

## A Tradition of Nautical Nightmares

Clinging to the rail,  
white knuckles wrapped  
tight around hopes and prayers

The horizon dropping out of sight  
My iron-sided salvation is  
sliding like a jack-knifed rig

The crushing reappearance of towering waves  
Morale dwindles in gasps between swells  
while echoes of lost sailors call

Unforgiving wind and ice  
hollow my expression into  
a chiseled deadhead floating aboard

Riding giants unendingly leaves my  
body battered and broken  
Unable to carry on the fight

Sound of a fog horn alerts  
others of my unfortunate standing  
Sailing around the perilous Cape Horn

IAN YATES