

The Long Way Study Guide

The Long Way by Bernard Moitessier

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Contents

The Long Way Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Chapter 1 and 2.....	4
Chapter 3 and 4.....	5
Chapter 5 and 6.....	6
Chapter 7 and 8.....	7
Chapter 9 and 10.....	8
Chapter 11 and 12.....	9
Chapter 13 and 14.....	10
Chapter 15 and 16.....	12
Chapter 17 and 18.....	13
Chapter 19 and 20.....	14
Chapter 21 and 22.....	15
Appendix.....	16
Characters.....	19
Objects/Places.....	23
Themes.....	28
Style.....	30
Quotes.....	32
Topics for Discussion.....	35



Plot Summary

The author, Bernard Moitessier prepares to sail solo around the world from Plymouth England in late August 1968. He enters a race sponsored by the Sunday Times. Other of Bernard's sailor friends enter the race including Bill King and Loick Fougeron. Bernard begins the trip fairly depressed, but seems to derive energy from watching his boat Joshua being followed by flying fish and barracudas. Bernard cannot establish direct communication with the island of Trinidad, but hopes that his sighting will at least be reported to Lloyd's Agency. The boat Joshua seems to enjoy the trip, but sometimes encourages Bernard to sail it too fast in rough weather. This contributes to a 60-degree knockdown, though with few ill-effects. Bernard throws off more extra gear and weight while approaching the dangerous waters of the Cape of Good Hope. He does sail into South Africa's Walker Bay and is able to get close to a freighter and throw it a package of pictures and material and also a request to contact the Sunday Times. In the process, Joshua is damaged by a passing collision with the freighter and damage to the bowsprit. The damage seems irreparable, but Bernard thinks of his sailor friend Henry Wakelam and is able fix the bowsprit in a couple of days.

There are other dangerous moments, but soon Bernard is able to drink a bottle of champagne to celebrate passing the vicinity of the Cape of Good Hope. By the end of October he is cruising into the Indian Ocean. The weather is mild in November and Bernard enjoys watching and feeding the sea birds. Joshua rapidly approaches Australia as Bernard takes up his time feeding and filming the shearwater birds. Bernard thinks of his youth sailing in the Gulf of Siam and the natural signs he learned about the behavior of the sea. South of Australia, Bernard nears the port of Hobart in Tasmania and sails close to a small fishing boat. He has a conversation with the fishermen and gives them photos of his log and other materials to bring to the Hobart Yacht Club. He asks them of the other sailors in the "Long Way" contests, but only hears of a lone sailor that rounded New Zealand recently. Bernard celebrates Christmas as he passes New Zealand, and feels that porpoises alongside Joshua guide the ship away from dangerous reefs and into the Pacific Ocean.

As he prepares to round Cape Horn, Bernard fears icebergs. His yoga exercises and varied diet make him feel strong enough to continue his voyage, but he decides that he does not want to sail back to England. The ride past Cape Horn is rough and exciting and Bernard must force himself to reef in Joshua's sail to avoid capsizing. By early March, Joshua is approaching the Cape of Good Hope for the second time in the voyage. There is rough weather in the southern hemisphere winter and there are four more knockdowns of Joshua. Bernard is heading for Tahiti and feels an increasing resentment of the "Monster" of civilization. He flirts with the idea of going to the primitive Galapagos Islands but decides this would be wrong. On arriving in Tahiti, Bernard meets old friends. He confronts what he feels to be over-development of the harbor and identifies with a persecuted rat on the harbor rocks. Bernard asks people, including, in an imaginary meeting, the Pope, to care for and to preserve the Earth and the oceans.



Chapter 1 and 2

Chapter 1 and 2 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 1—Full Sail

The author, Bernard Moitessier prepares to sail around the world on August 22nd, 1968. He is in the port of Plymouth, England and the weather is favorable to begin. The author, Bernard says goodbye to his wife, Francoise. The Sunday Times has organized a solo, non-stop boat race around the world with prizes. Other of the author's friends, Bill King, Loick and Fougeron are also planning to sail around the world from a port in the United Kingdom. Bernard accepts a water-proof camera from journalists, but refuses the offer of a heavy radio transmitter. Instead, Bernard plans to fire messages by slingshot to close passing ships. Another boat that is making the trip is Nigel Tetley's Victress, a three-hulled boat known as a trimaran. Bernard is sailing the yacht, Joshua, by himself and sails south towards the island of Madeira. The author listens to the BBC on the radio but has no means of sending out radio messages. On September 1st, Bernard communicates with a passing ship by Morse code with flashing mirrors.

Bernard passes the Canary Islands and his ship is followed by a school of flying fish. His average speed is 150 miles per day. The boat Joshua sails quickly due to its light weight. At Plymouth, Bernard removes over 1300 pounds of extra books, supplies and goods. He rigs the boat with a number of sails, including a storm jib and a Genoa bonnet. This allows him to sail with only light breezes. Passing the Cape Verde Islands, he runs into the doldrums and Joshua's speed drops substantially. Bernard is a bit depressed, eats less, but is glad he is at least able to collect some rain water.

Chapter 2—Clear Light

Bernard feels the breezes blowing again when he gets up at night. This is after 900 miles in the doldrums. He eats better and also sees the flying fish and dorados returning alongside the boat. Bernard is amazed to see a flying fish caught in the air by a jumping barracuda. The fight between the prey and the predator seems unfair. A huge flying fish even falls on the boat deck, but Bernard fears in the dark that it is a poisonous fish and inadvertently lets it go. Otherwise, he would have caught it and eaten it. A school of puffer fishes are all blown up and then one or two are eaten by a shark. Bernard thinks about how puffer fish are poisonous, though they can be eaten if certain parts of them are first discarded. Sharks and dorados do not get a stomachache from eating a puffer fish. The boat is sailing quickly and Bernard takes time to relax and read.



Chapter 3 and 4

Chapter 3 and 4 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 3—Sunday at Trinidad

There is calm and the boat slows as it nears the small island of Trinidad, hundreds of miles off Brazil. Bernard steers the boat towards the island 90 miles south. There is some rough water, but he wants to meet a boat there and drop off film for the Sunday Times. Bernard sees Trinidad on Sept. 29th. The boat Joshua approaches the cliffs and beaches of the island. A sunken freighter appears to be used as a jetty to create a harbor, but no other boats are seen. Bernard climbs up the boat's mast and looks through his binoculars. It is Sunday at lunch hour and there is no activity visible onshore. Finally after an hour, people come out of their houses and see Bernard and his boat. Since Bernard is not going to land and a boat is not sent to meet him, he decides to turn the boat Joshua around and leave. He is sad that his attempt at contact is probably unsuccessful. Perhaps someone saw the letters on his sail and the name of his boat and reported it to the Lloyd's agency.

Chapter 4, Muchos Pocos Hacen Un Mucho—(Many Littles Make a Big)

The ship Joshua proceeds at a fairly rapid pace. The ship has a log trailing, which helps Bernard get a very accurate reading of his speed and the distance he travels. By October 3rd the boat slows again in calm winds. Bernard takes this as a chance to dive overboard and clean the bottom of the boat from barnacles. The winds blow harder and the weather becomes cooler. Bernard is trying to reach the three great capes early—the Cape of Good Hope, of Leeuwin, and the Horn. Porpoises follow the ship and Bernard takes a motion picture roll of them, with his camera, the Beaulieu.

At 31 degrees south latitude, a small gale hits and the boat is knocked down about 60 degrees towards the water. There is little or no damage, since it is only for a few seconds. On October 12th another gale hits and Bernard must reef in the sails to avoid going too fast. Soon the winds slacken and the reefs in the sails are let out again. Bernard is eating better and sleeping better, though often in short naps. He throws more extra stuff off the boat in order to be lighter and safer. The Cape of Good Hope is only 310 miles away.



Chapter 5 and 6

Chapter 5 and 6 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 5—Played and Lost ...Played and Won!

Bernard decides to sail close to the South African shore and be seen by other ships. He wants to get a package to the Sunday Times. He sees the Cape Agulhas lighthouse and the wind is bad for going east. Bernard decides to get close to ships by a little port in Walker Bay. There are near gale strength winds and it is a Sunday, so no yachts are nearby. Bernard steers Joshua close to a big black freighter and sends a can with a message to the freighter deck, using a slingshot. The freighter steers even closer and Bernard is able to throw a package onto its deck. He fails to get clear of the freighter in time, and the freighter stern hits his mast and bends the bowsprit. Bernard remembers that on his previous boat the Marie-Thérèse he had been thrown off in a gale and nearly drowned, but then was thrown back into the boat. Bernard is able to repair the metal lines to the mast rapidly. Bernard has a bigger problem with the bowsprit. He thinks of his old friend Henry Wakelam who helped him to build other boats. After thinking it over for a night, Bernard sets up a kind of pulley with increased leverage by using a spare staysail boom. Little by little the bowsprit is straightened out again.

Chapter 6—Good Hope

Bernard considers the waters between the Cape of Good Hope and Durban to be especially dangerous. This is because the Agulhas current is strong, and warm water from the north meets the colder, less salty water from off Antarctica. Bernard is tired and lets out as little sail as possible. Slowly he draws his route on a small globe in his cabin. He is familiar with these waters from trips he made years ago to South Africa from Mauritius, an island off of East Africa. Bernard stays awake looking for icebergs for two nights. The water is rough and a big wave hits and floods the cabin when Bernard's favorite sextant is not stowed away. A leg of the sextant is broken and it needs repairs.

The sextant is an instrument that is used to plot the ship position by plotting it against the sun or the stars to find out the latitude. There continues to be rough cross seas. The wind is calm and Bernard makes small repairs on the boat. Bernard has even learned how to wash his clothes in saltwater and soap and later shake out the salt crystals. The boat is in good shape and enters the Indian Ocean. To celebrate, Bernard drinks a bottle of champagne. He listens to Radio Capetown and finds that no gales are heading his way. Now the Cape of Good Hope is behind him and he gets drunk. He has the illusion of a man laughing at the Cape as the boat circles in a calm wind. By October 28th, the boat Joshua is hitting nearly 200 miles per day.



Chapter 7 and 8

Chapter 7 and 8 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 7—A Saw Toothed Wake

Bernard is afraid of sailing too far south in search of a good wind. That type of move almost destroys Joshua on a previous voyage. The weather is not bad, but the sea is very choppy. Bernard keeps the boat's sails reefed in because his energy is sapped from passing around the Cape of Good Hope. He is anxious because he cannot get any word about his fellow sailors, Bill King, Nigel and Loick, from the BBC. He wonders if they will sail close to land around the cape or far to the south. Bill and Nigel were to maintain two-way radio contact with the Sunday Times, but they may have thrown the heavy equipment overboard. This is before the possibility of cell phones with a satellite connection. When a brisk wind comes back, Bernard relaxes. The weather is dry and his water supplies are somewhat depleted. Bernard spends his time watching the birds that follow his ship. There are small birds like the so-called Cape Robin and larger birds such as shearwaters, malamocks and albatrosses. There is a good rain and Bernard catches 8 gallons of water in his container. Some days, 160 miles are covered. Bernard exercises more and takes vitamins, deciding to continue his trip. He is amazed to see plankton, which are tiny animals, and many jellyfish in the sea. Bernard catches two water spiders in a bucket and is surprised to see them copulate. The ship goes quickly in a fair wind and is followed by a troop of porpoises at the quick speed of 8 knots.

Chapter 8—The Days and the Nights

The boat passes several thousand miles south of Vietnam and picks up Vietnamese radio channels. Bernard used to speak Vietnamese but cannot speak it anymore. He sailed a junk from Rach-Gia to ports in Cambodia. Bernard claims to never have smuggled arms, only some dried prawns. The Chinese sail that the junks use is easy to handle but is not very durable. Lines have to be replaced often and sails are replaced every 3 months in the rainy season, in these traditional boats. Now Joshua is only 900 miles from Cape Leeuwin in Australia and is sailing quite a ways south of the Cape. The sea birds surround the boat with many shearwaters around Bernard. A shearwater actually eats a piece of cheese out of Bernard's hand, while other birds watch on the ship's deck. The birds fly towards the pieces of cheese thrown into the water. The boat is stuck in calm winds, but Bernard has fun making motion pictures of the birds and watching them. The birds fight over some of the pieces of food thrown to them. Bernard throws liver pâté at the birds from a can and the birds are confused when the pâté floats while the cheese sinks. Bernard feels closer to the birds and goes out on the deck in the moonlight, softly talking to the birds as he feeds them cheese from his hand. Then a fresh wind comes back and the shearwater disappears.



Chapter 9 and 10

Chapter 9 and 10 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 9—The Long Way

Bernard is sailing his boat south of Australia and is again thinking of finding another boat to give word of his position and his progress. He balances this urge with the dangers of approaching near to the island of Tasmania. Bernard has built two little sailboats with messages on them and puts them in the ocean. They are recovered a year later by people onshore. Bernard recalls the days of his youth sailing in the Gulf of Siam. On the junks there would be a mystical old sailor called the Taicong, who could interpret the moon and the wind, and know the coming weather. Later, when Bernard taught sailors to cruise in the Mediterranean Sea, he taught them how to sail without compasses, and tell direction by the tides, the moon and other natural signs. The Taicong would need quiet to contemplate the elements. He would wait three days before a voyage to get a sense of the winds and weather. Now, Bernard tries to sense if a gale is coming from the secondary northwest wave swell, as the boat goes east. This reminds Bernard of an old Taicong legend of how the wind makes the low stars twinkle because it tries to blow the stars out. Bernard wavers on whether to approach the Tasmanian port of Hobart. He recalls his fairly pleasant cruise across the Indian Ocean. There is more rain and the water tanks are nearly full. Bernard is quiet in the cabin and listens to the sounds of the sea.

Chapter 10—The Rule of the Game

Joshua sails near the Cape Bruny lighthouse in Tasmania. He nears a cove where he can anchor a message bottle, but doubts it will ever be found. Bernard carefully studies the navigation charts and finds that there is a large rock that juts 150 feet out of the water off Tasmania. At the same time he avoids a dangerous reef. Then, Bernard sees a small fishing boat and signals to it with his mirror. The fishing boat comes near to Joshua and Bernard is able to give his film and other materials to the three fishermen, telling them to bring the stuff to the Hobart Yacht Club. One of the men has heard of a yacht that went around New Zealand without stopping, perhaps Knox-Johnston's boat. Bernard enjoys conversing with the fishermen, and then sails past Tasmania. He thinks of the other men to go on the solo journey, Nigel, Bill King and Loick, but hears nothing about them or the sighting of the boat Joshua on the BBC Radio. It is almost Christmas and Bernard plans to sail around New Zealand without making any further contact with people in boats or on land.



Chapter 11 and 12

Chapter 11 and 12 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 11—Christmas and the Rat

Joshua's speed is reduced by a moderate southeast gale, because the boat heaves-to. Then Bernard sees little seals around the boat. Bernard has fantasies of meeting a New Zealander yacht at Christmas time, and exchanging champagne with them, as they send out a dinghy boat to meet him. More seal families come around the boat, with baby seals coming close to the boat to play.

On Christmas, Bernard unwraps a smoked ham and eats fairly well for lunch. He makes a tomato sauce and cooks it with pieces of ham on a hot plate. Shortly after, Bernard sees the mountains of South New Zealand about 50 miles away. The air is calm and Bernard enjoys his Christmas dinner and opens his bottle of champagne to celebrate passing Australia and New Zealand. He thinks of the peace of Christmas with all men and even rats. He thinks back to a time in Tahiti when he killed a rat on his boat with a slingshot. He regrets this later. Bernard thinks about the Bible, though he turns off the radio when he tires of sentimental Christmas music. In the Bible it is written "In the beginning was the word." Bernard compares a word to a vibration on the boat, from other lives and from books. Then, totally drunk, he falls asleep.

Chapter 12—The Time of the Very Beginning

The boat Joshua sails about 100 miles from Stewart Island to the south, while the southwest coast of New Zealand is 40 miles to the north. The next day the boat is between Stewart Island to the East-North-East and the dangerous reef of the South Trap. It passes close to Stewart Island, near the reef. Bernard cooks some rice in a pressure cooker and eats in a calm sea. He hears the whistles of porpoises on either side of the boat and imagines that the porpoises are guiding him out to the Pacific Ocean, and telling him to turn right. Bernard realizes that Joshua is sailing too far south, too close to Stewart Island. He drops his sail and tries to get a more accurate position for the boat. Then he turns right, to the east, and he sees a porpoise somersault as if to celebrate his proper turn. The porpoises give Bernard a feeling of peace and friendship. Then he gets a crazy impulse to head again towards Stewart Island and its rocks, but he knows that this would be wrongly tempting fate. He thinks of a story of a fisherman who got magic powers from saving a talking fish, but then loses them by asking for too much.



Chapter 13 and 14

Chapter 13 and 14 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 13—My Eldest Brother

The boat sails smoothly into the Pacific Ocean at a good pace, but later there are more periods of calm winds. Bernard examines letters he has from 15 sea captains about their passing of the Cape Horn, and the danger of icebergs. Cape Horn of South America is the furthest south of the three great capes. Captain Le Bourdais writes that he is sure that there are no icebergs on that route. There is one letter that warns of small ice floes and visible icebergs at the Horn on the way to Chile. An 88-year old former captain tells of ice found between Cape Horn, the Falklands Bank and the Falkland Islands to the east of Cape Horn. Bernard steers Joshua further south than necessary, at the 48th parallel, because the weather is warm and it is summer. The wind picks up and the trip is far more pleasant than an earlier trip from Tahiti east to Alicante. In that trip, Bernard and his wife Françoise constantly are wearing their foul weather gear and getting wet. Bernard theorizes on what makes more icebergs go further north. He feels happiness in the air and calls this feeling the presence of his "Eldest Brother." The boat is halfway to Cape Horn. Bernard does his yoga exercises and eats well. He is careful to eat a balanced diet, having different kinds of canned food. He thinks how the crew of the ship Endurance had their ship crushed by ice, but survived for months in the ice of Antarctica.

A storm is coming and Bernard reefs in his sails and puts up his small storm jib sail. He thinks of gales on previous trips and how he handles them while sleeping half of the time. The boat Joshua sails well in the gale. For the first time, Bernard thinks of continuing east after Cape Horn, South America to the Cape of Good Hope and to somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. This means not returning to Plymouth, England and forfeiting the Long Way Race around the world.

Chapter 14—Joshua Against Joshua

The pattern of a gale is to come from the northwest, and then shift to the southwest in high southern latitudes. This causes choppy and dangerous seas. The gale is not bad but there is more rough weather. Nevertheless, Joshua makes good time and does better than she did on the Tahiti-Alicante run three years ago. The rougher weather means that Bernard must be careful and use his safety harness on deck, since otherwise he could be swept out to sea. As he approaches Cape Horn he has to sail further south. The movie camera, the Beaulieu seems to be water-damaged but is successfully dried out.

There is more rainfall and the boat's water supply is filled up again. Bernard looks at a dishtowel and other clothes to see if there is more or less humidity in the atmosphere. Joshua is now 900 miles from Cape Horn. The seas are rougher with some waves



traveling at 10-11 knots. Bernard keeps Joshua light to avoid the danger of pitching. He has a system to handle and adjust the sails using a wire and has a steel wire as a sliding safety wire to attach to his harness. Bernard feels an approaching gale but it is just more rough seas. The weather can change fast as the boat gets further south. Joshua is sailing faster than three years ago. This is partly because he has a more flexible system of smaller sails. It is easier to trim sails in due to a new system of loosening and tightening sail reefs with a winch. The wind is strong and Joshua is only two days away from Cape Horn. The night sea shines with moonbeams and Bernard realizes that it is the southern lights, the Aurora Australia. He imagines that the lights are reflected off the ice of Antarctica, 500 miles to the south.



Chapter 15 and 16

Chapter 15 and 16 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 15—One Night...

Bernard dreams of ice fields, though he never sights any ice. The wind is force 8 and he spends time on the ship's deck looking for a gale. Bernard sails quickly before a gale develops. There are balls in the sea and on the stay-sail that glow in the dark. Later, he finds out that this is an effect from a type of plankton. Bernard tries to not let out too much sail, as the sky clears with still rough seas. If Joshua goes too fast it surfs over waves, which is what Joshua likes to do, though it is dangerous. Bernard is so fascinated watching the boat surf that he urinates down his pants leg. There are some heavy waves that temporarily bury the bowsprit in the front. The whole day the weather has been foul. It is cold and finally Bernard yields to reason and reefs in the sail to make Joshua go a little slower.

Chapter 16—One day and a Night

The barometer drops but Bernard adjusts the mizzen sail so the boat goes a little faster. He must keep his safety harness on constantly when he goes on deck. Passing Cape Horn is only 130 miles away. The next day the sun comes out. Soon the wind is blowing hard again. The sea is somewhat moderated by the fact that land is only 40 miles away. Bernard looks for the small island of Diego Ramirez and finally finds it. Cape Horn is close but he cannot see it through clouds.

Bernard sleeps, and imagines that his older brother is telling him to go to sleep. He dreams of his fishing days in Indochina. Bernard wakes up several hours later and has trouble finding the boat's position. He realizes that Joshua is only 15 miles of the Horn. He is rounding the Cape but does not consider himself really past it until the boat sails 500 more miles to the Falkland Islands. Bernard still does not want to return to Plymouth England.



Chapter 17 and 18

Chapter 17 and 18 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 17—True Dreams and False

Joshua rapidly sails past the Horn. Bernard wonders where the other sailors are in the solo race around the world. He wonders if Nigel's Trimaran survived the trip and thinks of other shipwrecked sailors who struggle to survive. Bernard tries to give word of his position off of the Falkland Islands. He approaches the fjord that leads to Port Stanley, but stops the boat near the lighthouse there without contacting anyone, due to safety concerns. He then sails northeast to clear the iceberg zone. Bernard takes advantage of the calm to put his wetsuit on and scrape the barnacles off of Joshua's hull. Bernard enjoys the brief swim, despite having to be alert for an inquisitive shark. The calm winds give Bernard a chance to relax and he sees that the ship Joshua is in good shape. Bernard dreams of his friends Loick and Nicole at Plymouth, England. He wonders if Loick, Bill King and Nigel make the trip all around the world. He dreams he had a small device to communicate with his friends. They do not have cell phones connected by satellite transmission at this time. Bernard imagines an island with 8 couples, some with a child and some not. The boat crosses where Joshua was on its first trip towards the Cape of Good Hope back in September. It is now February 1969.

Bernard thinks about whether he should approach other ships to give world to his family and the world, despite some dangers. The ship is lighter, but there are only 40 gallons of water left, only enough for a bit more than 60 days. He thinks of a ship's crew that ran out of water and tried to survive in the Antarctic on ice and fish. Bernard wants to go past Australia and New Zealand to Tahiti or the Galapagos Islands. One more time he rearranges the weight on the ship towards the middle. Bernard thinks back to his Chinese nursemaid who told him about the gods and the god within everyone. He thinks about his children and all the children of the world.

Chapter 18—Time to Choose

The wind is picking up and Bernard gathers 12 more gallons of water in a rain storm. He is tired but the weather is fine and the ship is moving. He wonders if he is going too far and even briefly thinks of returning north to Plymouth, England to try to collect the Sunday Times prize money. Bernard is afraid of the cold weather in the Southern Hemisphere as he sails into March, April and May. He also misses his family. If he goes to the Galapagos there is no equipment there or civilization, only seals and penguins. He is still undecided on what to do.



Chapter 19 and 20

Chapter 19 and 20 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 19—The Turning Point

Bernard wakes up and decides again to sail past the Cape of Good Hope and end up at Tahiti. At least there he can re-outfit his boat with supplies, contact his family, and check his physical health. Bernard needs civilization, but resents it, calling it "the Monster." He knows he benefits from his steel-hulled boat and technology, but he fears being surrounded and taken over by the Monster. Bernard lets the weather decide for him. Since the weather is good and the wind blows towards the east, he continues to go east.

Bernard imagines that a small seagull comes to perch on his knee and speak to him. The seagull is not real, but the Fairy Tern that guides sailors out to the sea. The problem is that people do not want to listen to the men who are truly in touch with the sea. The next ten days the weather is nice and good for sailing and Joshua sails near Capetown. Joshua is only 30 miles off Capetown, and Bernard yearns to stop there at the Capetown Yacht Club, an old hangout of his. He resists the urge, but is able to signal a boat to come towards him. Bernard throws the small launch boat a plastic container with film reels, his photos of his log book and other photos, to be brought to the French Consulate. Bernard hears that four of the other boats sailing solo around the world have been stopped by events, but the sailor does not know which ones. Passing a tanker-ship, Bernard sends a can there by slingshot with a message to Robert of the Sunday Times, who met him at the beginning of the trip in Plymouth, England. He wonders if the journalist will understand why he refuses to return to Plymouth.

Chapter 20—Listen, Joshua...

There is a quick description of Bernard's trip across the Indian Ocean for a second time. He thinks of how the months of loneliness on the open sea have changed him. After passing New Zealand again, Bernard even thinks of going past Cape Horn again, but realizes that this is too much. There are lots of gales in the last 3 months of the trip, with 2 knockdowns of the boat before New Zealand and also after it. That means that the mast and sails touch the water at least for a few seconds. The damage in all these cases is not major.

The Fairy Tern guides Bernard and Joshua north into the Pacific, to the tropical island of Tahiti, where Bernard docks after 10 months of sailing alone. Bernard sails the boat through the coral reef, anchors at Tahiti and meets people that he knows. It takes a while to adjust to being on land. Then Bernard is disturbed by the construction of a new road by the shore.



Chapter 21 and 22

Chapter 21 and 22 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 21—Time to Choose—Part II

Bernard is angry at continuing development on Tahiti. He accuses the bulldozers and concrete mixers as being somehow robots that only seek to pave over all of nature. He dislikes the concrete quay and docks Joshua at an undeveloped point in the harbor with several of his friends' boats. Bernard feels pity for the rat that raids the boats for food. When the weather is bad, the boats are forced to go to the protected concrete quay, but return to the undeveloped site as soon as possible. They plant grass and banana trees and dream of planting pandanus shrubs near the concrete quay. Then, Bernard and his friends face a move to develop their spot. Despite their protests, the spot is developed and Bernard becomes interested in the "Friends of the Earth" organization.

Chapter 22—The Second Turning Point

Bernard wonders what it will take to stop the development that he hates. Some trees are brought back to the docks of Tahiti, but Bernard dreams of a sort of "suicide tack" to win the fight against over-development. He feels overwhelmed by what he calls the "Monster" of development, which accuses people like him of laziness and criminal activity. He reads books by writers who wonder if progress has gone too far and if it can be stopped.

Bernard thinks back to when he was in Singapore and his boat, Marie-Thérèse needed an expensive caulking job, to fill in its cracks. Somehow, a stranger arranged to have the job done for free. Bernard thinks of this unknown benefactor going to the Pope and asking him to help protect the Earth from over-development. The unknown man is worried about overpopulation and the fate of nature. The Pope is amused and listens, drinking his tea. Then the unknown man lets his magical bird stay with the Pope for a few days to educate him about spirituality.

Bernard thinks of the book "East of Eden," where the characters debate the interpretation of a passage in the Bible. One of the characters, a Chinese man learns Hebrew to get the exact translation. The man concludes that the translation is not "Thou shalt rule over sin" as a promise, or as an order, but should be translated as "Thou mayest rule over sin."



Appendix

Appendix Summary and Analysis

Appendix

December to January is mid summer in the Southern Hemisphere latitudes where most of Joshua's sailing takes place. Weather is better than in the winter, but it is still possible to capsize or "pitch-pool." The problem is that a boat needs to sail pass the Cape of Good Hope (Africa) early, so it does not pass Cape Horn (South America) too late.

Knox-Johnston's boat, the Suhaili is the winner of the Sunday Times race. It races across the Indian Ocean at a very southern latitude of the 40th parallel, while Joshua sails further north. Going west to east is easier in the Indian Ocean because of the prevailing westerly winds.

Sail—Strength and Chafe Resistance

Good sails for the boat cost \$2,000 in 1968. A heavy main sail can rip, but can usually be sewed back together. Bernard used Tergal, a synthetic material for his sails.

Sail track—This concerns sails being easy to take down and put up. Bernard uses Vaseline lubrication on these.

Blocks—Bernard uses traditional wooden blocks on the sails.

Lines, Chafe—Bernard uses Tergal lines along with his Tergal sails. He gets the idea of oiling lines from his friend Henry Wakelam, to reduce sail wear and tear from chafing and rubbing.

Mast rungs— These are used by Bernard to be able to climb up the mast easily.

Mast and Rigging—Joshua has solid wooden masts and steel wire for shrouds. Bernard uses cable clamps to make quick repairs on the wires.

Thimbles—Bernard uses big thimbles to guide the stainless steel wires. He tries to keep all the moving parts simple.

Spreaders. These are flexible, which helps avoid destruction of the sails. The steel straps are rigidly tied together, but are able to pivot on the mast.

Under Way—All Joshua's sails are made of Tergal, most of 9 oz. weight, but some of 5 oz. This is done as a test for the manufacturer and is effective for the jib sail. Bernard uses running reef pendants to make it easy to pull in sails rapidly and reef them in when the water and weather are rough.



Reef Points—These are tied using square knots, which are more durable in bad weather.

The Bowsprit—This has a system for changing a sail on it, using a steel wire

Sail Areas—These are easily adjusted with a system of small sails that can be put up or taken down in rough weather.

Self-Steering—This is done by steering through a weather vane. Joshua is mostly self-steered except when entering or leaving a harbor, or nearing other ships or obstacles. The weather vane controls the main rudder. Bernard has drawn diagrams of well-designed and poorly-designed self-steering systems.

High Altitudes—These are what the route around the southern hemisphere is called. Sailing in this area between the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn is dangerous due to the stormy gales in the prevailing westerly winds. Joshua's first trip across the Indian Ocean is smooth, and only its second passage is very rough. Bernard describes a knockdown, where the masts are knocked down to the sea. A bad example of this happened in a previous trip. Knockdown often occurs because of excessive surfing speeds in very rough seas. One tactic to avoid pitch-pooling is to steer at a 15 degree angle to the incoming waves.

The Indian Ocean—This is rough the second time around, when Joshua is knocked down twice. When the masts are knocked down, Joshua's keel goes up by 30 to 40 degrees in the air, but the boat does not pitch-pool (capsize bow down first, and stern over).

Pacific Knockdowns—These occur, in one description, when in a gale moving west to east. The wind comes from the northwest and later shifts to the west-southwest. This shift in the wind causes dangerous breaking seas. Bernard blames himself for the last knockdown in the Pacific, for not altering his northeast course. Four sails are ripped, the weathervane is broken, and Joshua's keel goes up by 40 degrees. Bernard has to steer the boat from inside the cabin until another weathervane can be installed.

Heaving-to in the High Latitudes—This is usually possible during gales. This means to stop sailing forward. Sometimes with gales from the west, a slight sail is kept to try to stabilize the boat.

Freak Waves—These occasionally occur and can be 50 feet high and 2,000 feet long. A strange, huge wave sweeps away the masts from the yacht Tzu Hang. Perhaps these are caused by an iceberg falling off from a glacier.

Celestial Navigation—is done with tables to calculate a ship's position by using the sun, the planets, the stars or the moon. Most of Bernard's sightings with sextant for his position are done using the sun. He also takes accurate sightings with the stars.

Time—It is essential to have an accurate time piece to calculate one's position accurately. Time from a radio makes this much easier.



Compasses—These are affected by steel objects. Bernard does not use a compass to show absolute position, but only relative changes in position.

Equipment Made by Goiot—Bernard gets excellent service from Goiot winches and sail hanks. He soaks them in oil to keep them working a long time.

Lights—These are important when Joshua is sailing in shipping lanes. One option is a small lens kerosene lamp. More intense is a 250 candlepower Coleman pressure lantern. Movies and Photography—Bernard has great fun with his underwater Nikonos camera and his movie camera, the 16 mm Beaulieu C16. He has a special setup made so he can use five 1.5-volt batteries.

Fresh Water—The amount of this needed is about 2 ½ quarts a day, plus water for washing clothes and things.

Food and Health—Grapefruits and lemons are great and Bernard also takes vitamin C and other vitamin supplements.

Food—A balanced diet is necessary and also enough water to avoid dehydration. It could be useful for sailors to can food as some foods are very cheap in some places. Meat can be salted or smoked. Sailors know of native fruits on the Pacific Islands that can keep people alive in desperation, such as the fruit of the pandanus, on Tahiti and other Polynesian Islands.

General Remarks on Cruising Life—A well sealed metal boat can survive seas that roll totally over it, even a 19-foot boat.

Maintenance of a Steel Boat—The hull of a steel boat is protected from electrolysis by zinc silicate paint and zinc anodes, plus lots of paint on top of that. Joshua has been sailing for 10 years with no rust damage.

Repairs—Joshua has spare steel sheets and ¼ inch rivets and drill bits to make holes for emergency repairs. Watertight riveting can be done by amateurs. Another repair technique is to patch a hole temporarily with a cement and clay mixture, which hardens after 12 hours.

Money—Sailors can make money by chartering boats and giving a cruising school. Some sailors sew sails or help repair boats. Others take pictures of tourists. Some sailors like Bernard make money by writing books about their voyages.



Characters

Bernard Moitessier, the Author

Bernard Moitessier, the author, is virtually the only character of the book that is described directly, not from memory. Bernard is a married man of a few years over 40 years old. He decides to undertake a solo voyage around the world. When he starts in Plymouth England, there is a race to make this trip around the world and win a prize from the Sunday Times. At the beginning, Bernard is interested in this prize and also receives free goods from sponsors such as a free movie camera and undersea camera, and Tergal sails. Ultimately, Bernard decides that his love of the sea and of nature is most important and that he does not really want the prize or to return to England.

Bernard is an extremely skilled sailor who has been working on the sea since his youth in Indochina. There he used to sail Chinese junks across the Gulf of Siam, and learned how to tell the weather signs and directions from the sea and sky, without modern equipment. He grew up with several brothers and at one point feels that he is being watched by his eldest brother. Bernard is very interested in making movies of porpoises, flying fish, sea birds and other phenomena. His intense interest in the sea and the life in it helps him maintain his resolve to sail around the world and his sanity. Bernard develops an extreme dislike of civilization towards the end of the trip, which makes him decide to not return to Plymouth, England and try to pick up the prize money. He would like to stay on the sea and primitive islands, but his reason makes him decide to go to Tahiti to refit his boat and get a medical exam. There he continues to fight against the "Monster" of civilization, though he also sees that some type of compromise between freedom and development has to be made.

Joshua, the Yacht, the Boat, the Ship

Joshua is Bernard's yacht and is an inanimate object, yet in the course of the book takes on some aspects of a living being. Joshua likes to pursue and be accompanied by flying fish along with the predatory dorado and barracuda fish. It (or she) loves to be followed by porpoises especially when the sailing path is uncertain. These porpoises can grab Joshua's and Bernard's attention and get them to correct their course. Bernard lavishes attention on Joshua, going into the water during calm winds to clean barnacles off of Joshua's hull, though otherwise Bernard refuses to take a bath for months. Joshua is the model for the Beautiful Sailboat that Bernard thinks about in the story of the Fairy Tern, but in the story, the boat is much larger than in life.

Joshua likes to surf during storms, but has to be controlled by Bernard and have its sails reefed in, because it is too dangerous. It is having a lot of fun, but risks capsizing bow first into the ocean. Joshua has been Bernard's boat for 10 years and sees Bernard through a prior dangerous trip from Tahiti across the Pacific and beyond Cape Horn. By now, Bernard knows most of Joshua's reactions in a storm, and consequently Bernard



lightens the load of the boat and centers it, to avoid having the boat capsizing. Joshua is in better shape now, because the arrangement of its sails can be more pinpointed to the amount of wind there is available by using more or less sails that can be reefed in faster than before. In chapter 14, "Joshua against Joshua," Bernard details how he is impressed that Joshua is now sailing faster than in its last long distance trip across the Pacific.

The Other Sailors—Bill King, Nigel, Loick Fergeron, Knox-Jo

In the appendix it is mentioned that about a dozen sailors attempt the solo trip around the world, with the winner being Knox-Johnston. Bernard spends a lot of time wondering how the other sailors are doing. He makes his few attempts to communicate with other boats near the Cape of Good Hope and Tasmania mainly to find out about the fate of these other sailors. He knows that his friends Bill King, Nigel and Loick Fergeron have "plastic boats" that are not really seaworthy and he hints several times that he does not expect these sailors to complete the trip around the world. Some of these men are close friends of Bernard's, including Loick who gives him a supply of purple onions for his boat. Bernard describes Knox-Johnston, who sails the Suhaili, as the only other sailor he knows of that has a sea-worthy boat. He has strong doubts if Loick's boat, Victress, which is a trimaran (a boat with three hulls) will complete the journey. In fact, though Loick reaches safety, Victress fails to make the trip around the world.

Francoise

Francoise is Bernard's wife and she sees him off at Plymouth England. She and Bernard have several children. Francoise also goes with Bernard on a long trip from Tahiti to Alicante, which includes a trip through the Pacific and around Cape Horn at the tip of South America. Bernard remembers killing a rat in front of her on their ship, but later regrets the killing. Perhaps he killed the rat to please his wife.

Henry Wakelam

Henry Wakelam is a sailor who helps Bernard build boats earlier in Bernard's career. When Bernard is forced to make a repair that he has never done before he thinks of Henry Wakelam, who is very good at improvising a solution to difficult problems in ship construction. Henry tells Bernard, in his mind, to wait a day and let a thought develop. This is in relation to the crisis that Bernard has after his bowsprit is bent in a collision with another ship.



The Taicong

The Taicong is a mystical figure in the navigation of Chinese junks in the Gulf of Siam. Bernard thinks back to taicongs from his youth in Indochina. The Taicong quietly contemplates the sea and sky for three days and nights before a ship sets sail and learns how to tell the ship's direction and to make weather predictions from a study of the elements. Bernard also remembers the legends of taicongs of how the wind tries to blow out the lower stars just above the horizon and the stars must be protected by the gods. That is why, it is said that the stars twinkle more when a storm is approaching.

Bob and Robert from the Sunday Times

Bob is the Sunday Times' photographer and Robert is a reporter. They go down to see Bernard and other sailors off at Plymouth. They offer Bernard and other sailors two-way radios, but the equipment is heavy and bulky and Bernard rejects it.

Captain Francois Le Bourdais, the Cape Horners

Captain Francois Le Borda is a retired captain who sails around Cape Horn. He denies, in a letter, encountering icebergs in the seas around Cape Horn. Other of the Cape Horners, those who have sailed around Cape Horn, claim to have seen ice floes and icebergs in these waters, extending east and north the shallow banks around the Falkland Islands.

The Monster

The Monster is a metaphor for civilization and development that is unchecked by anyone. Bernard develops this metaphor when he sees a new concrete road built around Tahiti and more development of the docks and seashore of Tahiti. Bernard claims that the Monster wants development for development's sake, and has a force of bulldozers and cement mixers who almost independently decide to have endless building and expansion.

The Pope and the Unknown Stranger

The Pope is introduced at the end of the book as someone that Bernard would like to educate on the need for a new sensitivity about preserving the Earth and the seas. An unknown stranger helps Bernard finance the caulking of his boat at a critical point in Bernard's career. Bernard imagines this unknown stranger going to the Pope to convince him to respect the other creatures of the earth and seas.



The Fairy Tern

The Fairy Tern is a representation of the ultimate friendly sea bird that comes to perch on Bernard's knee and eat from his hand. Later the Fairy Tern comes to intervene in the imaginary meeting of the unknown stranger and the Pope. The Fairy Tern's task is to stay with the Pope and teach him about the need for coexistence between man and all creatures on the planet.



Objects/Places

Flying Fish, Barracudas, Dorados, Porpoises, Seals

Flying Fish follow the boat Joshua in the first part of the journey in the South Atlantic. The flying fish are followed by the predator fish, the dorado and the barracuda. Flying fish are a good fish to eat, and Bernard catches one that falls on deck, but lets it go since it is dark and he fears it could be a poisonous fish. At points around New Zealand and the Pacific, Joshua is followed by seals and porpoises. At one point Bernard thinks that porpoises help guide him out to the Pacific, avoiding dangerous reefs.

Trinidad

Trinidad is a small island that is several hundred miles off the coast of Brazil and run by Brazil. The people there see the boat Joshua approach, but have no boat available to come out and accept Bernard's messages.

The Cape of Good Hope

The Cape of Good Hope is at the tip of South Africa and is characterized by Bernard as the most dangerous of the three great capes. This is because it is the place where the warm waters of the South Atlantic meet the less saline and colder waters off of the Antarctic. Bernard describes the 500 miles, including Cape Agulhas, to Durban as the region of the Cape of Good Hope.

Cape Leeuwiin

Cape Leeuwin is at the southwestern tip of Australia. It is one of the three great capes that Bernard must round to sail around the world. Bernard sails several hundred miles south of Cape Leeuwin both times that he passes it.

Tasmania

Tasmania is an island off the coast of southern Australia. Bernard sails close to this island both times that he passes it. On the second time he signals fisherman to come near Joshua off the port of Hobart. The fishermen speak with him for a while and take his messages and packages.



New Zealand and Stewart Island

New Zealand is comprised of two main islands east of Australia. Stewart Island is a small island off of New Zealand. Bernard sails Joshua close to New Zealand the first time passing it. He is in some doubt whether New Zealand and Stewart Island are where he is to pass into the Pacific Ocean. At a key moment he sees porpoises that he thinks help guide him into the correct direction.

Cape Horn

Cape Horn is the southern tip of South America. This is a quite dangerous spot, which is also the farthest south point that Joshua sails around. Bernard is particularly concerned about the presence of icebergs near the Horn, because Antarctica is only about 500 miles away.

Falkland Islands, Port Stanley

The Falkland Islands are islands to the east of Argentina. Bernard tries to go up the fjord to Port Stanley, the leading city of the Falklands, to drop off a message, but decides that in his tired condition, it is too dangerous.

Tahiti

Tahiti is a developed island in the Pacific Ocean. Bernard finally docks here after 10 months nonstop at sea. He happily meets some of his old friends there, but is disturbed that there is a new road around the island and concrete quays.

The Galapagos Islands

The Galapagos Islands are primitive islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and due east of South America. Bernard is tempted to sail beyond Tahiti to the Galapagos Islands. He realizes this is a bad idea because there are few or no modern facilities there.

Plymouth, England

Plymouth, England is the port from which Bernard and many of his friends start the solo trip around the world. There he meets the journalists from the Sunday Times who offer him various free equipment. He also says goodbye there to his wife, Françoise.



Other Yachts in the Long Way Race

Other yachts in the "Long Way" Sunday Times race include Knox-Johnston's Suhaili, and Loick Fergeron's Victress. Note that the Victress is a very fast but fragile boat, a trimaran, which is a boat with three hulls. Also mentioned in the race are the yachts Tzu Hang, Captain Browne and Galway Blazer II.

Pitch-pool, Pitch-pooling

To Pitch-pool, or pitch-pooling means for a boat to capsize with its bow going down first, followed by its stern, and then usually coming up again after turning over.

Self-Steering Systems, Weathervane

Self-steering systems are systems of lines that connect the ship's rudder to a weathervane. All the solo sailor has to do is point the weathervane in the direction that he wants the ship to go. This enables sailors to sleep and do other activities, not just hold on to the steering wheel all of the time. These systems all have a back-up where the sailor or captain can steer by hand. He uses this especially in emergency situations, or in tight harbor situations, where reefs and other objects have to be avoided.

Malamocks, shearwaters, albatrosses

Malamocks, shearwaters, and albatrosses are the large birds that follow Joshua through the sea, especially in the southern Indian Ocean. Bernard spends a large amount of time, especially when the wind is calm, feeding these birds.

Capetown South Africa, Capetown Yacht Club

During his second trip across the Cape of Good Hope, Bernard sails within 30 miles of the large port city of Capetown South Africa. There he has pleasant memories of working and staying at the Capetown Yacht Club. A small boat, a launch, comes out to meet the boat Joshua there and take Bernard's messages and materials.

The Concrete Quays at Tahiti, the Paved Road around Tahiti

The concrete quays at Tahiti symbolize to Bernard the Monster of development run amok. This is amplified by a paved road that has been built around Tahiti along the shore. Bernard finds the concrete quays a useful place to dock when there is stormy weather, but otherwise prefers to dock at an undeveloped spot by the shore.



Knock Downs

Knock Downs are dangerous incidents when in a rough sea the mast of a boat is knocked down to the horizontal level or all the way down to the sea. This happens to Joshua several times during the trip around the world, with four knockdowns occurring in the last leg of the trip in the Pacific towards Tahiti. A knockdown may cause minimal damage or only a couple of ripped sails. More extensive danger may occur, and there is always the danger that when the boat goes through a knockdown, the sailor can be thrown about and severely injured or killed. Or if he is outside, he could be thrown off the boat entirely, or be dragging from a safety harness.

Icebergs, the Ice Line

During the long trip in the southern latitudes, icebergs are a danger that is often present. Bernard has sea charts that show the known maximum north "ice line" of icebergs floating in that area in that season. The most southerly that Bernard sails is to round Cape Horn, which is the most likely place to see or run into an iceberg.

Bowsprit

The Bowsprit is a long pipe of steel that is almost 7 feet long that extends from the bow of Joshua. Bernard finds this piece of equipment useful and is very upset when it is damaged in a collision with a black freighter. Luckily, after a couple of days he figures out how to straighten it out. A sail is extended from the bowsprit.

Tergal Sails

Tergal Sails are made of a synthetic material and are said to be more durable than those made of cotton or other natural materials. The manufacturer gives Bernard a set of Tergal sails for Joshua, to give him a chance to try out the material, and to recommend it if it proves to be successful.

Indochina, Gulf of Siam, Vietnam

Bernard Moitessier is apparently of French ethnic origin but was born in Indochina. He speaks Vietnamese fluently in his youth, but after leaving the area for 20 years has largely forgotten the language. He spends years sailing a Chinese junk in the Gulf of Siam. Bernard hears Vietnamese radio broadcasts while passing a couple of thousand miles south of Vietnam.

Sextant

A sextant is an instrument that is used to calculate a ship's position by looking at the sun or at the stars or moon. Bernard has several sextants. One he likes most is inadvertently broken when he leaves it loose and later the ship has a knockdown. Bernard does his best to glue the sextant back together.

Cape Robin

Cape Robins are small sea birds that follow Joshua in its voyage from off the Cape of Good Hope and into the Indian Ocean. Actually, Bernard is not sure of their real name, and invents the name, Cape Robin for them.



Themes

Man Against the Sea

Throughout the whole story of Bernard's trip around the world and to Tahiti, he is struggling with the sea. Often the sea is Bernard's friend, but it can turn into his deadly opponent. This is most apparent when there are severe gales and Joshua surfs too much on cross seas. Several times Joshua's mast is knocked down towards the sea, and its keel is 30 to 40 degrees out of the water. The biggest danger is if Joshua pitch-pools, which means it turns over upside down from the bow to the stern. Even if this happens, a boat with a weighted keel will right itself after a few seconds. Of course, in such an event the boat is damaged and the lone sailor is in danger of breaking his neck. Two of the other boats making the solo trip around the world pitch-pool in the South Atlantic near the Cape of Good Hope. They have to abandon their trip, but are able to make it to a port.

The dangers of the sea can be more subtle. Extended calm winds can be extremely frustrating. Joshua only sails 20 or 30 miles some days and Bernard feels he will never escape the doldrums zones. The sea can be boring too. In this respect, Bernard is a master at enjoying, filming and even fantasizing about the birds, fish and other creatures of the sea. Another point of danger is when Bernard tries to communicate with others and goes close to ships and harbors. Even in the open sea, a lone sailor must always be ready to respond. This is why Bernard takes only short naps and does not sleep the whole night through ever.

Whether to Cooperate with or Escape Civilization

Bernard begins his trip on the boat Joshua to have an adventure and to possibly collect the prize money if he is first to circle the world and return to Plymouth, England. Later, the long trip is a way to escape civilization, not to win another other prize. Bernard has been a sailor for his entire life. It has been a path to adventure for him when he is growing up. Sailing ships is also a way to earn money, whether through legitimate trade or through smuggling contraband goods. On the "Long Way" trip, he receives free sails and equipment and knows that he has a book publishing deal at the end of the trip whether he wins the race or not. Bernard knows that he needs civilization to provide a strong steel boat, Tergal sails and other equipment. Yet, when he docks in Tahiti, he feels enraged by what he considers to be over-development by roads and shoreline docks.

By the time Joshua sails past Cape Horn and the Falkland Islands, Bernard no longer wants to return to Plymouth and win the prize money. He probably could win, but decides that he is disgusted with the idea of returning to Europe at this point. Instead Bernard gets immense pleasure from the sea and considers docking at the primitive Galapagos Islands, though going to Tahiti instead. He watches the porpoises and flying



fish that travel along with Joshua and establishes a kind of communication with these creatures. There is a supernatural feeling when Bernard states that the porpoises warn him to stay away from the rocks when passing New Zealand and Steward Island. Bernard knows he must return to land, but does so with some regret.

The Mystical Feeling of the Sea

Bernard is a trained sailor from his youth, but also has a keen sense of the processes of nature and their mystical elements. Indeed, these two aspects of nature are often in harmony with each other. The old taicongs guide the Chinese junks in the Gulf of Siam with years of experience and communion with the sea in Bernard's youth. They can figure the direction of the wind and the coming weather by watching the waves, the clouds and the stars. For example, when the stars twinkle more, this is an indication of changing weather or a storm because a disturbance in the upper atmosphere. Then this is linked to the story that the winds try to put out the stars that are low in the sky, but the stars are protected by the gods. Bernard still likes this story although he also knows the scientific reason why sometimes the stars twinkle more. Bernard can get further drawn into stories of the sea when he imagines that Joshua is a playful youngster that loves to surf on the waves. This is fun but if done too fast can lead to the capsizing of the ship.

Bernard also has a deep feeling of empathy for the birds that fly to the boat. He talks and communicates with the shearwaters and albatrosses by feeding them cheese, butter and pate, usually in the water but sometimes on the ship. He imagines that a Fairy Tern comes to perch on his knee and eat from his hand. The symbol of the rat is related to Bernard's feelings against over-development and civilization. He kills one on his previous ship but later feels guilty. At Tahiti, he wants to preserve the rat from the development of the seashore, although the rat goes into boats to steal food. This symbolizes Bernard's love of all creatures, including the detested rat.

Style

Perspective

The perspective of the book is that of Bernard, an adventurous and lone sailor. As Bernard states in the appendix, sailors often write books about their adventures in order to support their ability to continue to have boats and sea voyages. The book "The Long Way" tracks the day-to-day adventures of Bernard and the ship Joshua. Bernard has to make sure that the boat is steered in the proper direction though most of this is done through a self-steering mechanism. He wants to go as fast as possible without excessively endangering Joshua by capsizing. Bernard has many practical things to worry about such as whether he catches enough rain to keep up his water supply and whether the boat is properly maintained.

Bernard is clear that the solo sailor must be constantly on his guard. In a vivid incident, a sextant is used and not put away properly. An hour later, a large wave hits the ship and water floods the cabin. The sextant is knocked to the ground, partially broken and must be repaired. This is just one of the many events of Bernard's voyage. What is most important is that Bernard maintains his ability to solve problems and react to events. When he hits the black freighter and the bowsprit is damaged, he does not immediately know how to fix it, but develops a solution over a couple of days. The appendix gives much more technical information about the operation of a yacht on a long sea voyage, and can serve as a useful guide to sailors who undertake such voyages.

Tone

The tone of "The Long Way" is very subjective. The book is not just the story of a voyage around the world, but of one man's experience. Bernard, the author has a great deal of pride in the many things that he has learned by experience, discovered on his own, and learned from others. Any small task that he has learned to do gives him joy. The reader can feel the pleasure of the author in describing how he learns to wash clothes in salty water without the clothes ending up clammy and sticky. Therefore, the attack on technology and the "Monster" of civilization, at the end of the book seems paradoxical.

Bernard, the author may resent over-development and the destruction of trees and habitats, but he actually uses and enjoys technology. Most of the book is a detailed description of the long sea voyage as a scientific experiment. This aspect of the book is made clearer by the long appendix which details the materials and innovation that Bernard uses to make his trip. For example, a key system that makes the author's trip possible is a self-steering system. This system helps to make the author's trip possible, since he does not have to spend all of his time attached to the steering wheel.



Many of the passages of the book are mystical and romantic. Different events of the voyage trigger Bernard's memories of his childhood and youth in Indochina, when he sailed on a Chinese junk. The porpoises warn Bernard of danger, while the birds seem to talk to him, finally in the form of the Fairy Tern. In fact, the book maintains its interest and excitement in the shift between the two overall points, from the spirit of scientific inquiry to the sense of the mystical and irrational. Ultimately, for a single sailor on a yacht going around the world, the sea is a mysterious giant that cannot be understood by reason alone.

Structure

The book is divided into five parts with 22 chapters, plus an appendix and glossary. Part 1 describes Bernard setting out to sail from Plymouth England and the first leg of his voyage. He undergoes his first trials with depression, physical aches and pains and being alone. He also has his first crisis when Joshua's bowsprit is damaged in its grazing crash against the black freighter. However, all these he overcomes and passes the first great cape. In Part 2, Bernard completes his route around the region of the Cape of Good Hope and enters the Indian Ocean. He relaxes with the mostly very good weather and pays more attention to filming sea birds and feeding them. This is followed by a fairly smooth passage around Cape Leeuwin in Australia and later New Zealand. Bernard describes an intervention by porpoises that follow Joshua, and indicate to him the proper direction to steer. Perhaps he only means that the porpoises draw his attention and help him mobilize his own faculties to overcome these difficulties.

Part 3 takes Bernard through the Pacific Ocean and around Cape Horn. There is lots of reminiscing in this part, of the author's youth sailing in the Gulf of Siam and learning about the sea. Bernard also thinks of his prior trip with his wife through the Pacific, under generally much stormier conditions. At the end of this part, Bernard first considers not returning to Plymouth, England and his fear of civilization in Europe. In Part 4, Bernard finally decides to sail around the Cape of Good Hope again, with the eventual destination to the island of Tahiti. After undergoing the roughest part of his journey with four knockdowns of Joshua in the Pacific, Bernard manages to make it to Tahiti. Here he becomes angry at the "Monster" of civilization and what he considers to be the over-development of Tahiti. He resolves that the needs of individuals for freedom and of society for development must be reconciled, in an imaginary visit to the Pope. The book also has an extensive appendix with many interesting technical details both for sailors and for the layman.



Quotes

All Joshua and I wanted was to be left alone with ourselves. Any other thing did not exist, had never existed. You do not ask a tame seagull why it needs to disappear from time to time toward the open sea.

Chapter 1, p. 3.

A huge barracuda takes off after it and snatches the flying fish at the top of the arc. The really amazing thing was seeing the barracuda contorting its entire body and beating its tail, modifying its trajectory to follow the prey, which had angled off to the left at the top of its leap.

Chapter 2, p. 14.

At first they all thought I was going to anchor there. They were waiting, hoping, afraid to believe.... But they have no boat, and I have no dinghy.

Chapter 3, p. 23.

Atom was rolled over near the Cape and emerged with her deck as flat as a raft. Awahnee encountered the most terrible weather of her career in these waters, and she is a veteran of the Horn.

Chapter 6, p. 45.

I have not finished my cigarette when an enormous breaking sea hits the port beam and knocks us flat.

Chapter 6, p. 49.

Where are Bill King, Nigel, Loick? I had hoped day after day to get news of them from the BBC or Radio Cape Town after my message to the little black freighter.

Chapter 7, p. 60.

Everything hovering in the air of Asia at that time, the richest, most formative period of my life comes back to me with incredible clarity.

Chapter 8, p. 72.

The crew never spoke to him, because the taicong needs all his peace to communicate with the gods and read on their faces.

Chapter 9, p. 83.

I do not think it is Bill King; perhaps Knox-Johnston. Of the three who set out in June, only he had a real sea boat.

Chapter 10, p. 89.



Usually, Joshua always lets me know of course changes without my having to look at the compass if the sky is overcast. This time, she couldn't.

Chapter 12, p. 102.

Joshua is half way to the Horn. For five days in a row I have done my yoga exercises completely naked in the cockpit, before the meridian sight. I feel the sun entering into me, giving me its power.

Chapter 13, p. 114.

I am too high this time, Joshua is too high. Come aeck to the foot of the mast... stop playing with the ghosts in the foam... drop the mainsail fast and hold tight to your boat and your sanity...

Chapter 15, p. 134.

Many monsoons later, on a trip from Kampot to Rach Gia in my big junk loaded with sugar and a little contraband, I planted three sprouted coconuts and a mango pit, so the island of our childhood would also have water and fruits. ...Sleep quietly little brother, I just went to look...

Chapter 16, p. 139.

Hey old man, eight of our boats are anchored in a really peaceful little spot, five couples have a child each, the other three have decided against having any, but it's as if they each had five kids.

Chapter 17, p. 151.

Trying to reach Tahiti nonstop is risky, I know. But the risk would be much greater to the north. The closer I got, the more disgusted I would be.

Chapter 19, p. 163.

"Well you're free to split, no one is stopping you..." "Free for the moment... but before long no one will be free if things go on.

Chapter 19, p. 164.

Now it is a story between Joshua and me, between me and the sky; a story just for us, a great love story that does not concern the others any more.

Chapter 19, p. 170.

Construction continues. The destruction goes on. With all the legalities in order. That's their strength: papers. The Law. The Law that says you can wreck everything.

Chapter 21, p. 177.

A sailor is always racing in those parts. And if Joshua had beaten Suhaili to the mark (it is by no means sure that Joshua would have finished first), it would have been a grave injustice, as Knox-Johnston's boat was much smaller, and much less sound.

Appendix, p. 189.

It should be noted that the boat cannot start surfing unless she has already reached a certain speed; a board floating amid very large seas will stay at the same place.
Appendix, p. 216.



Topics for Discussion

Discuss Bernard's motivations for going on a solo trip around the world on his yacht Joshua. How do his motivations change through the long trip?

Bernard wants to communicate with the outside world, but actually does so only a few times. Why is this? Is this motivated by danger in such contacts, or are there other reasons for this?

Discuss how Bernard stays healthy and sane while being isolated on a ship going around the world for 10 months. In what way do his diet and exercise help him to accomplish this? How does he maintain a good mental state during this long period of time? Is he successful in maintaining a good mental state?

Discuss how Bernard develops a strong dislike for civilization, ending up calling it "the Monster." Is this attitude in him all along or does it develop over his long voyage? How is this dislike for civilization manifested when he docks in Tahiti?

Discuss how Bernard's long years of training as a youth affect his sailing technique. Do his experiences in the Gulf of Siam in a Chinese junk help to strengthen his sailing technique or weaken it? What role do the stories and legends he learned in those days play?

Discuss Bernard's book in relation to helping an active long-range sailor. Would his advice and tactics for putting together a boat help a sailor who takes his yacht on the open sea? Is there enough detailed information in the book for a trained sailor?

Discuss Bernard's relationship with his wife Françoise and his children. Are they important in Bernard's thoughts? Does he have many memories of them?

Discuss Bernard's relationship with his fellow sailors, including Bill King, Nigel and Loick. Does he look at them more as collaborators or as competitors? Is he upset to not hear any news of them on the radio? Why?