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## A Time to Walk the Ocean Floor

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# A Time to Walk the Ocean Floor

by Rick Taylor

R.E.M. sleep descends.  
Time now to walk the ocean floor,  
just you and I,  
content that our dream  
will negate any need  
for gills or breathing tubes.

As we descend,  
the colors change —  
ivory turns to emerald, emerald to azure,  
azure to grey, and grey to coal-black.  
Down deep our imaginary lights snap on.  
How many wrecked ships do we see —  
Freighters, destroyers, battleships, cruisers, submarines —  
All sent here to the bottom to rust and decay?

Your white, linen gown  
undulates rhythmically as you walk.  
You stumble in slow motion,  
and I reach out to steady you.  
How beautiful you are  
in this dream-like reverie,  
red tresses rising and falling  
like silk under trance.  
If only I could tell you of my love,  
but nothing save bubbles comes forth  
when my mouth opens  
to express my adulation.



I point as if to say, *Look there!*  
A freighter torn by war  
has rolled on its side,  
spilling its contents into the sand.  
Devoured by sea worms and time,  
its crew has long since departed.  
Further on, a wrecked galleon  
shows even less,  
just a small mound  
in which to hide its gold.

Think of the crashes and watery blasts  
as battles and hurricanes rage up top.  
To its victims the Ocean says,  
*Come unto me  
for comfort and rest.  
No issue, however grave,  
no agony, however acute,  
can have meaning down here  
where silence reigns.*



*Photo (detail) by Joel  
Kendall*

