

Lights Out on The Sea

I sat one early morning on the sand looking south over Casco Bay, waiting for the sunrise. The northeastern sky just off my shoulder seemed to lighten a bit as I noticed a single pinpoint of light speeding along the horizon. I could hear no sound, except for the waves crashing toward me, dissipating not far from my feet.

The light moved very fast, too fast for a boat. Even a small craft that close would be easily heard. Yet the light had a sense of being man-made, not other-worldly.

A few minutes later a similar sight appeared going just as fast, but this time there were two lights, one white and the other green, moving in tandem across the horizon.

As the sun found its way up from wherever it had spent the night, the sky lightened from a dark grey and made the world around me a little brighter. For the first time, I noticed seagulls standing like sentinels up and down the beach on either side of me, keeping their distance as they will from humans. More lights transited the horizon now and I could see the birds' heads following them. Like me, they seemed to find the apparitions of interest. Unlike me, they

simply accepted them and didn't wonder about their origin.

I supposed the lights could have been ghosts, demons or extra-terrestrials, but I didn't think so. Neither did the birds. The gulls have stood there each morning for eons waiting for a morsel from the immeasurable abundance of the sea. A few goblins would never scare them away.

I was the only one standing on the beach that morning who could be frightened by my thoughts. I alone could conjure ghosts from my past or present or fearsome goblins from the future.

But not the birds. Theirs was a future they could not comprehend and a past they could not remember. The unknown lights out on the sea did not disturb their sense of the present. To them the present is reality. To me it could be a gift.

Taking a lesson from my companions, I opened my eyes and closed my mind and stood watching the sun come up, a simple witness to the daily miracle. I felt the wind wash over me and buoy me up, my burdens lifting as I came into the moment. I never determined the genesis of the lights out on the sea. For me,



they had served their purpose, and they faded away in the presence of the new day.

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Windswept Press
Murrells Inlet, SC

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