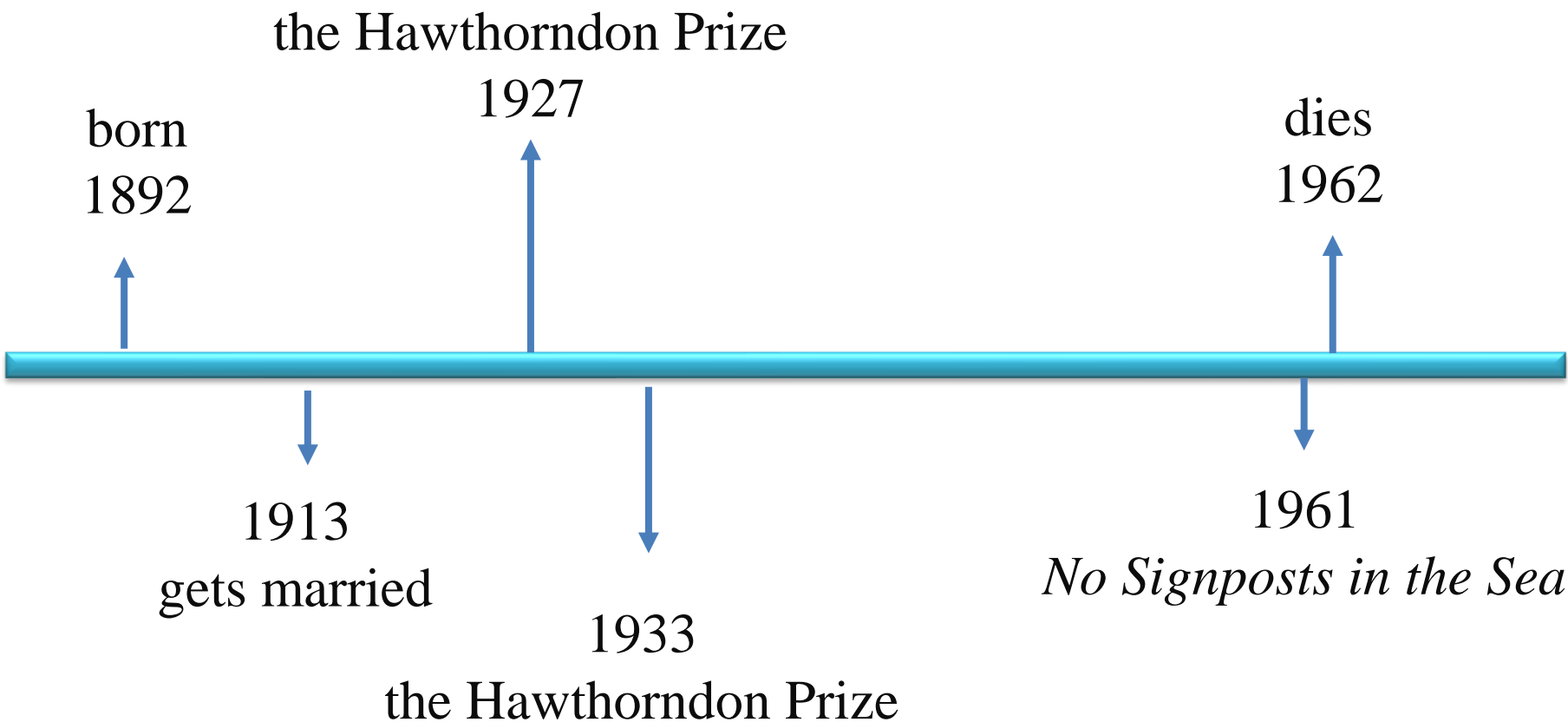


# No Signposts in the Sea

**Wu Qiong**

# About the author





## V. Sackville- West



- A prolific (多产的) writer



- One of the Britain's promising young writers in the 1920s



## About the author

- Victoria Mary Sackville-West (1892-1962), an English poet and novelist.
- Born in Knole Castle, the seat of the Sackville family from the time that Queen Elizabeth I gave Knole to her cousin, Lord Treasurer Thomas Sackville.
- A member of the Bloomsbury group (布卢姆斯伯里团体). 1907~1930年间经常在伦敦布卢姆斯伯里区一些人家聚会讨论美学和哲学问题的一批英国作家、哲学家和艺术家。主要成员有福斯特、斯特雷奇、C. 贝尔、画家V. 贝尔(1879~1961)和D. 格兰特(1885~1978)、J.M. 凯恩斯、费边社作家L. 吴尔夫(1880~1969)和吴尔夫(夫人)。





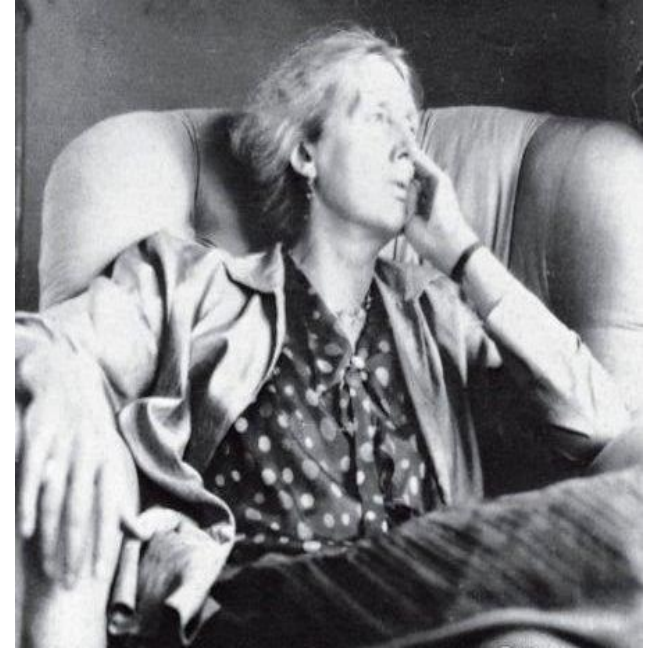
**Knole** is an English stately home (富丽堂皇的住宅) in the town of Sevenoaks in west Kent, surrounded by a 1,000-acre deer park. (英国肯特郡七橡树镇)



She was born in Knole Castle  
(诺尔城堡)

## About the Author

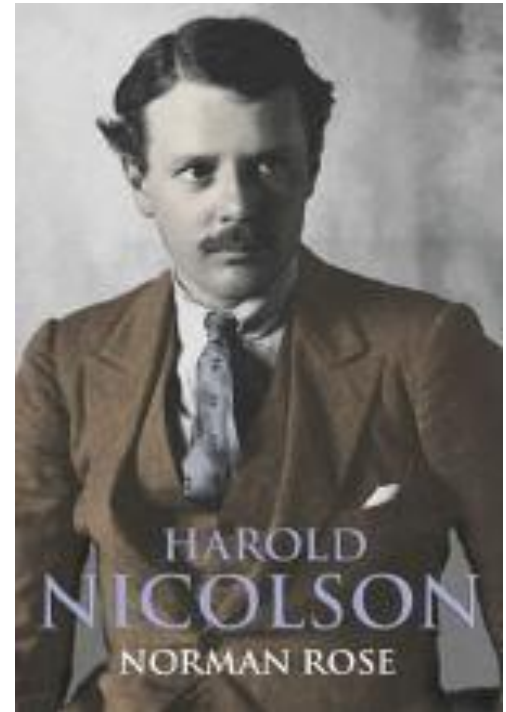
Best known poem, *The Land*, was awarded the Hawthornden prize in 1927. Her poetry is traditional in form, reminiscent of the work of the English nature poets of the age of romanticism.





# About the Author

- She wrote her first ballads (叙事诗) at the age of 11.
- Between 1906 and 1910, she produced 8 novels and 8 plays.
- In 1913, she married the diplomat and critic **Harold Nicolson**; they had two children, Benedict Nicholson, the art critic, and Nigel Nicholson, the publisher.





## About the Author

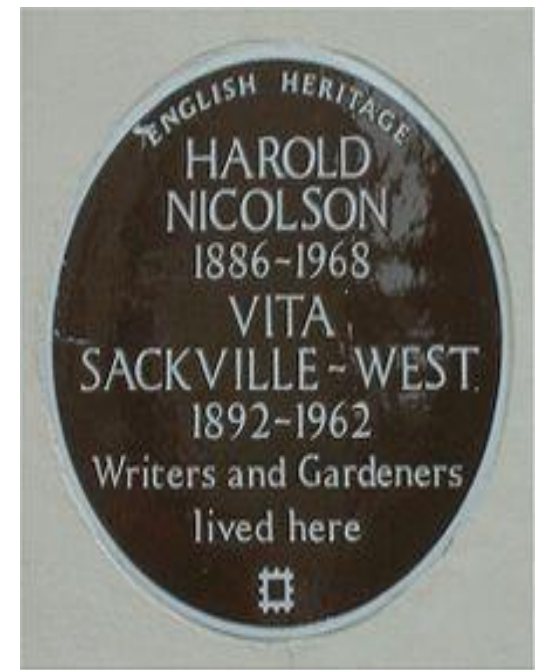
- Harold Nicolson admitted he had a male lover. The marriage endured despite their homosexual affairs.
- In 1923 Sackville-West was introduced to **Virginia Woolf** (弗吉尼亚 伍尔芙), and the two became lovers.



Virginia Woolf

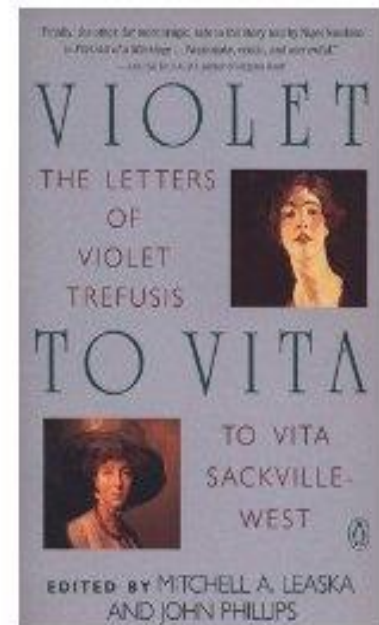
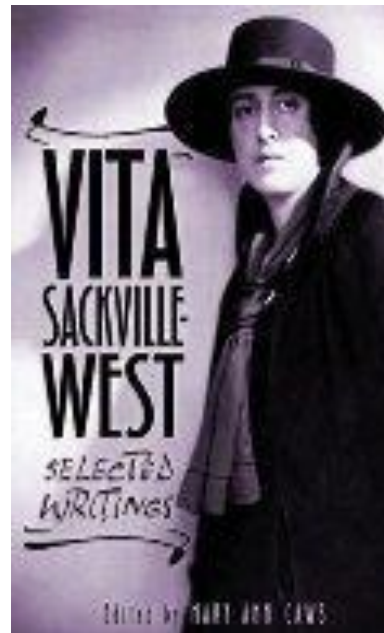
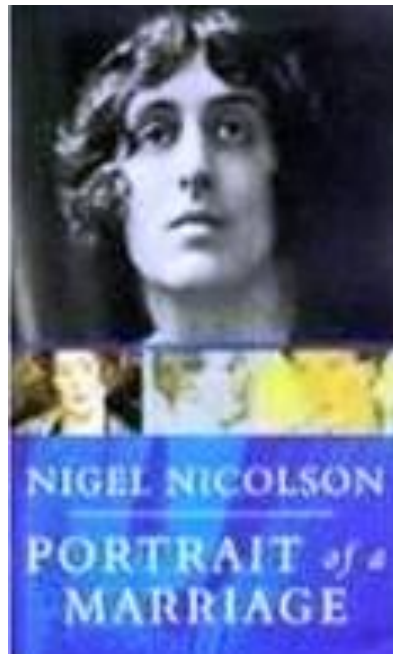
## About the Author

- She won the Hawthornden Prize twice (the only writer to do so) in 1927 and 1933.
- In 1946 Sackville-West was made a Companion of Honor (荣誉勋爵奖 to those who make great contributions to the U.K.) for her contribution to literature.
- Sackville-West died of cancer on June 2, 1962.
- Her husband Harold Nicolson died six years later.



# About the Author

- Sackville-West believed in equal rights for women.



## About her novels

- She was a prolific writer, wrote 15 novels, as well as biographies and travel books.
- She is best remembered for her novels:

*The Edwardians* (1930)

*All Passion Spent* (1931)

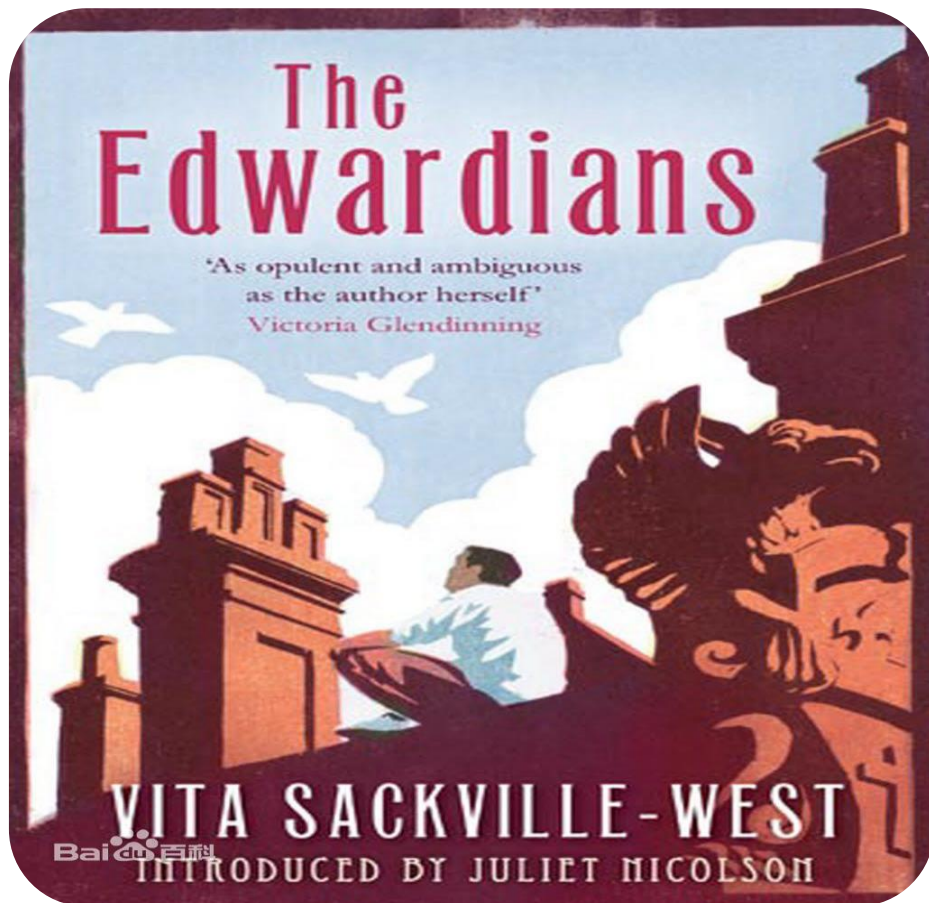
*Family History* (1932)

*Pepita* (1937): depicted the story of her grandmother, a Spanish dancer.

# Well known novels

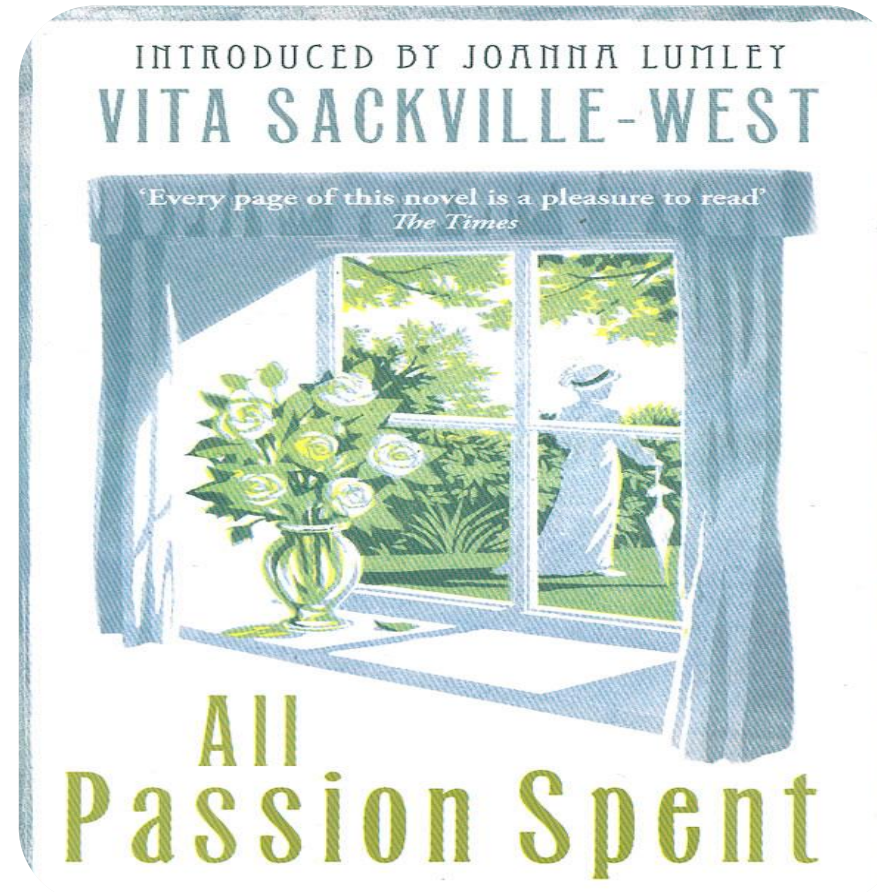
The Edwardians (1930)

《爱德华时代》



All Passion Spent (1931)

《耗尽的激情》

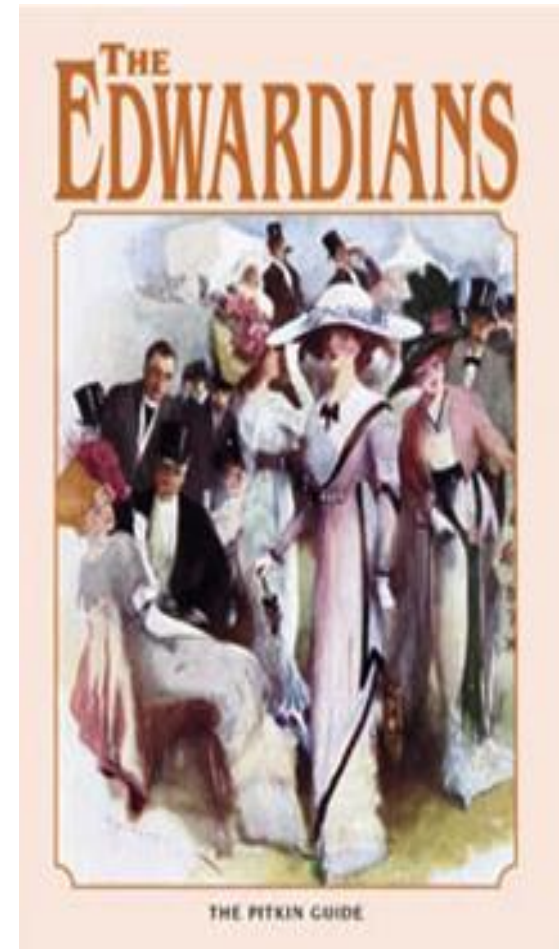




## About her Novels

### The Edwardians (1930) 爱德华时代

- *The Edwardians* is a clear critique of the Edwardian aristocratic society as well as a reflection of the author's own childhood experiences.



## About her Novels

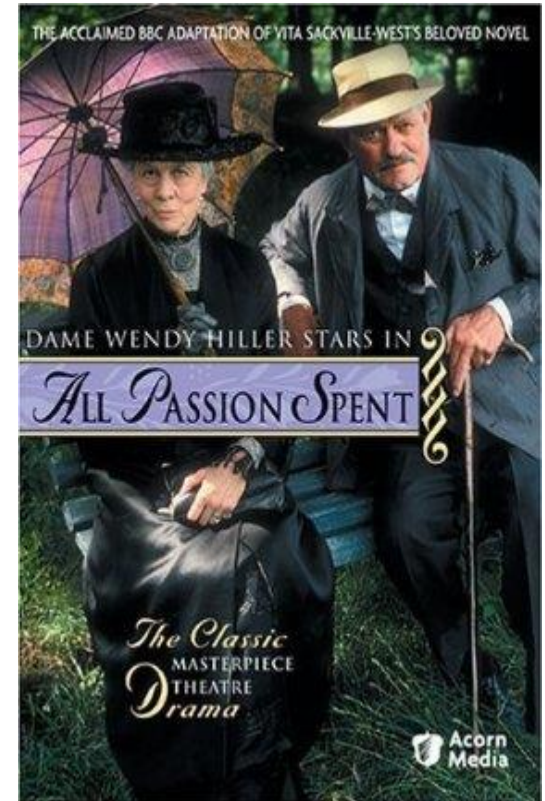
Vita Sackville-West gives insight into the everyday life of the upper class of the Edwardian era. She describes the occasions where the high society meets regularly, such as the glamorous (迷人的) parties, which are given every weekend, and the numerous luncheons which take place during the week. The customs and free time activities like playing cards are also mentioned. With this presentation, however, Sackville-West reveals the majority of the aristocracy and upper class as superficial and artificially constructed.



# About her Novels

## *All Passion Spent (1931)*

- It is one of Sackville-West's most popular works and has been adapted for television by the BBC.
- This charming and gentle novel addresses peoples', especially women's, control of their own lives, a subject about which Sackville-West was greatly concerned.

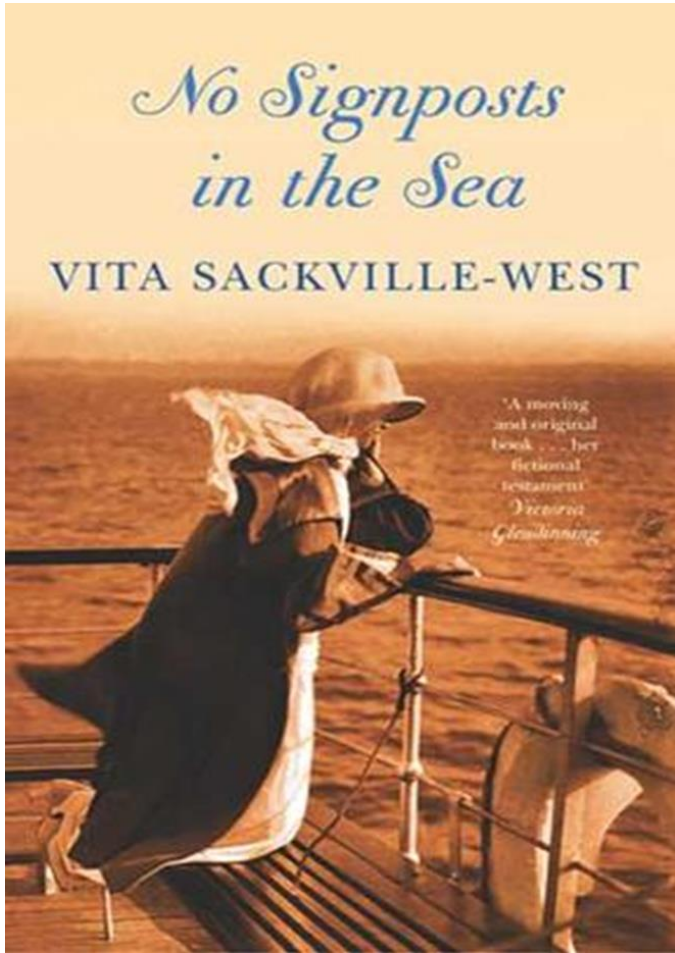


# Writing features



- Stream of consciousness

# Background



## *No Signposts in the Sea*

The novel was written by Sackville-West.

It was in the form of a journal narrated by Edmund Carr.

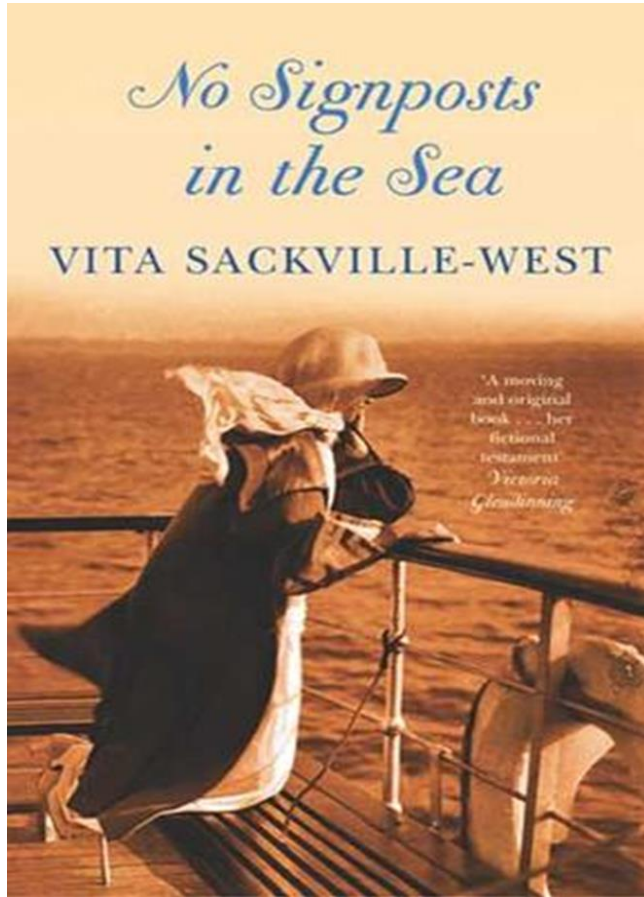


Sackville-West's **illness**



Sackville-West's **cruise**

# Background



The novel was first published in 1961. It was Vita Sackville-West's final novel before her death in 1962, and it was a fitting farewell.

## Background

In the novel Edmund Carr also had a short time to live. He decided to leave his job and took a Pacific cruise.

So, the cruise in the novel was based on the cruise that Sackville-West took in 1959.



# Background

The novel revealed Sackville-West's opinions and thoughts about **love**, **marriage** and **ideal relationship**: mutual respect, independence, and the same sense of values.





## The Narrator of the *No Signposts in the Sea*

Who is the narrator?



Edmund Carr, a middle aged journalist  
who wrote political articles, a political  
commentator

## **Warming-up:**

1. Suppose one has been informed that his days in the world are numbered, what do you think one may choose to do as the best option?
2. What do you think is the value of living on the earth ?
3. What's your perception of happiness?

## A study of the title

- What is the general function of a “signpost”?



A post supporting a sign that has information or directions; an indication, a sign, or a guide.

## Text Analysis

- Part 1 (Para. 1-2):

It is an introduction to the setting and all the three characters and their relationship of the story, “I” — Edmund Carr; Laura, and Colonel Dalrymple. Edmund admires Laura and loves her secretly; Colonel Dalrymple could be his possible rival.

## Information from Para 1

What can we know from the first paragraph?

**First**, Carr sits somewhere far from Laura, and is a secret admirer of Laura / *in surreptitious (秘密的, 暗中的) love with, an inward love on Laura. But we don't know whether Carr dare express his love bravely, only love Laura in secret.*

**Second**, Carr is different from what he used to be, because in the past, he never paid any attention to women's dressing, but he now is much impressed by how Laura is dressing.

**Third**, Laura is a distinctive person, different from others, esp. in her dressing.

**Fourth**, Carr's profession

1. In the dining saloon I sit at a table with three other men; Laura sits some way off with a married couple and their daughter.

## 1) **Saloon** vs **salon**

- **Saloon:** a large comfortable room where passengers on a ship can sit and relax; pub 酒吧, 大厅, 公共大厅
- **Salon:**
  - barbershop; a beauty salon
  - a fashion salon
  - a literary / art salon*

## 2) **way off:** (*an American expression meaning*) *far from where you are.*

e.g. I heard the bells from way off. 远离

- **Some way off:** at a distance 离...有一段距离

e.g. So she sat **some way off**, weeping bitterly.

3. I can observe her without her knowing, and this gives me pleasure, for it is as in a moving picture that I can note the grace of her gestures, whether she raises a glass of wine to her lips or turns with a remark to one of her neighbours or takes a cigarette from her case with those slender fingers.

- 1) **What can we infer from this sentence?** (deeply attracted by the beauty of Laura; )
- 2) **What characterizes the sentence structure and the use of words?**
  - long sentence; loose sentence (easy to follow, the main information comes first. )
  - detailed description of Laura's gestures
- 3) **What does the loose sentence suggest?** (create an enjoyable and relaxing atmosphere; so attracted by the beauty of Laura that I cannot move my eyes away from her. )
- 4) The din of..., of... of.... is continuous and makes you dizzy.



4. I have never had much of an eye for noticing the clothes of women:

1) I have never paid much attention to nor have ever had a keen appreciation of the clothes of women.

**2) have an eye for** : to have the ability to see, judge and understand clearly; to have a keen appreciation of

eg: I respect his judgment where art is concerned. He has an eye for a good painting.

I do not have an eye for artistic details and that is why I have been keeping silent.

5. ...but I get the impression that Laura is always in grey and white by day, looking cool when other people are flushed and shiny in the tropical heat; in the evening she wears **soft rich colours**, dark red, olive green, midnight blue, always of the most supple flowing texture.

- 1) Again, very detailed description of Laura's dress. –love and affection for Laura.
- 2) Laura is unique, different from others. She is always wearing grey and white clothes. Other people's faces look hot and shiny in the hot tropical climate because of the heat and sweat.

**-flushed:** (esp. of the face) reddened (as from heat, embarrassment or guilt or shame or modesty)

Her face was flushed with anger.

- 3) She wears soft rich colours: **Metonymy**. The word 'colours' stands for clothes of these colours.

**rich colours:** deep, intense colours such as dark red, olive green and midnight blue (very dark blue).

- 4) supple flowing texture: flexible, smooth texture, such as satin, silk. 柔顺  
光滑

- The word **rich** conveys various meanings when applied to modify different objects, e.g.
- a rich banquet ( luxurious, sumptuous )
- rich wine ( full of strength and flavour ) 烈酒，浓酒
- rich soil ( fertile, yielding in abundance )
- a rich mine ( producing in abundance )
- a rich prize ( worth much, valuable ) 贵重的奖品

6. I ventured to say something of the kind to her, when she laughed at my clumsy compliment and said I had better take to writing fashion articles instead of political leaders.( I expressed my opinion, expecting her to laugh at me.)

1) **venture:** to express ( an opinion ) at the risk of criticism, objection, denial

e.g. Upon the irresponsible taxation he does venture to speak plainly.

Don't ask,' he said, whenever Ginny ventured to raise the subject.

2) **clumsy:** not elegant or graceful in expression

e.g. a clumsy apology

My clumsy answer hurt her feelings.

3) **compliment:** a remark (or act) expressing praise and admiration.

e.g. I was embarrassed by their compliment.

He complimented her on her new dress without even looking at it. 他连看都没看一眼，就称颂她的新衣服。

4) **take to doing sth:** to begin doing something regularly:

e.g. Sandra has taken to getting up early to go jogging.

5) **political leader:** (journalism) leading articles, political editorials.

Para. 2: His acquaintance with the Colonel, and the release from work pressure probably under Laura's unconscious influence, make him have a reflection on his life in the past.

1. The tall Colonel whose name is Dairymple seems a nice chap. He and I and Laura and a Chinese woman improbably called Mme Merveille have made up a Bridge-four and thus beguile ourselves for an hour or so after dinner while others dance on deck.

1) He and I and Laura --- *He and Laura and I* deviation – *implication/ special purpose; shield*

2) a Chinese woman improbably called Mme Merveille: A Chinese woman with a French name. That's something hard to imagine, unlikely to happen.

Mme: Madame, French title for a married woman, also used before names of married women who are not British or American, e.g. Madame Sun Yat-sen.

3) beguile ourselves: pass our time pleasantly

**beguile:** to cause (time) to pass without being noticed 消磨  
时间; attract 陶醉

e.g. They beguiled themselves in playing the basketball.

We beguiled the time by telling each other jokes on the way to the town.

The travelers were beguiled by the beauty of the landscapes.

2. The Colonel, who is not too offensively an Empire-builder, sometimes tries to talk to me about public affairs.

1) In Carr's eyes, Empire-builders are all aggressive people causing offence and disgust. But this one ( a military officer sent to the colonies ) is not so bad.

The Colonel, an Empire-builder who is not too disgustingly aggressive, sometimes tries to talk to me about public affairs.

2) public affairs

Issues, questions, and responses involving social, economic, governmental, military, scientific, or corporate activities that are of concern to the people at large.

公众事务：涉及到大多数人关心的社会、经济、政府、军事、科学或法人活动的论题，问题和回应



3. He says he used to read me, and is rather charmingly deferential, prefacing his remarks by ‘Of course it’s not for me to suggest to you...’and then proceeding to tell me exactly how he thinks some topical item of our domestic or foreign policy should be handled.

1) **read me: Metonymy.** *Me* stands for books or articles written by me.  
e.g. I like Shakespeare. (Shakespeare’s works)

2) **deferential:** polite and respectful to others  
e.g. She is always extremely deferential to anyone in authority. 她对任何权威人士总是必恭必敬。

3) **prefacing his remark:** beginning his remark

4) Topical is used to describe something that concerns or relates to events that are happening at the present time.

e.g. *The magazine's aim is to discuss topical issues in a sensible way.*  
时事新闻 topical news

4. He is by no means stupid or ill-informed; a little opinionated/obstinate perhaps, and just about as far to the Right as anybody could go, but I like him, and try not to tease him by putting forward views which would only bring a puzzled look to his face.

1) He is not at all stupid or ignorant.

(**ill-informed**, ill means badly, imperfectly, wrongly, improperly, e.g. ill-advised, ill-bred, ill-considered, ill-defined, ill-mannered)

2) **just about as far to the Right as anybody could go**: just about as conservative as anybody could be; extremely conservative politically.

### **Political parties or people**

**The Right:** The people and groups who advocate the adoption of conservative or reactionary measures, especially in government and politics. Also called **right wing**

**The Left:** The people and groups who advocate liberal, often radical measures to effect change in the established order, especially in politics, usually to achieve the equality, freedom, and well-being of the common citizens of a state.

3) try not to tease him by putting forward views which would only bring a puzzled look to his face:

Carr knew if he put forward some liberal views, the conservative Colonel would look puzzled. Personally he liked the Colonel, so he didn't want to make fun of him.

5. Besides, I do not want to become involved in discussion. I observe with amusement how totally the concerns of the world, which once absorbed me to the exclusion of all else except an occasional relaxation with poetry or music, have lost interest for me even to the extent of a bored distaste.

1) I was once so completely absorbed in the important affairs of the world that I devoted all my attention, time and energy to them and only occasionally did I allow myself a little rest by reading poetry or listening to music. Yet now these world problems no longer hold any interest for me. Actually, I dislike them and they bore me now. I feel quite amused as I watch how this dramatic change in perspective is taking place.

我有趣地发现，自己过去除偶尔借诗歌或音乐消遣放松一下外，一心专注的世界大事现在不仅是索然无味的，而且简直是到了令人厌烦的地步。

2) **concern:** a matter of interest or importance

3) **to the exclusion of :** so as to keep out, leave out , excluding

For example:

\* He spent his spare time gardening, to the exclusion of all other interest. 他把空余时间都用在园艺上了，没有任何其他爱好。

\*All editorials were about the general election to the exclusion of all other topics.

\*He was advised to study English literature to the exclusion of all other subjects.

4) **to the extent of a bored distaste:** to such an extent or degree that they give me a bored distaste

6. Doubtless some instinct impels me gluttonously to cram these the last weeks of my life with the gentler things I never had time for, releasing some suppressed inclination which in fact was always latent.

1) some instinct impels me gluttonously to cram these the last weeks of my life with the gentler things I never had time for :

Perhaps because I know my days are numbered, I am impelled by instinct to enjoy myself to the full with more refined, pleasant and softer things ( as compared with writing political leaders and so on ) which I never had time to enjoy in the past.

• **gluttonously to cram:** eating like a glutton(贪吃者), too much and greedily; **greedily filling his life with the gentler things**

• 这无疑是自己受某种本能的驱使，要贪婪地用一些过去无暇享受的赏心乐事来填补自己生命中的最后几周。

6. Doubtless some instinct impels me gluttonously to cram these the last weeks of my life with the gentler things I never had time for, releasing some suppressed inclination which in fact was always latent.

2) releasing some suppressed inclination which in fact was always latent:

- allowing my likings and wishes to show themselves, setting free my likings and wishes, which had always existed but had been ignored and suppressed
- **inclination:** liking, wish
  - She has no inclination to be an actress.
  - You must think of our feelings instead of following your own inclinations.
- **latent:** potentially existing but not presently evident or realized
  - We must take measures to control the latent disease germs. 我们必须采取措施控制潜伏的病菌。
  - Within everyone there was a latent volcano of unhappiness and discontent. 在每个人心中都有一座潜伏着不幸福与不满的火山。

释放那些在过去虽受到压抑但一直潜伏在自己心中的欲望。

7. Or maybe Laura's unwitting influence has called it out.

1) Or maybe my suppressed inclination has been brought out under Laura's unconscious (unintentional) influence.

2) **unwitting:** unconscious/ unintentional

e.g. Please forgive his unwitting insult. 请原谅他无意的伤害。

She is their unwitting accomplice. 她无意中成了他们的帮凶。



## Revision:

1. 举止的优雅      2. 举起酒杯到唇边      3. 扭头与邻座交谈
4. 纤细的手指      5. 懂得鉴赏      6. 被热带的高温烘烤得红光满面
7. 穿着色调柔和、富丽的衣服      8. 质料柔软光滑的衣服
9. 冒昧地说      10. 笨拙的恭维      11. 开始着手做。。。
12. 政治社论      13. 消遣；消磨时光      14. 对某人毕恭毕敬；彬彬有礼
15. 说话以。。。开始      16. 接着做某事      17. 国内外政策
18. 绝不是      19. 愚蠢或孤陋寡闻      20. 有一点儿固执己见
21. 提出观点      22. 参与讨论      23. 有趣地发现      24. 世界大事
24. 不包括      25. 吸引某人，引起某人关注      26. 偶尔的放松
27. 到了觉得乏味和讨厌的地步      28. 某种本能
29. 驱使某人做某事      30. 贪婪地填补      31. 释放被压抑的欲望
32. 潜伏在心中的欲望      33. 无意的影响

# No Signpost in the Sea

Detailed Study  
(Paras 3-4)

### Para 3: What Carr used to be like.

1. Dismissive as a Pharisee, I regarded as moonlings all those whose life was lived on a less practical plane.

1) **dismissive**: showing indifference or disregard 自以为是的、轻视的、蔑视的

e.g. He signed his disapproval with a dismissive hand gesture. 他用轻蔑的手势表示他不同意。

2) **Pharisee**: Pharisee: member of a Jewish religious sect (from about 120BC.) They were more puritanical than the other sects; term now applied to a hypocritical or overrighteous person.

法利赛人，犹太教的一派，他们主张遵守口传律法，这种观点至今仍是犹太教神学思想的中心。法利赛人严格律己，笃信教义，仇视信奉异教的罗马统治者，赢得众多百姓的拥护。

3) **moonlings**: inhabitants of the moon (impractical inhabitants)

ling: suffix of nouns, often pejorative (贬义的), denoting a person or thing connected with a group, activity, or status.

**hireling**: a person whose services may be hired; 雇工

**underling**: a person of low rank or position in relation to another, such as a servant and also used to form diminutives. 部下, 下属

4) **on a less practical plane**: more spiritual or less concerned with practical things

e.g. We felt we were living life on several different planes.

The talks between the two countries will be held on a higher plane.  
两国之间的谈判将在更高一级举行。

5) I was as puritanical as a Pharisee and I viewed with contempt all those who lived a less practical life than my own and regarded them as impractical inhabitants on the moon.

2. Protests about damage to ‘natural beauty’ froze me with contempt, for I believed in progress and could spare no regrets for a lake dammed into hydraulic use for the benefit of an industrial city in the Midlands.

- 1) **freeze**: to make or keep motionless, or stiff, unable to show one’s feelings  
e.g. He froze the little girls with his stern gaze. 在他严厉的注视下，女孩们一动不动。  
We all froze at the sight of the snake.

2) **spare no regrets for ...** ; feel no regrets at all for

3) **a lake dammed into hydraulic use**: A dam is built on a lake in order to make use of its water power.

4) **Midlands**: a region in West Central England, around Birmingham.

5) I was not moved by the protests about damage to ‘natural beauty’ and I viewed them with great contempt. Believing in practicality and materialism, Carr disagreed with those who protested that industrialization had spoiled the natural beauty of the world.

对于人们因为大自然之美遭到破坏而提出的抗议，我无动于衷，且嗤之以鼻，因为我相信进步。也不会因为在中西部地区为一座工业城市水力需要筑坝而为那片湖泊感到遗憾。

3. And so it was for all things.

And this was my view on all things; and that is how I looked at all things.

4. A hard materialism was my creed, accepted as a law of progress;

1) I firmly believed in uncompromising materialism which in my opinion represented the law of human progress.

2) **hard**: firm and definite; uncompromising 绝对的

3) **materialism**: the doctrine that comfort, pleasure, and wealth are the only or highest goals or values; the tendency to be more concerned with material than with spiritual or intellectual goals or values. 物质至上主义

4) **creed**: statement of belief, principles, opinions on any subject.

e.g. The laws apply to everyone irrespective of race, creed or colour. 法律适用于所有的人,不分种族、信仰或肤色。

5. any ascription of disinterested motives aroused not only my suspicion but my scorn.

1) **ascription**: the act of ascribing (assigning sth. to a supposed cause, source); a statement that ascribes. 归因，归属

e.g. You should not ascribe your failure to bad luck.

翻译：我将我的进步归功于他一直以来的帮助。

Family means some ascription for the young as well as the elder. 家庭无论对年轻人还是老年人都意味着某种归属。

2) **disinterested**: not influenced by personal interest or selfish motives; impartial; unbiased. 无私欲的、公平的、公正的

e.g. The judge gave a disinterested verdict. 法官作出了公正的判决。

3) When people claimed that they protested against damaging the natural beauty out of unselfish motives, I suspected them and viewed them with contempt. I not only disbelieved people when they said they did things out of unselfish motives, I also held them in contempt.

#### Para.4. What Carr is like now.

1. And now see how I stand, as sentimental and sensitive as any old maid doing water-colours of sunsets!

Just imagine how I have changed now. Here I stand, sentimental and sensitive, like an old unmarried woman painting a water-colour picture of sunset.

- 1) **sentimental**: having or showing tender, gentle, or delicate feelings, especially in an excessive or exaggerated or affected way.
- 2) **sensitive**: having or showing keen sensibility, highly responsive intellectually.
- 3) **sentimental and sensitive**: alliteration
- 4) **old maid**: a woman, especially an old woman, who has never married.  
Old maids are supposed to be sentimental and sensitive.



2. I once flattered myself that I was an adult man; I now perceive that I am gloriously and adolescently silly.

- 1) **flatter oneself that:** to hold the self-satisfying or self-deluding belief that...自诩为，自以为是
- 2) **gloriously:** (colloquial) delightfully, enjoyably
- 3) **adolescent:** youthful, immature.

**Paraphrase:** I once deluded myself (迷惑) that I was an adult man, mature, but now I see that I am delightfully and childishly silly.

我一度以为自己是个成熟的人，现在看来我真傻得天真幼稚。

3. A new Clovis, loving what I have despised, and suffering from calf-love into the bargain, I want my fill of beauty before I go.

1) **Clovis (465-511)**: referring to the savage pagan（异教徒，非基督教徒），king of the Franks, who was later converted to Christianity and became a gentle Christian monarch. 克洛维，法兰克国王，476年西罗马帝国灭亡，墨洛温王朝兴起，第一个国王为克洛维，曾将墨洛温王朝版图扩展至西欧大部地区。

Here Carr describes himself as a new Clovis, who was later converted to Christianity. I am like a new Clovis, loving what I used to despise.

2) suffering from calf-love into the bargain: **moreover experiencing the pain of puppy love**

- **calf-love**: immature love that adolescent boys and girls may feel for each other; puppy love. The narrator, Carr uses this word probably to imply that he had never truly been in love before he met Laura.
- **into the bargain**: in addition, moreover

3) I want my fill of beauty before I go.

\* Before I die, I want to enjoy beauty to my heart's content; to enjoy as much as I can.

\* euphemism: before I go—before I die.

4. Geographically I did not care and scarcely know where I am. There are no signposts in the sea.

There are no signposts in the sea. This is a summary sentence. The implication is there's nothing to guide one's mind on the sea; there's nothing to stop one's imagination.

# No Signpost in the Sea

Detailed Study  
(Paras 5-6)

**Para 5:** unfamiliar peace of the body and the purification of the soul in the moonlight

1. The young moon lies on her back tonight as is her habit in the tropics, and as, I think, is suitable if not seemly for a virgin:

1) **Personification.** The moon which has just risen lies on her back, which is her habit in the tropics, and I think the way the young moon lies is suitable if not proper for a virgin.

Here the narrator personifies the moon, describing it as a beautiful virgin.

2) **seemly:** proper, fitting, as regarded by conventional standards of conduct or good taste. 恰当的

e.g. Friendly relations should keep a seemly distance . 适当的距离是人际交往中最需要把握的尺寸。

We will call at a more seemly time. 我们会在更适合的时候来拜访的。

2. Not a star but might not **shoot down** and accept the invitation to become her lover.

Every single star might come down quickly and accept the invitation to become her lover.

1) Pay attention to the writer's choice of words here. 'shoot down' means 'come down quickly', which implies that the young moon is so beautiful that the stars cannot wait to come down to see her. 'Not a star but might not...' can achieve a much more emphatic effect.

2) but: adv. used for emphasis.

3. When all my fellow-passengers have finally dispersed to bed, I **creep up** again to the deserted deck and slip into the swimming pool and float, no longer what people believe me to be, a middle-aged journalist taking a holiday on an ocean-going liner, but a liberated being, bathed in mythological waters, an Endymion young and strong, with a god for his father and a vision of the world inspired from Olympus.

1) **dispersed to bed:** went to bed in their own cabins.

**disperse:** go in different directions; scatter

e.g. The wind dispersed the cloud from the sky.

The police fired into the air in an attempt to disperse the crowd.

1) I **come up stealthily** again to the empty deck and slip into the swimming pool and let myself float in the water freely. At this moment I am not a middle-aged journalist that people believe me to be spending a holiday on an ocean-going liner. I have now become a liberated person, bathed in magic waters, and I feel I am like Endymion, a young and strong youth who has a god for his father and gifted with the power to see the world given by gods at Olympus.

3) a liberated being, bathed in mythological waters

\* **liberated being**: a human being freed from all worries, mental pressures, human frailties, etc.

\* **mythological waters**: magic waters, that appear in Greek mythology, such as the Lethe (遗忘河), the river of forgetfulness whose water produced loss of memory in those who drank of it;

Here the narrator uses this **allusion** because he feels he has become incapable of envy, ambition, malice, etc. while floating in the swimming pool, as if the pool had changed him completely by a miracle just like mythological waters.



4) an Endymion, young and strong :

- In Greek mythology, Endymion was loved by Selene (塞勒涅), the goddess of the moon, who visited him every night while he lay asleep in a cave on Mount Latmus in Caria; she bore him 50 daughters.
- A common form of the myth represents Endymion as having been put to sleep by Selene herself so that she might enjoy his beauty undisturbed.

5) with a god for his father and a vision of the world inspired from Olympus.

\* **Olympus:** mountain range in northern Greece; home of the Gods in Greek mythology.

有天神为父，还有一双奥林匹斯诸神所赐的观察世界的慧眼。

4. All weight is lifted from my limbs; I am one with the night;  
I feel that I am weightless and totally absorbed by the night (completely integrated with the night; become part of the night; to be at peace with the night )

5. I understand the meaning of pantheism.

Pantheism is the religious belief that God is in everything in nature and the universe. 古希腊是个泛神论国家,人们把每个城邦,每个自然现象都认为受一位神灵支配着,因此希腊人祀奉各种神灵建造神庙。

I understand why people worship many objects as their gods. The narrator implies that man is passing and transient, while Nature, the objective world, is lasting.

6. How my friends would laugh if they knew I had come this!

How my friends would laugh if they knew I had changed to such an extent.

This is explained in the following sentence.

7. To have discarded, as I believe, all usual frailties, to have become incapable of envy, ambition, malice, the desire to score off my neighbour, to enjoy this purification as I enjoy the clean voluptuousness of the warm breeze on my skin and the cool support of the water.

1) **discarded...all usual frailties**: got rid of all moral weaknesses usually found in a person, such as envy, malice, etc.

**malice**: the desire to cause pain, injury, or distress to others. 恶意; the intent to commit an unlawful act or cause harm without legal justification or excuse. 蓄意害人

e.g. a verbal attack motivated by pure malice.

ruin her reputation and did it with malice.

2) **incapable of**: not allowing or admitting

3) **score off my neighbour**: defeat my neighbour in competitions. Gain some advantage over my neighbour

7. To have discarded, as I believe, all usual frailties, to have become incapable of envy, ambition, malice, the desire to score off my neighbour, to enjoy this purification as I enjoy the clean **voluptuousness** of the warm breeze on my skin and the cool support of the water.

4) enjoy the purification: enjoy the purification of the soul—the state of being free from all those moral weaknesses.

5) the clean voluptuousness of the warm breeze on my skin: transferred epithet; **the sensual delight**, pleasure produced by the clean warm breeze brushing against my skin.

6) the cool support of the water: transferred epithet. The support of the cool water.

在享受着这暖风浴肤，凉水托体所带来的清新感受时，我相信我的灵魂也得到了净化，丢弃了凡人皆有的种种弱点，变得不会嫉妒，没有野心，没有恶意，与世无争。

8. Thus, I imagine, must the pious feel cleansed on leaving the confessional after the solemnity of absolution.

- 1) I imagined devoted religious people must feel as clean and pure as I do now when they leave the solemn confessional after gaining pardon of their sins.
- 2) The pious: the pious people, who show religious devotion and are zealous in the performance of religious obligations.
- 3) The confessional: a small, enclosed place in a church, where a priest hears confessions.
- 4) absolution(免罪、赦罪): a remission of sin; specifically, in the Roman Catholic Church, such remission is formally given by a priest.

我想象，那些虔诚的教徒在做完庄严的忏悔仪式离开忏悔室时，他们心灵得到净化的感觉一定就像我此时的感觉。

Para 6: Happiness with Laura to look at the sea by day or at night.

1. Sometimes Laura and I lean over the taffrail, and that is happiness.

taffrail: the railing around the stern of a ship 船尾栏杆

2. It may be by daylight, looking at the sea, rippled with little white ponies, or with no ripples at all but only the lazy satin of blue, marbled at the edge where the passage of our ship has disturbed it.

1) rippled with little white ponies: White ponies ( small horses ) are a **metaphor** referring to the spray of breaking waves.

2) the lazy satin of blue: the slow, smooth blue waters like a piece of satin.

3) marbled at the edge... has disturbed it: When our ship passes, it disturbs the slow, smooth blue waters as if cutting it into two. At the edge, there are streaks of white sea spray and blue or green waters. They resemble marble.

只见海面上时而翻卷起白色的浪花，时而平静得宛若一幅微微飘动起伏着的蓝色缎面，完全见不到翻起的浪花，只有我们的轮船驶过之处才泛起一道道如大理石般的波纹。

3. Or it may be at night, when the sky surely seems blacker than ever at home and the stars more golden.

Or it may be at night, when the sky surely seems blacker and the stars more golden because the air here is much cleaner than at home ( in England ) : The air is not polluted, and there is no fog on the sea.

4. I recall a phrase from the diary of a half-literate soldier, ‘The stars seemed little cuts in the black cover, through which a bright beyond was seen.’

Simile is used in this sentence.

beyond: whatever is beyond or far away.

5. sometimes these untaught scribblers have a way of putting things: Sometimes these uneducated people who write carelessly know how to describe things, express ideas.

1. 不恰当，不优雅； 2. 飞射下来； 3. 回舱就寝、散去就寝；  
4. 滑入泳池； 5. 爬上空无一人的甲板； 6. 无拘无束的人； 7.  
沐浴在水中； 8. 赐予观察世界的慧眼； 9. 丢弃凡人常有的弱点；  
10. 不再嫉妒、没有野心、没有恶意； 11. 打败某人的欲望； 12.  
享受心灵的净化； 13. 享受暖风浴肤、凉水托体的快感



# No Signposts in the Sea

Detailed Study  
(Paras 7-9)

## Paragraph 8: A description of the coastline with diverse features

1. Sometimes we follow a coastline, it may be precipitous bluffs of grey limestone rising sheer out of the sea, or a low-lying arid stretch with miles of white sandy beach, and no sign of habitation, very bleached and barren.
  - 1) it may be precipitous bluffs of grey limestone rising sheer out of the sea: The coast may be high, steep cliffs of grey limestone, rising steeply out of the sea.  
**precipitous:** very steep. e.g. a precipitous mountain path.  
**bluff:** cliff
  - 2) a low-lying arid stretch with miles of white sandy beach:  
**arid:** lacking sufficient water or rainfall; dry e.g. an arid climate  
**stretch:** a large and unbroken expanse e.g. a stretch of clear water, a stretch of highway.
  - 3) With no sign of habitation: with no sign that the place is inhabited

1. Sometimes we follow a coastline, it may be precipitous bluffs of grey limestone rising sheer out of the sea, or a low-lying arid stretch with miles of white sandy beach, and no sign of habitation, very bleached and barren.

4) **very bleach and barren:** alliteration

bleach: white, colourless

barren: not producing crops or fruit; barren soil, barren hills.

5) Two kinds of views:

\***precipitous** bluffs rising **sheer** out of the sea

\*a **low-lying** arid **stretch** with miles of white sandy beach

有时，我们的轮船沿着海岸线航行。时而是从海中突拔而起的石灰岩峭壁，时而是地势低洼连绵数英里的白色沙滩，干燥而渺无人迹，贫瘠而荒凉。

2. These coasts remind me of people; either they are forbidding and unapproachable, or else they present no mystery and show all they have to give at a glance; you feel the country would continue to be flat and featureless however far you penetrated inland.

- 1) **These coasts remind me of people:** Coasts—people : similarities.
- 2) **forbidding:** looking dangerous, threatening or disagreeable
- 3) **These coasts remind me of people; either they are forbidding and unapproachable, or else they present no mystery and show all they have to give at a glance:** Analogy . The author compares the sheer steep cliffs to forbidding, unapproachable people, and the barren open sandy beach to people who have nothing to reveal.
- 4) **featureless:** without any special characteristics.

# Analogy

- \* Analogy is also a form of **comparison**, but unlike simile or metaphor, which usually concentrates on **one** point of **resemblance**, analogy draws a parallel between unlike things that have **several** common qualities or points of resemblance. ( things are **alike** in several/many respects)
- The **function** of analogy differs also from that of simile or metaphor. While the latter figures serve to heighten effect \*with vivid imagery, analogy is chiefly used for the purpose of persuasion or for the explanation or exposition of an idea.
- \* It is an effective way to **make the abstract concrete**. There is emotional impact in the analogy that is lacking in the abstract argument.

#### 4. Analogy

- 1) cliffs→people look stern, forbidding, unapproachable
- 2) the barren open sandy beach →people have nothing to reveal

5. What I like best are the stern cliffs, with ranges of mountains soaring behind them, full of possibilities, peaks to be scaled only by the most daring.

- 1) **stern**: sharp; something difficult to do.
- 2) **with ranges of mountains soaring behind them, full of possibilities, peaks to be scaled only by the most daring**: Behind the stern cliffs, rising high into the sky are ranges of mountains and peaks which only the most daring people climb. These mountains may have all kinds of beautiful things hidden in them, things that cannot be seen from outside. For instance, one may find some strange species of plants or animals there.
- 3) **scale**: to climb up a steep surface, such as a wall or the side of a mountain, often using special equipment:  
e.g. The prisoner scaled the high prison wall and ran off.

5. What plants of the high altitudes grow unravished among their crags and valleys?

1) **high altitudes**: high place, region

**altitude**: the height of a thing above the earth's surface or above sea level. It means a high place or region when used in the plural form.

2) grow unravished among crags and valleys: grow unharmed among the rocky crags or deep in the valleys. The word *unravished* is used figuratively.

**ravish**: to take or carry away by force; to rape (a woman)

**crag**: a steep rock or cliff

6. So do I let my imagination play over the recesses of Laura's character, so austere in the foreground but nurturing what treasures of tenderness, like delicate flowers, for the discovery of the venturesome.

- 1) **So do I let my imagination play over the recesses of Laura's character:** In the same way I let myself freely imagine what the innermost part of Laura's character presents.
- 2) **recess:** (often plural) a secluded, withdrawn, or inner place, e.g. the recesses of the forests, the recesses of the subconscious, the innermost recesses of the heart.
- 3) **so austere in the foreground but nurturing what treasures of tenderness , like delicate flowers, for the discovery of the venturesome:** (She looks ) so severe outwardly, but inwardly she is full of tenderness—tenderness like delicate flowers waiting for the daring to discover.



7. the cliffs → Laura

stern/austere

\*mountains and peaks → stern

→ mysterious things

→ to be scaled by the most daring

\*Laura → austere

→ profound feelings of tenderness

→ secrets to be discovered only by the courageous

This is another instance of analogy. The author is comparing the cliffs to Laura. Both look stern at first glance. Behind the cliffs there are mountains and peaks whose crags and valleys present mysterious things. And Laura, serious though she may look, has a deep reserve and profound feelings of tenderness in the recesses of her character. The mysterious peaks are to be scaled by the most daring. Similarly only the courageous can discover the secrets in the innermost place of Laura's heart.

Para 8-9: Narrator is different from other passengers.

1. My fellow-passengers do not share my admiration: It is obvious that my fellow-passengers do not admire the stern cliffs as I do.

1. ‘Drearee sorter cowst,’ said an Australian. ‘Makes you long for a bit of green.’

The coast is so grey and barren that one wants very much to see a bit of green things.

1. 陡峭的悬崖(precipitous bluffs); 2. 突拔而起(rise sheer); 3. 地势低洼连绵数英里(low-lying stretch with miles of...); 4. 渺无人迹(no sign of habitation); 5. 贫瘠而荒凉(bleached and barren); 6. 令人望而生畏、难以接近(forbidding and unapproachable); 7. 无秘可隐(present no mystery); 8. 悬崖峭壁 (stern cliffs) ; 9. 连绵的山脉(ranges of mountains); 10. 等待被攀登的山峰(peaks to be scaled); 11. 未被破坏 (植物) (grow unravished); 12. 峭壁和幽谷中(among crags and valleys); 13. 探索性格深处的秘密(play over the recesses of one's character); 14. 表面严肃冷峻(austere in the foreground); 15. 蕴含丰富温柔的情感 (nurture treasures of tenderness); 16. 宛若娇嫩的花朵(like a delicate flower)

1. 不恰当，不优雅； 2. 飞射下来； 3. 回舱就寝、散去就寝；  
4. 滑入泳池； 5. 爬上空无一人的甲板； 6. 无拘无束的人； 7.  
沐浴在水中； 8. 赐予观察世界的慧眼； 9. 丢弃凡人常有的弱点；  
10. 不再嫉妒、没有野心、没有恶意； 11. 打败某人的欲望； 12.  
享受心灵的净化； 13. 享受暖风浴肤、凉水托体的快感

# No Signposts in the Sea

Detailed Study  
(Paras 11-17)

## Paragraph 11:

Darkness falls, and there is nothing but the intermittent gleam of lighthouse on a solitary promontory.

1. **intermittent**: stopping and starting at irregular intervals

e.g. They saw the intermittent gleams from a lighthouse.

他们看见了灯塔发出一闪一灭的光。

She suffered from intermittent headache. 她患间歇性头痛。

**gleam**: a flash of light 闪烁、微光

e.g. I could see the faint gleam of light in the distance. 我能看见远处微弱的灯光。

A gleam of interest in the matter came into her eyes. 她的眼睛里显露出一丝对此事感到兴趣的神情。

2. **a solitary promontory**: a lonely headland, a cape; a natural elevation (especially a rocky one that juts out into the sea) 海角

**Para 12-17:** The Colonel's witty remarks and rich knowledge made Carr learn and reflect on sth.

1. We rounded just such a cape towards sunset, the most easterly point of a continent, dramatically high and lonely, a great purple mountain overhung by a great purple cloud.

1) **dramatically:** strikingly; impressively

2) **a great purple mountain overhung by a great purple cloud:** There was a big purple cloud over a large purple mountain.

日落时分，我们的船刚好绕过这样一个海角，它位于一块大陆的最东端，是一座孤峰高耸的紫色大山，山顶笼罩着大片紫色的云雾。

2. **The sea had turned to a corresponding dusk of lavender.**

The color of the sea had changed into a dim purple which was in harmony with the color of the sky and the surroundings. 海水也相应地变成了淡紫色。

corresponding: accompanying 相应的，一致的

e.g. All rights carry with them corresponding responsibilities.

3. Aloof on the top, the yellow light revolved, steady, warning; I wondered what mortal controlled it, in what must be one of the loneliest, most forbidding spots on Earth.

1) **aloof**: remote in manner; 疏远的，远离的

e.g. She had always kept herself aloof from the boys in class. 她一直和班上的男同学保持疏远的关系。

2) **mortal**: a human being, person, a being that will die eventually.



4. Haunted too, for many wrecks had piled up on the reefs in the past, when there was no beacon to guide them.

- 1) **haunted**: frequented by ghosts
- 2) **wreck**: a ship that has sunk or is so badly damaged that it cannot sail; goods or wreckage cast ashore after a shipwreck.
- 3) **reef**: a line of sharp rocks made of coral, or raised area of sand near the surface of the sea. 暗礁  
e.g. The ship was wrecked on a reef.
- 4) **beacon**: a special tower with a bright light, or a floating object that sends signals, used to warn boats that they are near the shore.

Para 13-16: Conversation with the Colonel .

1. The Colonel joined us. ‘How would you care for that man’s job?’ he said.

-- ‘I suppose he gets relieved every so often?’

1) **I suppose he gets relieved every so often**: I guess sometimes somebody else replaces him so that he is set free from the post to take a rest.

2) **get relieved**: to have the job taken away, especially when the job is something one does not want to do or is too heavy.

3) **every so often**: sometimes, but not often

2. “On the contrary, he refuses ever to leave. He is an Italian, and he has been there for years and years, with a native woman for his only company. Most people would think him crazy, but I must say **I find it refreshing to think there are still a few odd fish left in the world.** ”

1) **I find it refreshing to think there are still a few odd fish left in the world:**  
I feel comfortable when I think that there are still a few odd people left in the world (who are willing to do the jobs people usually hate doing. )

2) **An odd fish or queer fish:** (British English) (old-fashioned) someone who is slightly strange or crazy.

Para 17:

1. This is the unexpected kind of remark that makes me like the Colonel; there is a touch of rough poetry about him.

1) **touch**: a very small amount or degree; a trace, etc.

2) **poetry**: quality of beauty, grace, deep feeling

3) **about somebody**: in the character of a person

e.g. There is a touch of humor about the speaker.

There was a sense of mystery about the unknown visitor.

There is a feeling of calm about her.

有一点儿朴素的诗人气质。

Para 17:

2. I also like the out-of-the-way information which he imparts from time to time without insistence; he has travelled much, and has used his eyes and kept his ear open.

- 1) I also like the out-of-the-way information which he imparts from time to time without insistence out-of-the-way information: I also like the unusual information he conveys to me from time to time without speaking emphatically.

\*out-of-the-way: unusual e.g. He had the most out-of-the-way sense of humour.

\*impart: transmit (knowledge or skill)

e.g. One of a teacher's aims is to impart knowledge. 教师的作用之一是传授知识。

- 2) ... and has used his eyes and kept his ear open: He has observed carefully and learnt much from what he has heard.

Para 17:

3. I have discovered also that he knows quite a lot about sea birds; he puts me right about the different sorts of gull, and tells me very nicely that that couldn't possibly be an albatross, not in these waters.

- 1) **he puts me right about the different sorts of gull:** He corrects me about the different kinds of gulls.
- 2) **...and tells me very nicely that that couldn't possibly be an albatross, not in these waters.** He tells me in a way that is not offensive that the sea bird couldn't possibly be an albatross, for albatrosses are not found in these waters. Albatrosses are the largest sea birds with a wingspan of over 3.5m, found generally in the southern hemisphere.

Albatross: the largest sea birds with a wingspan of over 3.5m, found generally in the southern hemisphere.



Para 17:

4. The albatross, it appears, follows a ship only to a certain latitude and then turns back; it knows how far it should go and no farther. How wise is the albatross!

The albatross does not follow a ship all the way but just to a certain latitude and then turns back, knowing how far it should go and not beyond. This bird's wise behavior reminds the narrator of human behavior.

5. We might all take a lesson from him, knowing the latitude we can permit ourselves.

We human beings ought to learn from the wise bird, knowing how far we can allow ourselves to go; knowing how much freedom of conduct we can allow ourselves to have. Here the word 'latitude', used figuratively, which means freedom of opinion, conduct, action, etc.



Para 17:

6. Thus, and no farther, can I follow Laura.

Like the albatross, I should know how far I can go and I can follow Laura no farther. What he implies is that there is a limit to his relationship with Laura, and that he should not allow himself to go beyond that limit. This reveals the narrator's feeling torn between love of Laura and his acknowledgement that she is unattainable for him.

7. I suspect also that there is quite a lot of lore stored away in the Colonel's otherwise not very interesting mind.

- 1) I suspect there is quite a lot of knowledge stored away in the Colonel's mind, which is not interesting except for that.
- 2) **lore**: knowledge or wisdom, especially of an unscientific kind, about a certain subject.  
e.g. a countryman's weather *lore*
- 3) **otherwise**: except for what has just been mentioned.  
e.g. He was tired but otherwise in good health.

8. Laura likes him too, and although I prefer having her to myself  
I don't really  
resent it when he lounges up to make a third.

I prefer being with her alone, just the two of us, but do not feel  
angry or upset when the Colonel comes in a relaxed manner to  
join us.

- 1) **resent:** to feel angry or upset.
- 2) **lounge up:** to stand, move, sit, etc. in a lazy or relaxed manner.
- 3) **make a third:** to be a third party

I will appreciate it very much if you.....

I love it when....

# No Signposts in the Sea

Detailed Study  
(Para 18)

## Paragraph 18:

1. In all this great serenity of ocean it is seldom that we espy so much as another ship; the jolly dolphins and the scratchy little flying-fish have the vast circle all to themselves, 'the Flying Fish, who has a part with the birds,' and doubtless are glad to see the last of the monster which bears us into and out of sight.

1) **serenity**: calmness, peacefulness, quietness

e.g. The *serenity* in the aftermath of the tornado was remarkable

His *serenity* calmed those around him.

2) **espy**: to catch sight of

e.g. Out of the corner of my eye, I *espied* the squirrel making another raid on the bird feeder. 我眼角的余光看到松鼠又在袭击喂鸟器。

3) **scratchy**: making a scratching or a scraping noise.

4) **flying- fish**: These fish have large pectoral fins (胸鳍) like parachutes (降落伞) which enable them to glide in the air for short flights after they have thrust themselves from the water. They are found mainly in tropical or warm seas.

5) **the Flying fish, who has a part with the birds**: The flying fish can glide in the air for a short time, so they can fly just a bit like birds. This remark is in quotation mark, indicating they are said by the Colonel, who knows birds well.

Flying fish: large pectoral fins (胸鰭) which enable them to glide in the air for short flights after they have thrust themselves from the water.



1. In all this great serenity of ocean it is seldom that we espy so much as another ship; the jolly dolphins and the scratchy little flying-fish have the vast circle all to themselves, 'the Flying Fish, who has a part with the birds,' and doubtless are glad to see the last of the monster which bears us into and out of sight. 在这片无比宁静的大海上，我们连一艘其他的船只也难得见到。欢乐的海豚和那些吱吱叫的小飞鱼是这片广阔天地的主人。当它们再也看不到那载着我们驶入它们的视线又很快消失的怪物时，这些与鸟儿有点相似的小飞鱼肯定高兴得很。

6) **have the vast circle all to themselves**: be able to use/enjoy sth. without others.  
e.g When my parents went on a business trip, I had the house to myself.

7) **to see the last of the monster which bears us into and out of sight**: to see no more the great, strange-looking ship which carries us into and out of the range of their sight. Compared with the natural beauty of sea and sea birds, the huge man-made ship looks like a monster. Such a remark reveals the narrator's new attitude towards the relationship between nature and modern civilization.

8) **What contributes to the impressiveness of the scene?**

**serenity** of the ocean      **jolly** dolphins

**scratchy little** flying-fish---the **monster**      have the **vast circle** all to themselves  
**into and out of sight**

(use of specific words; contrastive description )



2. Our wake closes up and we might never have been.

When the track left in the water by our moving ship disappears, the sea is peaceful and quiet again, as if we had never been there.

3. But it does happen from time to time that an island appears on the horizon, nameless to us and full of mystery, the peak of a submarine mountain range, lonely, unblemished, remote.

1) After the wake of our ship is closed, the sea is undisturbed again, but from time to time an island appears on the horizon. This noun phrase ‘the peak of a submarine mountain range, lonely, unblemished, remote.’ is in apposition to the word ‘island’. The three attributes ‘lonely, unblemished, remote’ all modify the word ‘peak’.

2) **submarine**: being, living, used or carried on beneath the surface of the water, especially of the sea.

3) **lonely**: without habitation, unvisited; solitary

4) **unblemished**: the perfection or beauty is not spoiled.

e.g. Nowadays, *unblemished* or even perfect faces are the rule on magazine covers and billboards.

Apart from a parking fine ten years before, she had an *unblemished* driving record.

5) **remote**: far away from civilization, quiet and lonely.

4. Does one like islands because one unconsciously **appropriates** them, **a small manageable domain in a large unmanageable world**?

1) **appropriate**: to take something for your own use, usually without permission:  
e.g. He lost his job when he was found to have appropriated some of the company's money.

He appropriated my unread newspapers and never returned them.

2) antithesis: a **small manageable** domain in a **large unmanageable** world

3) domain: territory under one government or ruler.

人们喜爱岛屿，是不是因为在难以驾驭的广袤世界之中有这么些易于治理的小块领地，就不知不觉地要占为己有呢？



5. I cannot tell why it should give me such a queer sensation to reflect that that island **has always been there** (unless indeed it be no more than the work of the patient coral) and **will be** there still, **should** I return to find it waiting for me.

- 1) queer sensation: strange feeling; strange awareness
- 2) I feel that that island had been there from time primeval, unless it is only a coral reef formed more recently. If I should return, I would find the lonely island still there, waiting for me.
- 3) That island has always been there...will be there, **should I return** to find it waiting for me. Subjunctive mood: If I should return...

What is implied there?

6. It is the same sensation as I have experienced in looking at a photograph of, say, some river valley of innermost China, and seen a boulder, and thought that if I could find myself transported to that spot I could touch the reality of that particular piece of rock...

1) When I see an island appearing on the horizon, my senses respond in the same indescribable way as when I see a photo, for instance, a river valley of innermost China, a large rock, and I think that if I could be moved suddenly to be at that spot, I could actually touch that particular rock with my hands.

2) Here the narrator describes a close relationship between humans and nature. He compares the island appearing on the horizon to a place like a river valley far inside China. By a river valley in innermost China, the narrator might refer to the picturesque hills and rivers, e.g. in Guilin or river gorges in Yunnan Province. They are similar to the small island the narrator talks about in that they both are remote and unspoiled by modern civilization.

3) **boulder**: a large stone or rock

4) **transport**: to carry from one place to another, especially over long distances.

6. It is *there*. For me, I could sit on that very boulder.

... to reflect that that island **has always been *there*** and **will be *there*** still, should I return to find it waiting for me.... It **is *there***. For me, I could sit on that very boulder.

1) What does the tense imply here?

2) I could sit on that very boulder. (modal verb). What does it imply?

7. I explain myself badly, and it is not a sensation I could expect anyone save Laura to understand, but of such incommunicable quirks is the private mind made up.

1) **...but of such incommunicable quirks is the private mind made up:** inversion for emphasis. The normal order should be: “The private mind is made up of such incommunicable quirks.”, which means “The secret mind is made up of these peculiar traits that are secretive, reserved, and that one finds difficult to communicate to others. ”

2) **incommunicative:** not giving information readily, reserved

3) **quirk:** a strange habit or feature of someone’s character; peculiar trait.

e.g. The most annoying quirk of his is wearing a cap all the time.

他最令人感到厌恶的怪癖就是无论何时都戴着帽子。

# No Signposts in the Sea

Detailed Study  
(Paras 19-32)

1. 陡峭的悬崖(precipitous bluffs); 2. 突拔而起(rise sheer); 3. 地势低洼连绵数英里(low-lying stretch with miles of...); 4. 渺无人迹(no sign of habitation); 5. 贫瘠而荒凉(bleached and barren); 6. 令人望而生畏、难以接近(forbidding and unapproachable); 7. 无秘可隐(present no mystery); 8. 悬崖峭壁 (stern cliffs) ; 9. 连绵的山脉(ranges of mountains); 10. 等待被攀登的山峰(peaks to be scaled); 11. 未被破坏 (植物) (grow unravished); 12. 峭壁和幽谷中(among crags and valleys); 13. 探索性格深处的秘密(play over the recesses of one's character); 14. 表面严肃冷峻(austere in the foreground); 15. 蕴含丰富温柔的情感 (nurture treasures of tenderness); 16. 宛若娇嫩的花朵(like a delicate flower)

1. 不恰当，不优雅； 2. 飞射下来； 3. 回舱就寝、散去就寝；  
4. 滑入泳池； 5. 爬上空无一人的甲板； 6. 无拘无束的人； 7.  
沐浴在水中； 8. 赐予观察世界的慧眼； 9. 丢弃凡人常有的弱点；  
10. 不再嫉妒、没有野心、没有恶意； 11. 打败某人的欲望； 12.  
享受心灵的净化； 13. 享受暖风浴肤、凉水托体的快感

## Revision:

1. 在无比宁静的大海上;
2. 看到: catch sight of;
3. 拥有...; 是...的主人;
4. 驶入、驶出视线;
5. 孤独、无暇而遥远; unblemished
6. 不知不觉占有... unconsciously appropriate sth.
7. 奇怪的感觉; queer sensation
8. 不可言传的隐秘古怪的念头; incommunicable quirks



Revision:

I cannot tell why it should give me such a queer sensation to reflect that that island **has always been there** and **will be there** still, **should** I return to find it waiting for me.

But it does happen from time to time that an island appears on the horizon, nameless to us and full of mystery, the peak of a submarine mountain range, lonely, unblemished, remote.

## Paragraph 19:

1. Well, the islands. I divert myself by inventing the life upon them, and am amused to find my imagination always turning toward the idyllic.

1) **Paraphrase:** Now let's come back to the islands. I'm amused to find my imagination always leads me to fabricate the life on the islands as pleasing, simple and picturesque.

2) **\*divert oneself:** amuse oneself

e.g. How otherwise can we divert ourselves? 我们还有什么别的消遣呢?

**\*divert one's attention:** turn one's attention away from...

e.g. She dished up the anti-pollution business to divert the attention of the public. 她把防止污染的事情说得十分重要,以便转移公众的注意。

3) **invent:** to think up; devise; fabricate in the mind

2. This is the new Edmund Carr with a vengeance.

1) **Paraphrase:** Here I am born anew, completely different from the past, changed excessively or to an unusual extent.

2) **with a vengeance:** to a high degree, excessively

e.g. The wind was blowing the whole night *with a vengeance*.

He's been working *with a vengeance* over the past few weeks to make up for the lost time.

3. If we have seen a skiff sailing close in shore, I follow the fisherman as he beaches his craft in the little cove and gives a cry like a sea bird to announce his coming.

1) **Paraphrase:** If we have spotted a small boat, in my imagination I follow the fisherman as he grounds his boat on the beach in the cove and gives a cry like a sea bird to tell his wife that he has come back from the sea.

2) **skiff:** a small light boat

3) **cove:** part of the coast where the land bends around, partly enclosing the sea so the shore is protected

3. His woman meets him; they are young, and their skins of a golden-brown; she takes his catch from him. In their plaited hut there is nothing but health and love.

1) **Paraphrase:** I imagine that his wife comes out of home to meet him; they are young, and their skins of a golden-brown; she takes the fish he has caught from him. Their interwoven hut is full of health and love.

2) Here in these sentences the narrator is inventing the life of the fisherman and his wife.

3) **plaited:** interwoven 茅草编成的

4) **...nothing but health and love.** Why are health and love highlighted here?

## Para 20-25

1. One night we passed two islands, steeply humped against faint reflected moonlight; and on each of them, high up, shone a steady yellow gleam.

1) **Paraphrase:** One night we passed two islands with high rounded shapes in the dim moonlight reflected by the sea.

2) **hump:** to form a large round shape that rises above the surface of the ground or water. 使隆起，使变成弓状

在海水反射的昏黄的月色的映照下，海岛呈现出陡峭的驼峰型轮廓。

2. 'Not lighthouses,' I said to Laura. 'Villages'

3. We gazed, as the ship slid by and the humps receded into the darkness and even the lights were obscured by the shoulder of a hill, never to be seen by us again.

1) **Paraphrase:** We looked at the two islands for a long time as the ship moved smoothly by and the steeply rounded islands moved backward and disappeared into the darkness, and even the lights were blocked by the shoulder of a hill, and thus we could never see them again.

2) **recede:** to move backward

3) **obscure:** to prevent something from being seen or heard clearly  
e.g. The stars are obscured by the clouds.

The big elm tree obscures our view of the valley.

4) **shoulder:** a rounded part of a mountain just below the top 山肩

我们注目凝视着，轮船这时已渐渐从岛边滑过，海岛的驼峰形轮廓也渐渐消失在一片黑暗中，连岛上的闪光都被一个山肩挡住，从我们的视线中永远地消失了。

4. So peaceful and secret; so self-contained. 多么宁静、深沉而又隐秘

It is an **elliptical sentence** with 'the two villages are' omitted. All these attributes are opposite to the troubled landmasses.

1) **self-contained**: showing self-command or control; having within oneself or itself that is all necessary; self-sufficient. 独立的、自治的、沉默寡言的; 深沉的  
e.g. The apartment is small, but completely *self-contained*, with its own bathroom, kitchen, and living area.

She's very *self-contained* and isn't at all worried about moving to a big city where she won't know anybody.

5. One of the ship's officers joined us, off duty.
  6. 'Yes,' he said, following our gaze. 'One of them is a leper colony and the other a penal settlement. '
- 
- 1) As they are admiring the two villages, the ship's officer tells them one of the villages is an isolated settlement inhabited by lepers and the other is for convicts.
  - 2) **colony**: a particular group of people or the place where they live.  
e.g. an artist's colony, a leper colony
  - 3) **penal settlement**: an isolated community of convicts



7. God is there no escape from suffering and sin?

1) Even now when we are sailing on the peaceful sea, far away from the landmasses of the troubled world, you will still find signs of suffering and punishment. The leper colony refers to suffering while the penal settlement refers to sin. In his imagination the narrator has romanticized the two lonely spots (so peaceful and secret; so self-contained), and now he is shocked to hear the truth, and his imagination is shattered by harsh reality.

2) ‘Suffering and sin’ are an instance of alliteration.

Para 26: Pleasure in watching the sunset for the green flash.

1. Laura and I amuse ourselves by watching for the green flash which comes at the instant the sun disappears below the line of the horizon.

Note the use of the phrase ‘watching for’, not just ‘watching’ because the green flash does not appear every time the sun sets. They have to watch and wait for it to happen.



2. This does not happen every day, for the sky must be entirely clear of cloud and clouds seem very liable to gather along the path of the setting sun, but we are as pleased as children when our game succeeds. 这种绿光不是每天都能看到，只有当天空没有一丝云彩时才能看到，而云彩特别喜欢沿着日落的轨道聚集。

- 1) It is said that only under certain conditions does the green light come—the sky must be clear with good visibility; humidity of the air should be low; there must be no cloud or mist in the sky.

It does not happen every day because clouds seem very likely to gather along the path of the setting sun. But wherever the green flash appears, we are as delighted as children when our game succeeds.

- 2) **liable**: to be likely to do or say something or to believe in a particular way, especially because of a fault or natural tendency
- 3) **flash**: a bright light that shines for a short time and then stops shining.

3. Laura claps her hands. Only a second does it last, that streak of green light; we wait for it while the red ball, cut in half as though by a knife, sinks to its daily doom.

- 1) **Paraphrase:** The green flash only lasts a second; we wait for it while the sun, like a red ball cut in half as though by a knife, sinks below the horizon.
- 2) This sentence is inverted because it begins with ‘only’ for emphasis.  
e.g. Only then did I notice that his face had turned pale and he was about to faint.
- 3) **streak:** a sudden flash of ...
- 4) **‘cut in half as though by a knife’**—past participle, functioning as attributive, modifying ‘the red ball’. ‘red ball ’ is a metaphor.
- 5) **sink to its daily doom:** goes down to where it is destined to go every day.

那道绿光一闪而逝； 落到每日的归宿之处

- Stages of a green flash



4. Then come the twilight colours of sea and heaven (we have discovered the fallacy of saying that darkness falls suddenly in these latitudes, at any rate on sea level), the winepink width of water merging into lawns of aquamarine, and the sky a tender palette of pink and blue. But the green flash is our chief delight.

- 1) **Paraphrase:** After the sun goes down, the sea and sky turn into twilight colour (we have found that it is erroneous to say that darkness falls suddenly in these latitudes ); the wide expanse of winepink waters are mixed with strips of bluish-green waters like lawns, and the sky becomes a palette of soft pink and blue colours.
- 2) 接着可以看到大海和天空上出现一片茫茫的暮色(有人说, 在这种纬度的地区的海面上, 夜幕总是突如其来地降临, 我们发现这种说法是错误的), 深红色的海面渐渐变成了一块块蓝绿色的草坪, 天空则变成了一块柔和的浅红色和蓝色的调色板。
- 3) Transferred epithet

4. Then come the twilight colours of sea and heaven (we have discovered the fallacy of saying that darkness falls suddenly in these latitudes, at any rate on sea level), the winepink width of water merging into lawns of aquamarine, and the sky a tender palette of pink and blue. But the green flash is our chief delight.

- 1) **twilight**: the diffused light from the sky when the sun is below the horizon  
暮色
- 2) **sea and heaven**: the sea and the sky.
- 3) **fallacy**: a false idea or belief, especially one a lot of people believe is true.  
e.g. It is a common fallacy that economic growth has to be achieved at the expense of the environment.
- 4) **lawns**: The word 'lawns' is used metaphorically, meaning wide strips of bluish-green waters like lawns.
- 5) **aquamarine**: bluish-green
- 6) **tender palette of pink and blue**: a palette is a board on which an artist mixes his paints. Here it is a metaphor, meaning the sky is like a palette of soft pink and blue colours. **The adjective 'tender' is a transferred epithet**, which actually modifies pink and blue colours

## Para 27-32: Talking about the colour

1. Crème de Menthe,' says Laura. 薄荷甜酒

(French) a sweet liqueur, usually green in colour, flavoured with mint.  
Laura compares the flash to crème de menthe, revealing her upper-class taste.

2. 'Jade, ' I say.

3. 'Emerald,' says Laura. 'Jade is too opaque.'

Laura corrects Carr, saying it's more suitable to say the colour is emerald (翡翠的) for jade is too thick to see through.

**opaque:** not able to be seen through 不透明的

e.g. The window is made of opaque glass.

4. 'Vicious viridian,' I say, not to be outdone.

Alliteration, very intense bluish-green.



5. ‘You always did lose yourself in the pleasure of words, Edmund. Say green as jealousy and be done with it.’

1) Paraphrase: You were always absorbed by the pleasure of words. You always enjoyed playing with words so much that you noticed nothing else. I suggest you say the light is green as jealousy and then we will finish this game on words.

2) **green as jealousy:** very jealous

Now Laura is joking about Edmund Carr’s love of words and the phrase ‘vicious viridian’

6. ‘I have never known the meaning of jealousy.’

I have never been jealous. In fact what he says here is not true. In Paragraph 5, Carr describes how swimming in the pool at night affects him. Only then does he discard all human frailties to have become incapable of envy, ambition, malice...

# No Signposts in the Sea

Detailed Study  
(Paras 33-34)

Para 33: **Another change---everything in the warmth of the sun was to his liking.**

1. I am sorry to see the sun go, for one of the pleasures I have discovered is the warmth of his touch on my skin. At home in London I never noticed the weather, unless actually inconvenienced by fog or rain.

1) I have never noticed the weather, unless (I was) actually inconvenienced by fog or rain.

At home I never noticed the weather unless fog or rain actually caused me a problem.

2) **inconvenience:**

e.g. All the residents have been inconvenienced by the road works.

I hope it won't inconvenience you to drive me to the station.

2. I had no temptation to take a flying holiday to the South and understood little when people spoke or wrote of sunlight on white walls.

1) take a flying holiday: transferred epithet.

## Paragraph 33:

3. Now the indolence of southern latitudes has captured me.

1) **Paraphrase:** **Now** the idleness and warmth of the places in the South has captivated me.

2) **indolence:** (formal ) idleness, laziness

e.g. After a sudden burst of activity, the team lapsed back into indolence.突然一阵忙碌之后，这个团队又陷入了懒散状态。

I was an indolent creature who could not imagine action.

3) **capture:** to captivate, charm, excite, attract.

e.g. The American drive to land a man on the Moon captured the imagination/attention of the whole world.

### Paragraph 33:

4. I like to see dusky men sitting about doing nothing. I like the footfall of naked feet in the dust, silent as a cat passing.

1) **dusky men:** dark-skinned men

e.g. Gold earrings gleamed against her dusky cheeks. 金色的耳环在她微黑的面颊上闪闪发光。

2) **Paraphrase:** I like the footfall of naked feet in the dust, silent as a cat passing: I like to hear the sound of footsteps made by bare feet walking in the dust. It is as silent as a cat passing.

4. I like turning a corner from the shade of a house into the full torrid glare of an open space.

1) ...into the full torrid glare of an open space: into the hot, dazzling brightness of a space without any covering.

3) torrid: extremely hot.

She almost can tolerate any kind of torrid days. 她几乎能忍受各种酷热的天气。

我喜欢绕过一个屋角时从房屋的阴影中一步跨入在烈日照射下炽热耀眼的空旷场地时的感觉。

5. I put my hand on metal railings and snatch it away, burnt. But it is seldom that I go ashore.

1) **Paraphrase:** What I have described all happens, but in fact I seldom go ashore.

2) In this paragraph, the narrator uses the method of comparison to show how much he has been changed by the trip on the sea.

**Para 34:** This part is the summary of his whole journey at sea. It's not only a physical journey, but also a life-changing journey, a spiritual journey to the main character. He loves the long purposeless days in the sea because the blue ocean gives him peace and calm of mind.

1. I would never have believed in the simple bliss of being, day after day, at sea.
- 1) **Subjunctive mood.** If I had not taken this trip by ship, I would never have believed in the simple but perfect happiness of this kind of life—a life spent at sea day after day.
- 2) **bliss:** perfect happiness and enjoyment.
- 3) **being:** the state or fact of existing or living; existence or life.
- 4) alliteration

如果没有这一回的亲身经历，我永远也不会相信日复一日地航行于大海上竟会是这样的其乐无穷。



2. Our ports of call are few, and when they do occur I resent them.

1) **port of call**: a port that is a regular stop over for ships.

2) **resent**: to feel or show displeasure

3. I should like this empty existence to be prolonged beyond calculation.

1) **Paraphrase**: I wish this idle voyage, without any worry or suffering, could go on forever.

2) **empty existence**: an idle life with no practical problems of the world to disturb or trouble a person.

3) **prolong**: to lengthen or extend in time or space.

4) **beyond calculation**: that cannot be calculated  
e.g. beyond belief, beyond doubt, beyond recognition

4. In the ship's library stands a large globe whose function so far as I am concerned is to reveal the proportion of ocean to the land masses of the troubled world the Pacific alone dwarfs all the continents put together.

- 1) **landmasses of the troubled world:** In the narrator's opinion, the blue sea is peaceful, offering 'the simple bliss of being' while the land is a troubled world with 'suffering and sin.'
- 2) **the pacific alone dwarfs all the continents put together:** The Pacific Ocean alone is much larger than all the continents combined.
- 3) **dwarf:** to make small.  
e.g. As China's income per head catches up, its economy will soon dwarf those of its Asian neighbors.  
随着中国的人均收入急起直追，它的经济不久将使其亚洲邻国相形见绌。

5. Blue, the colour of peace. And then I like all the small noises of a ship: the faint creaking, as of the saddle leather to a horseman riding across turf, the slap of a rope, the hiss of sudden spray.

**Paraphrase:** I like all the small noises of a ship: the weak creaking sound, like the sound made by the saddle-leather to a horseman riding across a grass-covered surface, the sound of a rope hitting something, the hissing sound made by sudden spray of water.

**Rhetorical device:** onomatopoeia

我喜欢船上的轻微声响: 如同草地上奔驰的骑手鞍皮发出的轻微的吱嘎声, 绳索的拍打声以及浪花飞溅的嘶嘶声。

6. I have been exhilarated by two days of storm, but above all I love these long purposeless days in which I shed all that I have ever been.

1) **Paraphrase:** A storm that has lasted two days has made me extremely excited and happy, but above all, I love these idle days in which I throw off all the qualities, perspectives, values and everything else that made me as what I was: I was born anew.

2) **exhilarate:** fill with sublime emotion

e.g. This dangerous task did not defeat but exhilarate him. 这件危险的任务不但没有击垮他反而使他振奋。

3) **shed:** to get rid of (something unwanted)

e.g. \*This method can help students shed inhibitions. 这一方法能帮助学生去除顾虑。

\* Can you shed any light on the situation? 你能说明一下这个情形吗?

\* It's too late to change your mind now and there is no point in shedding tears. 你现在改变主意已经太迟了,而且为此伤心落泪是毫无用处的。

## During the voyage (and how)

sentimental and sensitive; wants his fill of beauty before he dies, enjoys life; more attention to common things → **change of perspective**.

- (1) **enjoy life and purification** at night in the swimming pool alone and be free from moral weaknesses;
- (2) **observe the sea** by day or at night with Laura happily;
- (3) associate the features of the coastline with the character of the people while **observing the coastline** which tempts him to go into the innermost part of Laura.
- (4) **begin to be interested in such common things as the sea-birds** which he did not care about, begin to like the kind of people—Colonel
- (5) **long for and reflect on ordinary people's life** ; the description of **the islands**;
- (6) Pleasure in watching the **sunset** for the green flash
- (7) noticing the **weather** and enjoy the ordinary people's **life of leisure**
- (8) blue is the **color of peace** which represents Carr's **peace of mind**—change of perspective

He has changed his perspective toward life and set himself free from worries in the world, free from the people's moral weaknesses, such as envy, ambition and malice.



**Edmund Carr:** days on the earth are numbered

troubled land masses

serenity of the ocean

simple bliss of being

contemporary world

- pandemic;
- violence & conflicts;
- energy crisis;
- fierce competition;
- sin and suffering

- Reading a book;
- Listening to music
- Having a conversation with yourself;
- Enjoy the voluptuousness of warm breeze;
- Watching for the sunrise;
- Doing sth.as is planned.
- ○ ○ ○ ○

**health and love**

Changes happen to the narrator

materialist

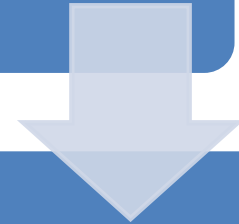


mentalist



## Changes that happen to the narrator


He used to be dismissive, arrogant, pragmatic and indifferent.



Now he is sentimental, sensitive and friendly.

## Changes that happen to the narrator

He used to only care about political affairs.



Now he cherishes the beauty of the life and nature such as love, friendship. He longs for a purification.

# The Theme of the *No Signposts in the Sea*

Cherish our lives

Appreciate the beauty  
around us.

Enjoy our lives.