

Song of the Storm–Petrel

Maxim Gorky

Table of Contents

<u>Song of the Storm–Petrel</u>	1
<u>Maxim Gorky</u>	2

Song of the Storm–Petrel

Maxim Gorky

Translated by George Jeshurun

This page copyright © 2001 Blackmask Online.
<http://www.blackmask.com>

BETWEEN the ocean and the thunder,
Between black clouds and the gray water,
Speeds and floats and sweeps the petrel,
Before the storm, before the wildness—
Harbinger and mad foreboding.
Now he flouts the black sea–water,
Now he stabs into the cloud–ranks,
Hurling on them cries defiant,
Cries of war and tempest madness,
Cries of rage and white–hot passion,
And high strains of triumph battle
Upward through his storm–born crying.
Hark the moaning gulls around him,
Hark their shuddering calls of terror
At his fearful fighting pæan.
Fain, fain they are to sink and hide them
Far below the rush and wildness
Down to utter dark and quiet
In the caverned ocean shelter,
While the frailest soul, the penguin,
Hides and flutters, weakly yearning
For the rocks to fall and hide him.
But the one free soul, the petrel,
Floats unharmed above the chaos,
Gray with anger, stanch with raging,
While the darkness, growing blacker,
Hangs above the sea–flung mountains,
And the topmost, ever madder,
Leap and dash in frenzied laughter,
Toss their curses as to welcome
Crash and hurricane and lightning.
Listen to the rolling whirlwind,
Striving for the sea's uprooting.
Now he grasps with rage titanic
One vast shrieking hell of water,
Dashing it upon the sea–rocks,
Where it sinks with one vast moaning
In a grave of tearful whiteness.
And the petrel in the cloud–heights,

Song of the Storm–Petrel

The one rival of the lightning,
Scatters down his splendid crying,
Drawing from the very danger
Urge and will to cry forever.
There he's laughing like a demon,
Like a god of all the tempest,
Laughing, calling, crying, sobbing,
At the clouds that strive to veil him.
Laughter mingles with his sobbing
At the storm–wind's futile anger.
He the demon, wily, subtle,
He has long heard weaker singing.
Something tells him not forever
Can the glorious sun be hidden.
Not forever, not forever.