

TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE OCEAN

Bill Scott

A poem for two voices

First Voice

Rolling its danger shoreward, teeth at the cliff foot
Bombora tangled water coming and going
Growling threat of the wind and the grey water
Under the old moon pull, ebbing and flowing.

Second Voice

Lure of the islands, road of the albatross,
Smooth track of sea road out and away
To mysterious distances, faraway harbours
Where great cities lie in the arms of the bay.

First Voice

Beach vines, castles of sand, gold of the dunes,
Rock pools under headlands, seaweed and shell
Pleasant enough to visit but always present
Echoes the warning roar of treacherous swell.

Second Voice

Atolls and corals and pearls to be gathered
Out of the deeps and traps of the sea.
Road to many adventures of iceberg and island
Here are the wandering hulls and a way to be free.

First Voice

Warmth of the hearth and the soft glow of the lantern
Safety of walls and peace of the bolted door.
Let the mad hound galewinds rattle the windows
Here the firelight flickers and glows on the floor.

Second Voice

There are sirens that sing in the echoing sound of the seawind
Calling me out to where wild water rolls
I must go, I must go there to follow the music
Of drowned sailors' songs in the call of the gulls.

First Voice

I will stay on the shore and so be safe from the ocean

| a n | t h o | l o | g y |

With the gentle whisper of forests to quiet my fears

Second Voice

And I'll roll and go across the distant horizons

And visit the ports of the world till I end my years.