

Shore Leave



by Dread Pirate

Shore Leave,

Taking a Long Walk.

by

Dread Pirate

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CREATED & PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

This work is dedicated to all those who walk the
land and see beyond their feet.

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A note from the Author

This work deviates from what has come to be considered my normal style. In this work I have taken shore leave. Although I have left the nautical terms and Crew behind, you will find the entries insightful and philosophical as well as motivational. You may even find this work far more personal. In some places it is written in the first person rather than in Imperial Dread Sea Scrolls style of second or third person.

This is not to suggest that all the pieces of this work are set in first person reality. You may find a few entries, placed throughout this short work, that exist for no other reason than to provide a distraction to the day events. They may be fantasy, a daydream transcribed, or a scrap of nautical poetry.

Just like when you take a vacation with no set schedule or itinerary, thus describes the ebb and flow of Shore Leave. This ebook is a short, free flowing holiday, where every day is a new adventure, and behind every tree there is a new insight. As always, thank you for your patronage.

Perspective...



[photo by Dread Pirate]

Just another mushroom?



[photo by Dread Pirate]

Or home to a friendly moth?
[Look hard! Can you see the moth hiding?]

All too often what we see can be a deception to the eye. It all depends on how we view the subject. In this case, the first image is nothing more than an ordinary mushroom. Once we change our perspective it becomes a haven to a moth. How often have we looked at something and made the mistake of not seeing what is really there?



[photo by Amy D'Orsay]

Always another....

For every perfect sunrise, there is a faultless sunset.

There is always another....

For every day of brisk wind to fill your sails, there is a day of dead calm.

For every roll to port, there is a roll to starboard.

For every pitch, there is a yaw.

There is always another....

For every heinous garbage scow, there is a gorgeous tall ship.

For every show yawl, there is a faster sloop.

For every missed turn of the hourglass, there is a proper turn.

There is always another....

For every mermaid that vanishes off port, there is one that appears to starboard.

For every black day, there is a day of radiance.

For every steadfast shipmate, there is a mutineer.

There is always another....

For every missed opportunity, there is another to fill its place.

For every forgotten dream, there is a aspiration come true.

For every negative action, there is a positive reaction.

There is always another....

For every perfect sunrise, there is a faultless sunset.



[photo by Amy D'Orsay]

The Symphony of War

The autumn air was crisp, clean and fresh. There was something about the chill that made the scent of the forest sharper, more intense, almost palatable. The scent of the sap dropping in the oaks, maples, and gum filled the air. Odor of their coming dormancy cloaked all who entered the wood. The brightly colored fallen leaves, dew drenched and underfoot, added a musty, woody aroma to the mix. Passing into sleep, the trees freed their leaves. The leaves final color choice, a fleeting blaze of passion, a testament to the one they loved and had to leave. The leaves in turn gave of themselves so that they would turn into the very lifeblood that gave their trees verve.

All around the signs of fall could not be missed. Flowers that came only to life when the air chilled had come into bloom. Burnt orange, rusty red, and muted purples peaked out from under bush and leaf fall. Colors melded in some forest wide grand mural that only the squirrels and chipmunks could properly maintain. Fruits came to ripen upon branch and vine. Nuts fell upon the thick carpet provided by their brethren, the leaves. Everywhere throughout the forest, color and *life* clashed in one final collage in the time before winter.

This evening the golden rays of sunset splashed across the tops of the trees. Only shafts of light made it through the not yet fallen brotherhood of the leaves. The yellow-gold light touched flowers and emboldened leaves and helped them burst into new grander magnificent colors yet unknown and unnamed. The cool breeze helped the branches of the trees dance. Leaves took their final flight in golden radiance. Drowsy trees smiled as they noted their departure. Sunlight dappled all in fleeting motion as it snuck through the new openings. The symphony of color, light, movement, sound and scent had almost been overwhelming.

All too soon the light faded over hill and the shadows lengthened. The day creatures of the wood made their last dashes about in hurried efforts. Night watchers came awake and aware. The call of the owl could be heard through the gentle soft rustle of leaves. The sound of wings beating the air could be heard if you listened close enough. As the light raced onward to illuminate its other stages, color became faded, muted. The once festive riot of painted leaves and flowers faded to shades of gray. The chill deepened and the scents grew heavier.

Seeing all and yet disturbing nothing, one of the wood stood unnoticed behind a huge double trunk red oak. All around him is serenity in the twilight. The trees continue forth with their yearly ritual. Deer gently pass in the dusk, browsing on the feast of acorns provided by their benefactors. A screech owl lets out a paralyzing call and a field mouse stops and listens in fear and awe. The forest moves forward as it always has, as it always shall.

Early evening thermals had brought the scent that he knew would come. The stench was overpowering and repulsive when it assaulted him. The contrast in aroma brought shallow tears to his eye. But it passed with a shift in wind. Through the wood the intruders came. In one fluid motion, born of a lifetime of watching the swaying branches of the willow, as silent as the movement of the flower in the breeze, the elf raised his bow. Only the sound made was the wooden arrow being drawn over the polished wood of his handmade bow. It was only then that he was reminded of his nearby brethren, faint almost undetectable sounds of hundreds of his kin following his lead. The sound of arrow being drawn over the elegant wood, heard by only those most attuned, became the symphony of Elvin war.

Cavalier...

Cavalier is an attitude.
Some land lovers just don't get it.
Some land lovers never will get it.

Can you imagine a being fated to living the life of a mundane?
Damn the man, what a shipwreck that would be!

Cavalier is a way of life.
Most land lovers would rather play in the sandbox.
Most land lovers will never sail the seas of life.

Can you imagine a being fated to living the life of a mundane?
Damn the man, what a shipwreck that would be!

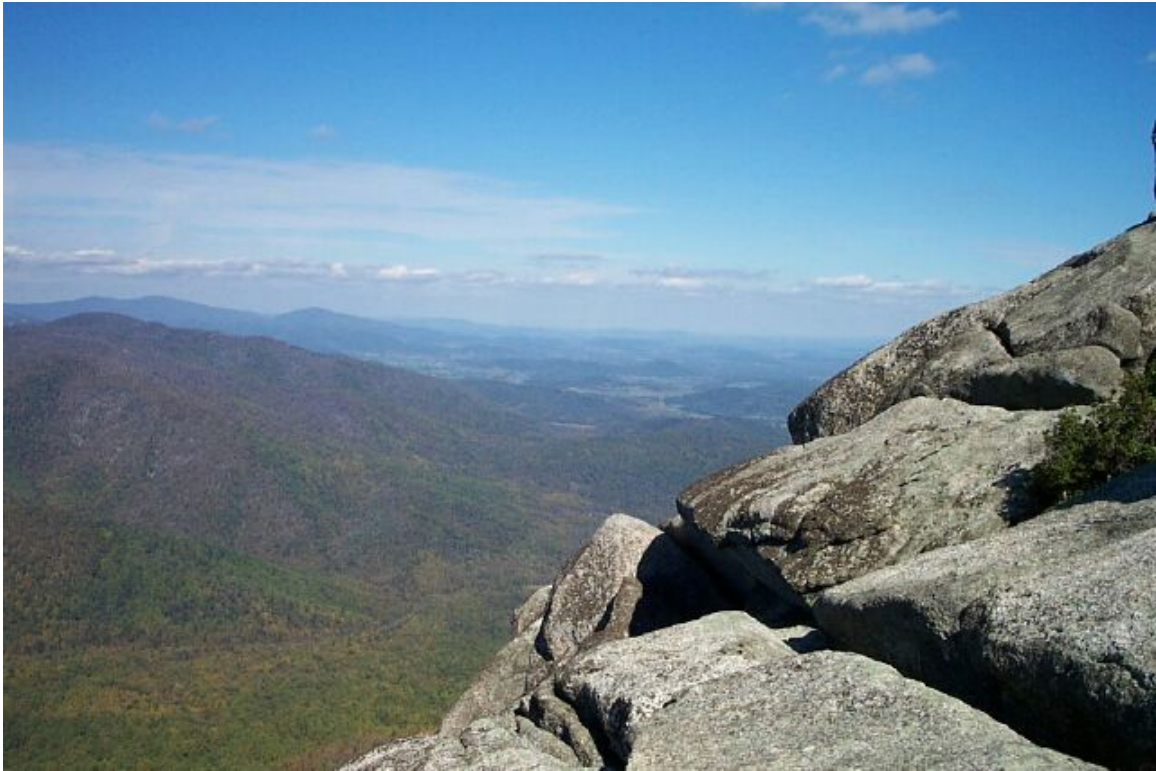
Cavalier is living life to the fullest.
Many land lovers fear the unknown and the horizon.
Many land lovers never pull their head out of the sand.

Can you imagine a being fated to living the life of a mundane?
Damn the man, what a shipwreck that would be!

Cavalier is living like today is the day.
Cavalier is keeping it real,
Cavalier is keeping it motivated,
most of all,
Cavalier is keeping it positive!

Old Rag Mountain...

I drive 83 miles to hike a back trail, a place of silence and reverence, Old Rag Mountain. There is no pack on my back, no geek outfit, just my forest green fleece jacket and my tennis shoes. I am not city going for a day hike in the country. All I hope for is peace and quiet. The sound of the wind over the mountaintop is the only sound that I long to hear. The only view I want to see is the world below me. I am prepared to make the ten mile round trip just for the privilege of seeing it.

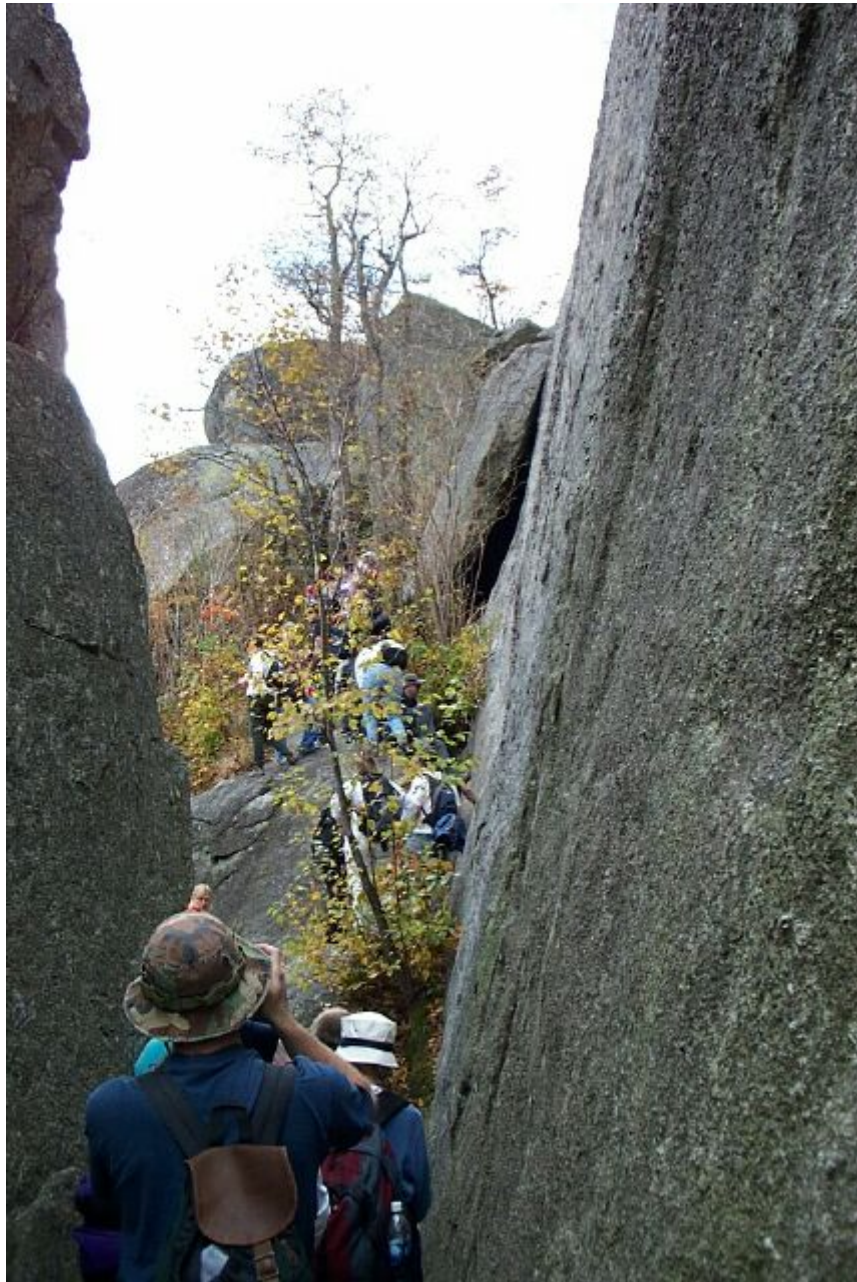


[photo by Dread Pirate]

Immediately upon arrival I know something is very wrong. The medium sized parking area has people holding long multicolored sticks with colorful streamers attached to the top waving you into a specific parking space. It is early and the lot is over half full. There are day hikers standing about in groups, large groups. I am asked to take a photo of a group that looks like they just drove in from Rodeo Drive. Their LL Bean clothing makes my stomach quiver. The \$1500.00 US camera the gent *tosses* at me makes my palms wet just holding it. By his lack of instruction I wonder if he knows how to use his own camera.

Then I line up to pay my \$5.00 to the park rangers. I ponder the "use tax" that I am required to pay. The tax of \$5.00 for taking a walk on the land that I own with \$1500.00 camera toting yuppies seems a bit steep. Thank goodness the senior member of my group has some sort of magical pass that allows me to hike my

land free. I see the rock formations as we hike. I stop to take a moment to snap a pic. All I can hear is some kid screaming on the top of his lungs about wanting to go home. No doubt that lad would rather be home playing a virtual hiking game on his gameboy. Too bad his parents had not had the foresight of keeping him home, it would have saved them the embarrassment and a headache. There are people on the trail above me and below me. I don't see the peace and the serenity here. I continue up the trail in high hopes. I then come to a bottleneck in the trail at the "chimney".



[photo by Dread Pirate]

As I stand waiting, taking in the view, I overhear a pretty young lady behind me mention that she is feeling “trail rage.” I crack up and my mood is lightened one hundredfold. As I climb and pull myself up through the rock formations, as I slide through the cracks and crevices I twist my ankles more than once. I remember now why high top boots were invented and why I should have worn mine even if they were heavily insulated. We climb our way through the rocks and the pace picks up. We step out onto a ledge and I snap this one.



[photo by Dread Pirate]

Zenhunterbob has to carry food and clothing for himself and his two boys. He carries the pack with little effort. A labor of love? He, we, are part of the rear echelon. The last team up that carries the first aid kits, radios and other might-be-of-use-items. The small first aid kit in my front pocket feels incredibly inadequate compared to the industrial size one he carries. But I know from past experience, that the two of us could handle any situation that arose with nothing more than the shirt on our back.

We hike further and further. My muscles cramp harder and with more “twang” than ever before. I remember the side effects listed on the meds I take. “Intense muscle cramps” check. I have to stop more than I want, but I know that peace and serenity are just around that next corner, surely I can find one spot... Even a good-looking female stops, identifies herself as a doctor and asks if I need help. I smile and laugh, “Take two aspirins and call me in the morning,” I retort with voice tight. She looks at me with disdain but my smile and laugh are contagious and she finally smiles and laughs moving on past me. The pain in my hips is

greater than I ever thought possible but somehow, I feel more alive than I have in months. I think of that silly song, “Put one foot in front of the other.. and soon you’ll be walkin’ cross the flooorooooor” and a few cadences I remember from days gone by and I continue to walk through the cramps.

The pinnacle is reached. It is almost shoulder-to-shoulder with people. I sit on solid granite and am thankful for the seat. I munch an apple given freely to me by a kind and gentle soul. My stomach is in an uproar from the pain. I drink a quart of water and think about purchasing a “camelback”. I ponder why I had not brought any water, I know better than to dehydrate. I promise myself to buy a camelback, and then laugh knowing that I will keep that promise.



[photo by Dread Pirate]

After I can move again, I walk around what seems like hundreds of people on the mountaintop and look out over the Blue Ridge. There are so many people here. As I stare into the valley I see more homes than ever before, three radio towers grace the mountaintop to my left, "Can you hear me now?" It is not the same here or there. My peace and serenity are not here.

Just before I start the six-mile leg back, taking a longer route but less trying path, I snap a self-portrait. The shadow upon the rock is a stark contrast, a contrast I feel within.

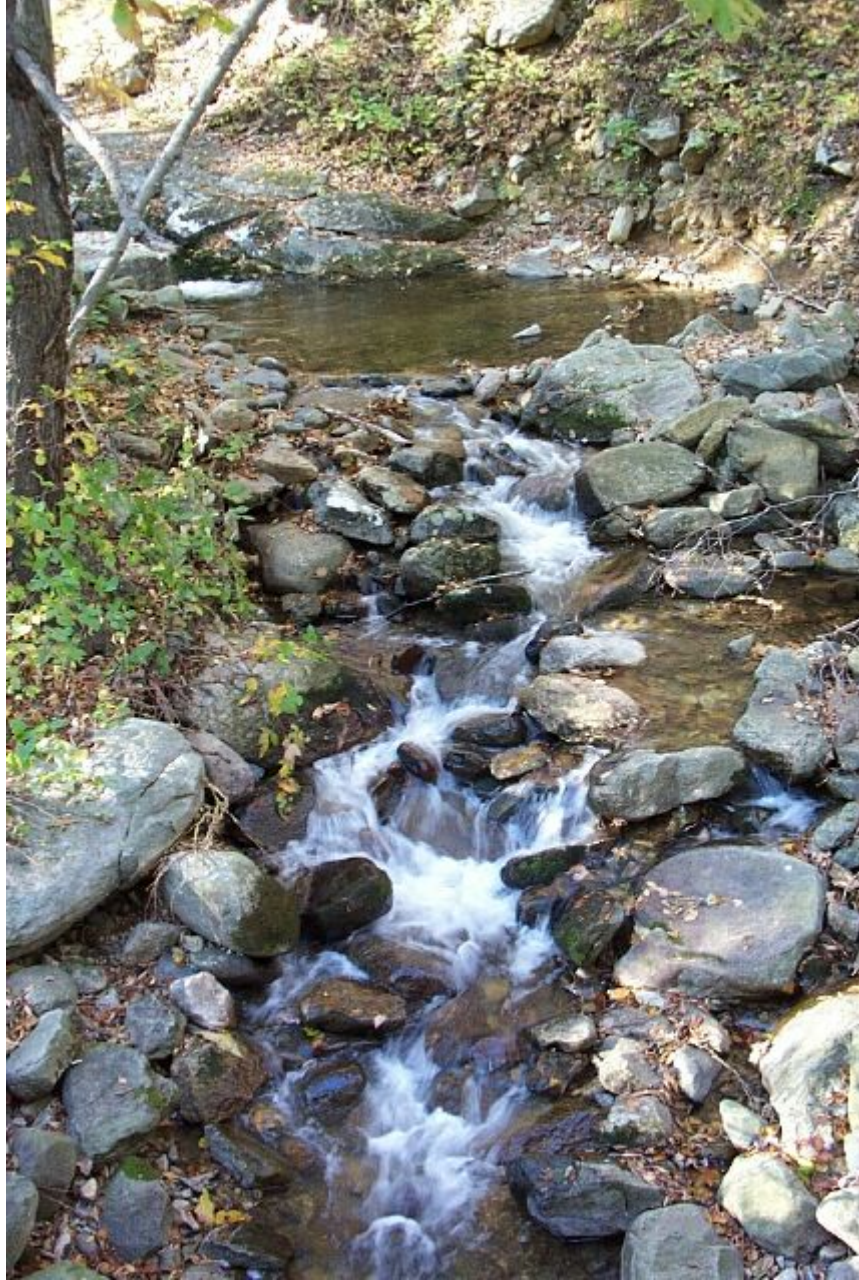
[photo by Dread Pirate; self portrait]



One last look around confirms it. I need to move. This place has changed, people are all around now, too close and too different. I cannot find serenity among screaming children and adults snapping bad images of huddled family and friends. I must find other less populated places.

As I descend I use another set of muscles and laugh as the cramps start elsewhere. I curse my meds, my body and the mountain. And yet, I look all around me and know that I am at home. Having grown up in the mountains I miss their feel, smell and their unforgiving nature. I know that I need to get back to the place that I belong and wonder how long it will be until I carry out that promise. My legs burn and cramp and my hips are aching and hurting again. I move forward thinking of where I want to be. I feel frustration well up because I know not where I want to be or what I want to do... and yet, I put one foot in front of the other and move forward. Somewhere in the haze of thought and pain I find myself staring at it.

The calming sound, the path less traveled. The sound is hypnotic and music to my soul. People are far and few between here, they choose the short put brutal path they hiked up as their return trail. I stand, for what seems like an eternity, staring. I found it, peace and serenity. Just for a time the pain subsides, the sound of voices, and the world subside. I find that I have no more answers than when I started my adventure, but just for a moment, I find my peace.



[photo by Dread Pirate]

Dear me...

Dear Me,

Where are you?

I am looking,

I am listening,

I am searching,

I find thee not...

yet.



[photo by Amy D'Orsay]

Forward motion

When the seas get rough,
You will hear the land lovers bellow,
Hard to port!
Hard to starboard!

When the skies darken,
The land lovers see shadows and holler,
All stop!
Reverse engines!

When the seas are calm,
The land lover begs for a port of call,
Any port!
Any place!

When the seas get rough,
When the skies darken,
Even when the seas are calm,

The sailor of life will set sail.

The sailor of life knows,
Only forward motion,
Advance action,
Will get you to your home port.

For the booty

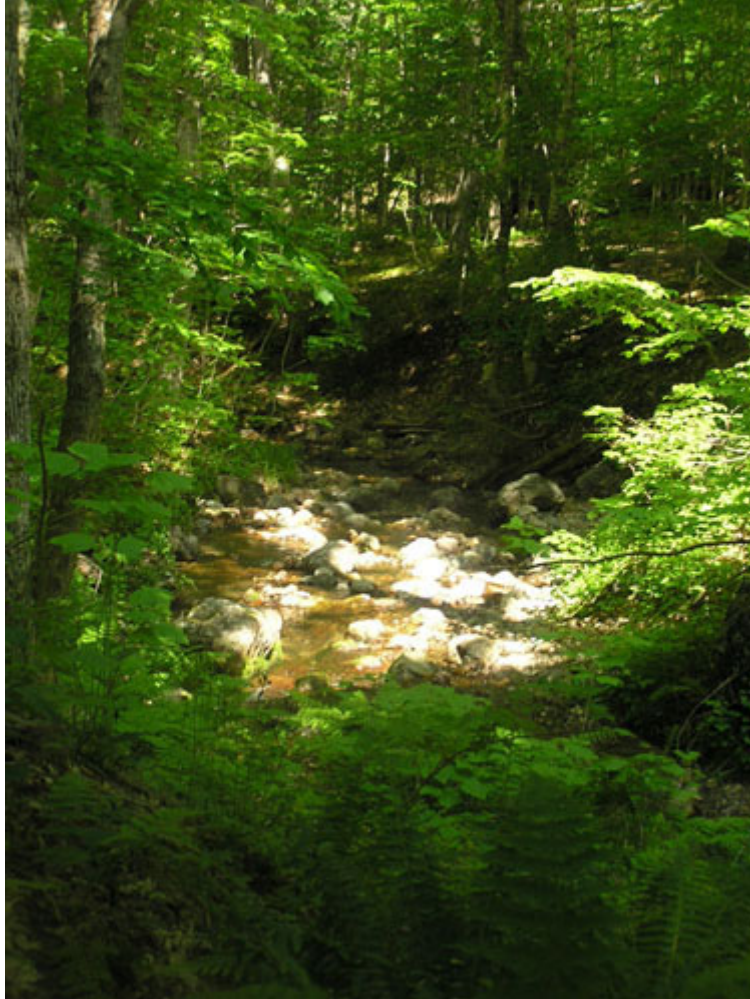
Land lovers are just... unique. Last Thursday I was asked by a co-worker what I was going to do over the weekend. I told the inquiring mind what it did not want to know. I simply explained, "I am going to remake all of my ebooks, to include sample ebooks because I have changed the price on them. I then have to update all of my websites as well as the outside sales sites. I am also working on an audio book project and as well as working on putting my first ebook into paper." I took a breath and she continued to stare at the pile of papers on her desk. I continued, "I am also changing my office into a recording studio so I have to begin renovation." She looked up and without a hint of humor said, "You need to get a life."

I was, as you can quite imagine, ready to rip her into shreds. But, my employer looks down on employee brawls. Damn the man. I looked at her while she mumbled something about having to get a life too and spoke the following words to the side of her head, "I am working on my future, using my positive motivation and creativity, that will one day translate into dollars and cents." Then I walked away.

At first, I had mixed emotions about such rude behavior. But I quickly realized that most people are ignorant. They allow their mouths to run without a thought passing through their skull. This person obviously has issues with those sailors of life that have a weekend goal that does not include mass quantities of alcohol, loss of sleep, and in her case, a few hands of strip poker where everyone folds!

What surprised me the most was my retort. I had, up until that moment, tried to convince myself that my motivational and other efforts were nothing more than a hobby that had the potential to be financially self-sustaining. In my response, I found truth. I am no longer looking at my motivational musings, works of fiction, music and poetry as just something to fill the hours. I am looking at them as an investment. I am looking at them as a business. I am creating something that will pay me back in the future in cold hard cash.

Why do I push myself? Why do I have five projects going at a time? Why do I want to self-publish my works as ebooks, audio books on CD, etc.? Because it is time that I share some of what I know has helped many people. The bottom line, I just realized that I am a pirate, and I am in it for more than just the booty.



[photo by Amy D'Orsay]

I walk on the Dark Side...

Yesterday a co-worker and I were shooting emails back and forth about which one of us walked on the Dark Side. She almost won hands down when she walked into my cube, placed her hands on her hips, looked me in the eye and said, "I am so Dark that when I come near, the devil closes the gates of hell because he fears me. I am so Dark that when I think of heaven, angels cry black tears!" Damn the man... what the hell can you say that will top that? I just smiled and said, "yes, but you forget, I am the Dark Force." (I stressed the word "am") She smiled and sauntered out of the cube. I love a sailor who can hold her own.

Our little game gave way to me thinking about if I walk the Dark path or in the path of Light. It has been a most unique topic of thought. The most interesting thing for me is, I find that I have walked both paths, often at the exact same time. Yeah, I know, leave it to Dread to make something far more complicated than just a black helmet and a light saber!

My life experiences have not made me real partial to the bunny-foo-foo-goody-two-shoes white light side of the "Force." As a matter of fact I can not think

of a single person that I have ever known, or know to this day, who does not *pretend* to walk on the side of Light. Hell, if they would open their closet door skeletons would tumble out of the hole like rats from an empty grain barrel. It has been my personal experience to run like hell from the person that forcefully projects a persona of goodness about them. I have been messed over by more people that claim to be a "Good (add religious term/religion here)" than any other group, or groups of individuals, combined. It seems to me that most of those that talk the talk, just don't walk the walk.

I wrote a simple poem many years ago:

Open the door,
Close the door,
All the same,
Just less noise.

Now, before some smart ass tells me that cannot be a poem because it does not meet some damned land loving requirement, do me a favor, get bent and take a dive off the plank. That simple poem has stayed with me for a very long time. I believe that it applies to the Dark/Light or yin/yang, mental musings I have been struggling with all of my life. This poem is an attempt to integrate the struggle of good/evil as well as my place within.

I am pretty sure that I stride on the Dark Side. Hell, anyone with half a brain can read my pen name and figure that out. Dread Pirate. The name does not convey Mr. bunny-foo-foo-goody-two-shoes nice metropolitan fellow. I am not a nice person. As a rule, I do not like most people. I can hardly tolerate humanity on whole. I find most humans I meet to be morons at best, and complete land loving butt-munches at worst. (I cleaned that up for you "I walk in the Light" types.) I have no problem cutting you off in a nanosecond if you lie to me or screw me over in any way. I hold a grudge for a lifetime. I am still looking for a guy named Gino for an infraction upon my person when I was in eighth grade. I am 40+ now. If I find can't trust you, you are deep-sixed post haste. I am generally gruff and of serious disposition. People see me coming and give me wide berth. (I think it is the beard/flat top haircut combination.) I find that it is easier for me when I walk in the Dark. People get out of my way.

When I open the door, Light floods in and hurts my eyes. I become overwhelmed with the Light Force of humanity and its warped, twisted, contorted, quasi-system of values and half-truths that are set forth as morays and standards. You know the kind, the people who told you never to smoke or drink as they delicately held their cancer sticks between fore and middle finger all the while holding the stem of their chilled martini glass. That was the moment I *willingly* jumped into the Dark. If they were good, if they were righteous, I needed no part of their Light Side. To me, Light Side meant, quite simply, do as I say, not as I do. I would rather steal tomatoes out of your garden and eat every one, then, when asked if I had stolen the tomatoes say, "You betcha," and proceed to run

my ass off, than look a person in the eye and say, "The yellow pear tomatoes or the Roma?"

I don't like the door open. I like it closed tightly and locked. I don't trust the White Lighters. They have a tendency to come in, remove my few possessions, and then swear to all that is holy, that they never stepped foot into my berth. When the door is closed there is less light, less noise, less of everything. In some ways, I like less. Some people say less is more. I concur with the exceptions of money and military power. Closed doors look right. An open door invites disaster. Open doors allow things to happen. A door left open has allowed a young lady to be beaten and raped in her own home more than once. I like my doors closed, thank you. I like the Dark. I especially don't like people who lie about committing a crime, get convicted, and then claim to find the Light. These are the people that confound me to no end. If you were innocent to begin with, why all of the sudden have you "found" the Force of Light?

When it's Dark, people hide, I like it when people of the Light hide. It means, less traffic, less noise, less stupidity. People who walk in the Dark have a tendency to be themselves. Ever notice that? Those who keep to the shadows are apt to be real, smarter, simpler, and far quieter than their counterparts. The door is closed, less light, thus, things are quieter. I like quiet.

My thoughts are not always the kindest. Truth be told, most of the time my thoughts are not kind nor gentle thoughts. I would just as soon as watch you drown in the sea of your own lies. I have no issues with abandoning you when you have mutinied on me. I will not except your lame excuses. I refuse to understand your inability to speak to me in an open and honest manner. I extend the plank and push you off after I have spent copious amounts of time trying to educate you and you refuse to learn.

There is no doubt. I walk the Dark Side. I like my door closed. I do not like the Light. I like less noise. I enjoy the gray of the shadows and the simplicity of *my way*. I stride within the darkness. I sail the black waters. I am the Dread Pirate, yes, I am the Dark Force.

Scrap of treasure...

In their time, the Knights Templar owned a vast fleet of ships. Christopher Columbus sailed to "the New World" aboard three Templar ships. After the King of France brought charges against the Templars, and the Pope of the Catholic Church dissolved their order, would this then have made the once great templar navigators and sailors who continued to sail the ocean blue pirates?

Man overboard!

How many times have you heard sailors-of-life say they are getting a cellular phone just in case of an emergency? Allow me to state for the record, that you do not need to purchase a \$60.00 US a month wireless plan to make a 911 call in an emergency. Many individuals think that they must have a service plan in order to dial 911 on a wireless phone and be connected with emergency services. This is simply not true. The FCC has taken steps to make sure that all cell phones are programmed with a specific number so even if they are not on a service plan, they can be used to dial 911 in an emergency.¹

Let us first define the word emergency; an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action or an urgent need for assistance or relief.² Thus, if you are out sailing, an emergency arises, (running out of your favorite alcoholic beverage does not qualify as an emergency shipmate!) and the marine radio that you never used, tested, or learned how to use, is not functioning properly... fear not. You kept that "old cell phone" plugged in and charged under the console. It does not matter that you no longer have a service provider. If you can get a signal you can, and will be, connected to the closest 911 Emergency Call Center, who will in turn, switch you to the US Coast Guard.

This, of course, also translates into any situation that should arise when you are on shore leave. Keep the old cell in the car and plugged into the power jack. When, and if, the need arises to dial 911 in an emergency, the FCC has seen fit not to leave you high and dry. You will, as long as you can acquire a signal from a cell phone tower, be able to contact the local 911 Emergency Call Center.

For complete and additional information on this topic visit the [National Emergency Number Association Wireless Page.](#)

For additional legal proceedings on the topic:

FIFTH REPORT AND ORDER

CC Docket No. 92-105

FIRST REPORT AND ORDER

WT Docket No. 00-110

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER ON RECONSIDERATION

CC Docket No. 92-105 and WT Docket No. 00-110

<http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireless/Orders/2001/fcc01351.doc>

¹ FCC TAKES STEPS TO IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCIES TO ASSIST WIRELESS CALLERS USING NON-SERVICE-INITIALIZED PHONES
http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireline_Comp/News_Releases/2002/nrwc0202.html

² Merriam-Webster online definition of emergency.
<http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=emergency>

Nothing

Nothing:

Virtual
Electrons
Words
Images

Intangible
Invisible
Untouchable
Unthinkable

Unreal
Electronic mail only
Never a spoken word
Never a touchable image

Everything:

Real
Emotional
Communication
Similes

Solid
Poignant
Reliable
Relevant

So real
So full of feeling
Ever present ever needed
Proven beyond a doubt

Virtual fantasy
Real emotion
Ever present
All consuming

Nothing and yet everything.

What goes up must come down?

Today the geeks, twits and morons at NASA gave themselves a big pat on the back and congratulated themselves on a job well done. They got lucky, damned lucky. They are not saying it publicly, but the truth is the scientists and engineers at NASA are antiquated and need to be replaced. Their thought process is outdated and they are failing at the most basic of aeronautical basics. When an astronaut has to make a space walk to pull spacers out from in between tiles, someone on the ground desperately needs their ass kicked. Problem: When the space vehicle takes off, it sustains a large amount of damage from 1) launch materials, 2) ejection of the solid fuel rocket, 3) birds, and other objects floating about the vacuum of space once it is beyond the atmosphere of Earth.

We can easily eliminate the first two of these things. I built model rockets as a kid. (Currently have two in the attic that are newer models.) I used to build some wild ass looking rockets because I could never afford the kits. I would use the junk that fell to the ground from other kids' rockets who were kind enough to give it to me because it was "broken." Morons. (No, not Mormons, different kind of idiot.) My rockets flew higher and faster than any kit rocket, period. As a matter of fact, my rockets would fly too high. I never bothered to "pack the chute" because recovery was not going to happen! If the chute did deploy, the rocket would be caught on the wind and end up two counties over. (I am not joking.) My rockets would go out of binocular sight!

You see, I improvised. No one ever gave me a book on model rocketry. I never even had the original instructions that came with a kit model. I had to use my imagination combined with how I saw the kit model rockets fly. The other difference was that model rocket engines were (and still are I believe) sold in packages of three. I, therefore, presumed that it took three engines to propel a rocket skyward. Because I never saw any directions, I had no idea that the model rockets used only ONE engine per launch, until much later in my life! Ooops. Further, I was using parts of rockets and well as any other parts that I could scrounge to make my rockets.

Things I learned early on that NASA has yet to figure out:

- 1) Never put the engines before the payload.
- 2) Never unbalance the load. (Build a balanced rocket.)
- 3) Make the weight disproportionate, light(top) to heavy(bottom).
- 4) There is a 90% chance that your second stage of rocket engines will not fire, so don't use them.
- 5) If you launch the rocket at an angle, it will fly at an angle.
- 6) If you have crap in the way, (trees, power lines, etc,) it will turn your rocket into dust very quickly when it hits them.
- 7) Use as few components as possible, and make them as strong as possible, or the whole works will come apart very quickly.

Well now, all so easy. Why then, pray tell, has NASA built the space shuttle ignoring each and every one of these rules? Yes, you are once again correct, they are morons. Go you.

Launching the Space Shuttle. OK, if we ultimately are having the shuttle enter the stratosphere at an angle, why are we launching it straight up? This is an obvious waste of precious energy/fuel. Moreover, with the advent of hydraulic catapults (the kind used on aircraft carriers) as well as electromagnetic rail technology, why are we not using the same principle to launch the space shuttle into orbit as we use to launch jets off the deck of an aircraft carrier? Again, we are launching the craft at a 90 degree angle to the Earth, flipping the damned thing, ejecting the solid fuel rocket, then entering the proper orbit. Why not, using electromagnetic rail technology, launch the rocket at the proper angle in conjunction with a solid fuel engine that is BEHIND the Shuttle? This would, for all intents and purposes, eliminate both the first and second "problems" that continually plague the NASA space program.

Why indeed. Like every government agency, NASA is plagued with "old timers" that have been there for 30 years. These guys may well have been the shit in their day but it is time to step aside and let the brilliant young minds of today have a crack at designing, creating, and building a whole new Space Shuttle system. NASA has the new tag line, Explore, Discover. Understand. Odds are you will, as in all things, after they have been renewed, revitalized, and reenergized, see a wonderful new age of man entering space without all the drama of Space Shuttle tile spacer removal.



[photo by Amy D'Orsay]

Untitled I

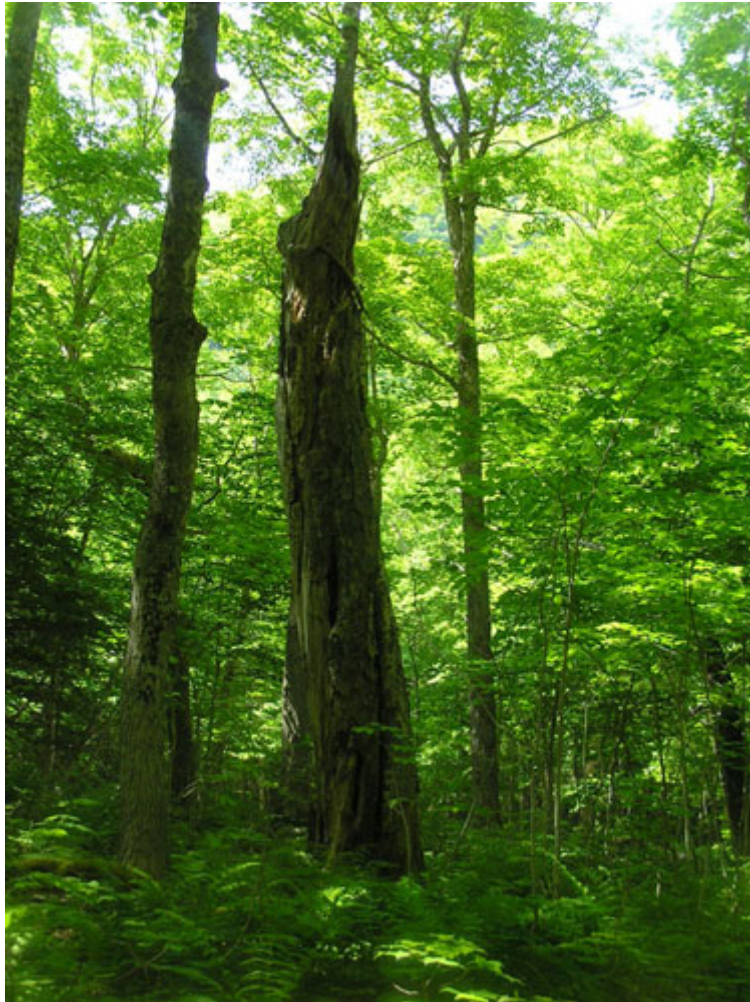
One so missed,
Part of life,
Intertwined and entangled.
Integrated beyond understanding.
Quiet thoughts,
Silent musing,
Specters of long past.
Daily thoughts ensue.

Perpetuating and evermore?

Longing deepens with the incoming tide,
I yearn for the days of yore,
Grieving and frustrated.
Fascinated and amazed.

Unsettled beliefs,
Flexible indulgence,
Translucent and lucid.
Resilient and fleeting.

Transparent Acquiescence?



[photo by Amy D'Orsay]

Silence surrounds me

Silence surrounds me, and deafens me.
A shroud of white light falls upon me, and I am veiled in darkness.
The calm warm feeling of being alone chills me to the bone.
I lay sleeping, only to find that I am more awake than ever.

My mind settles into steadily flipping images of days gone by and days to come.
Frame after frame, subject after subject, story after story flows through my mind.
I am dormant, and yet it never endingly in motion.
Dreamscape and reality merge in a quasi-surreally that flirts with me.

I muse,
Might a single touch of soft skin...
Could the scent of long beautiful hair...
Maybe the warmth of *her* body...

Silence confounds me, it perceives me.
A mantle of black light falls upon me, and I am radiant with light.
The fear and foreboding of being alone warms me to the bone.
I lay awake, only to find that I am more asleep than ever.

The End



About the Author



The Dread Pirate is a seafaring fellow that sails the oceans of life. Needing to motivate himself and the Crew, he began to scribe motivational musings years ago. Upon realizing that his nautical writing style and motivating nature afforded shipmates insight to their own lives, he chose to share a little of his experiences, philosophies, and revelations via his motivational Web log, [The Imperial Dread Sea Scrolls](#).

He furthered his efforts by self-publishing The Imperial Dread Sea Scrolls, Volume I and IDSS Volume II, Crossing the Line into Motivation. Being the Chief Motivational Officer of the Destiny's Quest and [DPebooks](#) is a full time billet, but he finds time for star gazing, writing, and fishing.

Visit [Dread Pirate's Secret Cyber Island](#) on the Web for the latest information on the author and his works.

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■ Additional Resources:

For additional Dread style motivation, please visit the official source for news and information on the Dread Pirate and his works.

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