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THE DAY THAT I DIE

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

The day that I die shall the sky be clear
 And the east sea-wind blow free,
Sweeping along with its rover's song
 To bear my soul to sea.

They will carry me out of the bamboo hut
 To the driftwood piled on the lea,
And ye that name me in after years,
 This shall ye say of me:

That I followed the road of the restless gull,
 As free as a vagrant breeze,
That I bared my breast to the winds' unrest
 And the wrath of the driving seas.

That I loved the song of the thrumming spars
 And the lift of the plunging prow,
But I could not bide in the seaport towns
 And I could not follow the plow.

For ever the wind came out of the east
 To beckon me on and on;
The sunset's lure was my paramour
 And I loved each rose-pale dawn.

That I lived to a straight and simple creed
The whole of my worldly span,
And white or black or yellow, I dealt
Foursquare with my fellow man.

That I drained Life's cup to its blood red lees
And it thrilled my every vein,
But I did not frown when I laid it down
To lift it never again.

That ever my spirit turned my steps
To the naked morning lands,
And I came to rest on an unknown isle --
Jade cliffs and silver sands.

And I breathed my last with a simple tribe,
A people savage and free,
And they gave my body unto the fire
And my soul to the reinless sea.