

courage. West Nohno 4 long trips to West Africa with a sick and physically dead chief engineer. I break my leg—he dies—all hands drunk and criminally neglectful—I take charge with a useless leg and body filled with fever and bring her home with credit. Now holding ship for me, also offered post engineer and dock master's job at Nigeria—unable however to take either account this broken leg.

Drink is something that does not bother me—a drink or two and finish—that is my absolute rule—there have only been some three times during my life time when I have gone under. Once at Doc. B's after coming back from a big party and celebration in Newark, poison home made stuff and then at B's a glass of absinth on top. I've felt more sorry than I can say for that. Once in France when because I would never carouse with the gang they doped a bacardi on me, then left me to stagger on by myself. But though it took near all night I got safely back to my ship alone. The other time I can't remember except in a foggy uncertain way, I'm certain however that there was another. That is the extent of drink. I've got a bottle of Johnny Walker, black label, right here in my room—for me it will last six months or a year. I like however to bring it back to my friends—think perhaps they might appreciate it.

Now for women—yes—I don't hate them too much—but not just any woman and never a bad one. Comparing myself with a lot of men I know I would certainly draw down the grand halo for purity etc. etc. etc. No joke.

Now what's next? Go west. Well we'll see. I had hopes of taking a run out there this time being as I simply can't do any work anyhow. As to staying out there—I can't see it—that is to staying in Chicago. As to running vessels on the Mississippi—well—

Now please write some more and let's get at the base trouble of your wonderful attitude. One thing is sure, I never loaf—with health and able body I couldn't—not only on my own part—but the shipping men who know me wouldn't let me alone. I'm wanted. How now for your good for nothing—drunkard—women master and man of no honor. Pray that I may get a good leg that I may go some more.

Love and kindest wishes B.O.S.

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TWO FUGITIVE POEMS (1910)

MARTIN AND KATHERINE

Alone today I mounted that steep hill
On which the Wartburg stands. Here Luther dwelt