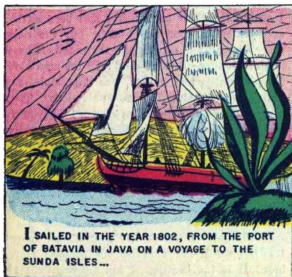


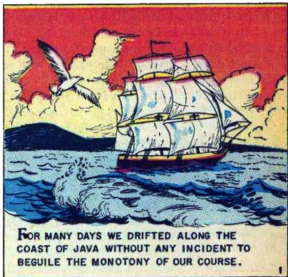
DRIFTING IN FROM UNFATHOM-  
ABLE AND SUPERNATURAL SEAS  
THIS STRANGE AND HARROWING  
MANUSCRIPT STRUCK COLD TERROR  
TO THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO  
READ IT. WHERE IT CAME FROM,  
WHO WROTE IT, NO ONE WILL EVER  
KNOW...

"MS. FOUND IN A BOTTLE"  
A HORROR CLASSIC BY E. A. POE.

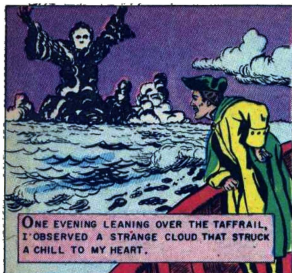
E. ALLIOT



I SAILED IN THE YEAR 1802, FROM THE PORT  
OF BATAVIA IN JAVA ON A VOYAGE TO THE  
SUNDA ISLES...



FOR MANY DAYS WE DRIFTED ALONG THE  
COAST OF JAVA WITHOUT ANY INCIDENT TO  
BEGUILE THE MONOTONY OF OUR COURSE.



ONE EVENING LEANING OVER THE TAFFRAIL, I OBSERVED A STRANGE CLOUD THAT STRUCK A CHILL TO MY HEART.



SUDDENLY IT BECAME INTOLERABLY HOT AND EVERY BREATH OF WIND DIED AWAY. I WENT BELOW WITH A FEELING OF APPROACHING EVIL...



I TOLD THE CAPTAIN OF MY FEARS, BUT HE PAID NO ATTENTION TO WHAT I SAID AND LEFT WITHOUT DEIGNING TO REPLY.



MY UNEASINESS KEPT ME FROM SLEEPING, AND ABOUT MIDNIGHT I DECIDED TO GO ON DECK.



AS I PLACED MY FOOT ON THE UPPER RUNG OF THE COMPANION LADDER, I WAS STARTLED BY A LOUD AND FRIGHTENING HUMMING NOISE!



AS I STEPPED ON DECK I FOUND THE SHIP QUIVERING LIKE A STRICKEN BEAST.



IN THE NEXT INSTANT, A WILDERNESS OF FOAM HURLED US ON OUR BEAM-ENDS SWEEPING THE DECK FROM STEM TO STERN.



BY WHAT MIRACLE I ESCAPED DESTRUCTION I CANNOT SAY, ON COMING TO I FOUND MYSELF JAMMED BETWEEN THE STERN-POST AND RUDDER.



AFTER AWHILE I FOUND ONE SURVIVOR WHO CAME REELING TOWARD ME. ALL THE OTHERS WERE GONE!!



FOR FIVE DAYS WE SCUDDLED BEFORE THE WIND, DRIVEN AT A FRIGHTFUL SPEED. ON THE FIFTH DAY IT BECAME STRANGELY COLD.

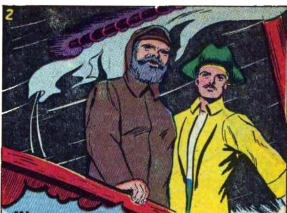


A WEIRD SUN AROSE WITH A SICKLY YELLOW LUSTER--EMITTING ALMOST NO LIGHT.

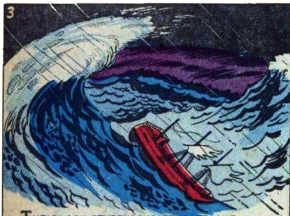




AT NOON THE SUN WENT DOWN, AS IF HURRIEDLY EXTINGUISHED BY SOME UNACCOUNTABLE POWER.



WE WERE ENVELOPED IN ETERNAL NIGHT, ALL AROUND WERE HORROR, AND THICK GLOOM, AND A BLACK SWELTERING DESERT OF EBONY.



THE BLACK, STUPENDOUS SEAS BECAME MORE DISMALLY APPALLING. WE SLID FROM TREMENDOUS HEIGHTS INTO WATERY ABYSS.



IN A DULL, SULLEN GLARE THAT LIT OUR STRICKEN BOAT I BEHELD A SPECTACLE THAT FROZE MY BLOOD, REARED ON THE SUMMIT OF A WAVE, A HUNDRED TIMES LARGER THAN HERSELF, HOVERED A GIGANTIC SHIP!



WE WERE AT THE BOTTOM OF ONE OF THESE ABYSSES, WHEN A SCREAM FROM MY COMPANION BROKE THE SILENCE OF THE NIGHT! "ALMIGHTY GOD! SEE! SEE!"



FOR A MOMENT OF INTENSE TERROR SHE PAUSED ON THE GIDDY PINNACLE, AND THEN CAME DOWN, IN A PANIC OF FEAR I STAGGERED AFT.



SHE STRUCK US WITH TREMENDOUS FORCE AND I WAS HURLED INTO THE STRANGER'S RIGGING.



AS I CLIMBED DOWN TO HER DECK I NOTICED WITH HORROR THAT SHE BORE FULL SAIL IN THE VERY TEETH OF THAT SUPERNATURAL SEA.



IN AWE AND TERROR I SLUNK INTO THE HOLD, AFRAID OF I KNEW NOT WHAT.



AS I TRIED TO HIDE, A DOOR OPENED AND A FOOTSTEP SPUN ME AROUND.



A MAN PASSED BY MUTTERING TO HIMSELF IN A STRANGE TONGUE. HIS KNEES TOTTERED AND HE SEEMED OF INCREDIBLY GREAT AGE.



HE TOOK NO NOTICE OF ME! FINALLY I TOOK COURAGE IN HAND AND WENT ON DECK, BUT THERE TOO, NONE WOULD SEE ME...



IT IS LONG SINCE I FIRST TROD THE DECK OF THIS TERRIBLE SHIP. IT IS AS IF I WERE ALONE. I SHALL CONTINUE THIS JOURNAL AS LONG AS I AM ABLE.



I HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT THE TIMBERS OF THE SHIP. THEY SEEM TO HAVE *GROWN* LIKE THE LIVING BODY OF A SEAMAN!



ABOUT AN HOUR AGO I MINGLED WITH THE CREW, BUT ALL SEEMED UTTERLY UNCONSCIOUS OF MY PRESENCE.

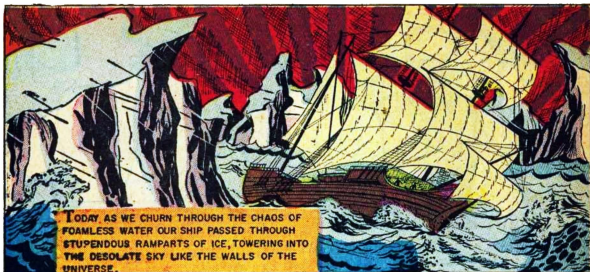


I HAVE SEEN THE CAPTAIN FACE TO FACE, BUT HE TOO WAS UNAWARE OF MY PRESENCE. THE CABIN IS FILLED WITH ANCIENT VOLUMES, STRANGE INSTRUMENTS AND MOLDERING CHARTS.



HE MUTTERED TO HIMSELF IN PEEVISH SYLLABLES OF A FOREIGN TONGUE. HIS VOICE REACHED MY EARS AS THOUGH FROM THE DISTANCE OF A MILE. I COULD STAND IT NO LONGER AND RAN OUT.





TODAY, AS WE CHURN THROUGH THE CHAOS OF FOAMLESS WATER OUR SHIP PASSED THROUGH STUPENDOUS RAMPARTS OF ICE, TOWERING INTO THE DESOLATE SKY LIKE THE WALLS OF THE UNIVERSE.



THE WIND IS STILL BEHIND US AND AT TIMES LIFTED US BODILY OUT OF THE SEA!



OH, HORROR UPON HORROR! WE HAVE ENTERED A GIGANTIC AMPHITHEATER, THE SUMMIT OF WHOSE WALLS ARE LOST IN DARKNESS! WE ARE BEGINNING TO WHIRL!



BUT LITTLE TIME IS LEFT. THE CIRCLES GROW SMALLER- WE ARE PLUNGING MADLY WITHIN THE GRASP OF THE WHIRLPOOL- AND AMID A THUNDERING OF OCEAN AND TEMPEST, THE SHIP IS QUIVERING ---

**O GOD! AND GOING DOWN!**

AND SO ENDS THIS CHILLING TALE OF HORROR, WHOSE ORIGIN MUST FOREVER REMAIN A MYSTERY TO ALL ON EARTH.

THE END