



# The Flying Dutchman: A Retelling of Richard Wagner's Opera (German Edition)

*Ruprecht Frieling*

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A mysterious skipper from Amsterdam is haunted by a terrible curse. The mariner wanted to circumnavigate the storm-lashed Cape of Good Hope, which had already claimed the lives of thousands of seamen. He cursed the unpredictable sea itself, and offered his soul to the devil, if only he would help him sail around the Cape. The Lord of Hell obliged and accepted the seaman's offer.

Ever since, the captain plows the raging seas on his unsinkable ghost ship. No matter how severe the weather, the deathly three-master flies over the foaming crests with its sails always full, heralding new calamity. Seamen from all over the world have spread the ghostly tale of the sailing ship that surfaces from the inscrutable depths. Anyone who encounters the „Flying Dutchman“ is doomed.

There is however a small ray of hope for the ghostly skipper: Every seven years he can leave his ship and try to find a woman who will swear to be true to him forever. Only through her fidelity he could finally find peace for himself and his crew...

Ruprecht Frieling tells us the story of Richard Wagner's opera »The Flying Dutchman« in such a way that we feel as if we're standing on deck of the legendary ghost ship. He also reveals the history of the fanciful subject matter, and gives room to the composer's own thoughts on the story, as well as to his sources, Heinrich Heine, Frederick Marryat, and Wilhelm Hauff. The original libretto of the opera completes this insightful guide to the Dutchman.

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