["The Imaginary Iceberg" (Elizabeth Bishop, 1935)](https://www.drkaylee.us/20th-century-literature/the-imaginary-iceberg-elizabeth-bishop-1935)

We'd rather have the iceberg than the ship,   
although it meant the end of travel.   
Although it stood stock-still like cloudy rock   
and all the sea were moving marble.   
We'd rather have the iceberg than the ship;   
we'd rather own this breathing plain of snow   
though the ship's sails were laid upon the sea   
as the snow lies undissolved upon the water.   
O solemn, floating field,   
are you aware an iceberg takes repose   
with you, and when it wakes may pasture on your snows?   
  
  
​This is a scene a sailor'd give his eyes for.   
The ship's ignored. The iceberg rises   
and sinks again; its glassy pinnacles   
correct elliptics in the sky.   
This is a scene where he who treads the boards   
is artlessly rhetorical. The curtain   
is light enough to rise on finest ropes   
that airy twists of snow provide.   
The wits of these white peaks   
spar with the sun. Its weight the iceberg dares   
upon a shifting stage and stands and stares.   
  
  
The iceberg cuts its facets from within.   
Like jewelry from a grave   
it saves itself perpetually and adorns   
only itself, perhaps the snows   
which so surprise us lying on the sea.   
Good-bye, we say, good-bye, the ship steers off   
where waves give in to one another's waves   
and clouds run in a warmer sky.   
Icebergs behoove the soul   
(both being self-made from elements least visible)   
to see them so: fleshed, fair, erected indivisible.