

# The Green Sheaf

In the great smoke about the fire the seven planets circled and sang, and I knew that each note, each word, each letter of their song was a human soul, for, at times, a dead leaf would be plucked from amongst us and disappear among the smoke, becoming some minute part of the great music of created things. Then I knew that the making of the perfect music was beginning, and that the perfect song of the sailors, and of the sea-creatures, and of the sea-weeds, and of the sea-fowl, and of the sea-winds, and of the sea itself was about to be shapen and to become a part of the song of the singing planets. And I, having loved the sea, lay in my pile of leaves trembling with hope that I might be deemed worthy of some part in that harmony.

The song began at last in a solemn pæan of thunderous and glorious words, like the running of a bright surf upon a beach. Then it trembled down into a quiet lyric, like the chattering of a brook over pebbles; then surged out again in a mournful andante that was like dawn, like a grey twilight upon mountains. Then I knew that the making of a tremendous word was in hand. A word which should signify and qualify the sea; a vast word, gentle, tremulous and solemn, and I was plucked forward (with a catch of joy in my heart, for I thought I had been deemed unworthy) to become one poor letter in the great word, one frail note in the perfect song, and then, as the completed music thundered and throbbed among the planets, I woke.

*John Masefield.*

