

Another New World

Josh Ritter

The leading light of the age all wondered amongst
Themselves what I would do next
After all that I'd found in my travels around
The world was there anything else left?
"Gentlemen", I said, "I've studied the maps"
"And if what I'm thinking is right"
"There's another new world at the top of the world"
"For whoever can break through the ice"

I looked round the room in that way I once had
And I saw that they wanted belief
So I said "All I've got are my guts and my God"
Then I paused, "and the Annabelle Lee"
Oh the Annabelle Lee, I saw their eyes shine
The most beautiful ship in the sea
My Nina, My Pinta, My Santa Maria
My beautiful Annabelle Lee

That spring we set sail as the crowd waved from shore
And on board the crew waved their hats
But I never had family just the Annabelle Lee
So I didn't have cause to look back
I just set the course north and I studied the charts
And toward dark I drifted toward sleep
And I dreamed of the fine deep harbor I'd find
Past the ice for my Annabelle Lee

After that it got colder the world got quiet
It was never quite day or quite night
And the sea turned the color of sky turned the color
Of sea turned the color of ice
'Til at last all around us was fastness
One vast glassy desert of arsenic white
And the waves that once lifted us
Sifted instead into drifts against Annabelle's sides

The crew gathered closer at first for the comfort
But each morning would bring a new set
Of the tracks in the snow leading over the edge
Of the world 'til I was the only one left
After that it gets cloudy but it feels like I lay there
For days maybe for months
But Annabelle held me the two of us happy
Just to think back on all we had done

We talked of the other worlds we'd discover
As she gave up her body to me
And as I chopped up her mainsail for timber
I told her of all that we still had to see
As the frost turned her moorings to nine-tail
And the wind lashed her sides in the cold
I burned her to keep me alive every night
In the lover's embrace of her hold

I won't call it rescue what brought me here back to
The old world to drink and decline
And to pretend that the search for another new world

Was well-worth the burning of mine
But sometimes at night in my dreams comes the singing
Of some known tropical bird
And I smile in my sleep thinking Annabelle Lee
Has finally made it to another new world