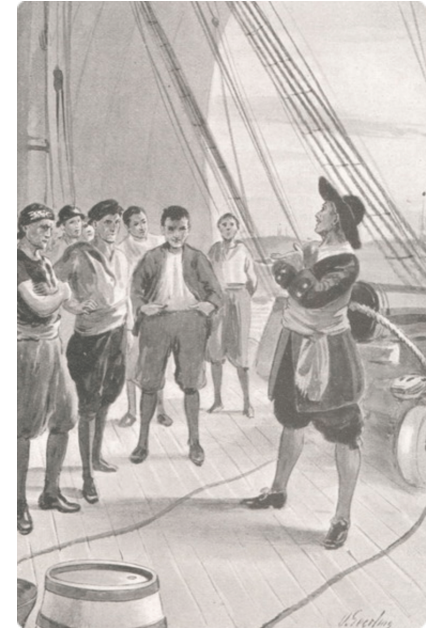# The Flying Dutchman

The storm was raging in the harbor. The high waves were crashing into the only ship that was moored at the dock. The entire crew went below deck to try and keep safe. Only the tough, large captain was on deck. He was angry, very very angry. He already had to put off the departure for a couple of days and now a storm was going to prevent him from leaving the harbor again? He didn't think so! He had sailed the seas under much worse conditions.

The captain walked to his crew and roared, "Tomorrow we sail, rain or shine!" And although the crew trusted its captain, this sounded dangerous to them. But nobody dared to speak up. Only the boatswain cleared his throat and said "Ehm captain? Tomorrow is Easter and we're not allowed to set off?" The captain hesitated for a minute, but then he hit the table with his fist and yelled, "I will decide when we depart! No storm or Easter day will decide that for me! Make sure everything is ready for departure first thing tomorrow." And he retreated to his cabin cussing.

The next morning the storm was raging even more, but the captain was determined to sail off. His crew had its doubts, but they also trusted their captain. They set up the sails and brought the anchor in. Another captain came over to ask if they were really this mad to set off during a storm and Easter. The captain responded, "I decide when we depart and we depart now! Even if we have to sail until eternity, we're going!" And with that the final word was said.

As soon as the final order of the captain was carried out, something strange happened. All the sailors were dumbfounded and stood in silence. Also the boatswain and even the captain remained in place. But even though no one was moving, the ship did start moving and sailed away from the harbor. The people in the harbor were stunned as they watched the ship sail off. The last words of the captain were repeated by the crowd. "Even if we have to sail until eternity, we're going!" There was something sinister about these words and everybody stood nervously watching the ship getting smaller and smaller on the horizon. Suddenly the white sails turned fiery red and the hull looked as if it was burned. "The ship has turned into a ghost ship," the people whispered to each other as they returned home.

For a long, long time nothing was heard about the ghost ship. It didn't moore in any harbors and it didn't return home. So people just assumed it had shipwrecked, but no shipwreck was ever found. The ghost ship was forgotten about until something strange happened. A ship that was one the way back to Holland saw a ship with fiery red sails and a burned hull at the Cape of Good Hope. There was no movement on the ship, but still it sailed with great speed. When the crew of the other ship started telling this story back home, nobody believed them.

But over the next months, more and more reports came in on this remarkable ship. Captains were afraid to sail near the Cape of Good Hope and the crew was hard to find. Until one brave captain went out to explore the situation. And indeed, at the Cape of Good Hope he saw the ghost ship. He couldn't believe his eyes and tried to convince himself that it was just a myth. Then the ghost ship started sailing straight at him! The crew started crying in despair, but it was too late. This ghost ship sailed right through them. But all the crew noticed was an ice cold gust of wind.

The brave captain was dumbfounded. "The ship was a Dutchman. It had a Dutch flag," was the only thing he could whisper. "Yes, the Flying Dutchman," somebody else said. And from that moment on the ghost ship was known as the Flying Dutchman. Nobody knows if the Flying Dutchman has found peace. The ship hasn't been spotted in many years, so it could be possible. Let's hope for the crew's sake that it was, because nothing is as terrible as sailing the seas forever and never being able to moor.