

I looked across the sea, and far away I could distinguish a gleaming shore. And as if in expectation, I saw many figures stand, watching. They were more beautiful than beautiful women and stronger than mighty men, and the brightness of their persons was greater than the golden crown of the beast. And the light shone on those who swam to meet them. I watched and trembled. And I saw many go down beneath the waters, and many swam on; and as these drew near to the shore their faces shone more brightly, and they seemed not to heed the great waves, but became less weary, and I knew they were near to that for which their soul longed. And I also saw, that, as they neared the persons of those who waited grew less bright, and I thought their beauty was not so beautiful, nor their strength so great. And I would have asked the reason of this, but Death was watching!

Then I turned again, and saw that many were near their Ideals. And a great wave arose as they would have reached the shore and swept them from it; and many turned back, and many struggled onwards. And they that gained the shore stood upon it, and cried with a great cry, and stretched out their hands to gather the bright ones to their arms. And as they drew them close, the great lights faded into greater darkness, and the beautiful forms faded within themselves, and died away, and

nothing was left but a vast night over all, and those who had fought, and won, and lost, fell upon the face of the waters (for the shore was no more), and pitying solitude, bending down to kiss them, hid them from my sight. And I cried: "Where is the Ideal?" Behold they have travailed in pain, and there is no joy born to them; where is that for which they traversed the great desert and braved the dark waters. Where is the hope of this people—their great Ideal?"

Death answered: "Perished in Reality!"

And I cried aloud and asked: "Do none obtain that for which they strive?"

He replied: "Those who fight for the Ideal gain the ground on which it stands; they are joyful and glad; they stretch out their hands; they grasp it; and it fades! the Ideal becomes real!"

Then I turned and looked across the desert, and many of the footmarks of those who had walked were no longer discernible, only a few remained. And, as I gazed, the sand ran in slowly and filled up the holes, and after a while over the great desert there was left no trace of what had been!

I would have inquired much, but Death no longer stood with me, and I awoke!

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