

The BALLAD of the ELDIA
(A True Story)

**NOW COME KIND FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS
AND LISTEN TO MY SONG
IT'S ONLY A COUPLE OF VERSES
AND IT WON'T DETAIN YOU LONG
IT'S ALL ABOUT A POOR OLD SHIP
AND MOURNFUL IS MY TALE
FOR SHE SPENT TWO MONTHS HIGH ON NAUSET BEACH
BLOWN ASHORE BY THE GREAT MARCH GALE**

**NOW "ELDIA" HAD BEEN IN CANADA
AND WAS EMPTY, SO THEY SAY
AND SOUTHWARD BOUND TO HAMPTON ROADS
ON THAT DARK AND STORMY DAY
THE CAPTAIN HEARD THE FORECASTS
AS HE WATCHED THE BAROMETER FALL
THAT MORNING HE SAID TO THE MATE ON WATCH
"NOW I DON'T LIKE THIS AT ALL ... "**

**"YOU KNOW THIS IS A KILLER STORM
THERE ARE DEAD MEN IN ITS WAKE
AND FROM THE FEEL OF THE WIND AND SEA
MORE LIVES IT WILL TRY TO TAKE
JUST OUT THERE ON THE BRIDGE WING
I WAS NEARLY DROWNED WITH SPRAY
SO PUT HER HELM HARD RIGHT, MISTER MATE
AND WE'LL MAKE FOR CAPE COD BAY ..."**

**NOW "ELDIA'S" MOTORS WERE DEPENDABLE
AND HER ENGINEER'S JOY AND PRIDE
BUT NOW THEY FAILED AND WOULD NOT RE-START
NO MATTER HOW HARD HE TRIED
THE CAPTAIN CRIED "LET THE ANCHORS GO!
AND CHIEF, YOU MUST TRY ONCE MORE
FOR WE'RE CAUGHT IN THE TEETH OF THIS CURSÉD GALE
DRIFTING HELPLESS TOWARDS THE SHORE ..."**

**BUT THE ENGINES REMAINED LIFELESS
AND THE ANCHORS COULD NOT HOLD**

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**AND EACH MAN BEGAN TO FEEL THE FEAR
THAT GRIPPED HIS HEART WITH COLD
TWO MILES - ONE MILE - NOW HALF, NOW LESS
WHILE THE CAPTAIN CHECKED THE CHART:
THEY'D GO HARD AGROUND ON A SANDY BEACH
IF THE ENGINES WOULD NOT START**

**NOW "ELDIA'S" HOPELESS STRUGGLES
WERE OBSERVED FROM NOT FAR AWAY
AND ASSISTANCE SOON WAS RENDERED
TO THE HAPLESS SHIP THAT DAY
IGNORING STORM AND DANGER
BRAVE COAST GUARDSMEN CAME THROUGH
AND RESCUED FROM THE PITCHING DECK
THE COLD AND FRIGHTENED CREW**

**NOT A LIFE WAS LOST AS THE LORD LOOKED DOWN
WITH KINDNESS ON THAT SHORE
BUT POOR "ELDIA'S" BACK WAS CRACKED
AND SHE'LL SAIL AGAIN NO MORE
AND PEOPLE CAME FROM MILES AROUND
TO BEHOLD A WOND'ROUS SIGHT
AND TO FEEL A SENSE OF SADNESS
IN THEIR WARM SAFE HOMES THAT NIGHT**

**SO THERE'LL BE INVESTIGATIONS
AND INQUIRIES GALORE
SHIPWRECKS AREN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN
IN NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR!
BUT THE SEA'S THE SEA, AND A STORM'S A STORM
SINCE NO ONE QUITE KNOWS WHEN
AND NATURE MOCKS TECHNOLOGY
TO REMIND US WE'RE ONLY MEN!**

- Bill Black (1988)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eldia_\(Vessel\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eldia_(Vessel))