

# “After Morning Muster”

by John Davis

The chief is filling his coffee cup,  
joking, telling the one about the nun  
drunk in the confessional booth. This week  
she’s swallowing vodka. Last week, Scotch.  
Peterson, a seaman, is polite enough  
to laugh, hoping he won’t get  
the graveyard watch.

Beyond the cove the sea holds  
our stories, whitecaps as high as the horizon.  
A 45-footer hauls in the survivors  
of a purse seiner. 5-foot, 10-foot,  
20-foot waves. He gives his head  
a wet dog shake. Even when we are dry  
we are in the water.