

BLACK SEA

You reach a certain depth where the sea is dead
dark and full of mystery the current runs
like a desert evening, silent clear and strong
you are the dry breeze
which escapes into that pool
It cannot be seen where you do end
and where that black sea begins
as your spirit burns like an infinity of diamonds
in this midnight sky
the stars cry, drip into the deep
stones of your molten tears cooled
by the sea are piled upon the beach
There you swam and spent your youth
in the shadow of Karadak

Screaming at all who passed with pride
of your skill and beauty
Laying about on these forever summer days
in love with yourself
Like the season you return
to rise as high and as gold as the August sun
There the King and Queen are descending to the sea
under the Chameleons watchful eye
to rule over legend and history
the play of long Ukrainian girls
ignoring the young men's schemes
Artists chewing grapes, sipping tea
trading with the farmers in the markets by the beach
there naked children skip as ice cream drips
tease their sisters who sneak American cigarettes
And you, alone, since your princely pretender
slipped his strings, left you a prisoner to your pride
and the sea

On this stage your tempest lashes all
fierce and hasty, your rage is fed by the sea
and you see yourself there
as the Empress, deigning to choose among your suitors
who return each year to seek you out and free their hearts
They shadow the craftspeople in Planerskoye
and wander south along the coast near the cliffs of Sudak
They ask for her at the pier in Krim Primoria,
can they help the lost?
The fishermen, drinking moonshine, awash in thought,
say that you can find her there, if you look,
in the shadow of Karadak
There you are drinking down the sea like Crimean wine,
drunk and mean, trying to drown the fire that is burning you bright,
Despising the King and Queen, for their eternal walk
tells you that love is not a lie

What did you whisper on the cool night stream
under these stark near stars, the giant lizards stare
in the shadow of that rock, above this deep dark sea
Was it your soul that was sighing
like the Sirens that lured the Greek
Is it your breath that slides through these bare hills
speaks a promise and with the tide recedes
And is your name a mystery to them still
as they flee your sudden storm
the harbor you appear to be dissipates before their eyes
You have chained men's minds
left us slaves to wander this void forever
Returning to find you, searching out your elusive charms,
chasing after your haunting song
as you call us nearer the rocks
to drown in your harsh beauty, unfulfilled,
in the shadow of Karadak