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Blown Away

Herb Payson

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Blown Away Herb Payson
New 35th anniversary edition

"The older I get, the more things there are that tend to make me nervous. I don't see myself as full of cowardice, but as lacking in courage. Given death on one hand and destruction on the other, I have occasionally behaved in manly fashion, but show me an easy way out and I take it."

Thus the Payson credo.

And thus, behind the self-effacement, a sensible attitude for anyone tackling the formidable challenges and risk of sailboat cruising.

The bare outline of Payson's story is a familiar one but with a unique twist: at middle age, a couple decides to take four of their six children on a 38 foot boat, depart work ashore (in the Paysons' case, the smoky nightclubs of L.A.) and take up the cruising life. But the fleshing out of the story - a blend of uproarious mishaps and white-knuckled action - is pure Payson with his style that gained him loyal followers in Sail magazine and others around the world.

In nearly seven years of South Pacific island-hopping, the author not only has refined diverse boat-handling and boat-living skills, but has learned that adversity can be funny (to readers, anyway). He applies this outlook to such universal problems as broken-down heads, dilatory customs officials, dubious navigational fixes and coping with gale-fore headwinds when a boat (his own beloved Sea Foam) is shaped more like a bowling ball than a 12-meter.

His shaky self-esteem notwithstanding, Herb Payson is a sailor with the kind of hard-earned wisdom that only thousands of tough miles can confer, and his sage advice on the hows and how-nots of cruising is well worth heeding. His story, told with eloquence and humor, will surely rank as a classic of nautical literature.

This special 35th anniversary edition is enhanced with a foreword by Lin Pardey plus Herb s reflections on how cruising affected his children and his relationship with his determined, lifelong partner/wife Nancy.

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