



The Voyage of the Rose City: An Adventure at Sea

John Moynihan

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A gripping, beautifully told story of a young man's coming-of-age at sea

When John Moynihan decided to ship out in the Merchant Marine during the summer of his junior year at Wesleyan University, his father, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, was not enthusiastic: As a young man, before joining the U.S. Navy, Pat Moynihan had worked the New York City docks and knew what his son would encounter. However, John's mother, Elizabeth, an avid sailor, found the idea of an adventure at sea exciting and set out to help him get his Seaman's Papers. When John was sworn in, he was given one piece of advice: to not tell the crew that his father was a United States senator.

The job ticket read "forty-five days from Camden, New Jersey, to the Mediterranean on the *Rose City*," a supertanker. As the ship sailed the orders changed, and forty-five days became four months across the equator, around Africa, across the Indian Ocean, and up to Japan—a far more perilous voyage than John or his mother had imagined. The physical labor was grueling, and outdated machinery aboard the ship, including broken radar, jeopardized the lives of the crew. They passed through the Straits of Malacca three times, with hazardous sailing conditions and threats of pirates. But it was also the trip of a lifetime: John reveled in the natural world around him, listened avidly to the tales of the old timers, and even came to value the drunken camaraderie among men whose only real family was one another. A talented artist, John drew what he saw and kept a journal on the ship that he turned into his senior thesis when he returned to Wesleyan the following year.

A few years after John died in his early forties, the result of a reaction to acetaminophen, his mother printed a limited edition of his journal illustrated with drawings from his notebooks. Encouraged by the interest in his account of the voyage, she agreed to publish the book more widely. An honestly written story of a boy's coming into manhood at sea, *The Voyage of the Rose City* is a taut, thrilling tale of the adventure of a lifetime.

From the Hardcover edition.

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