

A Ship and a Man

by Ambrose Bierce

Seeing a ship sailing by upon the sea of politics, an Ambitious Person started in hot pursuit along the strand; but the people's eyes being fixed upon the Presidency no one observed the pursuer. This greatly annoyed him, and recollecting that he was not aquatic, he stopped and shouted across the waves' tumultuous roar:

"Take my name off the passenger list."

Back to him over the waters, hollow and heartless, like laughter in a tomb, rang the voice of the Skipper:

"'T ain't on!"

And there, in the focus of a million pairs of convergent eyes, the Ambitious Person sat him down between the sun and moon and murmured sadly to his own soul:

"Marooned, by thunder!"