ^{they} had alit still secure.

Canoeists

—

#

"Braaf, you piss near me one more time and I'll rub your nose
 in it like a ~~pussy~~ ^{bitch} pup." Wennberg's warning halted Braaf in mid-pull
 at the front of his thighs. He arced a look from the object of interest
 there to the seated figure of the blacksmith, as if calculating

nozzle
have

Across the campfire from Wennberg, Melander ~~took~~
 carrying power. ~~Beyond Wennberg, Melander~~ minutely shook his head
 in message him.
 to Braaf: don'tx rile ~~the~~

ever so
an inch

"I'll wait for the day I have enough to drown you," Braaf said
 off-handedly and moved away into the trees. As he stood with his
 legs wide, he became aware that something seemed focused on his back:
 some pressure of watching, as when instinct told him the instant was
 wrong for pilferage. But in these woods...Braaf whirled and met the
 eyes. Eyes ~~as~~ big as his hands, blindly staring at him from either
 side of a long hooked beak.

more

It took him a half-moment to realize that the creature was ~~was~~ of
 wood, and that atop it, half hidden by tree limbs, squatted other
staring creatures, a ladder of sets of eyes.

Braaf plunged from the trees, beckoned to the other three men.

Written 2-14-51

Melander remembered a morning in the Kolosh market beside the stockade gate. A canoe party had come in from somewhere, and amid those who were hawking their wares sat a seam-faced man, a carver. Word had spread through New Archangel about his strange work: knife blades that000... Dobzhansky the interpreter managed to converse with the man. Melander asked what had been said. Dobzhansky said he had inquired how many years it had taken to attain such skill. The carver told him, "As long as I have lived, I have carved. If the spirit people will let me, I will carve even after I am dead."

M recalls a carver who visited at Sitka, selling knives with carved walnut--from gunstock--handles. (ex in Reid/Holm book) Complimented on his work, or asked how long such skill has taken to learn, the carver says, "I have carved all my life. If the spirit people will let me, I will carve even after I am dead."

As long as
I have lived
I have carved

Karlsson goes over and puts a hand on the carved columns.

"What is this ^{place?} ~~place?~~" Braaf asked.

"It's a ^{kind of} cathedral," Melander replied.

"Don't give us your ~~goddamned~~ riddles, Melander," Wennberg rasped.

"What are these things?"

Melander looked steadily at Wennberg. "It's a cathedral," he repeated. "Whatever these people believe is said in these carvings.

If we can't ^{understand} read them, that is a matter of language, like trying to listen to ^{any} ~~understand and Russian~~ what a Finn says." Around them the columns

shot to the sky, pillars of an edifice of legend built for 00 generations. Eagle poised atop bear, orca dove through the bodies of 00, 00, 00. The forest seemed to watch the display, and the men, without knowing what it was, ^{all} felt the watching.

"Why is it deserted?" Braaf wanted to know.

"Maybe they're like the Kolosh," Karlsson guessed. "They have summer villages where they hunt from; in winter they pull back to a main village, like Sitka."

wounded
spiked

carved
creature
to
eye
rod

somewhere

On the next of the Tebenkov maps--had Karlsson had a next map--
Vancouver Island lay angled like a colossal oyster shell... Blunt at
each end, 000 miles in length and generally 00 wide, sharp with inlets
and bays...Midway down its western shore, a particularly large and rough
nick showed. Hyka, the cyrillic script beside it read. Nootka, the
Sound where...

One further thing was noticeable on this 00 map. No thread of
route went along that west shore. Melander ^{had known} ~~know~~ enough of the navigation
of this coast to realize that the sheltered route lay along the opposite
side, and he would have taken them east. Karlsson headed them west.

pinions
These places of frontier enterprise, whether they were called Sitka
or Santa Fe or Johannesburg or Leopoldville, were the framework of
an age. Empires pulleyed from them: the haul of Sitka was fur. Fur
mean OO, and OO meant OO; both meant OO.

The energies of nations pulsed out along the routes, met the
forcefield of existing cultures, changed or broke them. The effect
was cumulative as that of glaciers.

Peltry was a soft gold.

At a place called Nootka Sound, like mountaineering parties
clambering in from all sides of the same precipice, the empire-makers
all enmeshed. The Englishman Meares had Chinese crews building trading
vessels, the Spanish came up from Mexico to stop him, the Russians were
on the northern verge, the Americans prodding along the southern.

involved continental chunks big as all of Europe
The trade-off was colossal, at least in spans on the map:

*gathering
tremulous
to the
distant
7 1000s*

rewritten, 2-10-81

strokes

Wennberg's face hung open in a look of surprise. His mouth made motions but no sound. Then, with effort: "I'm. Getting. Sick."

"If you don't paddle, you'll get dead, and us with you. Have a puke now and be done with it, Wennberg. We need your arms."

ave

Wennberg put his head over the side of the canoe and opened his mouth as if gasping help up from the ocean. After a minute the gasps became words: "Can't. Too. Sick."

"You've got to. Wennberg, listen to me, ^{aye?} Run a finger down your throat, do anything--tell yourself you've swallowed soapberries-- but get the sickness out of you now. Do it, Wennberg. ^{Dump} ~~Empty~~ your gut."

"Keep on, you'll have me puking too," muttered Braaf.

Just then Melander's ^{prescriptions} ~~advice~~ had ^{their} ~~its~~ intended effect on Wennberg.

"There now," Melander proclaimed in satisfaction. "You'll be a bull again before you know it. Rest a bit, we can spare you until you get your breath back."

Wennberg focused whitely toward Melander. "Melander, one time I'll reach down that mouth of yours and..." But in minutes, he had

picked up his paddle and, while still not smoothly in phase with the strokes of the

others, added propulsion to theirs.

~~Prescriptions~~

"More beef, Wennberg. Push that paddle deeper, aye?" [#]Melander's urging began while the tips of the fir trees of Dall Island still ^{feathered} were distinct ^{against sky} behind them. He had not expected Wennberg to be slack in this situation; ^{it who} Braaf was ~~the one~~ who chronically scanted his labor. ^{be anticipated}

But Braaf was thrusting steadily, his rag-wrapped hands as if bound to the paddle, ^{tossed onto} and he added gibe to Melander's admonition: "Bashful are you, Wennberg? Reach right down there and meet it, why not..."

Wennberg grumped something unhearable, at these remark ^{but} to him, and his paddling picked up markedly. But forty or fifty hillocks of water later, he again was faltering, a ^{heart-skip} ~~bit~~ in the rhythm of the boat.

"Wennberg, you're dabbing at it again." Melander's tone had sharpened.

The broad man held his paddle just above the water, as if trying ^{though} to ~~do~~ recall whether ~~water~~ ^{served as} or air was the element in which it operated. He swiveled the upper part of his body enough to look back at Melander.

2-13-81

On Melander's map, three widths of a thumb would have ~~covered~~^{spanned}
the space inscribed "Dixon Entrance." In actuality, ~~the narrow span~~^{this plain} of
water extends twice the distance of the English Channel between Dover
and Calais, and no calm white cliffs stand as guides. The canoeists'
crossing would be stretched even farther by the angle because they would
need to go
be going oblique, angling^e east to the arm of land. All in all, calculated
Melander, it added up to most of a day of paddling.

advised

"Sleep deep," Melander said. "Tomorrow we introduce ourselves

to Kaigani."

The letters lay large near the bottom of Melander's third map,

and in sober block rather than the delicate script elsewhere on the

(as though in warning:)
paper, Prol Kaigani. Kaigani Strait.

rewritten 2-13-81

A wavery wall of reassurance yet could be seen behind them--the outline of Dall Island and its neighbor, Prince of Wales. Distant as it had become, the shoreline of the islands seemed a footing, a place to return to. Then, just after Melander reckoned aloud that they might be a third of the way across, Karlsson glanced back and saw that the landwall was gone. In place of the islands hung a sheet of fog. The canoe man now ~~were~~ were in a basin of sea, nothing but water or its ~~flying~~ ^{in the air,} allies, ~~fog and cloud,~~ ^{and fog,} all about them.

shoved
The river ~~carved~~ through the land like a ^{massive} ~~great~~ smooth glacier.

Had the gray surface been solid enough to walk on--it ^{came to be a} ~~would be~~ joked
in some seasons of run-off that not much more mud content was needed
to make it pedestriable--it would have taken a man ^{striding} ~~walking~~ from its
toward
north shore to its south an entire hour. That man would have crossed
(the largest river of the Pacific shore of the Americas,)
the Columbia, and there on the south bank he would have stamped his
feet ~~■~~ at Astoria.

Astoria was tiny, but already in its third incarnation. John
Jacob Astor's wealth had installed the settlement in 0000 as a
fur depot. The War of 1812 passed the site to British control, ^{not bornly}
and it became Fort George....By the late 1840's it ~~was~~ Astoria ~~again~~ once
more. Not so much of a place; ~~really~~ a post office, some stores
and saloons... all in all, a few dozen ^{crate-like} structures ^{piled up along} huddled at the
foot of a ^{burly} Columbia headland. Yet, ^{too} ^{the} a port, ships calling regularly...
If for ^{whatever} some reason you found yourself at Astoria, ^{yes,} you could make your
way on into the world from its little docks. ^{rain-slick}

This night, the four canoe-going Swedes are ^{just under} 1000 miles upcoast
from Astoria.

like crates
unloaded

having
improvisely
straddled in
a run on sea

500 mi.
- on 1/2 way up
WA...?

Amidships of the canoe, Wennberg heaved the boulder within his arms to the height of his face, and with a grunt let it crash into the bottom of the craft. ⁴¹ The crunch was like the enlarged noise of a club striking an animal's skull, and the canoe bottom broke in a descent of splinters beneath the rock.

²⁰⁹¹ Wennberg gave one rapid look ^{at his result,} then skirted the stern of the canoe ~~again~~ and ^{ran again} began running, a bear in a footrace. ⁴² He had just passed ~~the~~ the driftlog when he heard the shout behind him, and he did not look back. ⁴³ Ahead of him, Melander and Karlsson and Braaf

were struggling to the beach with their own canoe, ~~the canoe~~ Melander somehow finding time as well to yell at Wennberg to hurry up and lend a hand.

They put the canoe into the surf just as the first musket ball blooped the water beside them. Wennberg in puffing agony looked back to see two men in skins kneeling to fire, five or six more on their way to the beach, as many more clustered around the spine-broken canoe.

~~He saw the man, and he shot at the two~~ Karlsson hurried a shot at the two

nearest shooters, missed them but ^{caused} ^{to} ~~made~~ them flinch away from the

shot's ricochet among the beach gravel, and threw his musket into

^{forepart of the} ~~the~~ canoe. "Jesu Maria, ^{climb} ~~get~~ in and paddle!" Melander ^{instructed} ~~cried~~. They

stroked as if hurling the ocean behind them as a barrier, and the canoe

climbed a mild breaker in slow surge to the beach, sped, climbed a

stronger wave, then slid rapidly southward from the figures on the beach.

low hill

Morning. Melander stood just outside the ~~the~~ line of trees, studying the shore, when Karlsson came beside him. To their right, *eastward*, the beach extended in a smooth arc of tan sand and treeline as far as they could see. To their left the beach cut sharply inland, and beyond the cove-like cut a wall of trees ~~extended~~ sheered out to meet the water of Dixon Entrance. Melander dipped his head toward the trees in a pointing nod, and Karlsson realized the treetops were

They rose, however, as they ~~were~~ neared the shore, into towering tops. Melander dipped his head toward the green spires in a pointing nod. "We should have a look there. Tell Braaf we're going..."

Can any trees be so high?

Wake



Having pushed the canoe into the placid water, Karlsson and Melander found themselves paddling across the mouth of a river, dark and flowing very slowly. as black lacquer, ~~and ¹ ~~and flowing very slowly.~~~~ Small circles of foam spun along its surface toward them like ghostly anemones. On the far side, they began to discern a black rim of rock between the waterline and the ^{forest.} ~~misted~~

Around the point of rock they pulled the canoe to security and
clambered onto the flow of black rock *for a full look.*

"God's bones, what a place," Melander murmured. The point had been
convulsed into hummocks and parapets, ~~gullies~~ pitted with fist-size holes
as if having been under siege from small cannon, riven into troughs by
the waves. As they stood ^{*gawking,*} ~~looking~~ surf blasted up from a blowhole
behind them, a mocking geyser of white ^{*t*} falling as they whirled to it.

Inland, a tumble of black boulders the size of oxcarts. Then a
narrow ^{*belt*} ~~stand~~ of fir trees. Then ~~a~~ sharp upshot of cliff, which went
into the fog just above the tree tops.

Tom-Holt?

Karlsson stood under the great trees, waiting for Melander.

A ^{fat} bead of water ticked his right wrist, and he looked with surprise

~~at the moisture.~~ He ^{Surprised,} ~~turned~~ ^{tipped,} his head until he was looking straight

up. He ~~could see a~~ water bead ^{saw another} leave its ^{detach from under} limb fifty feet above him ^{and}

~~come~~ ^{drop} like a slow tiny jewel, and ~~still~~ he had time to step aside

from it before it struck. ~~It was~~ like strange, slowed-down rain,

The droplets ^{descended} ~~occurred~~ two or three to the minute; Karlsson found

he could dodge ~~nearly all~~ ^{each} of them, stepping back and forth around

the tree trunk, head aimed up like a drunk man at the gate of God.

The play of it ^{captured} ~~took~~ him over ~~in a moment~~ without his being aware of it *surrender*

happening; his mind went free and nothing existed but the dazzles

of water and his strangely dancing body...

(Have M find him at this?)

Written 3-10-81
used 4-23-81

Rain stayed with them steadily. This was not New Archangel's soft, muslin-like showers, but cold hard rods of wet, drilling down on them. Its sound ~~was~~ came up off their garments--00,00-- like fingers drumming on an impatient knee.

*elegant as
wavy*

The others were in well-worn rainshirts, but Braaf sat
resplendent in a thigh-length Aleut parka, ^{colored} ~~stained~~ yarn sewn into
designs at the wrists, a front-ruff of eagle down...(check details
with Cook slide, ref in Voyage Details card file)

"What're you, the crown prince?" Wennberg had demanded that
first morning. "Where'd you ^{up with} ~~come onto~~ that ^{rig} ~~get up?~~"

Braaf held up a wrist and admired a scroll of sewn design.

"Oh...round and about."

used
4-23-81

It took a number of nights to become accustomed to the noise of the water along the shoreline. Melander, for his part, was made uneasy by an absence, and at last placed it; he was listening for the creak of ship timbers, the other part of the choir whenever ocean was heard.

used
4-23-81

Usual bruised-looking sky, tatters of fog in the tree tops.

This coast's mornings ~~looked like~~ were as if ~~brawl~~ had gone on ~~all night~~ in the heavens.

used
4-23-81

Trees pushed down to the absolute waterline: green, then
blue. You could reach up from swimming and make your way hand-
over-hand thru the forest.

Written 3-5-81
MSA 4-23-81

The nearest mountains stood green as meadows. The next, higher group darkened toward black. Then the highest, the horizon peaks, were a shadowed blue, as they were being thinned of substance as they extended down the coast.

used
4-23-81

The sun swung so low along the southern horizon that its glare struck the water in front of the canoe. Its dazzling path was a hazard to the eyes. Melander ^{squinted} ~~blinked~~ and swore. "Too much of everything, this coast has..."

After the days of gray, an hour or so of sun left them sozzled, light-headed.

used
4-23-81

Occasionally the current twirled witches' knots in itself. The
canoemen watched once as ~~a drifting tree made a complete circle~~
such a whirlpool took a drifting tree into a
complete circle, like a compass needle in total turn.

written 3-5-81

used 4-23-81

It was noticeable now that they were gaining a bit of daylight each day. "After Christmas, each day gets a chicken-step longer," Melander recited.

Among these four ^{watermen} voyagers, crosscurrents waited which, if they were let to flow free, might prove as roily as any of the North Pacific's.

Wennberg was the source of most tension, for after his manner of wedging himself into the escape none of the others could entirely put trust in him.

(no 9) As with many strong-tempered men, the anger in Wennberg ^{that} which could flare pure and fast as fire covered his other qualities.

^{The blacksmith} He was a highly capable voyager, ^{well} able to put up with discomforts day upon day, ~~the~~ ^{at the canoe work} as steady ^{worked} as could be asked, if some incident did not set him off ^{but} the trigger in him was always close to click.

As for Melander, the problem with so toplofty a type is that ordinary men cannot always see eye to eye with him. Difficult to be totally at ease with a man who thinks so many steps ahead, even though those stairs of thought may be your salvation.

Similarly, Karlsson's silent style could be thought a bit too aloof. There was not much visit in this slender man from Skane, and less jokery.

77C follows →

written
May 7, '81

"Buried as Bering," said Melander.

^{Means what?}
"Knock ~~again~~," Braaf ^{querried} invited.

"It's something the Russian navy men say. Bering was a skipper,
^{first one into} ^{up}
~~up~~ in the islands where the Aleuts come from. He was sailing in
the Tsar's hire, ~~had~~ a ship called the Saint Peter. A true Russian
vessel, leaky as a basket. Somewhere up there among the Aleuts they
~~themselves~~
got wintered in. Those islands don't have a whisker of timber, ^{do} Bering
^{dug} ^{pulled over} ^{in burrows like}
and his crew ^{into} sandhills, ^{put up} sail canvas for roof. Lived ~~like~~
lemmings, ^{tell it,}
~~worms~~, aye? Lived till they died, at least, and then, the Rooski ~~says~~
^{would come into camp and}
foxes ^{gobbled} the bodies. Bering himself took ^{ill} and they ^{put} him
^{caved}
in one of the dugouts. ~~The sand fell~~ down over his feet, but he wouldn't
let the crew dig ~~it~~ away. Said it kept him warm. Then sand over his
knees. Still wouldn't let them dig. Then up to his waist. Next his
belly, just before he died. Very nearly all in his grave before the
last breath was out of him. So, buried as Bering, a Rooskaya says
to feel sorry for himself."

Use e
Never ↓

In the rivers which cut the Washington shoreline and in the streams which feed down from the mountains into those rivers, a chick-sized bird called the ouzel is common. Slaty in color, peg-tailed, the ouzel behaves as if perplexed about something overhead: every few seconds the bird bobs, as if flinching from that peril in the sky. Evidently, however, the motion is merely practice for its livelihood, which ~~is~~^{is} to walk the bottoms of the rivers and streams, picking bits of feed as it goes. A hydraulic adaptee, the ouzel seems to be; somehow it has learned to use the flow of current to keep itself pinned down into place during this dinner delve beneath the riffles.

Much in the way that the ouzel can shop along the cellar of the river, the canoeists too were held into route now by the sum of the pressures on them. Weather above, ocean beside, forest solid along the continent edge--their course was ~~held~~^{pressed to} for them by the powers of the coast.

if they
had
only
to
paddle?

Braaf? Being around Braaf was like being in the presence of a natural phenomenon, such as St. Elmo's fire or marsh vapors. Braaf simply was there, on his own terms, take ^{him} for what he was.

As if still in echo of their encounter in the parade ground, Braaf and Wennberg jangled with each other ^{now} again and again.

no 4 clashed. Wennberg would suggest that Braaf had about as much weight

in the world as the fart of a fly, and Braaf would recommend that Wennberg

shove his head up the nearest cow's behind to see whether it held ~~any~~ any

more ^{exact} turds like him. Melander ^{was able to} ~~slow~~ ⁱⁿ the ^{but} ~~slanging~~, ~~without managing~~

~~never~~ ^{to} quite ~~to~~ stop it.

—————

written 3-10-81

Wennberg, crossing behind Braaf, stopped and looked at the back of Braaf's Aleut coat. "What's this on your back?"

curiously
Jacob's robe?

Braaf slipped an arm from the coat, brought the garment around to have a look. ^{Small} Dark splats, as if a ~~rusty~~ rusty rain had fallen, showed ^{at places} across the back and shoulders.

"Blood. From Melander."

Braaf stared at the stains, then gulped, and twin ^{glitters} tracks of tears ^{streaked} came down his face. Karlsson and Wennberg shifted awkwardly. Braaf ~~said~~ ^{choked out,} "Say anything, either of you, and I'll slit you loose from life."

descended

Karlsson knelt close by the firelight, carefully unrolled the map and weighted it at the corners with small rocks. Melander's pencil marks began near the top of the map, at a bite of harbor which K recognized as Sitka Sound, then traced from island to island, the Kuiu-Kosciusko-Heceta chain of their first days, across the channel of peril to the Queen Charlottes, down their shores to the island--not named, Kunghit--where Melander had been killed. Karlsson saw that the island where they now were, just off the mainland, was named Aristazabal.

Then Karlsson glanced to the bottom of the map, and froze. In his mind's eye he saw again the sketch of the escape route M had scratched into the dirt that first day, the briefness of Baranof, then the Queen Charlottes group, then Vancouver Island, then the south from the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Astoria. The map showed the topmost ~~portion~~ of this succession, the north ~~coast~~ of Vancouver Island, then ended.

Karlsson saw too, in that flash back to Sitka, what had happened. Melander was the one to steal the map from the steamship: he had ~~been~~ had

small oval rocks from beach gravel

describe map - a long scroll

across Heceta St

position

unrolled to its full length, ~~then~~ marking roots to corners

of map

of map was lost to scroll

heard M's words

to hurry because of the wood crew, had not had time to search through
all the maps; would have told them eventually, as he had of the OO,
and borne them on. Except now Melander was dead, and it was Karlsson
who had to point them into the unknown. ^{Karlsson} ~~He~~ had a sensation of being
emptied, as if his body from the stomach down had vanished along with
the bottom of the map.

c. back
7 his head
shot off

now
lay
under
no pill
7 stone
stone

REVISED

—
Except for the ^{triple} ~~three~~ windrows of surf

~~The~~ He woke to rainsound. The day's colors were all grays,

sea and sky nearly the same, rocks and forest darker. The big

cape to the north was obscured this morning.

Meeting the ocean swell at the mouth of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the brig rocked and dipped as though in introduction. A curtsy, it may have been, for the vessel was named the Jane. Her hold was filled with pilings which would help to underpin the multiplying docks of ^{a burgeoning city} ~~San Francisco~~, and she was outbound now from one of the ~~tiny~~

not 1

skipped details

which had popped into Jane's cockpit along with S.M.G. U. post up on N.O.

^{fledgling} ~~now~~ sawmill settlements of Puget Sound to ^{that place} ~~the California city~~. The Jane ~~is~~ worked clear of Cape Flattery, ^{then} ~~she~~ bore south ^{Californieward,} at a heading of 00,

San Fran-ward.

Wennberg saw the vessel two hours later. Its twin masts and tail-like gaff sail were like tepees on the water, two miles or so out from ^{and already passing.} the island. He roused Karlsson and Braaf.

They stared at the ship ~~and~~ like men yearning to jump to the moon. Under full sail as she was, they couldn't catch her. A signal fire, even if one could be built in time, was ^{unlikely to} ~~more~~ cause a ship to hove to along this wild coast, but ~~was~~ guaranteed ~~never~~ to attract the whale-hunting natives. ~~It~~ Gunshots were the same proposition. What was left to them was to stand and watch the sails plow out of sight to the south.

serenely

Wennberg would happily have been back at his forge--any forge,

wherever--heat and hammer in their heavy dance before him, the

glowing flakes falling from the metal as he imposed shape on it.

He went in his mind a number of times to that morning when he came

behind Braaf in the parade ground at New Archangel--and each time,

he veered yards away from ~~Wennberg~~ Braaf...But this was like trying

to undo a collision of comets: paths cross paths, and there you are.

peer-peon - CLANG!
- circle of water to
concentrate fire

a fire in
forge -
pull coals
out. in
hope it will
become
charcoal one
more, indeed,
we try in
to reverse it all
way to living tree.

written 3-5-81

While still within what should have been sheltered waters--nothing but island horizon to their west--the canoe men began to meet swells, long swaybacks which rocked the canoe with the strong message: the ocean is waiting.

If anything, the forest rose more sheerly than ever from the
tideline. Crows and ravens flew in and out, disappearing as if gulped,
re-emerging as if spat out.

The ocean would ~~gn~~ change from ghastly to enticing. And probably
back again in an hour.

written 3-5-81

Trees--not drift logs but roots, branches, bristles and all--drifted

in the channel.

1st draft,
May 23, '81

on ~~some~~ ⁱⁿ boat,

onto horses

was riding

~~inspect~~ examine

"Last ~~Sunday~~ Monday, as I rode with my son Jared to ~~our~~ oyster-beds at ~~the~~ the north of our land claim, we found, ~~beside~~ beside a canoe, two men nearly starved to death. We spoke to them, but could not make ourselves understood. After taking them to our house and summoning some of the other settlers from around, we finally succeeded in conversing with them. Their history is as follows: In 1850 they engaged to work for the Russian Fur Company seven years, and accordingly embarked, in company with 18 others, and sailed for the northwestern coast, bound for New Archangel. After a residence of nearly two years, they found they could not bear the ill-usage which they were receiving, and determined to make their escape.

near to boat

~~of the whole number of four men on the message~~

They were four, who determined ~~to cross~~ on that course of action. ~~Their number was four.~~ Stopping at a place beyond Vancouver

leave taking

Island, one of their number was killed by the Indians. A second unfortunate was drowned in the descent of the Washington coast. When found, the two who have survived had been in this Bay for three days--subsisting on roots and berries. They were much emaciated, and looked the perfect pictures of misery and ~~in~~ despair. One of the poor fellows, when found, was...

Their canoe is about twenty feet in length by three in width, sprightly built; and with this they have made a voyage of over 1,000 miles on one of the worst parts of the coast. They are well cared for by the citizens here, and at present are comfortably situated at Chinook, whence they will be taken across to Astoria when their strength is sufficient.

Their names are Nils Karlsson and Henrik Wennberg, and they are of Sweden."

Jonathan E. Cotter

use -
Vevev 1.?

10-2-81

REVISED ✓

Perhaps bring to ^{thought}~~mind~~ that trick done with apple and knife--
the fruit to be peeled in one stopless cutting, down and down the
pare of skin coiling from the ~~knife's~~ blade's glide, a ~~red~~ ^{red-white-red-white} spiral
stair ever more likely to snap away: but yet is it, for each
shaving of coil twirls a bond with ^{all} the others, the helix is holding
itself together, ^{spin on spin,} ~~through~~ by creational grace.

This voyage was ^{an accumulating} ~~a~~ dangle like that. Each day the canoe sliced
distance from the North Pacific, making the journey just that much
more apt to sunder, or just that much more cunningly pliant, you
would not have wagered which.

such as what K awaits now,

Have
we
wondered...

There are moment^S which form themselves unlike any that have
 come before in our lives or shall again. ^{think of it as K is poised here,} Ours might seem a kindlier
 evolution if what we know as memory had ^{could have} been set in us the other way;
 if the vital incidents ~~stood~~ already waited on display there in the
 mind when we enter the world--a glance, and A can be seen ready to
 happen some certain ~~Tuesday~~ Thursday; beyond it B is viewed clear,
~~and~~ due on a Wednesday two years and seventeen days off...The snag
 is Z, the ^{one} prospect we could not bear to know with exactitude:
 death's date. Is it why the apparatus fetches backward for us rather
 than forward, memory rather than foreknowledge--so that we can stand
 existence? Whatever, Karlsson at wait here in the Alaska night is
 like all of us in life's dark, able to know only that a moment is
 coming due and ^{to hope} ~~hoping~~ it is not the last of the series.

in detail

It must be
 is for no
 relations
 00, that
 one as we admit
 stand

Some moments form themselves unlike any that have come before
in our lives or shall again. Ours might seem a kindlier evolution
if what we know as memory had been set in us the other way; if the
most vital incidents of existence already waited ^{on display} in place in the
mind when we are born--A there seen ready to happen some certain ^{can be}
beyond it
Thursday, B viewed clear and due on a Wednesday two years and
seventeen days off...The snag is Z, the one prospect we could not
bear to know with exactitude: death's date. Is it why the apparatus
fetches backward for us rather than forward, memory rather than
foreknowledge, ^F so that we can stand existence? Whatever, Karlsson
awaiting the moment to come is like all of us in life's dark, knowing
that something, stalactite or stalagmite, is forming, but not what
its shape or thrust will be

only that forming is going on.

^{is Alaska night of us}
at wait here is like us all in life's dark, able to know only that
^{remembers it is has come}
a moment is coming due. ^{is coming} ^{hoping it is - last 7. series,}

Some moments form themselves unlike any that have come before
in our lives or will again. Like speeded-up stalactites or stalagmites
they suddenly loom, daggering obstacles somehow to ~~get~~ be got around.

Ours might seem a kindlier evolution if what we know as memory had
been set in us the other way; if these ^{vital} ~~been set~~ ~~abrupt~~ incidents of existence

already waited in place in the mind when we were born; the contents

of life there to be seen, unfolding in orderly manner
~~foreknowledge that this would happen~~, then

B viewed clearly ahead on a Wednesday two years ^{of 17 days} ~~off~~ some certain Tuesday,
A there to

be seen
ready
to happen

The problem is Z, the ^{one} answer we could not bear to know: death's date.

Is it ^{apparatus} ~~which surely is why it~~ ^{about} had been swung around in us, memory rather

than foreknowledge, so that we can stand existence? Whatever,
uncertainty is why K now knows a vital moment is
forming, but not what its shape & thrust will be.

Death's credence comes to us in small costs, mounting and mounting. Lack of a reminding word to Braaf when he took time in shifting his paddle. Loss of the sailor-habited scrutiny of the water around, every chance of rock or sheal commented on.

made his habit of dawdle

more
No "aye?" punctuating the day's time.

Near mid-day, when the canoe put ashore at the next island, the three men for a long minute stood looking at the folded-forward Melander, still ~~was~~ yearning not to believe the death. Wennberg

had cursed periodically during the crossing--"fish-fuckers...fish-fuckers"--but now said nothing, ~~simply~~ seemed to be gritting against

^{was on its way} whatever ~~came~~ next. Braaf too was silent, and very pale. ~~It was~~

^{wordless}
~~it was~~ ~~need~~
Karlsson, who said, "We ~~ve got~~ to bury him."

They managed, with Karlsson's ax and the cooking pot, to gouge a shallow trench in the forest floor. Wrapped in sailcloth, Melander was put into the thin grave. Atop the dirt, Karlsson and Wennberg and Braaf piled head-sized rocks from the beach, to ~~keep~~ discourage animals.

Then they made camp and sat to re-think life without Melander.

more?

consider

*all their
decision about
coast was there*

Kneeling close by the firelight, Karlsson unrolled the scroll of maps and weighted it at the corners with small oval stones from the beach gravel. Melander's pencil mark began near the top of the first map, at the square dots which were the buildings of New Archangel, and looped left around Japonski Island then down and out the bottom of Sitka Sound. On the next map, the penciled route hugged the west shore of Baranof Island to Cape Ommaney, then struck west to Kuiu.

Map three
The third map brought them down the Kuiu-Heceta-Noyes-Suemez-Dall chain of islands and across Kaigani Strait to the horn-tip of the Queen Charlottes. The fourth map showed how they had crossed Hecate Strait, descended the islands of the past several days, and then, ~~at~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ just more than halfway down the map, Melander's penciling stopped, at a rough-edged small island with no name.

Now Karlsson glanced to the bottom of ^{this} ~~the~~ map, and ~~was~~ froze.

In his mind he saw again the escape as Melander had scratched it into the dirt that first day. The briefness of Baranof Island. Then the Queen Charlottes group. Then Vancouver Island. Next, last, the southering coastline from the Strait of Fuca to Astoria. This fourth map showed ~~the~~ coastline as the northmost tip of Vancouver Island,

from

Perhaps think of that trick to be done with an apple and a knife:

to peel the fruit in one continuous cutting, the peel spiraling down *and down*

in ~~greater~~ ^{*ever*} and greater likelihood of breaking. Their voyage was

like that, each day's dangle--made by the canoe slicing ^{*distance from*} ~~at~~ the ocean--

more ~~like~~ ^{*apt*} to snap than the one before.

use
"Born in America"

time
man

time
man

It is an experience lost to us ^{great} now, the sea passage between one life and another. But if you were Morgan, Huw, cabinet-maker of Llanelli in Wales, bound out for Patagonia; or Henty, Elizabeth, ~~Van Diemen's~~ ^{Van Diemen's} wife and mother, following husband and sons from Sussex to ~~Van Diemen's~~ ^{Van Diemen's} ~~Land~~ ^{grazier's southern} Land in Australia; or Van Der Wende, Kathrin, girl of eight, wonder-eyed in ^{forty days} steerage from Rotterdam to New York; or any of tens of hundreds of thousands of others of the nineteenth century's sea-change citizens, the voyage stayed in your mind. It couldn't not. Sway of the waves, the shrunk ~~space~~ ^{lowered} berth to live in, the reliance of your survival on sailors who worked in the mast-trees like slow monkeys; queer turns of the world, all. ^{ocean-crossers} Some even spoke, after, of the shipboard weeks as ^{an entire} a separate life; a compressed existence, like a battle or an illness or a first unsuccessful time in love, which ^{as} stood like no other set of days ^{ever could} in ^{the} your memory. ^{mind's past}

if you were any of them

use sailor commonwealth from Dora

speech
of
land

failed

you?

Melander had been the calmative for the others ^{three} against the immensity of their attempt. He had been one of those salt-water monkeys in the mast-stays, knew and was not at all bashful to say that an ocean can be managed, fended with.

But now Melander was no longer on hand to be in charge of faith.

Braaf and
Karlsson and ~~Braaf and~~ Wennberg, men as different as ~~grass~~^{hip-high} and

upstairs and the moon, had ^{now} to find their own ways not be daunted

by this sea-run.

turned
they had
only half-
finished

✓

Between them and Vancouver, they quickly discovered, lay several hundred instances of monotony. Wave upon wave, the canoe met, was lofted at the bow, then wallowed rightward
slumped, down and ~~right~~ somewhat rightward,
into the water's trough. A new law of motion this seemed to be, dive-
and-stagger.

Karlsson ~~looked~~ called to Wennberg. Wennberg half-turned; he was grim, but functioning. "No, I don't need any invitations to toss up my breakfast."

The crossing was 0 hours of slosh, under the most beautiful weather of the entire voyage.

The surf. Is there any other ^{energy}~~thing~~ on the planet like it?

On any planet? The hurl of it, constantly moving, collapsing, rebuilding, simultaneously white and gray and lethal and lulling. The extent of it, its grave beat upon the shore and against all sides of all continents at once: how is there any foothold left for us?

Braaf had wondered too, looking at the colossal force of the ocean, why it didn't tear great chunks from the land all the time.

^{Probably} Perhaps it did, in great storms, ^{which} and that was how the islands of

their route had been made.

(from Rialto Blue card #1)

The surf came in cream-colored, thinned to milk as it slid ^{spilled}
up the beach. Between the waves the pattern was marbled, thick
loops and circles of foam. Its ^{noise} ~~sound~~ was a constant rumble with
lifts of sound, like a strong wind through a forest. And within
this, a hiss, a foamsound as the tide-edge deliquesced up the beach.
It smelled very fresh, more a sensation than anything the nose
could identify: a tang.

9-16-81 ✓

REVISED

This patience of Karlsson's, like any ~~an~~ extreme, ~~cannot~~^{ought not} entirely
 be counted virtue. It evidently kept him in situations, for instance,
 when Wennberg would have crashed out or Braaf wriggled out, ~~and~~ indeed,
 had done much to deposit him, without over-ample debate or decision,
 into Alaska.

The pair of them, tree and stump somehow endowed with legs, moved with no word through the night for two minutes, three. Apprehension strode with them both. Apprehensions, rather, for their anxieties were sized as different as the men.

A several hundredth time Melander retold himself the logic by which he had singled out this night. Yesterday the Russians all had gone around solemn as church mice, crossing themselves until it seemed they'd wear out the air. Now, ~~the~~ ^{side} religious ~~end~~ of Christmas having been observed, certain as anything they would

be celebrating and carousing and dancing their boots off. Assuredly, ~~all~~ ^{club house} the officers and any of the Company Russians who frequented their lodgings for card games and tippling and monotony-breaking argument, ~~every breathing one of them~~ all of them would be at the governor's ball in Baranov's Castle,

Y'day they had now and pious at...

~~leaving the gun-room accessible.~~ Nor, when the escapees' absence was discovered, would the Russians be eager to ~~leave~~ ^{dash from} their snug festivities to chase them through the ~~cold~~ ^{damp black} of Alaskan night. The Kolosh meanwhile would be ~~keeping~~ ^{staying} to their longhouses, ~~staying~~ ^{leaning} clear

of drunk and boisterous Tsarmen. Confusion, alcohol, reluctance, all ~~were in rank as~~ ^{would be} the Swedes' Christmas allies for escape. But late-going Russians yet within the officers' lodgings...clatter in the gun room heard by a sentry at the eastmost blockhouse...Melander's months of planning ~~now~~ ^{just here} teetered on such points beyond logic, and the ~~fact~~ ^{quiver} of them moved with him ~~in~~ ^{through} the dark.

quiver

Wennberg's perturbation was ~~with~~ ^{purely} himself. Until he stood up from beside the card-players in the barracks the blacksmith had not been convinced he would go through with the escape. ~~How came it that~~ Why risk the tumble, ass-over-earhole, down this bedamned coast? Why trust even a minute to these three orphans of Hell? So how came it that now he was traipsing off with Melander into disaster's black avid mouth?

as they watched

Just off the eastern shore stood a long line of fishing smacks with white, white sails,

They toppled

and were taken back by the water to be reformed for the next trick

of surf: this time it was round white islets, an archipelago of ~~surf~~ ^{Froth}.

~~as you watched.~~ Karlsson considered that he had seen wild surf so

far on this voyage, and he had, but this highthrown whiteness was

another matter. The power of Queen Charlotte Sound seemed to have a

need to climb into the air ~~as phantom boats.~~

phantom boats

✓

Karlsson was a particle of the Swedish diaspora which began in the 1840's, a man uncoupled from his family's farm by a surplus of brothers and absence of opportunity. The two brothers younger than ~~Karlsson~~^{him} caught America fever, put themselves into the emigrant stream aimed to the prairies beyond the Great Lakes. At their suggestion that he come along, Karlsson said only: "I am no farm maker." His liking for time in the forest, learned as helper to a gamekeeper on a nearby manor during his Skane boyhood, bent him toward Alaska even at the price of becoming

written 3-5-81

They were in a part of the coast now where broad channels drove directly from the ocean northeastward between islands, like fat wedges.

The ~~first~~^{next} of these ~~was~~^{would be} Milbanke Sound, no more than 0 miles but the

first test of the lessened canoe crew.

Gaps of daybreak had begun on the eastern horizon when ~~Karl~~ Karlsson

~~rose, breaks of light like gaps beneath a curtain.~~ Gradually the

islands and mountains all around the channel ~~came to sight like a~~^{grew}

~~herd of knobby heads.~~ As fuller daylight advanced, the strips of

light on the eastern horizon were as if chinking had fallen out

between mountains and clouded sky. The dawn went from silver to

slight yellow, to peach. Then the clouds began to shift away, out

of sight over the mountains.

One further thing is noticeable on this 00 map. No thread of route goes along that west shore, past Nootka. Melander had known enough of the navigation of this coast to realize that the sheltered route of voyage ~~lay~~ lay along the opposite side of the island, and at the prow of Vancouver, Cape Scott, he would have taken the canoemen east. Karlsson headed them west.

chose

Weary ~~was~~ though he was, Karlsson ^{dreamt} dreamed often these nights.

At least, ^{by daybreak} ~~remembering~~ he had memory of things which must have been

dreams. (^{night} The occurrences which had to do with women, he knew with

regrettable certainty to be dreams.) Again and again the carved columns

rose in the forest of his brain, the wild creature-faces stacked one

Bear and beaver and ^{eagle} ~~fox~~ and--human?

on another. Melander had stepped over to stand beside the big-

beaked face. Together Melander ~~the~~ and the beaked thing looked

back at Karlsson. Karlsson said to Melander it was time to push

on ~~the~~ in the canoe. "Aye," replied Melander, but still stood there.

Karlsson would repeat that it was time to embark, "aye," Melander

would say again, unmoving.

Bear
of
fox
beaver
human

usually
went
like this:

"But we're
to take
you with
us."
"Way."
"Would
need it
us" or
to take
it along

As in the forest when branches become moving wands overhead
but the air at ground remains still, the weather ^{often} at times cruised
over ^{canoe men} them without touching down. Streamers of cloud shot along,
~~at random in the tops of trees~~ ^{all} the sky was ~~filled~~ hither and thither,
you never knew what to expect except that it would be disorderly.
would-be storms and pretensions of clearing; Sitka had accustomed
them to changeableness with its weather-of-the-minute, but at Sitka
the concern was not whether the ocean would erupt beneath them
in the next swoop of gust.

next
ocean
cause
to erupt
under
them.

use present tense.

Sometime in these days the canoe ^{moved} took them ~~through~~ out of winter into ^{not-winter} ~~spring~~. No calendar would have shown ~~it~~ ^{the day,} and the moment itself

Way a breeze begins, return of air in push against next

was ~~as~~ untraceable as the atom-point at which a breeze first sets into motion. The alteration was no less definite for that. Ferns had begun to unroll green from their winter rust. In wet places of the forest came the bloom of skunk cabbage, its butter-gold flame of blossom and smelling like burnt sugar. Salmon had begun their turn... (?) To the north, the strains had begun within the Alaskan glaciers which months later would calve icebergs.... On the rivers, Yukon and Stikene and OO and OO, breakup was that much nearer...

fur reads

Geese + other birds Smarry birds?

[Account it] in scores of ^{stirrings,} ~~ways,~~ the long coast had begun to ^{engender} ~~stir~~ with spring.

stirrings

engender

describe a day, or half-day
- birds
- forest
- mood

written
3-15-81

The paddles dipped, glistened wet on the forward ^{reach} end of the stroke, dipped again.

Braaf ^{hap. haphazardly} ~~every so often~~ hummed. That he seemed to have no notion of tune whatsoever did not matter to the situation. His random buzzes irked Wennberg, which made them their own justification.

irritated
just/d

Karlsson constantly looked ahead as he paddled, as though he could pull the horizon of water nearer with his eyes.

In Wennberg's armwork there was none of Karlsson's thrift nor Braaf's minimum attention; just the resigned plod of a man wishing he were anywhere else.

The canoe rode higher in the water now, without Melander. Without, too, the food supply, which was fast dwindling.

If anything, green crowded more thickly to the tideline than ever.

When crows and ravens flew into this forest, they disappeared as if
gulped.

Poise

The shoreline mountains and ridges were as if in ~~an~~ a state of arrest;
awaiting the next flow of existence, the next pose to assume ~~in~~ when the
geologic clock ~~ticked~~^{chimed} again.

chimed

~~No longer could they risk~~

~~They could no longer afford to travel by night. The risk of~~

~~In these waters, peril of~~

had to gamble,

rock or tiderip was too great--greater, they ~~thought~~ ^{gambled}, than the chance of natives. Karlsson and Wennberg were agreed that bays and river mouths were where the natives habitated. Aproach these with care, hide out during the day and slip past at night, they decided.

One thing helped: they at last were on a gentler slope, so to ~~say~~ say, ~~speak~~ of the precipitous coast. Coves were frequent. The timber still came like a ^{green} waterfall over the rim of the continent, but stopped now a beach's-width from the ocean. The truce zone ^{which} Karlsson and Wennberg gratefully sank to, each night.

The offshore, however, was spiked with more rocks than the coast farther north. Seastacks and reefs were constant; this portion of shore looked like the outlying vigorous mountain ruins of the ~~younger~~ coast behind them.

to the north.

They came ashore each dusk like old women stiff in the knees.

Wennberg encouraged a fire while Karlsson put together whatever could pass ~~it~~ as a meal. Only after they had food in them could they face the canoe chores, the sheltering...

"Fear the goat from the front, the horse from the rear, and man
from all sides," ^{ran a saying of} the Sitka Russians. Now Karlsson watched Wennberg...

If he could have watched him from within sleep-shut eyelids, he would

have ^{done.}

Written 3-10-81

the first
It is told that, in another corner of the Pacific, when ~~white~~
exploring ship from Europe
explorers first appeared to the aborigines of Australia, the aborigines
registered no surprise, nor even any interest. The Endeavour, out of
Deptford(?)--this was Cook's ship of 0000-0000, another of his adroit
clambers to the ~~the~~ ends of the Pacific--stood 35 yards long and
with a cloud of canvas. A few fishermen in canoes did not even look
up at the ship. A woman ashore gave it a glance, "expressed neither
surprise nor concern," and ~~lit~~ lit a fire to cook dinner. Not until
the English sailors came ashore in small boats did the aborigines
react to them. Apparently the ship had been "too strange, too
monstrous, to be comprehended." The aborigines were entranced by
dream--"all that was unknown or not physically present at any given
moment was referred to as being 'in the dreaming'. On their own
ledge of the Pacific, Karlsson and Wennberg were entering their own
dreaming...

Karlsson's shot struck the seal in the head, dropping it before it could lurch off the tidal shelf into the water. (Or: have it quivering in death, possibly toppling toward water, and the men rushing for it?)

Braaf ^{rose} ~~got up~~ and stepped to the right of the horn of rock from which Karlsson had shot. He made his first climbing stride across the neck of rock when surf burst in front of him and a white weight of water tossed itself against him. Off balance, Braaf fell backward into the tidal trough.

~~The~~ rifle, thought Karlsson as he clambered ~~down~~ toward the trough, Wennberg cursing behind him, reach him with the rifle,

rifle to him

pull him up...



The trough sloshed Braaf wildly, banged him against its sides. He grabbed with both hands, but the mussels and barnacles slashed his hands and he could not get a grip. Then the tide was tossing him again.

The footing along the top of the trough was treacherous; Karlsson and Wennberg were like men on ^{soapsone} ~~ice~~ as they tried to get close to Braaf. All the while, he was a moving ^{quarry} ~~target~~, the surge banging him back and forth the length of the trough.

REVISED

salut'm
3 June 18

Shoalwater Bay March 19th 185³

Mr John Orvis Waterman
Editor, Oregon Weekly Times

2d draft
27 May 18

D^r Sir--On Monday last, as I was riding with my son Jared to examine oyster-beds at the north of our land claim, we found, beside a canoe, two men near to death. We spoke to them, but could not make ourselves understood. We contrived to lift them onto our horses and after taking them to our house and summoning some of the other settlers from around, we finally succeeded in conversing with them. Their history is as follows: In 1850 they engaged to work for the Russian Fur Company seven years, and accordingly embarked, in company with 18 others, and sailed for the northwestern coast, bound for New Archangel. After a residence of nearly two years, they found they could not bear the ill-usage which they were receiving, and determined to make their escape.

change

They were four, who determined on that leave-taking. At a place beyond Vancouver Island, one of their number was killed by the Indians. A second unfortunate was drowned in the descent of the ~~Washington~~ coast between the Strait of Fuca and here. When found, the two who have survived had been in this bay for three days--subsisting on roots and berries. They were much emaciated, and looked the perfect pictures of misery and despair. One of the poor fellows was making a chant to himself, as though in prayer. Their canoe is about twenty feet in length by three in width, sprightly built; and with this they have made a voyage of over 1,000 miles on one of the worst parts of the

second

"Hold me," Karlsson directed Wennberg. The burly man put both arms around Karlsson's knees as Karlsson stretched himself flat, toward the spilling water. He held the rifle at its barrel end, thrust the stock ^{as was sloshed into sight once more.} toward Braaf, "Braaf! Grab! We'll pull..."

Surf ^{splashed} exploded up over Wennberg and Karlsson, both of them ^{clenching} ~~staring~~ their eyes tight against the salt sting. [#] When they ^{could look} ~~looked~~ again, Braaf ^{bar} was past them, on the landward side, his boy's face in a grimace. He seemed to shake his head at them, ^{abruptly} then the tidal surge ~~sucked~~ ^{sucked} back toward the ocean and Braaf ^{was spinning again} ~~whirled~~ past them, his ^{arms supplicating} ~~hands stretching~~ ^{in search} just short of the gunstock. But

...God's bones, ^{this} ~~the~~ ^{it} ~~water~~ ^{never} ~~doesn't~~ ^{behave} the same twice. Have to be quicker, ^{be ready...} "This time, W! ~~Hold~~ ^{Edge me down} ~~Lower me more, there, that'll reach...~~"

1 pair of them

Karlsson and Wennberg ~~incredulously~~ ^{seaward} stared toward the ^{at peak} corner of the trough, braced ^{his} themselves for the riptide's return and the hurl of spray across them once more. ^{arrived, crashing along trough walls,} It came, the hard spatter, the runnels down their faces, now eyes could open again...

This time the tide had not brought Braaf back with it. ^{Where...?"} "Braaf, where...?" ^{wildly} "Braaf!" shouted Wennberg. Karlsson scrambled for the ocean edge, banging knees and hands on rough rock, Wennberg lurching after him.

The footing along the top of the trough was ~~re~~ treachery itself;

Karlsson and Wernberg lurched like men on soapstone as they tried

to approach the edge.

Braaf whirled ~~himself into sight~~ ^{below them,} grabbing with both hands at the walls

^{of the} ~~troughside,~~ barnacles and ~~mussels~~ mussels denying him grip and ~~slashing~~ ^{costing him}

~~his hands.~~ ^{skin} This time the tide tossed him from sight ~~seaward,~~ ^{around}

the trough's seaward bend.

out-slash
of
tide

^{knew}
~~was aware that~~
 Karlsson ~~knew~~ he was not so wide a thinker as Melander.

all way to it
 Come to that, he and Braaf and Wennberg together probably were not

that spacious. A man of task, call ^{Karlsson} ~~him~~—the patterns of effort

required to get a job done of most interest to him.

Melander's province of interest had been the entire coastline,
 and whatever joined it ^{over beyond} ~~around~~ the bend of the world. That was all
 very well, but Karlsson had the instinct that a tinier realm was
 equally vital; the circlet of strength where the palm of a hand
 went round the haft of a paddle.

Death's credence comes to us in small costs, mounting and mounting.

*which
mt &
mt*

*hovered,
maggled
at them
A?*

The new absence presented itself constantly to the paddling men. Lack

of a reminding word to Braaf when he made his ~~last~~ habitual dawdle

in shifting his paddle. Loss of the sailor-habited scrutiny of the

more

water around, every chance of rock or shoal or current commented on.

The hours unpunctuated by "aye?"

~~No "aye?" punctuating the hours.~~

Death's credence comes to us in small costs, mounting and mounting.

capacity only for the disabled:
At first in the canoe, ~~there simply was the hugeness of fact.~~

greatness

Melander dead, mainbeam of the escape collapsed, the long coast

burping down ~~a~~ ^{the} ~~life~~ ^{of one of them} as an owl would a dormouse. Like wild new hearts
the repeating shock of
it hammered in ~~the~~ Braaf and Wennberg and Karlsson, so profound a

^{. flood of it}
change they could not ~~get it~~ channel ~~ed~~ in their minds, only feel the
rush ~~es~~ and ~~eddies~~ ^{spill} of it ^{careening} racing within them. After, it seemed that ~~the~~
^{overpowered}
~~canoe~~ ^{must have} sensed out its own course; ~~during their blind time,~~ when ~~it~~ ^{the thought}

at last forced its way to one of them--Karlsson, it happened to be--

that to pull on paddles was not enough, that they needed a compass heading, the

needle showed them to be ^{precisely} ~~exactly~~ just where they ought. It was in the ~~the~~ pause

for that, Braaf ^{burrowing} digging the compass from the stowage beneath Melander,

Wennberg passing ^{the small instrument} ~~it~~ forward to Karlsson, when the absence of Melander

^{leach into} began to ~~come home~~ ^{as it would for days after.} to them, Loss of his sailor-habited scrutiny of

the water around, every chance of rock or ~~shoal~~ shoal or current

commented on. Lacking ~~of~~ reminding word to Braaf when he made his

habitual dawdle in shifting his paddle. The hours unpunctuated now

by "aye?"

quietly

more?

#?

Near mid-morning, the canoe ashore at the ^{southward} next island, the
canoemen stood looking at the folded-forward body of Melander. During
the crossing Wennberg had cursed periodically and profoundly but now
said nothing, seemed to be gritting against whatever was on its way
next. Braaf too was wordless, and ^{as buttermilk,} ~~very~~ pale. Karlsson it was who
came first out of the silence: "We need to bury him."

↓ With Karlsson's ax, the gaff, and the cooking pot, they managed
to gouge a shallow trench in the forest floor. Wrapped in sailcloth,
Melander was put into the thin grave. Wennberg and Braaf hesitated when
Karlsson began to tromp down the dirt, then joined in. From the beach
they brought rocks and piled them onto the gravetop to discourage
animals. ~~Then they returned to the canoe and pushed off south.~~

Something
new again!
a kind of
shame

Karlsson and Braaf looked to Wennberg. The broad man shook his head. "I don't believe in that ~~tripe~~^{guff} any more. Particularly after this."

"Don't do it for the words," Braaf murmured. "Do the words for Melander."

Wennberg hesitated, then the psalm ~~came~~^{started} from him in a low rumble: "...A thousand years in ~~thy~~^{thy} sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night...we spend our years as a tale that is told...So teach us to number our days..."

The next bad time was quick to come.

no9

Crossing the campsite, ~~the blacksmith~~ ^{Wennberg} passed behind where Braaf was sitting, stopped, and looked down. "What's ~~this~~ ^{here} on the back of you, then?"

Braaf ~~looked dully around at Wennberg.~~ ^{glanced up toward} the blacksmith. Slipping his arms from the Aleut parka, he brought the garment around to have a look. Small dark splats, as if a rusty rain had fallen, showed across the shoulders and the middle of the back.

~~"Braaf's eyes were on the stains where Melander's blood had showered forward. Braaf gulped, and twin lanes of tears pathed his face."~~
The three men stared at the stains where Melander's blood had showered forward. Braaf gulped, and twin lanes of tears pathed his face.

Wennberg shifted awkwardly. "Maybe it'll wash..."

Braaf choked out, "Say anything, either of you, and I'll ~~slit~~ ^{gut you.}

~~you loose from life."~~

Later Karlsson was not sure what the signal had been between him and Wennberg, how it was that they mutually walked off up the beach away from Braaf.

REVISED

(4 min. to here) 3

elsewhere along the coastal tracery of Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and indeed into the life of another man--this is all a journey I have awaited for a decade, ever since I began to ^{grow} aware of how ~~deeply~~ ^{powerfully,} mortally, I ~~have invested myself~~ ^{am bonded to} on this elusive ~~shore~~ ^{last margin of the land.}

wave
 A season of frontier, this winter will be for me. ^{of} exploring, stepping in search of the paths of westering impulse that ^{pull} ~~push~~ across America's girth of plains and over its continental ^{summit} ~~spine~~ and at last ^{must} ~~ship~~ off here at the surf of the Pacific. Those paths that for so many years carried Swan,

and flew to Queen Charlotte Islands where he was told good land could be found. The butterfly, a creature as big as a house accompanied him and would fly up in the air and when he saw any good land he would unfold his proboscis and point with it.

Just the way, Edinso drives the point home with a tap of mockery, Johnny was going with me showing me places.

To the astonishment of Braaf and Karlsson, Wennberg ~~suggested~~ volunteered
the notion that Karlsson now have charge of the maps, and the voyage
decisions. # The blacksmith spoke it reluctantly. "We can't ~~chase~~
each other like cats. Someway, we ^{need} have to make miles along this
~~God-condemned~~ ~~godamned~~ coast. I regret the day I ever ^{tossed} put in with you ^{pair} ~~two~~ or him"--
a jerk of the head toward Melander's grave in the forest--"but here I
am. Wherever ^{in hell} I am."

Karlsson looked to Braaf.

It took the young thief an instant to realize he was being polled.

He blinked and said: "You've to do it. I can't read the maps and

Wennberg couldn't lead a goose to water. You've to do it."

Karlsson

They made early camp. All words seemed to have gone with Melander until Wennber, crossing the campsite, stopped and looked down at the seated Braaf. "What's this on the back of you, then?"

Slipping his arms from the Aleut parka, Braaf brought the garment around to have a look. Small dark splats, as if a rusty rain had fallen, showed across the shoulders and the middle of the back.

Braaf stared at the stains where Melander's blood had showered forward onto him. He gulped, and twin lanes of tears pathed his face.

Karlsson and Wennberg ~~shifted~~ shifted awkwardly.

Braaf choked out, "Say anything, either of you, and I'll slit you loose from life."

✓

Crossing the campsite, Wennberg stopped and looked down at the seated Braaf. "What's this on the back of you?"

Braaf slipped his arms from the Aleut parka, brought the garment around to have a look. Small dark splats, as if a rusty rain had fallen, showed at several places across the shoulders and the middle of the back.

"Blood. ~~From~~ Melander¹⁵."

Braaf stared at the stains, then gulped, and twin ^{lines} slides of tears [→] ^{pathed} streaked his face.

Karlsson and Wennberg shifted awkwardly.

Braaf choked out, "Say anything, either of you, and I'll slit you loose from life."

Here stood a new style of coast to any they had seen yet. The three of them were at the inshore edge of a rock shelf high and flat as a quay--~~not a quay~~ although no one but nature had use ~~of~~ for a quay some four hundred paces long and half that in width. In the blue and brown afternoon, the ocean ^{tossing?} bright around the sober ~~shore~~ coastal rock and the seastacks daggering up offshore, the huge queer natural wharf lay thinly sheeted with water, like puddles after rain. ~~Braaf~~

By now Braaf had tides in his bones alongside the weather. "The high ~~water~~ ^{nodding at the remnant pools.} drowns all this, then," he ~~answered~~ ^{murmured}, "We'll need be quick."

Even as he ^{first} spoke, waves were trying to leg themselves up over the ^{seaward} ~~inshore~~ edge of the shelf.

of in coming tide

"Quick we'll be," Karlsson ^{responded} ~~answered~~.

and was in motion while the ~~words~~ still touched the air. "Over here, ^{horn of} that rock."

He led the other two onto the tidal plateau, to where a rock formation the size and shape of ~~of~~ a boatsail bladed up. Beside it, from sight of the seals, Karlsson studied out ambush. To the right, the ocean with unimaginable patience had forced a crevasse--a curved tide trough broader than a man would want to try to jump, and swirling harshly with each surge of surf into it. A short fist of rock jutted

on?

canal

No approach



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Sometime in these days the canoe ^{had} slid them out of winter into not-winter.

~~No calendar cites the definite day, and the moment itself is~~ quite can catch the time, and the cluster of moments themselves

as impossible to single out as ~~the~~ ^{those} atom^s of air which push ~~ed~~ against

~~the~~ ^{have} next and ~~has~~ begun a breeze. Yet you ~~know~~ the happening ^{is purely evident:} the rain-

Northwest trance is lifting from the coast and pulling new life in after it.

Ferns unroll green from their winter rust. Up from the low dampnesses

of the forest lick the bloom^s of skunk cabbage, ^{with} butter-gold flame

of blossom and scent like burnt sugar. Far out in the Pacific salmon

reverse ~~the~~ compass, ~~ignominious~~ make their instinctual veer from underocean

pastures back toward the rivers where they were spawned, and must now

spawn in turn. Seals ^{bob} ~~pop~~ forth in the offshore swells. Baja

California is departed by gray whales, the Bering Sea is to know them

next. Geese and ducks write

their calligraphy of flight northward. To the north too, Alaska's

glaciers creak with the first of the strains which months later will

calve icebergs into the azure bays. Within the white rivers, Yukon and

Stikine and Susitna and Alsek, Kuskokwim and Kvichak and Nushagak, currents begin to pry at their winter roofs of ice.

In stirrings tiny and mighty, the restive great coast was engendering spring.

family

not?

has been

is it to know them

#

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In the rivers which cut this shoreline and in the streams which feed down from the mountains into the rivers, a ^{chick} fist-sized bird called the ouzel is common. ~~A slaty, peg-tailed bird, its look~~ ^{in color,} ~~the ouzel's~~ ^{may be said}

and behavior are those of a very fat wren perplexed about something overhead: every few seconds the bird bobs, as if flinching. Evidently the motion is not flinch, however, but merely practice of its livelihood, which is to walk the bottoms of the rivers and streams, feeding busily as it goes.

delivered

The ouzel seems to be a hydraulic adaptee: the flow of current ^{down} pins it ^{clamber} into place during its ~~route~~ ^{route} beneath the riffles. In the way that the ouzel shops along the cellar of the river, the canoeists too ~~are~~ were now held into route by improbable pressures. The weather over them, ocean beside them, forest solid behind the shore edge--tight as a flume, their course was held ~~for~~ them by the powers of the coast.

Evidently a hydraulic

at the end of the tidal trough, ~~then~~ ^{bulged} along the inside of its wrist,
 directly in front of them, ~~lay~~ a low hump of rock.

Karlsson made the short crawl to the hump, Wennberg just behind
 him on the left and Braaf on the right. They hunched low as Karlsson
 peered to the seals.

The shot would be almost a hundred paces. Karlsson disliked the
 distance, but tried to amend for it a bit by singling out ^{the} seal
 lying ~~inshore~~ farthest inshore, a 00--bachelor--bullied ~~into~~
 solitude by the ~~head~~ bull of the herd.

^{luck's}
 "Tickle the chin," ~~of luck,~~ Braaf said softly as Karlsson aimed.

^{smoke?}
 "Or it's air soup tonight," Wennberg muttered.

desc
 seals -
 and
 behind
 them

Sometime in these days the canoe ^{slid} ~~slips~~ them out of winter

pieces

into not-winter. No calendar shows the ^{definite} day, and the moment itself

is as ^{impossible to single out} ~~untraceable~~ as the way a ^{instant} breeze begins, the first atom of

air in push against the next until all is motion. The alteration

is no less definite for that. Ferns began to unroll green from

rain-trance begins to lift

their winter rust. Up from the low dampnesses of the forest licked

the bloom of skunk cabbage, its butter-gold flame of blossom and the

scent like burnt sugar. Salmon had begun their turn, their instinctual

veer from underocean pastures toward the rivers where they were

spawned, and would spawn in turn. (?) Seals and otters...

Gray whales were departing Baja California...Geese and OO...

To the north, the strains had begun with the Alaskan glaciers which

months later would calve icebergs into the bays...On the rivers, ^{white}

hibernating water is arising

Yukon and Stikene and OO and OO, breakup was that much nearer...

In scores of stirrings, the long northwest coast had begun to engender

has

spring.

you
you
about-
become
aware

is
engendering

somehow
give
location
of P & T

The Indian arrived at the Port Townsend customs house with an item and a tale. Downcoast from the village his people called Hosett, while hunting seals he had come upon the body of a white person. The native used the word for "boy," and it was not until he added the description of a light fluff of beard that the customs collector realized a grown man was being described. The Indian had quickly buried the ^{corpse,} ~~body,~~ in hope that the spirit had not yet got out of it, ~~first clipped proof for his tale.~~ but ~~as was done in these instances~~ He handed the customs collector a forelock of straw-colored hair.

The customs collector knew that the weather since Christmas had been violent against vessels trying to ^{cross the bar into River.} ~~enter~~ the Columbia, The Merrithew, the Mindoro, the Vandalia, the Bordoux--three barks and a brig, they had gone to grief all been ~~lost~~ along that coast in these weeks. Taking up his pen, the collector wrote ^{the native his paper of reward:} ~~a rewarding "paper"~~ for the Indian: Wha-latl Asabuy, has assisted the duties of this District of Customs Collection by his

cross bar

some
trial

and the

Hall's
own
weather

report of..." He then turned to his daybook and began Braaf's ~~only~~ the official epitaph of Braaf:

epitaph: "A body, supposed from one or another of the vessels wrecked,

during this fearful winter, has come ashore, ^{that} --It is of an unknown young man, light hair,
round faced..."

official
epitaph
73

no 41

north of Cape Disappointment

REVISED

was
hunting
itself

Gaps of daybreak had begun on the eastern horizon when Karlsson came awake. By the time Braaf and Wennberg were up and breakfast was into the three of them, the islands and mountains all around the channel had grown to sight. They began to paddle, and on the eastern horizon now were strips of light as if chinking had fallen out between mountains and clouded sky. The dawn warmed from silver to OO yellow, to peach. Then the clouds, cut free by the light, began to shift away, out of sight over the eastern mountains. Karlsson's first day as vicar was going to be stormless.

They were in a part of the coast where the Pacific got a good pry, its broad channels driven northeastward between islands like fat wedges. The next of these would be Milbanke Sound, no more than 0 miles across but the first sea-test of the lessened canoe crew.

First, though, there was the day in the channel to be got through.

They ~~looked~~^{eyed} around ~~them~~ constantly, apprehensive of another canceload of natives. This too wore at their stamina, and Karlsson called an

early halt for lunch, and again for the night. Melander could stretch

men beyond what they thought were their ~~outmost~~^{heavenmost} limits, Karlsson already

knew he was going to have to ration, when possible, ~~the~~^{his} demands on

~~his~~^{the} other two.

Karlsson was at the end of his last map now. The northmost nub of Vancouver Island was all that showed, and it had no more utility... It would have had, though, for Melander. A thread of route ~~sk~~ led out of Queen Charlotte Sound along the eastern shore of the island, and there at the prow of Vancouver, Cape Scott, Melander would have steered the canoe into this sheltered route--and at the southern end of Vancouver, ~~that~~ such route would have brought them to a new Hudson's Bay post, Fort Victoria. There the Swedes would have been at the whim of the governor, to be returned to the Russians or let find passage to Europe.

None of that eventuated, however, for Karlsson knew only to stay with the coast, and at Cape Scott Karlsson, ^{without hesitation} headed them down the west shore.

coulda thought further

understair

under
equator

a belowstairs
~~an understairs~~

--the year, 1770--

Into a ~~basement~~ corner of the Pacific nosed a vessel named the

Endeavour, ~~in 1770~~. The Endeavour was out of Deptford on the 00

and ~~was~~ captained by James Cook, ~~out~~^{off} on another of his adroit

just ?

clambers to the edge of the earth. The ~~Australian~~ inlet into which

Cook now sailed was [^{change} to be called Botany Bay] and it was a momentous

history-
turning

instant, the ^{arrival} coming of white exploration to an unknown Australian

coast. ~~The~~ Thirty-five yards long and flying thunderheads of canvas,

the greatest explorer of his era on the foredeck, the Endeavour

^{into Botany Bay.} swept ~~in~~. The black people on the shore and in the bay registered--

pranced
queered

nothing. Fishermen in ^{digout} canoes did not even look up at the passing

ship. A woman ashore passed it a glance, "expressed neither surprise

nor concern," and squatted to light her dinner fire. Not until the

English sailors began to oar their way to shore in small boats did

the aborigines react to them, and begin to combat them. The ship

They made a long day of it, as if this coast were new footing for them. They passed a line of seastacks which extended offshore like an avenue of castles in ruins. Then, in late afternoon, rain took the shoreline from them and they guided by off-shore rocks. They came along the outer edge of a timbered island, ~~Karlsson~~ intending to turn to shore there. But rocks bulked in the cove, stone knuckles everywhere. "The island," Karlsson said, and they put to shore on its inland side.

(Next morning, the map dispute?)

Braaf pointed out to sea. Craft were there, a number of them,
blade-forms strewn on the water.

~~with~~ Karlsson put the spyglass up to his right eye.

"Canoes," he said. "Big ones, with something in tow. Stay from
sight."

Karlsson

He focused on the canoes, puzzled at their cluster. Then--

"That's a whale."

~~"Whale"~~ They're towing a whale."

"Whale?"

~~"What?"~~ Wennberg was disbelieving. "Where'd they get a whale?"

all disabled
no # *come down with* *glass*
~~Let~~ You've got the vapors, Karlsson. Let me see that ~~thing~~ *glass*."

Wennberg focused in turn, but by now the glass was not entirely
made out
needed. It could be ~~seen~~ by all three of them that the canoe fleet
was bringing in a glistening length, buoyed with floats that looked
like puffed-up seals, which could only be Leviathan.

Wennberg, ~~still~~ still not wanting to accept: "But how..."

Karlsson had studied again with the glass. "~~There~~ there laying up over
These Kolosh
the prows ~~harpoons~~. ~~They~~ paddle out and kill whales."

Karlsson now felt a dry clot form at the top of his throat as he
watched the long canoes ~~six~~ *six*, seven, eight altogether, with triple
paddles which cut the water so quickly on each side of the craft, and
two further men,
~~the other men~~ at either end of the six paddlers, harpooner forward and

steersman aft, who watched the ocean like fish hawks. ^{Rare for him,} ~~He~~ Braaf was
perturbed.
openly ~~frightened.~~ Wennberg tried to look scornful, but Karlsson
saw him try to swallow his own pebble of fear as well... ^{much of} If this
portion of the coast was populated with these sea hunters...

The canoes angled south of the watching Swedes, ^{at last} out of sight
around a high-standing island just off the tideline.

"So?" This was ^{put} ~~said~~ by Braaf, in honest puzzlement.

"Yes, so." Karlsson was ready to go on when Wennberg blurted:

"This is a how-d'ye-do we don't need."

"Yes, but we have it anyway. One thing, we can do about it.

travel by night."

Braaf chewed at the corner of his mouth at this news. Wennberg
tested out argument: "These whale-chasers, don't you suppose they're
like the Kolosh, they'll lay up now for a feast and the like? What
about if we paddle wide of them here, swing ~~into~~ ^{into} shore down the coast?"

"Maybe they'll feast, and maybe this is a season they hunt and hunt.

Would you rather risk some dark, or meeting those canoes?"

"Dark," voted Braaf instantly, "and the blacker the better."

"Dark," Wennberg grated out. "These fish-fuckers down this coast,
why can't they squat on their asses and look wise all day like the Kolosh?"

"Doesn't look just right."

Wanted
"We don't give a rat's shit how it looks, just so it's shelter." *roof and walls.*

Wennberg,
"Wennberg, it's not."

a further
The next fifty yards dissolved the cabin profile entirely. The *"You're crazy!"*

green roof roughened into growth of ~~gr~~ 00 brush, atop a great gray butt of cedar driftlog; the log's weather-silvered side, tall as the men, dropped pretense of gray cabin wall.

Karlsson swallowed, felt the ache sharpen behind his eyes. For once, Wennberg was too disheartened to be furious. He stood and shook his head, like an ox discouraging flies. "Why couldn't it've been..."

*Mast paint,
he called it
w*

"What?"

"Mast paint. Melander called pea soup that."

"Melander." Wennberg gave a half-hearted snort.

"Take a moment not to be a prick and tell me a thing, will-

~~you,~~ Wennberg?"

"You little pile of..."

"The pair of you, douse it," said Karlsson.

"My regrets, blacksmith," Braaf offered. "You ~~don't have to~~ ^{needn't} take

a moment not to be a prick. Just tell me this, you've swallowed gospel

in your time: where is he?"

"Where's...? Braaf, are you ~~out of...?~~ ^{moonstruck or what...?"}

"No, just tell me: where's Melander right now?"

Wennberg squinted as if Braaf ~~the~~ ^{had asked him the cubits} plan of the universe. "Melander's

buried, you helped... ~~Oh.~~ You mean, where's he...gone to?" Braaf bobbed yes.

~~bobbed his head in a~~ ^{translation} ~~nodded.~~ Wennberg appeared no more comfortable with this query than with

~~original query.~~
~~the previous one.~~

^{well, the pastor's say}
"It's, it's a matter of how he met judgment, that's all."

waited. Wennberg

Braaf blinked and continued to look at ~~him~~ Wennberg. The broad

man tried again:

"Look at it this way. You remember the balance-scales at New

draw me breath

Just off the eastern shore stood a long line of fishing smacks with white, white sails.

As the canoe men stared, the fleet topped and was taken back by the water ~~to be refashioned~~ for the next trick of surf. This time, ~~instead of~~ ^{not} phantom boats ~~it was~~ ^{but} round white islets, an archipelago of froth.

Karlsson considered that they had seen wild surf so far on this voyage, and they had, but this high-thrown whiteness was another matter. The power of Queen Charlotte Sound seemed to have a need to climb into the air. They would need to keep the canoe well out into the water, away from that turmoil.

The sun had stayed with them. Wisps of clouds hung above the shore, and a few thin streamers out over the ocean, westward, but the Sound itself was clarified in the light. The water was blue-black, an elegant ink with every detail of swirl perfectly shown. Mountains were not so high here, except a few on the eastern horizon; this was a lower, more rumpled shore than they had yet seen, and the effect was to emphasize the Sound itself, its dark water, and the low blue line on the horizon, far across, which was Vancouver Island.

Short boats
fantasy was
As they
watched,
the
cottage
was gone.

rounded?

burned pure,

REVISED

Not since ~~taking~~ their leave of New Archangel had they paddled at night. The memory of that did not go far to reassure Braaf and Wennberg. Ordinarily night was Braaf's time, the thief's ^{familiar} soulmate quilt. But here ^{sense} in the canoe, Karlsson could ~~feel~~ Braaf's distrust of the dark, feel how his paddling was more tentative, grudging, than ever.

metal
room

Wennberg ^{meantime} ~~in contrast~~ seemed in every hurry to ^{yank} ~~pull~~ them through blackness single-handed. His paddling was a near-flail until Karlsson drew a deep breath and said: ^{deuced} "Wait, the both of you, we need to beat our wings together. At my word: now...now...now..."

"Cape Scott, off there," said Karlsson. The western jut of coast and broken wall of rock offshore from it matched the profile at the lower left corner of the map across his lap. The northmost nub of Vancouver Island.

...So now I go blind, and say that I see. Braaf, Wennberg, forgive this, but I have to aim us as if I know the shot...

Karlsson resisted an urge to hurl the map overboard, rolled it and replaced it into the waterproofed canister, and ~~picked~~ picked up his paddle. "Come back to us, Braaf," he said to be saying something, "and ^{may}~~might~~ as well bring your paddle when you do."

stapled
-10

"I chose wrong," Melander once had told the blacksmith, "in bringing you instead of your forge and anvil. They'd have been easier to drag along this coast than you are, Wennberg." Karlsson remembered that now and silently chorused with Melander's irony.

K monolog - ital

Braaf was the scale-weight of the three of us. With him ^{here} ~~among us~~,
Wennberg dared do nothing. Turn on me, he had Braaf to worry about;
contend with Braaf, there'd ~~still~~ be me. But now. It has to be
the two of us against this coast because neither of us can last
alone. Wennberg is no ox, he can see that, if his rage doesn't get
in the way. But how to keep him tamped down...

tamped
down

Karlsson awoke, as usual these mornings, to the peg of warmth jutting

poke

up along his stomach. "Pride of the morning," Melander had called

such ~~these~~ night-born erections. "If your britches don't bulge at dawn,

it's a scant day ahead, aye?" Scant days evidently arrived with full-

Even...

rigged longings of their own. These were nights of dream for Karlsson,

~~chasing one another~~ matters going on in his head, busy and alarming, people of gone years

Dream seemed to be a sentinel against sleep.

putting their faces inside his skull. All of it brewed through the

night into the wanting which he would awake to.

wanting mood

Just now Karlsson wanted a woman and he

greatly

wanted not to be captaining this canoe voyage. He was, in fact,

in a mood to want any number of things that were nowhere in the

offing along this trackless coast, could he have brought them to

mind, but those particular two took up all the space. Those otter-

smooth ~~female~~ ^{woman} maneuvers, Melander again in charge of fate, memories

expand

conjoined...Karlsson lay on his side, waiting out the longing; then

*loincloth
down fire
of*

got up and went into the forest to ~~let his water~~ ^{have a pee.}

*have a pee
in one*

*niche:
trickle
of warmth*

*galloping
clapping
after one
another*

simultaneously

Weary though he was, Karlsson dreamt often these nights.

At least, by daybreak he had memory of extravagant events which must have been dreams. (^{any} ~~The~~ in-the-dark occurrences which had to do with women, he knew with regretable certainty to be dreams.) Sometimes the canoe was being endlessly paddled and getting nowhere, sometimes Karlsson was under the falling beads of water in the Queen Charlottes forest once more. Or ~~again~~ again and again this; the carved columns rising in the forest of his brain, the dead-eyed creature-faces stacked one on another, bear and beaver and eagle and--human? Melander has stepped over beside the big-beaked face. Together Melander and the beaked thing look back at Karlsson. Karlsson tells Melander it is time to push on in the canoe. "Aye," replies Melander, but still stands there. Karlsson repeats that it is time to embark. "Aye," says Melander again, unmoving.

"There!" Wennberg was pointing.

The cabin sat on the far side of the marsh from them, green-roofed and hunkered low.

pair of
The two men plunged into the muck, found they had to veer inland for better footing, and slogged rapidly as they could. Wennberg began ~~sk~~ hallooming, his calls loud and lonely in the gray stillness. *hoarse*

No answer came. "Got to be someone about, got to," Wennberg panted. Karlsson concentrated on lifting his feet through the muskeg.

They were within a hundred yards of the cabin before Karlsson let himself say what had been forming in his mind. "Doesn't look right."

"We don't give a rat's shit how it looks, just so it's shelter..."

"Wennberg, it's not."

The cabin profile dissolved entirely in the next fifty yards. The green roof could be seen to be a brush growth, atop a great gray butt of driftlog; the log's weather-silvered side, as tall as the men, was what had looked like gray cabin wall. ~~Why couldn't it have been...~~

Even Wennberg was too disheartened to be furious. He stood and shook his head, like an ox slowly fighting flies. "Why couldn't it've been..."

REVISED

Gulls were drifting up a current over the headland to the south.

Scree lay under the gray cliff, ^{a wash} ~~side~~ of rock reaching toward the ocean. This portion of coast attracted bright tides, comber after

comber breaking white from the swales of deeper water. All this,

the less vehement weather, the beaches ^{to land the canoe,} ~~in a way~~ were promising

signs; there was a feel that the canoeemen had come down from heights

to lowlands. But then the matter pivoted: ~~the~~ whale-hunting natives,

the hard ^{plowing} ~~going~~ of the canoe through the troughs of surf, ~~the~~ openness

of the ~~camping~~ coves...

treated

"You think you're too keen to be among us roughcast folk, you've had that about you since we ~~thought so all along~~ quit New Archangel. Your heart's as fancy as Melander's tongue was. Afraid I'll smudge off on you, ^{are you,} or that fifteen-fingers Braaf will pick your pocket? Better be afraid of what's worth being afraid of, Karlsson. This journey'll have two ends for you. When we're ~~reached~~ within touch of Astoria, I'll kill you."

more "You can make the try."

*sometime
then."
was
gaining
steadily
"S' time
was
I'll kill
you."*

long fingers

Wennberg would not go farther along the bay edge. "No use to it," he said dully. "Just more muck. Go on if you need to..."

The blacksmith slumped against the big driftlog, lowered himself until he was sitting with his back to the wood.

worried
Karlsson briefly that Wennberg would wander from the log, but he had seemed to understand when Karlsson told him he'd be back, not to move.

Karlsson aimed inland, away from the tideflat, and wallowed through dune grass which came to his waist. It was the color of a faded wheatfield, the rolling lines of grassed dunes extending parallel with the bay.

He made his way north to where the dune grass gave way to beach. As he went across the sand to the water's edge the beach crept in front of him, a slow crawl like tan snakes as the sand blew in ropey slinking patterns.

Then the bay entrance: instead of surf stacking against the shore four and five waves deep as had been common on this coast, here the whitecaps flowed and flowed into the bay, as if breaking into stampede.

Karlsson looked steadily at the breakers, willing against what he knew to be the truth flashing from them. He and Wennberg were not strong enough to paddle out against such flow,

Truth rolling
& twisting
inexorably in
them

Never
~~And~~ in
this
left in
whatever
candle -> of it as
and left to
them

4 ... This was Melander's line of country, the ocean. Not mine.

Sitka Sound, a millpond to this. If this coast was other, maybe we'd be walking out. My journey, that'd have been. ~~Able hunt,~~

to
Forest, you can make

your way through, sort it for yourself as you go. In Skane I could have been led ~~blindfolded~~ *with a sack over my head* into any wood and found my way straight out.

put one foot in front of another, you know you get somewhere. ~~But~~

But water moves, can't keep a fix on it. ~~I wonder if it~~

~~Melander understood this ocean. I never have.~~ It is a kind of night to me. *all of us but Melander, this ocean.* See it, but not into it.

~~can be~~ ^{at} deep as Melander said, Some places, deep as ~~these~~ ^o mountains

are high, ~~he said.~~ ~~Well,~~ take his word for it, *Thank you.*

~~out here,~~ stroke and stroke and stroke. ~~I wonder, if my strokes~~ *the work*

with this paddle had been ax strokes, how many trees'd been brought

down. How many forests, more like. ~~We~~ could've built our own

stockade, called it New Stockholm. ^{No,} Melander in charge, ~~probably~~

it'd be...
New Gotland. ~~Melander on ship that time...~~

*all you
candle is
chase after it,
keep*

. . . This was Melander's line of country, the ~~the~~ ocean, not mine. He savvied water, but it's like night to me. See it but not into it. Forest you can sort for yourself as you go, lead me into any Skane ~~for~~ wood with a meal ^{sack} over my head and ~~find~~ find my way straight out, I could. If this coast was other, we'd maybe be walking out and that'd have been my journey. Able to hunt, choose camp when we wanted, put one foot in front of another, know we're getting somewhere. But not with this ocean, can't keep a fix on it. Can ^{it} be deep as Melander said, some places deep as these mountains are high? Take his word for it, don't go looking...

Deacon's

Karlsson's shot struck the seal ~~in the neck~~ behind the base of its head, severing the animal from life. It jerked slightly then lay as if into deeper doze.

other seal disappear

"Square eye, Karlsson," Braaf congratulated ~~as~~ as he came to his feet and scrambled to the right of the horn of rock ~~from which~~ Karlsson had shot ^{from.} Amid his first climbing stride across the neck of rock, surf burst in front of Braaf and a white weight of water came up over him. Taken off balance, Braaf was slung backward. He put down a hand to halt his fall; it met the ^{wet} slickness of a barnacle colony, and Braaf ^{slid} fell into the tidal trough.

Instantly water buried him. ¶ Karlsson and Wennberg were ^{twins of} ~~double~~ disbelief. Braaf had been ^{snatched} gulped like a gnat ^{down} ~~into~~ a frog. ¶ Then his head bobbed through the foam; for a breath-space, his eyes ^{held} had the ^{offended} look they'd had when Wennberg ^{is boat} clattered the spittoon in the officers' quarters; and ^{now} the ~~insurgent~~ ^{insurg} tide ^{shot him} sluiced out of view around the bend of the trough.

→ Rifle

Karlsson clambered down toward the trough, Wennberg at his heels, cursing blue.

... Rifle, Reach the rifle to him, only chance...

Because of Melander's sketch in the dirt and the knowledge that their destination lay south, Karlsson had imagined that the escape route dropped straight as a plumb-line; that they would go along the coast like men shinnying down a rope. It was a revolution in his thinking to learn from the maps that they were canoeing east as well as south; that the traced route veered sideways through the boxes of measurement--Karlsson was puzzled by those, wondering why they were deeper than wide, ~~ix~~ why they weren't simply square--on the paper.

So they ^{canoe} came, like ^{an attacking} a chess piece, through meridians as well as parallels, down the North Pacific.

Wennberg joyfully would have been back at his forge. Any forge, anywhere. The glowing charcoal before him, the circle of water ladled around its edge to concentrate the heat. Then hammer and metal in their heavy dance, the fire-flakes falling from the metal as he imposed shape on it. Wennberg went in his mind time and again to that morning when he ^{strode up} ~~came~~ behind Braaf in the parade ground--and each of these times, he veered yards away from the laden thief.

But this was like trying to undo a fire in the forge: pulling coals out in hope they would become fresh charcoal again. Indeed, Wennberg's intense sort which ~~wished~~ desired wishing was of the ~~sort~~ [↑] to reverse a forge fire all the way to living tree. And made, he knew, as much sense. In this life paths cross paths, and there you are, tangled up with a Braaf.

used
already?

The clouds now were not Sitka's ebb and flow, but fat islands that stood on the horizon half a day at a time. It seemed you could ~~hardly~~ navigate by ~~them~~ their position, which likely is what the weather wanted you to think.

*to trick
you
into
thinking*

3-4-81

~~The~~ birds of ^{this shoreline} ~~the coast~~ seemed to have caught motion from the surf,
always bobbing, skittering, dashing off. The slow-striding ravens
of New Archangel were not in it with these darters.

slow-
striding

If they could have bent their vision upward over the coastal bluffs to see what they were traveling on the edge of, it would have appalled them. A sea of mountains, white chop of snow and ice and rock to the limits of the world. Arms of their own ocean, fjords and inlets, felt into this tumbled expanse, an endless grapple of immensities.

*used
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A land, then, entirely ruffled and agitated, and the Pacific meeting it in great flat calm. But that was pretense, as another look from upward would have shown. The islands and rocks appeared as if they had all been dropped just at that instant, the surf whiteness all around them frozen into that moment of splash.

7. How Do You Know If It's Right?

What is memory for? To keep us from falling into the same ditch every day, certainly. But we use it for more than that. We hold it up and look at it as a reward to ourselves. Like the thumbprint on a window, memory is a mindprint.

*I made that.
No one else
has one like it.*

gypalling

If Wennberg was not a good judge of situations, he nonetheless had ~~a~~ ^{some} knack for measuring people. It was what had cast his eye onto Braaf at New Archangel, saw through to the thievery which had escaped others' attention. This ~~set of talent and failing,~~ ^{nearsightedness} judgment and void of it, ~~that cast~~ ^{set} the tone of Wennberg. Continually he would thrust or veer into ~~situations~~ argument, carry it on until he saw how his combatant was responding, then deciding on the hinge of the moment whether to bluster further or back off. There is a phrase out of sea warfare, "a loos cannon on deck": unpredictability of behavior. ^{of this voyage} Wennberg was the loose cannon, ~~on this voyage,~~ but with ~~a~~ ^{- and occasional chocking from Melander and the others -} stiff enough axle ^{serious} that his carom wasn't always deadly. It simply always might be.

Of the other three men it was Karlsson who sensed the situation of Wennberg. Melander had discovered that manipulation of Wennberg was possible, and therefore thought it could be made standard. But Karlsson ~~had~~ gauged the disjointment in the blacksmith, the faultline where his judgments jarred against one another.

Perhaps think of that trick to be done with an apple and a knife:

to peel the fruit in one continuous cutting, the red spiral coiling

down and down from ~~the~~ the knife's glide, a stair of skin ever

*lighthouse
stair*

fall away

more likely to break--or is it, for each shaven coil concatenates

with the others, a whole growing ever greater? Does weight win, or

the tension of beauty hold? # This voyage was like that, each day's

dangle southward--made by the canoe slicing distance from the North

Pacific--either more apt to snap than the one before, or more

~~unavoidable~~ natural in place because of all that had come before it.

REVISED

"Empty barrels make the loudest ~~noise~~ noise," the slender man said.

Karlsson surprised himself as much as the other two. What he had uttered was just the sort of thing Melander would have delivered.

. . . One meal of salt beef left. Then just beans. Three, four days of those. And hardbread, maybe two meals' worth. Wennberg's already saying his guts think his throat's been cut. Not a bad idea, Braaf tells him, how'd he like help? If I could hunt

something on one of these islands. Anything, deer, goat. Beaver,

we could learn to think beaver was a ~~king's~~ ^{manor-lord's} feast. ~~There's~~ ^{Hunting costs time.} risk to

a gunshot, ^{too.} But ~~so is~~ ^{so's} there to starving. Better pull to shore early,

~~try~~ ^{nothing} the job of bear-robbing...

The paddler's exertion is much like that if you yanked on a rope:

Gradually the effort eats into the sockets of your arms, and still there is the invisible rope--more and more a hawser as the day extends--reaching ahead of you along the water. There was a method of ~~affixing~~^{stepping} a short mast ~~attached to the~~ to the canoe bottom and affixing sail, making the craft a hybrid sort of ketch, but the winter wind was against this. ~~in~~ⁱⁿ the first week, they were able to use the sail only ~~a total of two hours,~~^{once, for a few hours} on a dogleg route between 00 and 00. Canvas was the yearning of the escape; arm muscles were its reality.

"We could make a wintering of it. You're supposed to be clever with an axe, whyn't we grapple together a shelter of some sort, wait out ~~this~~ this pissy weather?"

Karlsson was framing a level reply when Braaf ^{chimed in,} ~~spoke~~ as if to the air: "Wait for good canoeing the way the Kolosh are, ~~you~~ d'you mean? The last time you were in the ~~the~~ ^{of a few} company you ran your legs to stubs, blacksmith. What'll you do when they're ~~kick~~ thick as ducks on the water?"

Wennberg cut ^{a glare} ~~across~~ to Braaf, but continued to look earnestly ^{across} ~~over~~ at Karlsson. Karlsson realized that the look contained something he had not thought was in Wennberg: a plead. ~~was~~

...He's in troth about this, wants a wintering instead of going Ready to lick dust, on. ~~He's in troth about this, wants a wintering instead of going~~ the bastard...

"Wennberg, ^{hear us} ~~listen~~," Karlsson said carefully. "A wintering would be double death. We'd starve down, never be able to hunt enough to feed us on this island. We don't even know if there's anything here to hunt. But say we did last the winter, Braaf's right, ^{with spring} the Kolosh ^{swim solid} will be everywhere here. ^{and} The first canoe of them will have us with Melander."

what's here

*Trimmed
wick*

The dark-bearded man carried a lamp to the table, established
it in the center, then ^{sat to it} seated himself. He was a trifle uneasy with
himself, ^{for} This ~~was~~ Sunday evening he was trimming ~~the~~ ^{scruple} as well.

Keeping the Sabbath was like a second backbone in a New England man.

But in the morning Bailey's sloop would ^{sail with} ~~take~~ the mail out of the bay

and it ^{might} ~~would~~ be two weeks ^{or more} until the next ^{postal opportunity.} chance. Too, there was the

point that ^{for worthwhile report,} Waterman paid coin, and the clink of specie was rare sound

here at this abyss-end of the frontier. He dipped a goosefeather pen
into OO ink and began.

*even here
at Amias
w' wad elbow*

Something about the beach disturbed Karlsson, but his exhaustion wouldn't let it surface. They were alive, on land of some manner, and that was all he could grip at the moment. He sank beside Wennberg and slept.

It came clear to him at once in the morning: the water was on the wrong side of them. East rather than west. And it was not ocean, but a bay of some sort. The hills across the water and the other forestscape around them were like the Alaska coastline greatly pressed down: green and rumped but low. A silvery haze hung through the hills.

By now even Wennberg had begun to look thin. They knew that without better food, the soon would be husks of themselves.

"A seal, maybe," Karlsson suggested. "Let's take the morning to try that point."

his stomach wished
The moon reminded him of an egg, and ~~he wished~~ he hadn't looked up.

*protested
that he
hadn't*

But the shine on the waves compelled it, a soft dazzle that was gone
even as it showed itself; you were compelled to wonder where that
flitting sheen came from.

on east
of south
7 this

Across the bay, rivers ^{were} flowing into themselves, turned backwards
by the tide advancing between their banks; for some hundreds of yards
at each mouth, the Willapa, the Bone, the OO, the OO, slowly crept
back towards their origins, like bolts of olive-drab cloth surreptitiously
trying to roll themselves up.

. . . This was Melander's line of country, this ocean, not mine. He savvied water, but to the others of us it's a kind of night. See it but not into it. Can it be deep as Melander said, some places as far to bottom as these mountains are high? Take his word for it, thank you. Sitka Sound, a millpond to this. If this coast was other, we'd maybe be hiking out. My journey, that'd have been. Forest you can make your way through, sort it for yourself as you go. In Skane I could have been led with a mealsack over my head into any wood and found my way straight out. Put one foot in front of another, you know you get somewhere. But water moves, can't keep a fix on it. All you can do is keep after it, stroke and stroke and stroke. If the work with this paddle had been axe strokes, how many trees'd been brought down? How many forests, more like. Could've built our own stockade, called it New Stockholm. No, Melander in charge, New Gotland it'd be...

Karlsson became aware his mind was drifting. He broke his stare at the backs of Braaf and Wennberg, purposely looked at the ocean horizon for the next few minutes.

anchored...
fixed
in look

Look in
That
was
reality



It had become usual: Karlsson woke to the peg of warmth touching
 toward his stomach. "Pride of the morning," Melander had called
 such night-born rearings. "If your britches don't bulge at dawn
 it's a scant day ahead, aye?" These full-rigged longings ^{seemed to be} ~~were~~
 leftovers of Karlsson's nights of dream; in each dark now, matters
 chased one another through his head, extravagant ~~and alarming~~
 events took place, people of gone years put their faces inside his
 skull. Dream seemed to be a wild sentinel against the clutch of
 this coast; perhaps ~~against him~~ demanded that the mind of Karlsson
 hear its howling tales instead of brood on predicament. In any
 event, all of it built through the night into the wanting which he
 would awake to. Just now Karlsson greatly wanted a woman and he
 greatly wanted not to be captaining this canoe voyage. He was, in
 fact, in a mood to want any number of things that were nowhere in the
 offing along this trackless coast, but these particular two took up
 all the ~~imagination~~ imagination in him. Those otter-smooth maneuvers of
 woman, this and then this, ^{yes} and on ^{once more} this, and Melander ~~again~~ in charge
 of fate, ayeing and coaxing, memories conjoined...Karlsson lay on his
 side, waiting for the longing to unstiffen. Then rose and went into
 the forest to have a pee.

belt
 now
 belly

start - why
 c a pee



They made a scampering afternoon of it, as if this new, last coast was firmer footing for their climb down from the north. The Strait ^{lay as} ~~was~~ a smaller, dozing relative of Kaigani, and the canoe stole its miles without the gray water arousing. A high, sharp cape, waves boiling white at its base, took over the continental horizon. The canoe passed around the seaward side of a sheer-cliffed island which stood off the point of the cape; Karlsson, Braaf, Wennberg looked ahead to an uneven coast, dark blades of rock strewn at its edge. No one said anything. They paddled on.

more

At dusk's start they put ashore just to the north of a ~~line~~ ^{stretch} startling procession of close-set seastacks which ~~came~~ out into the ocean across their route. Day-worn as the canoemen were, Karlsson did not want to risk rounding this coastal tumble into whatever mischief its far side might hold. [#] "Shore," he called to Braaf and Wennberg above the surf noise. "We've done the day."

—

10-2-81

Pt of Anches? ✓

~~REVISED~~

All this coastal rock appeared very old, as though preserved by
the ocean brine.

Birds of this shoreline evidently had caught motion from the surf, always bobbing, skittering, dashing off. Sanderlings, oystercatchers, turnstones, dowitchers, snipe: the proud-striding ravens of New Archangel were not in it with these darters. ^{Contrary} ~~On the~~

~~other hand,~~ ^{another way,} the clouds now were not the ebb and flow skidding about above Sitka Sound, but fat islands that impended on the horizon half a day at a time. It seemed here at this southering coast,

then, that you could navigate according to the clouds' positions, and that the routes of birds had nothing to teach but life's confusion-- which it would be like both the weather and birdlife to have you think.

Wingdom

Karlsson's shot struck the seal in the neck, not far beneath the base of its head. The animal lurched, flapped its foreflippers and tail briefly, then lowered its head as if into doze. The other seals writhed toward the rock edge, were gone.

"Square eye," ^{Karlsson,} Braaf congratulated as he came to his feet and stepped to the right of the horn of rock Karlsson had shot from. Karlsson and Wennberg moved now too, the three of them starting out toward the seal. But amid Braaf's first climbing stride across the neck of rock, surf burst in front of him and a white weight of water came up, seemed to stand in the air, and then fell on Braaf.

Taken off balance, Braaf was slung backward. He put down a hand to halt his fall. It met the wet slickness of a barnacle colony, and Braaf slid on into the tidal trough.

~~Instantly water buried him.~~

Karlsson and Wennberg were twins of disbelief. Braaf ~~had been~~ ^{was vanished,} ~~somewhere into the water~~ snatched like a gnat down a frog.

Then Braaf's head ^{up} bobbed through the foam. For a breath-space, his eyes held the affronted look they'd had when Wennberg's boot clattered the spittoon in the officers' quarters. Now the insurging

where
into
water

of a long
then it
had
seemed,

~~subson~~



4 Karlsson ran the choices in his mind.

choices
ran like
wooden horse
in his
mind

Under full sail as the ^{vessel} ~~Jane~~ was, they hadn't a ^{no} ~~a~~

prayer of catching her with the canoe. A signal fire, even if one could be built in time, was unlikely to persuade a ship to hove to along this wild coast, but guaranteed to attract the whale-hunting natives.

interior
monotony

Gunshots ~~were~~ the same proposition. # What was left to the ^{three} canoeists was to stand and watch the sails ^{of the Jane} serenely plow out of sight to the south.

With the glass, Karlsson studied the shoreline to the south.

The withdrawing tide brought more and more spines of rock to view.

~~There was~~ ^{came} no beach ^{roundish} evident, just a tidal plain of ^{roundish} cannonball rocks,

as if the farmfields of all the world had been emptied of stone here.

No islands stood in sight ^{beyond,} only the fins of seastacks. It ^{appeared} looked

the ^{bleakest} ~~worst~~ stretch of coast yet, and they ^{needed} ~~were going to~~ have to

paddle it by night and make a ^{somewhere on it} landing in earliest dawn.

The day this had ^{id} been, Karlsson ^{told} ~~thought~~ to himself, even that

~~didn't sound so much~~
~~doesn't look~~ worse.

What
3 min past
2 days had
been,

greatly

scene to come : the days along Vancouver Island.

scene to come: description of them having to coexist in rain^{ed}-in camp.

scene to come: something out of Karlsson's past, in Smaland or at New Archangel.

scene to come: they paddle to the beach south of Grays Harbor.

scene to come: Karlsson and Wennberg wary of each other, maybe contending.

scenè to come: description of where they are on the coast

scene to come: they get rained in, north of Grays Harbor.

that catch-of-breath
 In ~~the pause for that~~, Braaf whitely burrowing the compass and
~~mapcase~~
~~mapcase~~ from beneath the corpse that was Melander, Wennberg in
 a sick glaze handing the instrument and container on to Karlsson--
 in that stay of time, the absence began its ^{measured} ~~lasting~~ toll on them. Day upon
 day and all the waking hours of those days, it would be exacted now.

Loss of Melander's sailor-habited scrutiny
 of the water around, every chance of rock or shoal or current
 announced to them. Lack of reminding word to Braaf when he made
 his habitual dawdle in shifting his paddle. Want of regulation on
 Wennberg's ~~muscle~~ bluster, which evidently even Wennberg had come
 to rely on. No musing ^{parleys} ~~consultations~~ with Karlsson, treetop communing
 with stone. No minute of their ^{hours} ~~lives~~, ever again, punctuated by
 that voice's watchword, "aye?"

#

Mid-day now, the canoe ashore at the next southward island,
 Melander's three-man crew stood looking at his folded-forward body.
 Three men, each with new age on him.

Melander ^{style} ~~steered~~, steered the canoe around the seaward side rather ^{between} than isle-wall and cape-wall.

Ahead now, Karlsson, Braaf, Wennberg could see to a disordered coast. Rock talons, haired on top with forest, grabbed down into the surf; dark blades of rock were strewn offshore.

No one said anything. They paddled on.

—



(The rest of the page contains extremely faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the paper.)