

## Wake

The setting sun makes the waves glitter  
Brilliant like the chest of Rolexes  
And costume baubles below the deck.  
As the ship turns westerly to Havana,  
The fireball is lost in the yards of sail,  
Except to peek through intermittent bullet holes.

The Flirty Strumpet, my ship, herself,  
Heaves in steady rhythm through the Atlantic,  
Starkly contrasting the pitches of cannonades.  
Human pools dry on the battered deck,  
But the men can clean their congealing puddles  
Tomorrow, after they toast their fallen salts tonight.

Bawdy songs and stomping jigs groggily crescendo,  
Only to pause for tales of the day's battle  
With the United States Coast Guard  
And their rapid fire machine cannons.  
The year may be 2005, but only the smell  
Of black powder sustains us.

My muscles ache, knotted like the ropes:  
Dried frayed spider webs from the mizzenmasts.  
Other dogs below nurse fiery rum  
And fresh stigmata; strength to our cause  
To go our own way, and leave the new  
World and all behind in our wake.

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