

Pacific Reflections

– Pictures and Reflections from Sailing over the Pacific Ocean



Anna Eriksson

Foreword

Have you ever dreamt about sailing over an ocean?

People who have not, used to ask me: What do you do all the time (thinking: without internet and all other stimuli from the ordinary life)?

In this short essay, you are invited to follow me, Anna Eriksson from Sweden, and how I experienced my first sailing over the Pacific Ocean. Together with my husband and captain, Arthur Sundqvist, we had left Stockholm in May 2019 for a circumnavigation around the world. We did our virgin crossing over the Atlantic in 14 days from Cape Verde to Martinique in January 2020. The next passage we knew would be at least twice as long.

We passed through the huge Panama Canal in mid-March 2020, as one of the last yachts before the lockdown occurred worldwide. We took a chance; our motto is to go *wave by wave* and as we were allowed to go through, we did. We filled the boat with fruits and vegetables from the amazing Panama Mercado – a giant outdoor market – and left Panama City as soon as we could. We had a "zarpe" permit to enter Nuku Hiva in French Polynesia.

After some weeks on the Pacific, we received a message via our satellite phone from the government in French Polynesia, to sail directly to Papeete (another 7-10 days from Nuku Hiva) and then leave the boat and fly home. As if that was a possibility for liveboards like us. It took a while to understand that almost all countries had closed their borders. A brief message can take hours to download via the satellite phone. We found out that Hawaii was open and for a while, we thought about the option to turn north and sail another 4000 nautical miles (around 30 days).

In any case, we continued and with a combination of misunderstanding and luck – the government wanted us to just go somewhere else – outside French Polynesia, they meant. As if it were possible – the distances are huge in the big blue. I understood their information as a port other than Papeete, so I informed the JRCC, Joint Rescue Coordination Center, that we were changing our direction to Hiva Oa instead. And the JRCC informed the government and somewhere here they changed and let us make a short technical stop at Hiva Oa. After 33 days and 3885 nautical miles, we dropped anchor in Atuona Bay at Hiva Oa, Marquesas Islands.

This following piece came to me when we had been out on the Pacific for some days.

It started out with a cloud that caught my attention.

It was like a follow up and bridge from our Atlantic crossing:

<https://wavebywave.se/atlanten-in-pictures/>

Then another ten days passed before the rest came to me.

I started to be very present to the energy of the day.

First with a picture – then with a reflection.

Enjoy the reading!

All the best from Anna Eriksson, first mate on S/Y Vista

Vista is a ketch from France, Amel supermaramu redline 2000, SM435

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Saturday 21 Mars, 2020
03° 47'N, 84° 26'W
Panama basin

The Cloud

I feel immensely grateful to live on this Planet.

To be out here in the Pacific surrounded by the Ocean and the Sky
gives me plenty of time
to just be and witness what is around me.

I love the Moon.
It seems round on the picture – it is not.
At this date, the Moon is just a very tiny fragment
– lying like a tiny hammock up in the sky.
In four days, she will start to rise again.



4.59



5.14

Suddenly something catches my attention – as this small rose cloud below did early this morning. It must be the Sun that is on its way up – today as well.



5.16



5.32

It always surprises me that the Sun comes up somewhere other than where I see the first sign.



5.44



5.51

Now, look how majestically this Cloud form itself and how the Sun kind of plays "Look out" from behind the clouds.



6.24



6.28

The Cloud continues moving – showing us its array of alternative forms.



6.45



6.57

Look, I can even give you some rain. At the same time as Sun!
Isn't it magic?



7.02



7.05

Bye, bye, see you tomorrow!



7.32

Saturday 4 April 2020
05°35'S, 116°24'W
East Pacific

The Big Blue



So many times, I have spun on the Earth, Google earth on my iPhone, trying to grasp that we – for real – shall sail to the other side of the world. Where it is summer when Sweden has winter, where it is day when it's night in Stockholm.

The other side of the Earth is pure BLUE

Now we are here – in the middle of the big blue, the very blue. Horizon 360°. In the East Pacific area, 19 days from Panama and 10-14 days to Marquesas. I look at the chart and see the depth 3931 m, or just beside 5486 m, many thousands of meters deep!

A soft breeze from the back, 5 to 20 knots. Waves from none to 2-3 meters. Current 0,5-1 knot. 30° in the air and 29° in the water.

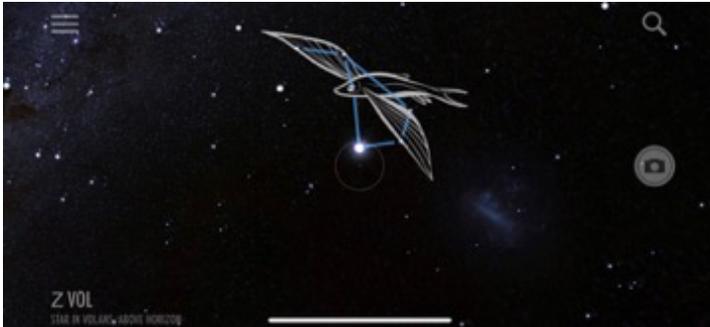
The Oceans are a huge part of the Earth, and on this side most of all. Think about if the Oceans create the balance that is so utterly missing in the crowds on the other side. Think about if all there is to remember – is showing its presence here – day after day.

Bye, bye – see you another day!



Saturday 4 April 2020
05°37'S, 117°48'W
East Pacific

The Stars



Locking up on all the stars surrounding us, I have never seen so many – ever. Not even at *Roque de Muchachos, La Palma*, one of the best places in the world to look for stars, where many countries have their own observatory.

Here out in the Pacific Ocean you kind of see all of them, even the small ones show up as a milky shimmer. Maybe the name of our galaxy, *Milky way*, was created by someone who has been here.

Instead of taking photos, I use *SkyView* to find out the names on what I see. This night I found a new constellation – the *Flying fish*. We see these fish a lot – they are always swimming and flying just above the surface of the sea in a big shoal. Every morning, some of them have landed on the deck of Vista. It is said they are delicious, like sardines, but so far, we haven't tried. The *Ocean Cruising Club* even has the flying fish on its Club burgee.

I see a star streak from *Venus* – named after the goddess of love and beauty. Also called *Morning and Evening star* as she is, after the Moon, the brightest you can see in the night sky with the maximum brightness just before sunrise and shortly after sunset.

I see a shooting star. Strong and clear, no doubt at all.

The stars remind me about the magnitude of the bigger system we all belong to. The brilliance of the stars is far too big to catch on a smart phone. They let me know about what I don't know that I don't know.

It is my little sister's birthday today.
I wish she is looking at the stars as well.

Sunday 5 April 2020
05°38'S, 118°58'W
East Pacific

Witnessing the Clouds



Today is a day with good-weather-clouds. This one look almost like a gigantic bird with its wings spread. Can you see that too? As a kid, I loved to lie on the lawn, looking at the clouds passing by. What comes to me today, is how I used to introduce meditation for beginners.

Sit comfortably with both feet on the floor.
Close your eyes and relax in your breathing.
Breathing in
Breathing out
Allow yourself to relax more and more on every outbreathing
Breathing in new energy
Relax, and breath out
Let the breathing continue
And start witnessing what is there
– like the clouds on the sky
It is all there is
You may feel something from your body
Just be and witness
You may start to think of something
Just let it pass, like the clouds
For now, you just witness what is there
(Let it go, it will come back if it is really important)
For now, just witness what is there
You are the one who witness
Being breath – in and out

Sunday 5 April 2020
05°38'S, 118°10'W
East Pacific

Drawn to the Light



Tonight, when I came up to my watch at 2 AM, I found us sailing almost to the moon as it lay straight in front of us. The same feeling as sailing to the end of a rainbow, as if there is something at the end. Come, come this way – they are pulling us closer and closer to a big secret or treasury.

This sense of direction is empowering, like riding on a wave of light. Think about if we always have that clear path shown in front of us! Just to follow even in the dark. We can be grateful when it happens, all the other days we need to trust our own light.

Tonight, I captured a photo with light coming both from inside of our boat and outside from the moon. It's like my eyes are always searching for the light. That is also what we are looking out for on our watches. Is there anybody else out there? Someone not using AIS, maybe not even having the navigation lights on. We want to keep our distance, keeping safety first. Still, when a light shows up, there is like an attachment – I keep on staring, observing every move – against or towards me? There is a connection even if we never will meet closer than this. If something happens, we will show up and help.

Maybe the knowing that others also search the light is good to remember on days when it feels very dark. Someone takes care and knows that there is always light somewhere, even at the darkest spots inside and outside. We belong together.

Monday 6 April 2020
05°39'S, 120°35'W
Pacific

There is Always a Crack



Even in the darkest moments there are openings.

Even the most thick-skinned have an Achilles heel.

Leonard Cohen knew very well that somewhere there is always a crack.

In Japan, they repair a broken pot with gold to mark the wisdom and the beauty that follows a crack.

Not only is the crack the opening – it is also the place from where the light, our inner wisdom comes.

Do you know your crack?

Monday 6 April 2020
05°51'S, 121°53'W
Marquesas fracture zone

This Too Will Pass



Dear existence, how shall I handle this crisis?

This too will pass.

Meanwhile – your work is to be present and take relevant actions according to what shows up in front of you. A crisis needs extraordinary actions. Like when you are on the sea and suddenly it starts blowing more than expected – your relevant action is to adjust your sails to the new situation. Stay alert. Stay present and listen – if you need to do anything, you will know.

Tuesday 7 April 2020
06°11'S, 123°20'W
Marquesas fracture zone

To Be With Oneself



By now, almost the whole world has been recommended (or forced to) to stay in quarantine because of a worldwide virus.

A time to meet yourself, to be with yourself.

Just be and face what is there.

How do you react or respond?

When so many activities are on hold.

When the outer world is in a way limited.

When close contact with others is prohibited.

When you are not allowed to leave your home more than a minimum.

I am sitting in our sailing boat, looking out over the huge blue ocean and the light blue sky.

Not so much is happening besides the waves passing by.

What's the meaning of life?

If I ask the waves they answer – there is none.

To be is what is.

To be oneself.

Who am I then?

What is my natural self-expression?

I witness the waves moving.

I am present to space, and freedom.

Still, in a feeling that this is almost unreal.

What are you present to?

Tuesday 7 April 2020
06°18'S, 124°14'W
Marquesas fracture zone

The Shadow



It's a full moon tonight. I am seeing a masterpiece.
I hope you see it too. It's magnificent!

I love the shadows from the clouds –
gets more mystic, more real, like life itself.

How come we are so hesitant to show the shadow side of ourselves?
I, at least, constantly choose the photos of me with a big smile.

There is, of course, so much more.
For many years, I used the lotus as a symbol (when I was working with Oceanic Aqua
Balancing) – the long root down in the mud gave me nutrients,
so going deep now and then was essential for me having a rich life.
Still is.
That's how I learn to know myself more.

How do you embrace your shadow sides?

Wednesday 8 April 2020
06°29'S, 125°24'W
Marquesas fracture zone

We Have a Choice



We are in a no-man's-land, not only are we in the middle of Pacific.
We are also in between a lot of countries with closed borders.
Maybe we just have to pass by islands we have sailed eight months to reach?
What a miscount! Or?
We do not know yet.
Who are we to judge?
We have decided to take this journey wave by wave.
We choose to be with what is right now.
If not, we will miss this too.

We can re-frame the situation – we are in a magic land
surrounded by very high energy from the Sun, the Moon, the Stars and the Ocean.

We are riding on the waves.
Feeling blessed.

Thursday 9 April 2020
07°12'S, 128°31'W
Marquesas fracture zone

Today is My Birthday



Today is my birthday.

I send a rose to all souls living on the planet right now.
Let's continue taking care of the precious energy that is vibrating inside and between us.

I am so grateful being able to smell the fragrance of the rose,
see the light shining through,
to feel the healing energy in my body.

I am so grateful being out here in the Big blue
on a totally new adventure with my husband.

I am so grateful having family and friends to connect with.

I am so grateful being alive.

Friday 10 April 2020
07°30'S, 130°22'W
Marquesas fracture zone

Patience



It is Good Friday – the day when Jesus, over 2000 years ago, got crucified for his, at that time, provocative talks. His talks are still serving as a ground for a big religion in the world. Think about what an impact he made.

Who is coming next?

Who will bring a new vision for the world?

Who has answers to the big questions of today?

Looking out on the calm ocean.

Wind and waves have gone down.

We are slowly gliding forward.

Sun is making a broad road of glitter for my eyes to rest on.

I am thinking about how nature solves things – in this area for example – with cyclones.

There is a *Harold* running around south-south-west from here.

People living here have to rise again and again, like we all did when we learned to walk.

The whole world is right now both aligned and at the same time separated because of the deadly virus Covid 19.

Most borders are closed.

No one knows when and how this will heal.

We learn to keep distance, to not hug, kiss or shaking hands.

Who will remember us to trust again?

Sun says: You will.

Saturday 11 April 2020
07°42'S, 130°50'W
Marquesas fracture zone

This is It!



Woke up to the sunrise.
So calm.
Since 2 AM we have been drifting without sail or motor.

This stillness – this is it!
Like the dot over the i.

Peace on the inside as well as on the outside.
Totally perfect as it is.
A day to just hang in to, feeling grateful for being in this space.
Not moving or changing anything, just being.

I realize how big this is for me – so used to being very busy.
I am surprised how much I like this stillness
– as it has been a strong longing that now gets space.

Saturday 11 April 2020
07°43'S, 131°00'W
Marquesas fracture zone

The Unknown



Today was the day when I let my body be surrounded by the blue, blue Pacific.
It was 31°, salt and 4500 meter down to the bottom.
It is hard to grasp how much that is.
It is definitely longer than it is to the visible horizon all around.

This is our Earth. So much that is unknown.
Freud understood that it is the same for us human beings.
That iceberg – wonder what metaphor they are using here on the south side?
Maybe it is enough just to be curious about what is under the surface
and what the next depth could bring?

How come we still are so hooked on science as the most reliable knowledge?
As we are not getting access to the unconsciousness via the conscious mind.

According to *Bruce Lipton*, cellular biologist from Stanford university,
the unconscious is over 1 million times more powerful than the conscious mind.
We need to have both with us for true transformation – willpower is not enough.
The cool thing is that everyone can train and get access to the unconsciousness.
The unknown is there like a free resource to dive deep into.

Saturday 11 April 2020
07°43'S, 130°58'W
Marquesas fracture zone

My New Home



We are still drifting.

Another sailing boat passed by motoring.
The only one we saw on the whole passage.
We had a small talk.
And they continued on.

We stayed as we were living here – secretly.
(You only get the around coordinates.)

I just love being here, pacing the energy around us.

It's like the Pacific has calmed down and invited us to stay,
to hang out and enjoy the world out here.

I am so grateful.

Sunday 12 April 2020
07°45'S, 131°32'W
Marquesas fracture zone

Stillness



Feeling blessed.

Sunday 12 April 2020
07°51'S, 131°56'W
Marquesas fracture zone

The Guardian



*What is it that scares me? If I would name the pain.
What in me needs to die, to make room for what wants to be born?*

*What words and metaphors are coming to me as signs of the new context?
That helps me navigate even in the dark and unknown.*

Dear Guardian – help me stay long enough to face what is there for me to see.

Monday 13 April 2020
07°53'S, 132°12'W
Marquesas fracture zone

On Sail Again!



After several days with almost no wind, it came back, and we are on sail again.

I love the fact that we are staying with what is,
not forcing ourselves or the boat
to go faster than what nature is giving us.
I am grateful that we can.

Trusting the cyclic movements in life.
Seasons.

The sun is coming up every morning and always comes back after the rain.

After stillness, we want to move.

After a dip, it goes up again.

The breakthrough is as close as the breakdown.

And the other way around.

We are enjoying what is.

Tuesday 14 April 2020
08°14'S, 133°25'W
Marquesas fracture zone

Rose Fluff



Think about the possibility of always have rose fluff nearby
– the day you need it the most.
Those days when you (or someone else) is hard on you, or when everything goes wrong.

The only thing you need is someone who is kind and forgiving.
Who reminds us that a new day will soon rise.
That embraces us with a big warm hug while our tears let go.

Every morning is a new day.
The rose fluff reminds us to stay in touch and listen to our hearts.

Thursday 16 April 2020
08°18'S, 135°06'W
Marquesas fracture zone

The Power in the New Day



It's an enormous power breaking through every morning.
Like when a child is getting born.

You see how it is almost a bubble on the horizon,
like it really wants to burst out (as it does in a few minutes).

What a gift and reminder for all of us
to see the energy and possibility with this new day.

24 hours or 1 440 minutes – new and fresh every morning!

What's emerging for you?

Saturday 18 April 2020
09°51'S, 137°55'W
Marquesas islands

Flow!



We are surfing on the waves with land in sight.
Waves, Wind, Vista – all of us want to go in the same direction – forward!

Feeling the excitement. Pure joy.
33 days on sea. ETA right when the sun will start going down.

Tonight, we will drop anchor in a new country, in a new part of the world:
French Polynesia, more exactly the easterly island Hiva Oa, at the Marquesas Islands.

Feeling blessed.



Anna & Arthur, Vista in the background at Atuona bay, Hiva Oa

09°48'S, 139°02'W
Hiva Oa, French Polynesia

Afterword



When we arrived at Hiva Oa 18 mars, the around 30 yachts in Atuona Bay had been in lockdown onboard for a month. It was said that we who came after 16 mars should get 40 days of quarantine, but luckily we only got one week.

We are forever grateful to the friendly people living at Hiva Oa. They are used to sailors and understand what it takes to sail so far. They took a stand for us all to be able to stay, get our visas and what we more needed. We were very welcomed and well-received. We are also thankful to the very sweet armada of sailors, around 30 boats, who showed a lot of support.

The team above is led by Mark in shorts, who coordinated all communication with the sailors, with help of Hereite who translated to English. Mark is also leading the JRCC-team at Hiva Oa and daily he is a history teacher. Hereite is holding the special flag they made for us as proof to sail around the Marquesas Islands before the whole French Polynesia opened again.

Despite the prevailing circumstances, my trip across the Pacific will always remind me that life is absolutely perfect no matter what happens.
I felt like I was in touch with the Light of our planet.
I feel immensely grateful for what I received.

About the author

Anna Eriksson is an executive coach from Stockholm, Sweden that has sold everything to sail and live on board with her husband. She runs the coaching company [Avalona.se](https://www.avalona.se) for CEO's that are ready to raise their energy. For the journey, there is a blog: [wavebywave.se](https://www.wavebywave.se)