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The Ship

A dark dream: a woman is standing on the docks in a harbor. She is standing near the water. She is standing on the pier. The docks are covered with seamen. The seamen are the masters of tides, they are fish chasers, squid hunters, dwellers on waves. The men on the docks are after water, water is what they're after. They say to this woman standing on the docks: "We're going to show you how to kill a god." And killing gods is what the men had set out to do. The gods of the world dwell, not on land, but in the bowl of the ocean. Out on the pier, so close to the ship...the ship that carries the men, the men waiting. The harbor is impregnated with the mists of waiting...the waiting of twilight to come to its end. And in all the hours of twilight there is a wind: a breath. The breath that comes in the hour of waiting, it comes for the men. It is breathing; it breathes through their swollen-soul aches. There is so much aching, but they do not speak of it.

One man is crouching on the floor below deck, he is touching the somber wood. The somber wood is crying out to him. It is crying. Crying so loudly that all the men can hear the sobs of the somber wood. Beyond the walls of the man, beyond the place where is touching the weeping, the wood is touching the water, the cold water. The ship is weeping...it weeps for the salt of the seas. It is weeping for the seagods.

The ship is sailing on the edge of the globe. The edge of this weeping wood. It is touching its own drowning. The men are caressing her salt lips where the barnacles are. They are caressing her feverish body, she is shivering in the thrashing ocean. The woman who came alongside the men, the men who want to kill the gods of the seas, she is nursing the men, and all their aching. The ship was sick. It was blindly sick. Thrashing it's wide body against the pelvis of the white sea. She is holding onto an oaken-post in the center below. She is holding on where the moaning of the ship can be heard from depths of the white sea. The sea is low, it's meaning. It knows the sound of a ship that weeps: it cannot ignore the sounds of the weeping...

The gods below can feel her fever. The phantom of the sea is listening. All the white gulls calling above are saying: this is going to end badly. It will certainly end badly...

And the sharks with blue bellies begin circling near the ship, they were waiting for the gods. They were waiting for twilight to come to an end. Then the skies filling with twilight were filling with water, the ship laver in the winds: the ship caught in the storm. The men where all shouting, the men where on deck. They where holding the mast steady, they where pulling up the sails, they were ready with the rudders. So the body of the weeping ship, the little lady, is tossing on the bowels of the water. The water rising up in mountain-peaks, then crashing over her little head. The sea was in opposition to her: it wanted to drown her, it wanted her dead.

Some of the men were swept away in the water, the mountainous waves. Lightning flashing and the crow's nest catching on fire and those blue bellied sharks circling in the water began to smile. The ship was in shambles, it was losing the will... the will to go on...

When the white sea seemed to have given all it could give, it gave again. It gave to this little ship: a god, a dragon of the sea. Then that Black Phantom swam to the surface of the sea, it rose with the rolling water. The spray on his scaly-face, the spray on the woman's face. The water black with the resounding color of the fever. The fever of the men, the fever of the ship... This dragon had known: it must get rid of this fever... this fever of men.

Then the ship with the fever was no more. The storm had ceased, the dragon gone. The gulls were calling in the clouds, they were looking at the aftermath, they were looking at all the somber scattered wood. And clutching to the oaken-post from the center below, was the woman who stood on the pier to join the men. The men all had fevers. They were all deadened to the pelvis of the sea. The woman saw the fins of those blue bellied sharks circling near the somber wooden pillar, but this time there was no fever. There was no man. There was no more aching. She did not fear them as she looked out over the edge of the white sea, sea turning golden.

I know the black fever... I know the Black Phantom.