

South Atlantic Reflections



Part 1. From Cape Town to St Helena



Our Existence

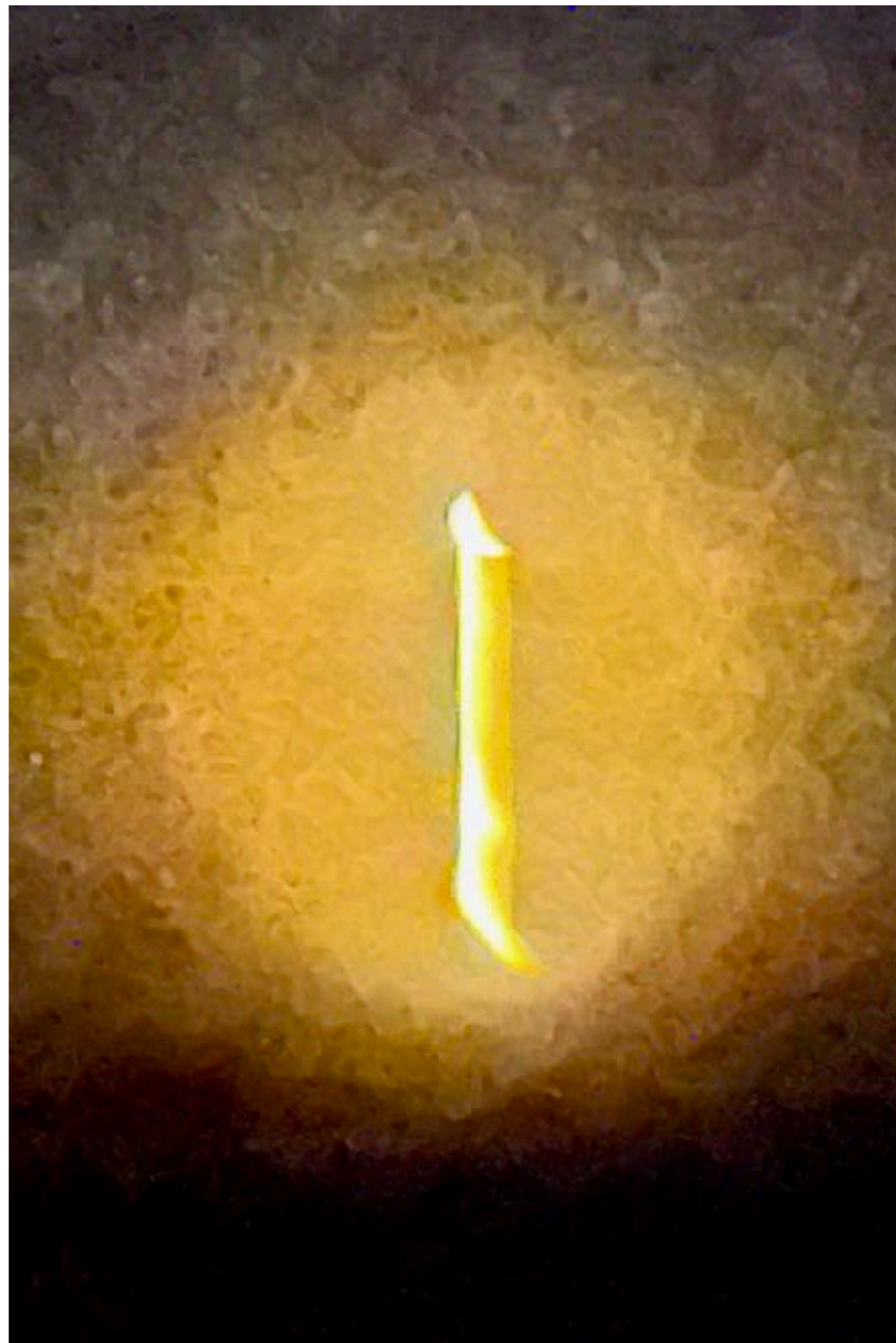
The moon had just started to become visible again, after some dark nights in the middle of the moon cycle. At the time of our arrival to St Helena, she will be full. We like that a lot and if possible, we plan our departure in alignment with the moon. Seeing the moon on the nightshift is like having a friend that lights up the way for us.

This time I had forgot to check it, so it was a nice surprise to see the crescent moon becoming darker yellow the closer the horizon she came. I took some photos to honour her presence. She was little and felt far away and as always when it is dark the photographs are getting blurred.

I have a play with "bad" photos – I allow myself to crop and edit them very freely, to see if there are some part that can be of interest. On the next page you can see what I found in the moon, both embryo- and phallus-like forms, both vulnerability and power. It was a like a small fairy tale that developed on the computer screen.

We are part of this huge energy system, our Existence. Out on the ocean we are surrounded by the sky and the sea, nothing else in between. The vastness is visible, the wind and the waves feelable. Around the Cape Town area there were a lot of seals and sea lions. They were great water role models, so playful in the water and the waves – jumping, turning around and often floating on their back. The windsurfers have also learnt to use the waves to bring joy. Vista, our yacht, dances on them too. I remember myself that the ocean is trustworthy. I take my time in the beginning of every passage to watch the waves and see their movements of up and down, feeling how well the boat finds it way between them. Feeling that we are a part of it all.

I look at the sunrise and sunset every day. It's magic moments. The birds seem to love those times too. Circles around the boat, like they want to connect and celebrate.



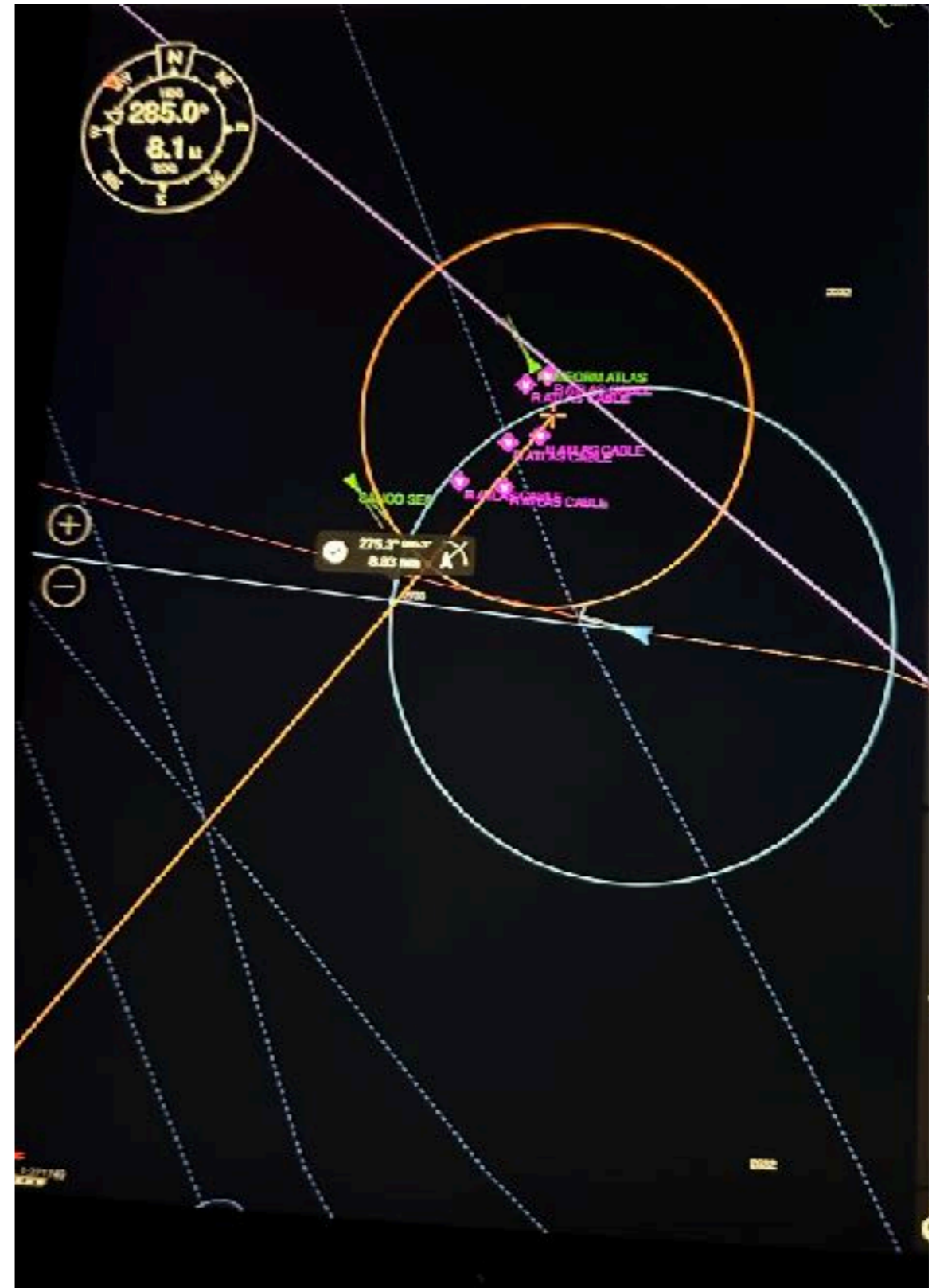


The Atlas Cable

We have been surprised by how few boats we have met on the oceans. On our first passage over the Northern Atlantic, I think we saw three boats, and only on the AIS. On the Pacific we met one IRL. Around Cape Town it is different, here we see a lot of cargos. Maybe that's a sign of the importance this route has had since many hundreds of years, of shipping things all the way east to Asia.

Here we also encounter towing of cables for the first time. They must have been enormous as we had to give a wide berth of seven nautical miles (nm) behind the mothership, and three nm on the sides and the back end. That little turn took us several hours. Six hours later we encountered a similar convey, but then we luckily were in a better position, and it was enough just with a short tack. The towing proceeded in the speed of three-four knots.

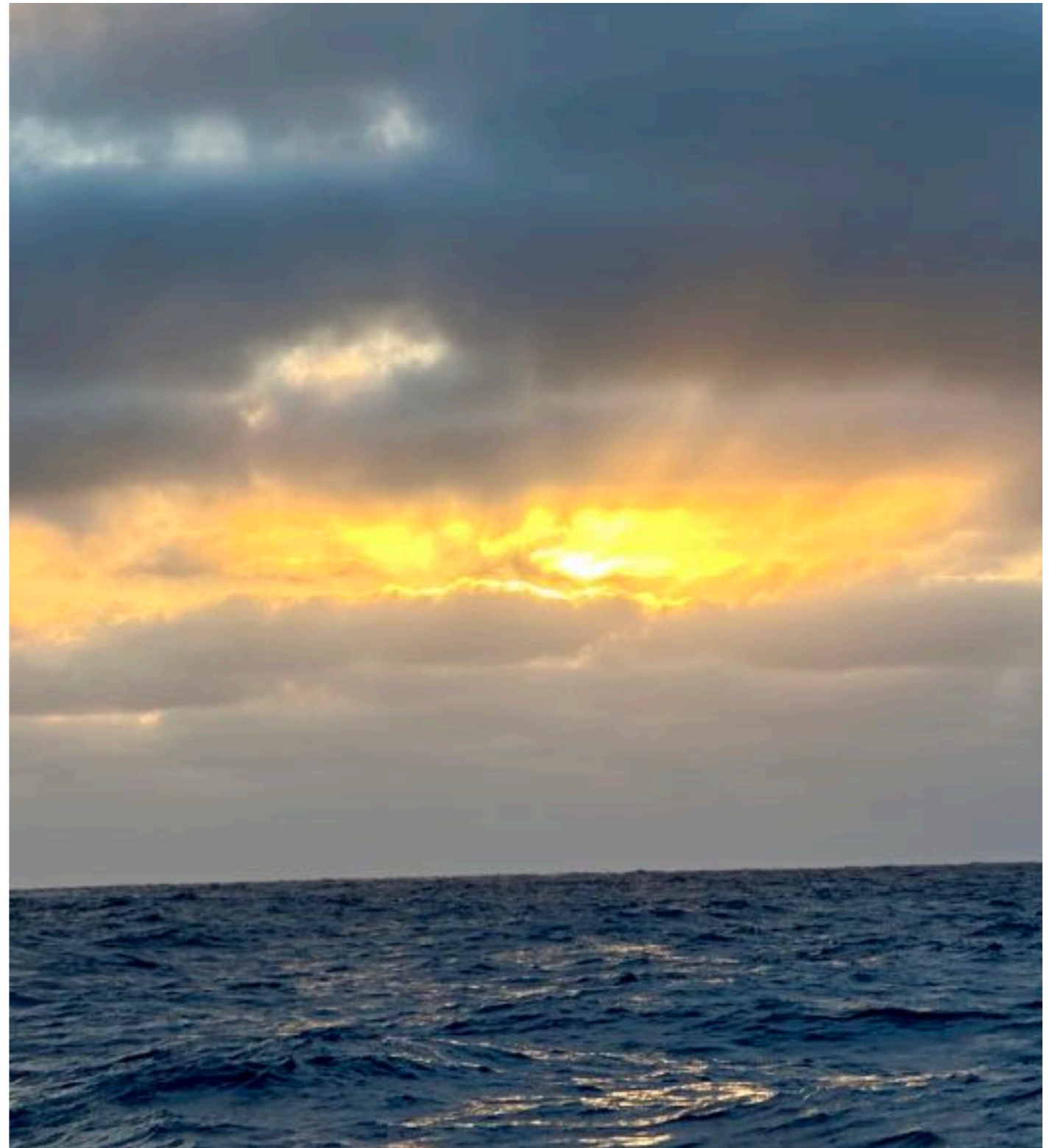
I got a flashback to Cocos Keeling in the Indian Ocean. That little atoll, full of palm trees, had an important role during the early 20th century when the world started to communicate through telegraphs. Cables got laid out on the ocean floor, with cable stations at strategic places from UK all the way to Australia and Asia. So, I thought cables were history, since long replaced with connections from satellites in the sky. On the sea chart we see warnings for disused sea cables. So, what is this Atlas cable about?



The Gold Edge

I thought of a colleague who named her company to the Gold Edge, when I saw the sunset of tonight. I feel that we are experiencing the gold edge of existence right now. The wind has settled down, likewise the waves. We have secured the Genoa on a pole, so it is not slapping in the light wind.

My husband plays guitar and I have started to write again. Life is sweet and soft. This is the fourth day on the south Atlantic Ocean. We have adjusted to the new rhythm with three hours watch, followed by three hours sleep. The body remembers and accept.





South Atlantic, 20 January 2024, 5.50 AM

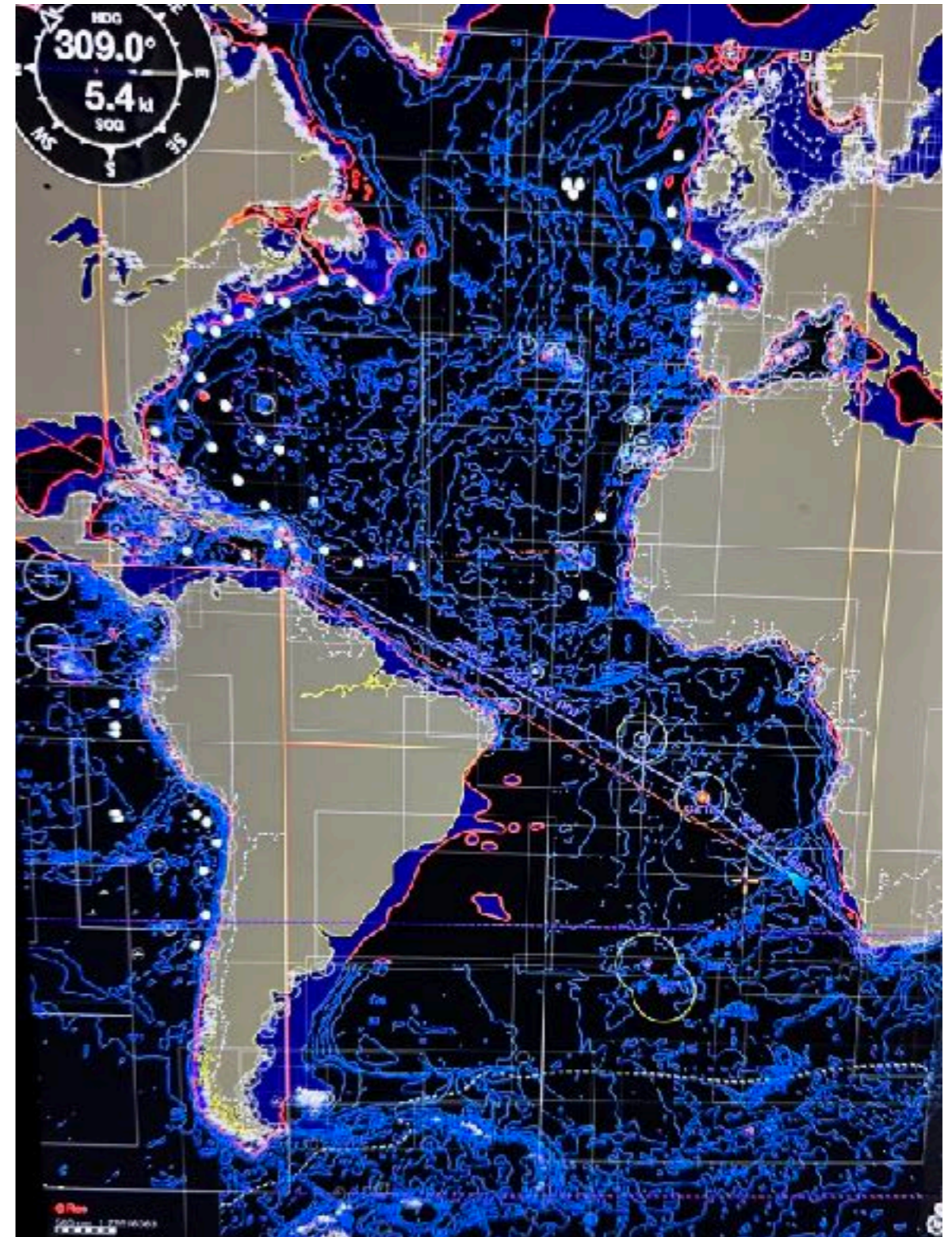
The slower speed brings calmness on board. We fall asleep easy, catching back some sleep from the first active and adjusting nights. It's easier to work in the pantry – we make some bread of buckwheat and chickpea flour in a pan on top of the oven, trusting it will stay still, and not becoming a projectile in a big wave.

With the peacefulness also comes more creativity. Captain plays rock'n roll on the guitar tonight as well, which rarely happens at sea, and I continue writing about my experiences of this big life shift we staged almost five years ago. I have learnt so much. I am so happy we dared to start something totally new. A theme is letting go, trusting something new and fun will come.



Out Here

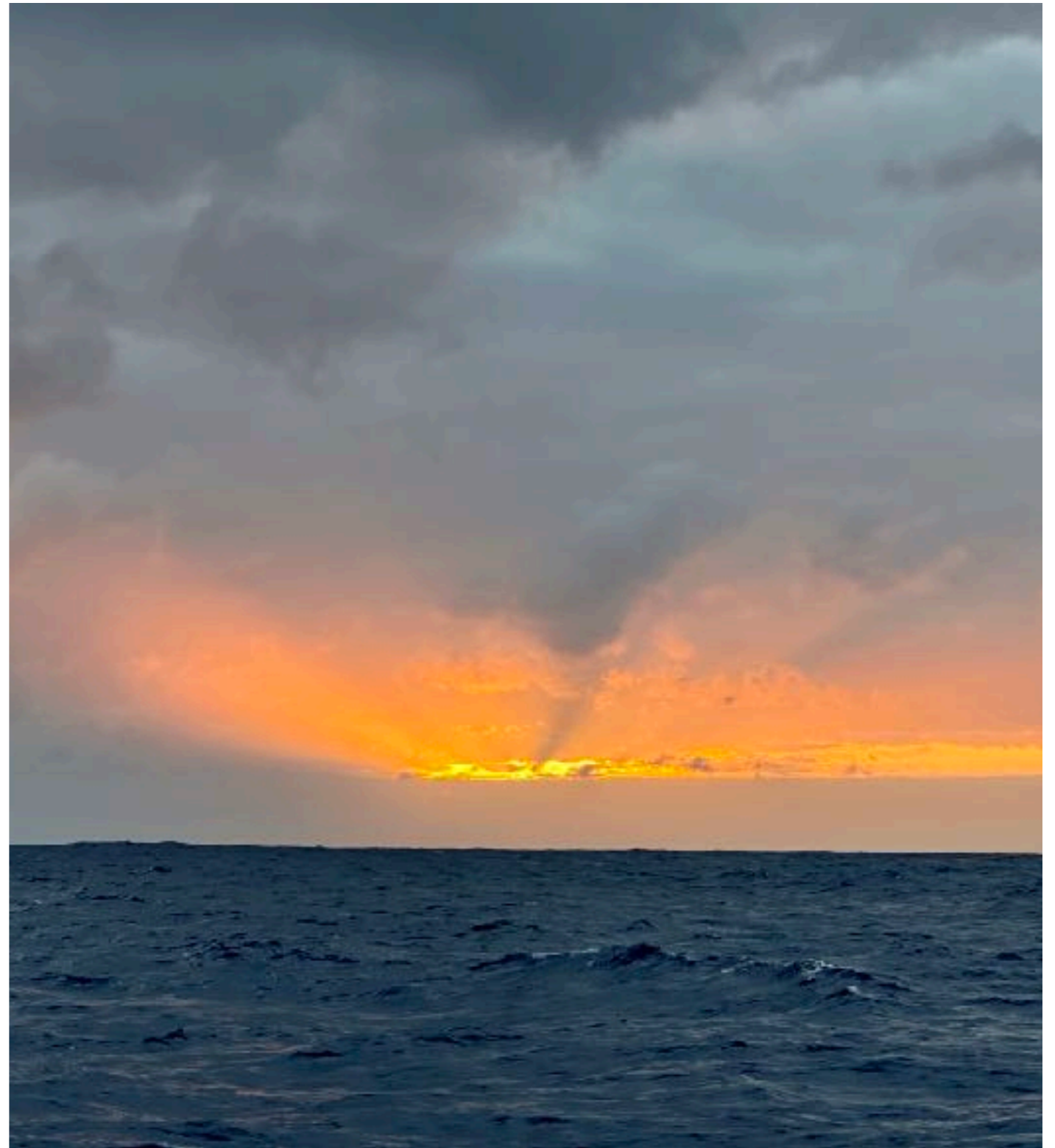
Vista is the blue arrow northwest of South Africa. The red-yellow dot is St Helena, our first stop in about a week. We are already halfway. The blue line shows the further path to Barbados, another four weeks. We don't see any cargos anymore. Only some birds now and then. It's an incredible feeling to be out here. This ocean is so much calmer than the Indian Ocean. The wind is blowing in the sweet spot between 14-17 knots, giving us enough speed forward, and at the same time keeping the stillness on board. Below is our Genoa on its pole – perfect when sailing downwind.



Halleluja

Sun is on its way down. We listen to Leonard Cohen singing Hallelujah. I feel gratitude over our life, like the sun rising her rays upwards. I couldn't imagine myself living this kind of life. I couldn't even dream about it, as I knew very little what it would be like out here. I am so happy being here. Day after day the waves and the wind kindly brings us forward. We have plenty of time to just be with what is.

For dinner we had fried lamb with aubergine, tomato concasse, confitted fenish, olives, marinated black beans and a cabbage salad. A small glass of red wine, an exception – happens very rarely when we are sailing and then only if everything feels super safe. To desert the last piece of our favourite blueberry cake.





South Atlantic, 23 January, 5.25 AM

Weather and Gratefulness

I was watching the sunrise. This morning another giant took over the scene. We like the clouds – they give us wind and a tiny bit of rain, just enough to wash away the salt from deck. They can bring something mini-squall-like. Even the gusts are kind on this ocean – just a little bit more than ordinary wind. Hopefully it will last until we reach St Helena.

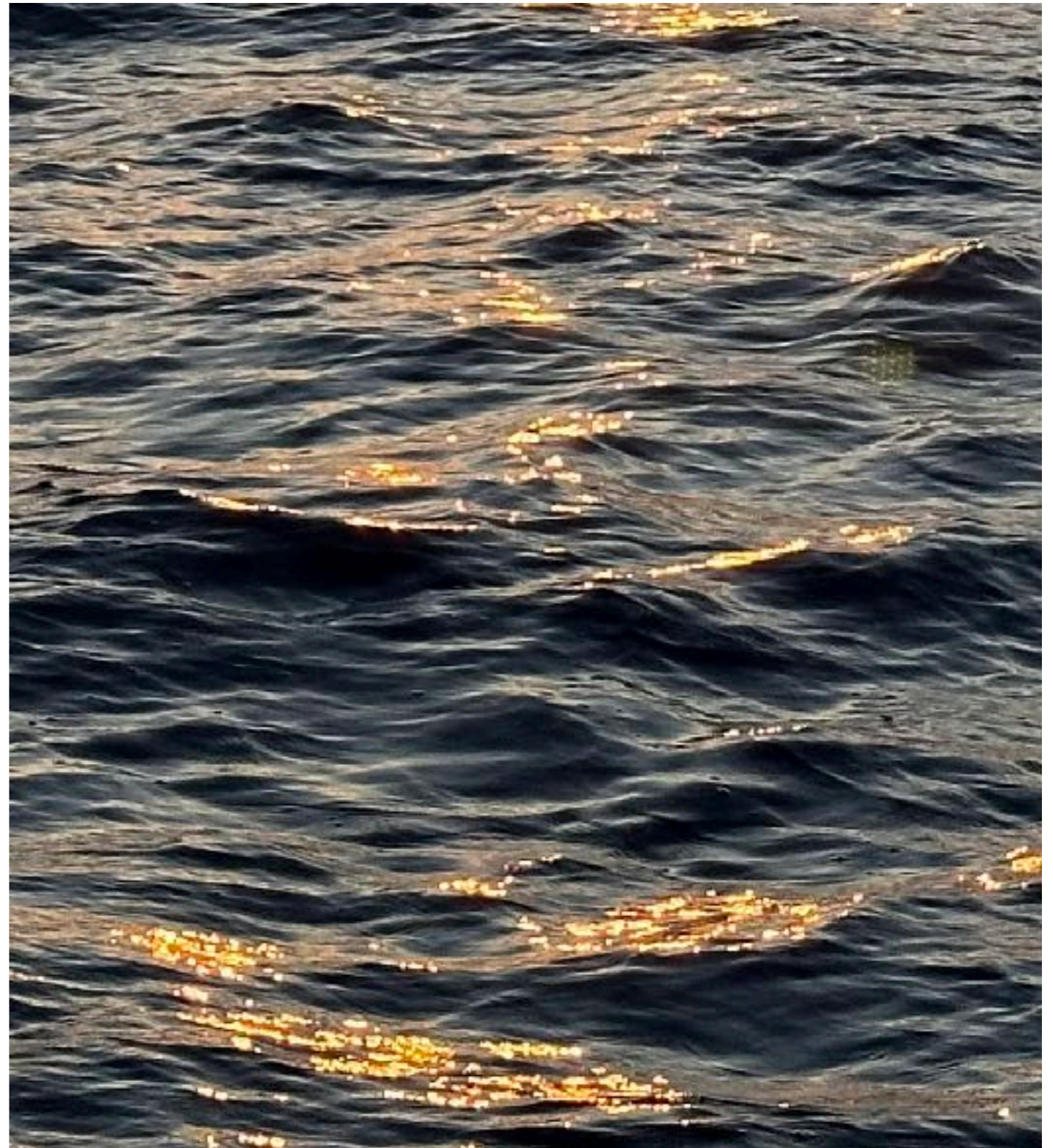
We feel grateful every day. This is an amazing way of experiencing our world, seen from the ocean point of view.



Listening and Mirroring

We have our morning sharing. What are we present to? What's in the air today? What topics, questions, ideas, reflections, new insights are coming to us today? And why are some seemingly disparate thoughts coming right now? Something to be curious about. Like it is gold, showing us our next step.

We more and more realize what a gift it is for us both to mirror back what we heard the other saying. Did we get what the other meant? And for the one sharing, it gives the opportunity to hear it again.



Full Moon

It's full moon tonight. We are gliding forward in very light wind and almost no waves. The speed is down to some knots. It doesn't matter, we are not in hurry.

We gave the flying fishes a chance tonight. It wasn't that bad, quite some bones and not so much meat but a good taste. I read that in Barbados the flying fishes are a big thing – there they serve them deep fried or on sandwiches. They seem to exist all over the world. I have been throwing so many overboard. OCC, the Ocean Cruising Club, have them even on their flag. And at Christmas Island the harbour was called the Flying fish cove.





South Atlantic, 26 January, 5.52 AM

Today's Menu

Every morning we plan today's menu. We think tasty food is important, especially on the long passages. Today it will be a vegetarian meal with chickpeas and a pumpkin stew. The species are important - cumin, garlic, ginger, chili, anis and oregano and many more. My husband is learning a lot from kitchens around the world. The Indian one is great for one-pot-meals. For dessert we will try buckwheat pancakes with

apple slices and cream of cashew nuts. As we have stopped eating white flour and sugar, we are experimenting a lot to find new and tasty recipes that are healthy for the body. In the sink we have both sauerkraut and kimchi fermenting.



South Atlantic, 27 January, 6.03 AM

Repetition vs New

A lot in life repeats itself, like the sun being visible every morning. The planets make their moves, and I have specific information when they will be at certain places. Every day we as humans act as usual, by automatic habits. I see it as a challenge to see the new in every day, in every sun rising, in every meeting. In that I feel alive and humble, rather than

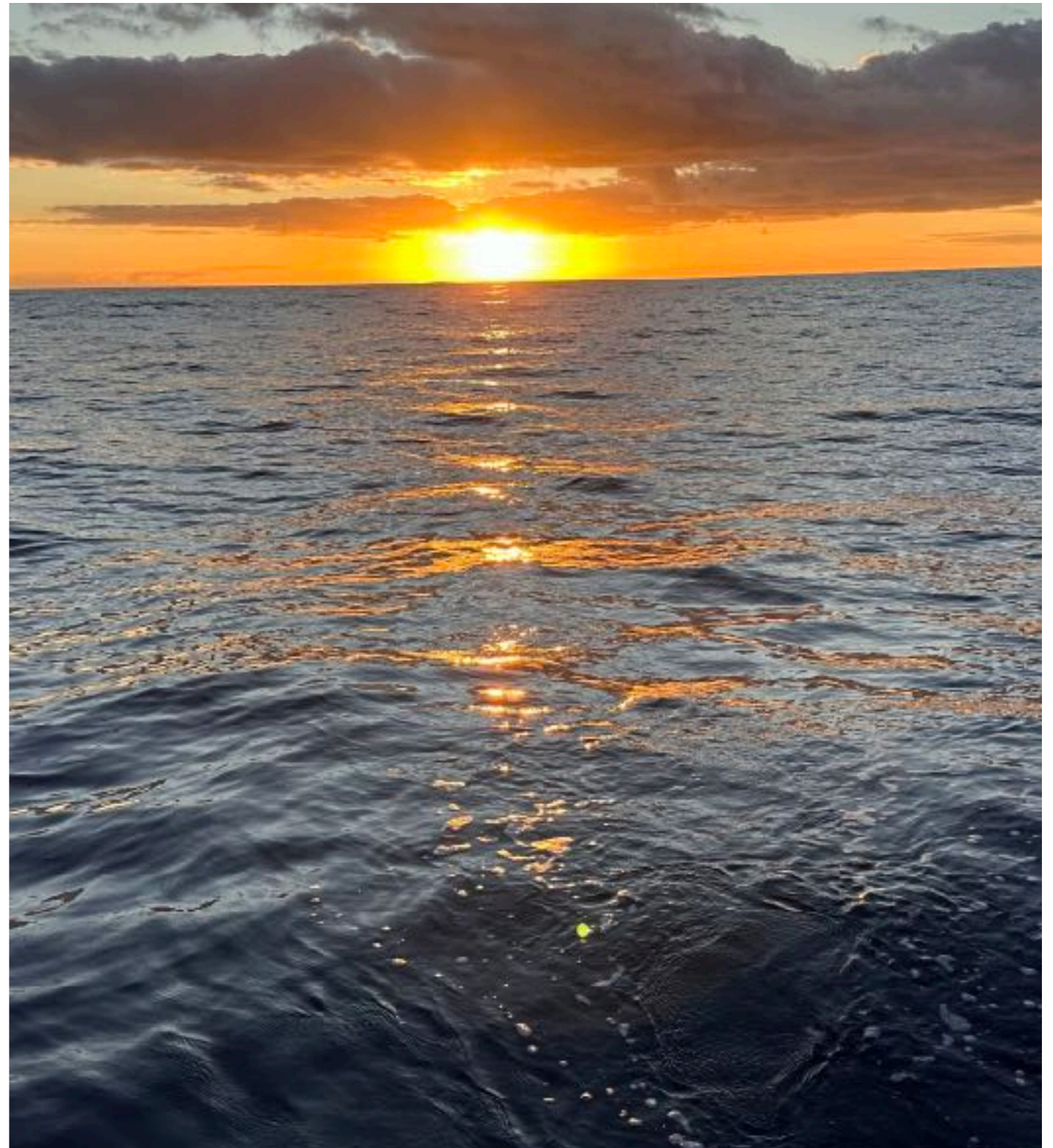
arrogant, dismissal something as only a repetition, more of the same. For me, the new is essential. I can't stop feeling grateful. This sailing is a bliss and very different from the one on Indian Ocean. We need the contrasts to experience more.

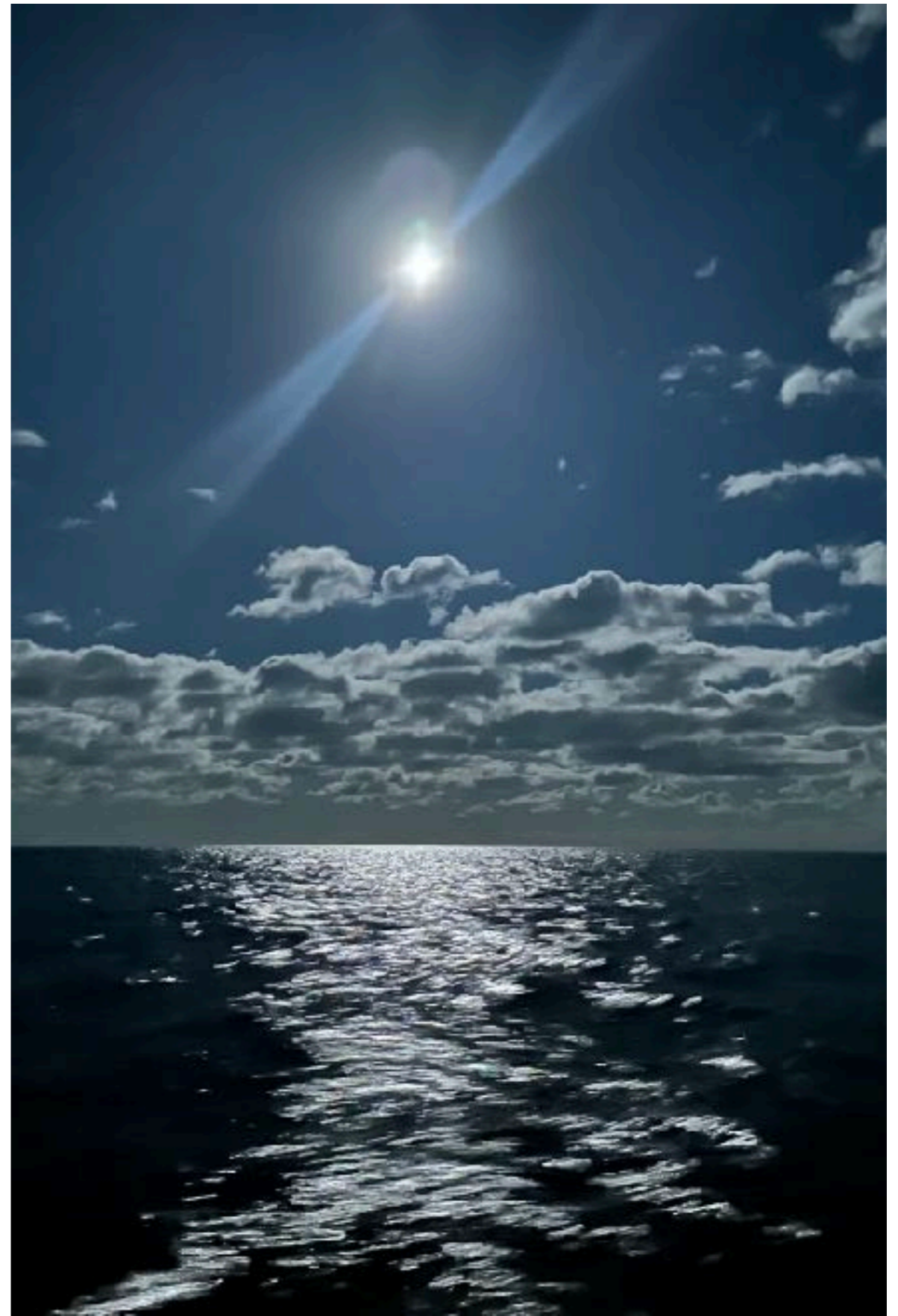


Creator

Existence is a true creator making new wonders every day, in endless variations. Imagine jumping on the sun pods, or like Jesus walking on the water. There is a reaching out, an invitation, in those glittery reflections from the Sun. Maybe this connection is the spine of the Sun. She can touch us in many ways.

Every morning there is a threshold between the dark and the light. We let go of the old and invite something new into our life. I wonder how I will be surprised today. Here on the Southern Atlantic it is very little wind today, only 3 knots. What are the possibilities with that? We will soon try our Cold Zero, a sail for light winds.







St Helena in sight, 29 January, 8.00 AM

Crossing a Border

We are about ten nautical miles from St Helena. I call them on VHF, channel 16, to announce our arrival to their island. The lady operating St Helena Radio responds and confirms my message and then give me the instruction to call again when we are one nautical mile outside the harbour. Soon after three others boat announce themselves as well.

Arriving to a new country includes crossing their boarder. Every country has their ritual for how they want the communication from arriving yachts. To hoist the flag for the country is a sign of respect, showing we are aware about where we are. The yellow quarantine flag is a way of saying we are coming without disease. They will check us before we are getting permission to enter a new land.





Jacobs ladder, 30 January, 19.46

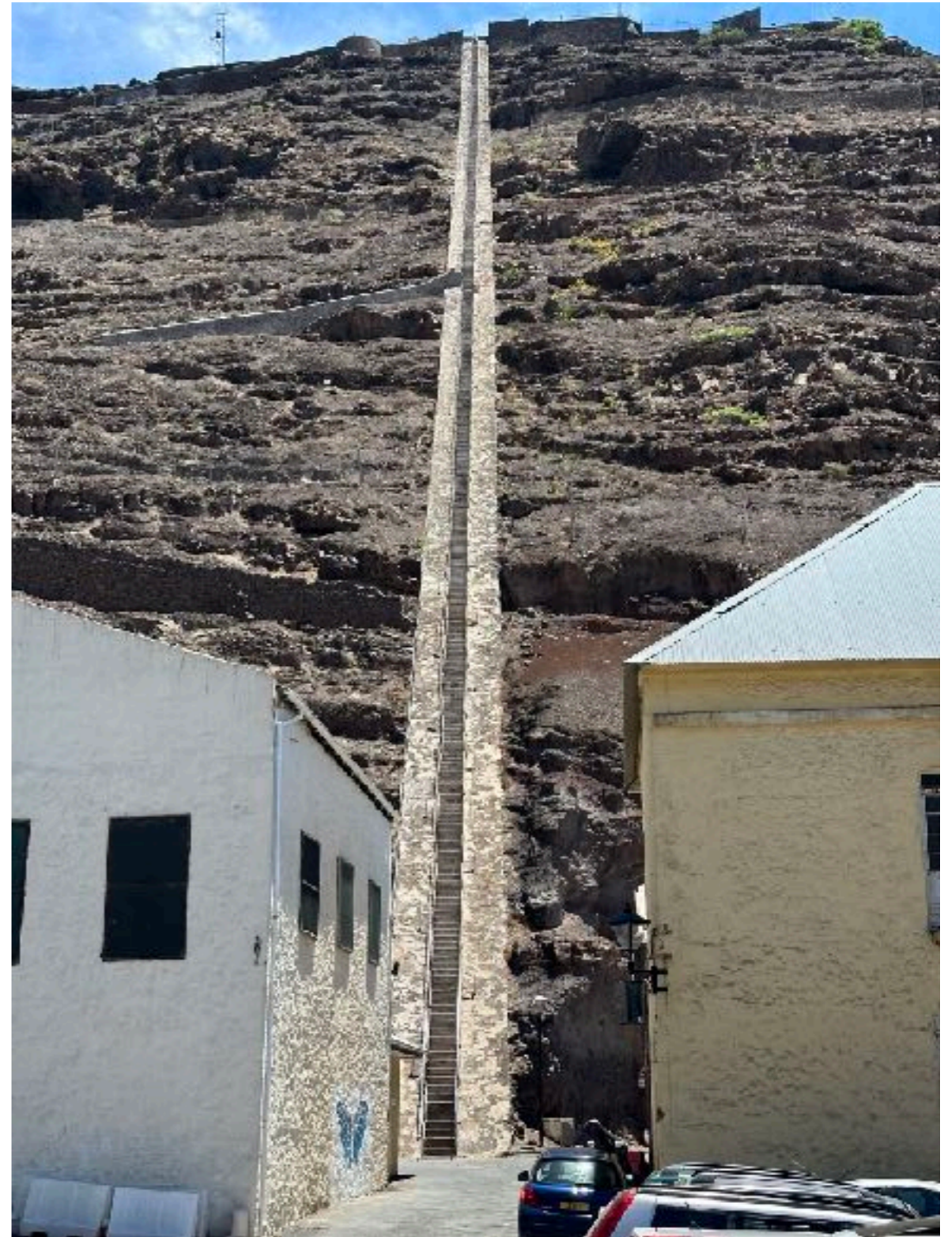
The Mountain and Jacob's Ladder

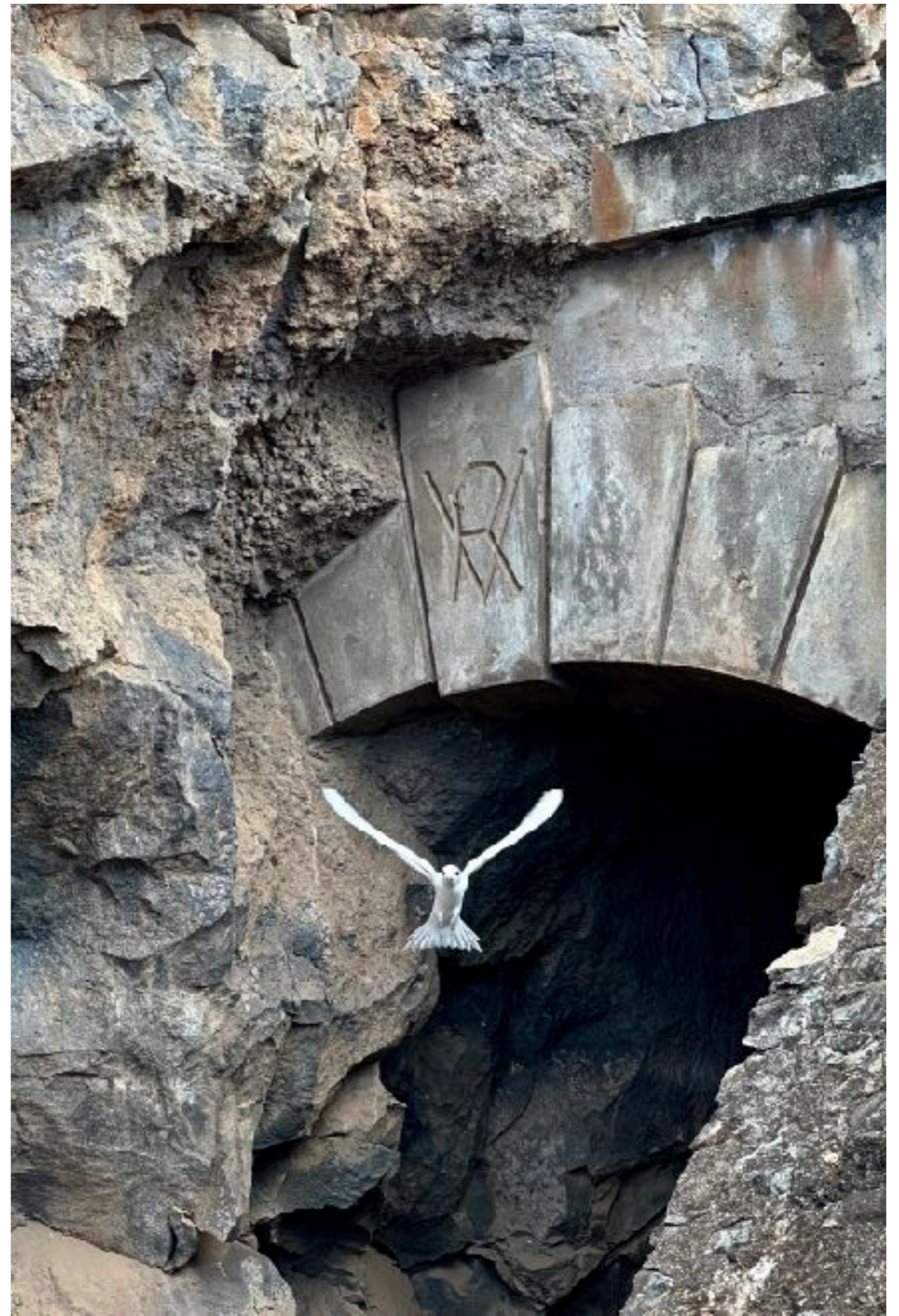
Many harbors have a high mountain behind, protecting us from the hard winds. Some of them stand out, like the one here at James Bay. The whole mountain is covered by a net, and from distance I can't see any vegetation. At the left corner close to the water, there are rests of a house. A bit higher up there is another house. Looks very mysterious.

I can imagine there is a road to the higher, but to the lower - how did people come there? The waves smash hard there even in calm weather. On our other side, to the right, there is another mountain. Here they have built a ladder up to the top, called Jacob's ladder. Or up to the sky? There must be a story I haven't heard yet. Someone has made a record of running the 699 steps upwards on 5 minutes and 14 seconds.



Jamestown, St Helena



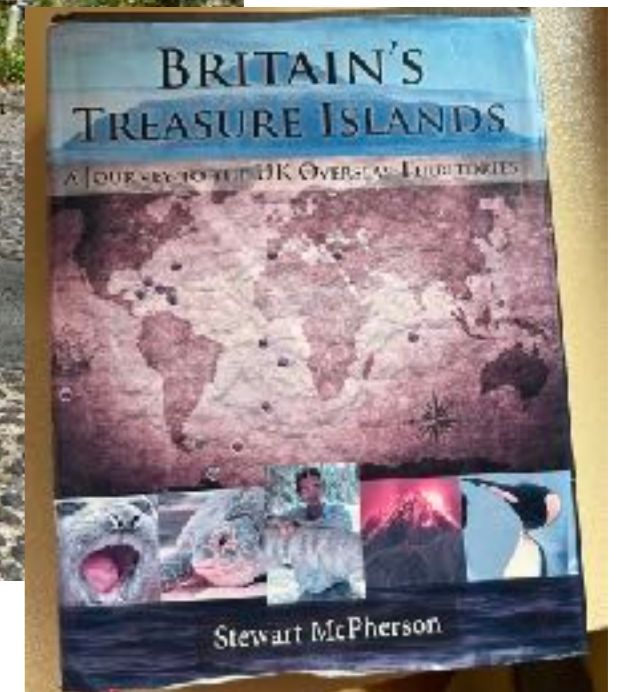






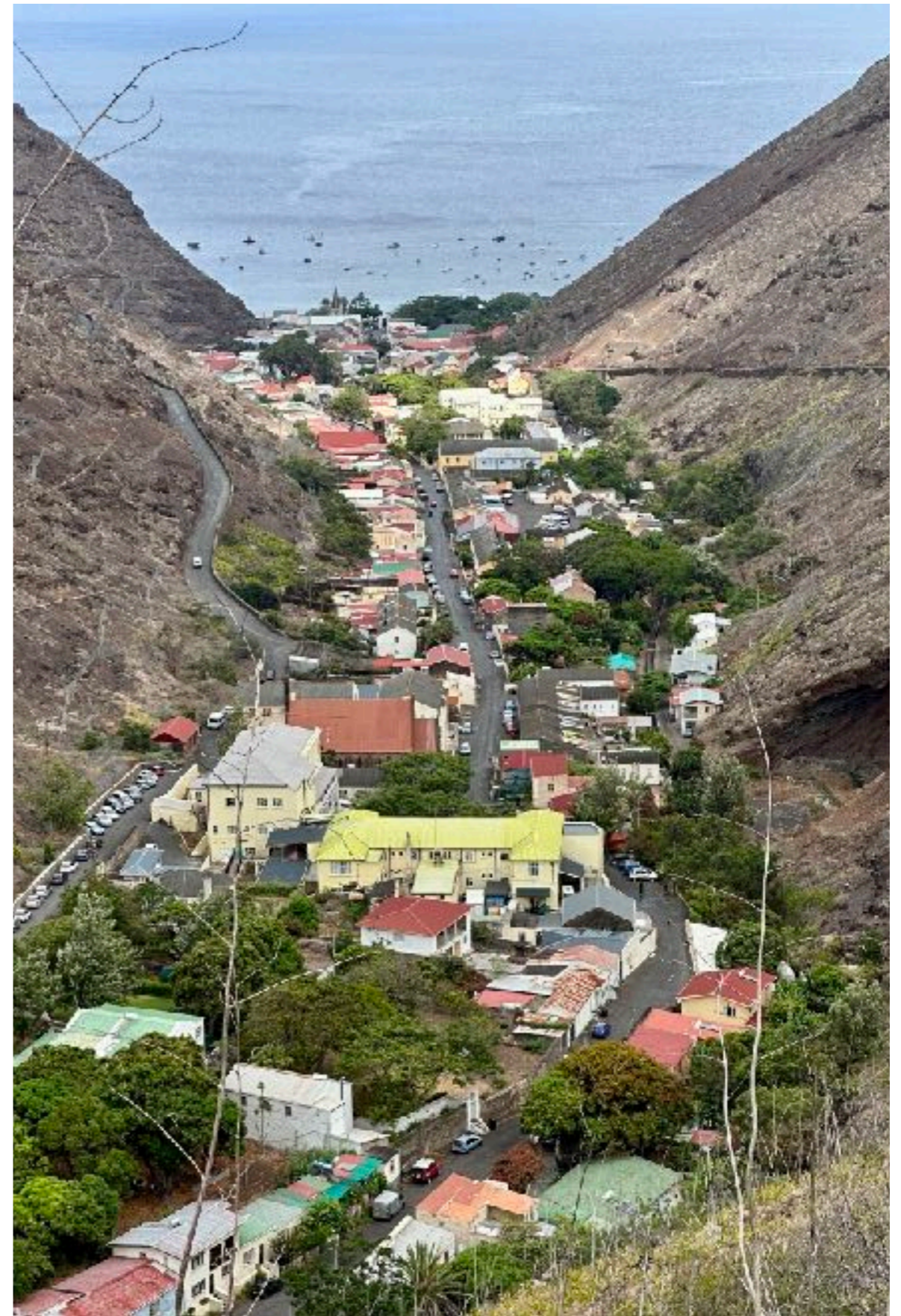


Cleaning is happening at the castle



On this little island, 14 million-year-old-volcano and British since 1659, they have a castle which nowadays is keeping the archive of the people who have lived here. There is a history of slaves - I read that the long emancipation started 1825 and ended 1839. When the big liberation took place in Africa, from 1840 and on, St Helena had depots that acted as receiving centres, hospitals and quarantine zones. The many that came here were in very bad shape and in the next bay

from where we are anchored, Rupert's Valley, approx. 8000 Africans are buried. As comparison around 4400 persons lives on the island today. There is a dark history everywhere - on the world, country, collective and individual level. At the same time there are stories of hope and love. I feel grateful to have been born free. I honour that by using my right to choose what I water.





The airstrip in the far end

We made a tour around the island today. Everyone seems to know that Napoleon stayed in prison here. It only became five years, 1815-1821, and the prison was a nice house with a quite big garden with bougainvillea, Lillies , Orchids and some ponds with Water Lillies and some very soft and beautiful leaves holding water drops (se picture). He even had his own horse. Napoleon got buried in Sane Valley,

where the magnificent bougainvillea above grows. His body got moved to Paris 1840.

On the island they have cultivated and harvested flax-plants, for making clothes. Cotton and nylon outranged it, and now the big plants grow wild covering the hills.

Keeping Trust

I am reading the weekly news, St Helena Independent, as I find it interesting to get a view of what's in the Saints mind at the point when we are here. In this issue they report the airport from 2017 officially opened, and that a small single engine plane Pilatus PC-12 has landed here on their circumnavigating by air. They also rely on island-hopping.

Then they report on the roads, the energy delivery plan, the internet situation and of course on football. Someone makes a point of how good the island is for biking, and that the prohibition-of-biking-signs should be taken down. The public service is recruiting. And there is a request to watch how many and which birds have in their area.

What stands out for me is the written description of how the court are resonating around a burglary case. They mention the man with his full name, describing what he has done and then they say quite a lot about the big consequences for the family where the crime was done. The man had professed to having remorse, but they point out that if that would be true, he should have admit the offense himself to the police, and also show some compassion with the victims, and not focusing on himself when they were discussed. The court then continue to reflect on how serious the crime is and how big the penalty shall be. As this is an island of low level of dishonesty, and the fellow residents repose a high degree of

trust in one another, any offending of this nature undermines trust. It also changes the society for worse in that people have to change their behavior to protect themselves from thieves. The value, 15 gbp, of the stolen food and wood varnish is substantial for this family with very low incomes, who had to resort to charity. The bottom-line is 10 months in prison, which can be replaced with 200 hours unpaid work, and a compensation of 1500 gbp, paid in 60 days.

They set the trust very high. That's what we all want, isn't it? I think this kind of open report and thinking is a good way to keep the morale high and show what values are expected. The key is remorse, showing up in a new way and for the community to forgive.



