

John Gorka

"The Dutchman"

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The Dutchman's not the kind of man
Who keeps his thumb jammed in the dam
That holds his dreams in,
But that's a secret that only Margaret knows.

When Amsterdam is golden in the summer,
Margaret brings him breakfast,
She believes him.
He thinks the tulips bloom beneath the snow.

He's mad as he can be, but Margaret only sees that
sometimes,
Sometimes she sees her unborn children in his eyes.

Let us go to the banks of the ocean
Where the walls rise above the Zuider Zee.
Long ago, I used to be a young man
Now dear Margaret remembers that for me.

The Dutchman still wears wooden shoes,
His cap and coat are patched with the love
That Margaret sewed there.
Sometimes he thinks he's still in Rotterdam.

And he watches the tug-boats down canals
And calls out to them when he thinks he knows the
Captain.
Till Margaret comes
To take him home again

Through unforgiving streets that trip him, though she
holds his arm,
Sometimes he thinks he's alone and he calls her name.

Let us go to the banks of the ocean
Where the walls rise above the Zuider Zee.
Long ago, I used to be a young man
Now dear Margaret remembers that for me.

The winters whirl the windmills 'round
She winds his muffler tighter

And they sit in the kitchen.
Some tea with whiskey keeps away the dew.

And he sees her for a moment, calls her name,
She makes the bed up singing some old love song,
A song Margaret learned
When it was very new.

He hums a line or two, they sing together in the dark.
The Dutchman falls asleep and Margaret blows the
candle out.

Let us go to the banks of the ocean
Where the walls rise above the Zuider Zee.
Long ago, I used to be a young man
And dear Margaret remembers that for me.

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