

# Ghost Ship

Robyn Hitchcock

The ghost ship haunts the sea  
She'll come back and marry me  
The rust is where her heart should be tonight  
Her face is where her fingers were tonight  
A glassy chequered engine room  
The speechless silence of the tomb  
The manuscripts inside the womb unfurl  
A girl  
Translucent as a jellyfish  
That palpitates upon a dish  
She stings you with her gently falling curl  
And sinking in the waters green tonight  
I wonder where my lover's been tonight  
The ghost ship changes tack  
And stands becalmed; her sails are slack  
The cabinboy lies on his back and sighs  
The mayonnaise is oozing down his thighs  
The bubbles rising from the deep  
Where deadmen sing themselves to sleep  
From oak and coral they do seep to say  
"Okay  
You throw open my future like a chart  
See through my skin; into my heart  
That flutters in my ribcage like a bird."  
And the ghost ship sails on into someone's life  
The air from bottles forms into  
The skeletons of all the crew  
In white they dance against the blue and wail  
Their curling bodies flail around the sail  
The figurehead before the mast  
Stares back into the golden past  
Across the wrinkled sea so vast she mourns  
Forlorn  
She flutters round me like a moth  
That beats against mosquito cloth  
And tries to eat her way into my dreams  
And sinking in the waters green tonight  
I wonder where my love has been tonight  
The melons on the riverbank  
Are bulging through decaying planks  
Their beauty is so warm and dank and light  
The captain wears a headless grin tonight  
And silhouetted on the blue  
The cook, the mate, the captain, too  
They know not where or why or what they do at all  
They fall  
Like masonry in the abyss  
That opens every time we kiss  
I hear their laughter echo round the bay  
And the ghost ship sails on into someone's life