

companion. He came at last to a sleeping village of wooden houses, and through the centre of the town ran a single line of rails, an iron link connecting the unknown hamlet with all civilisation. A red and a green light glimmered down the line, giving the only indication that a train ever came that way. As he went a mile or two farther the cool breath of the great lake made itself felt, and after crossing a field he suddenly came upon the water, finding all further progress in that direction barred. Huge sand dunes formed the shore, covered with sighing pines. At the foot of the dunes stretched a broad beach of firm sand, dimly visible in contrast with the darker water; and at long intervals fell the light ripple of the languid summer waves, running up the beach with a half-asleep whisper, that became softer and softer until it was merged in the silence beyond. Far out on the dark waters a point of light, like a floating star, showed where a steamer was slowly making her way; and so still was the night that he felt rather than heard her pulsating engines. It was the only sign of life visible from that enchanted bay—the bay of the silver strand.

Renmark threw himself down on the soft sand at the foot of a dune. The point of light gradually worked its way to the west, following, doubtless unconsciously, the star of empire, and disappeared round the headland, taking with it a certain vague sense of companionship. But the world is very small, and a man is never quite as much alone as he thinks he is. Renmark heard the low hoot of an