



I DON'T SEE ANYTHING...  
...NOTHING AT ALL...  
...WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO BE LOOKING FOR?...

...LOOK CLOSELY AT THE SURFACE OF THE WATERS...LOOK OUT THERE AND SCAN THE WATERS WHERE THEY TOUCH THE HORIZON...DO YOU NOT SEE IT?

...YOU CALL IT A 'MOVEMENT IN THE WATERS'... HOW *LITTLE* YOU KNOW OF THIS COUNTRY NOT TO REALIZE WHAT THAT LITTLE 'MOVEMENT IN THE WATER' IS...

...YES... I SEE SOMETHING NOW... A DISTURBANCE... A MOVEMENT IN THE WATERS...WHAT IS IT?

...AND I KNOW THE *MOSKOE-STROM* WELL, FOR I WAS ONCE IN THE CENTER OF IT...BEING DRAWN INTO *HELL ITSELF*... YOU WILL BE INTERESTED IN THE TALE I WILL TELL YOU...OF...



...WELL -WHAT IS IT THEN?

# A DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTRÖM

...THAT IS WHAT IS CALLED THE *MOSKOE-STROM*, NAMED AFTER THE ISLAND *MOSKOE* NEARBY IT... IT IS THE GREATEST, MOST MAGNIFICENT, AND MOST GHASTLY THING ON THIS EARTH...

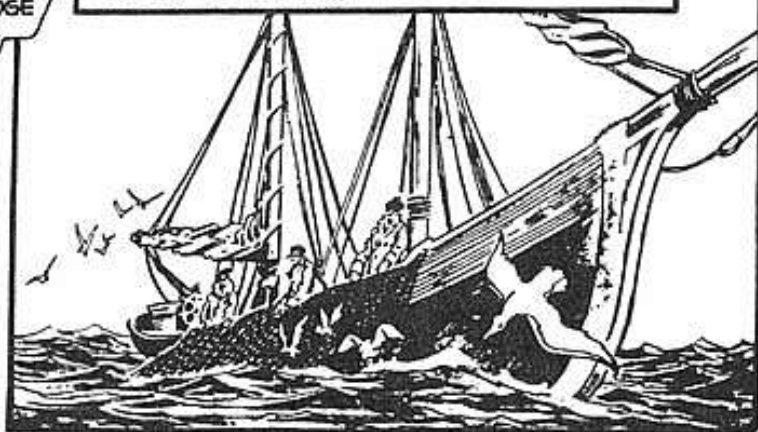
...IT IS THE *MAELSTRÖM*... 'WHIRLPOOL' YOU WOULD CALL IT...THE MOST TREACHEROUS THING KNOWN TO MAN ON LAND OR SEA...FOR IT SUCKS IN LAND AND SEA AND MAN ALIKE...WE *NORWEGIANS* KNOW ITS *TREACHERY*...



YOU WERE ONCE IN THE CENTER OF A WHIRLPOOL? WHAT RUBBISH... YOU EXPECT ANY BANE MAN TO BELIEVE THAT YOU DESCENDED INTO A MAELSTROM AND SURVIVED TO TELL THE TALE?

...NO... I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO BELIEVE IT... THO I SWEAR TO YOU IT IS TRUE...  
...WAIT TILL I TELL THE STORY... THEN JUDGE THE TRUTH OF IT...

"... MYSELF AND TWO BROTHERS ONCE OWNED A SCHOONER-RIGGED SMACK OF ABOUT SEVENTY TONS BURTHEN, WITH WHICH WE WERE IN THE HABIT OF FISHING AMONG THE ISLANDS BEYOND MOSKOE..."



"...IT WAS OUR PRACTICE TO LEAVE OUR FISHING AREA BEFORE THE NIGHTLY 7 O'CLOCK WATER CURRENTS BECAME TOO STRONG TO MANIPULATE THE BOAT..."

...WE'RE LEAVING LATE TONIGHT... DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD CAMP AT MOSKOE ISLAND PERHAPS TILL MORNING?

...IT WOULD PROBABLY BE BEST... I DON'T THINK WE'LL MAKE IT HOME...



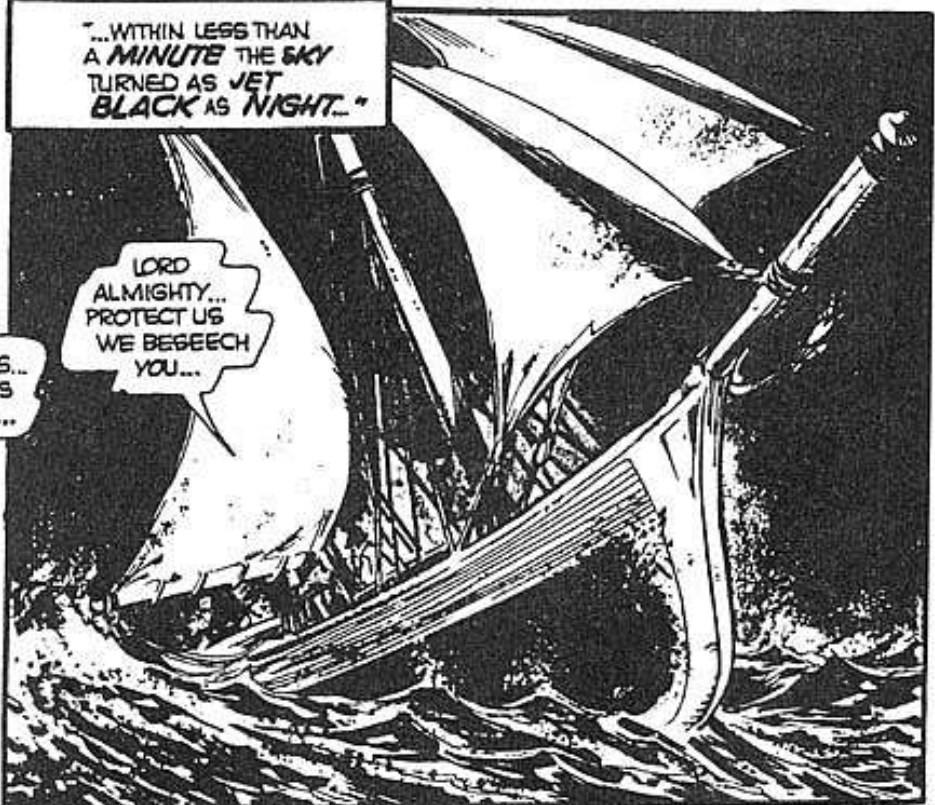
"...SO, AS WE HAD OFTEN DONE, WE HEADED OUR CRAFT FOR THE ISLAND, RATHER THAN RISK THE CURRENTS..."

"...WITHIN LESS THAN A MINUTE THE SKY TURNED AS JET BLACK AS NIGHT..."

...THE WATER IS TOO CALM... THERE'S NO WIND...

...PERHAPS A STORM THREATENS... AND THIS LULL IS A WARNING...

LORD ALMIGHTY... PROTECT US WE BESEECH YOU...



"...AND WITHIN TWO MINUTES THE VIOLENT HURRICANE WAS UPON US..."

\*...SUCH A HURRICANE AS THEN BLEW  
IT IS FOLLY TO ATTEMPT DESCRIBING...  
THE OLDEST SEAMAN IN NORWAY  
NEVER EXPERIENCED ANYTHING  
LIKE IT...\*

\*...WE HAD LET OUR SAILS DOWN  
BEFORE THE STORM OVERTOOK  
US BUT AT ITS FIRST GHASTLY  
BLOW BOTH OUR MASTS  
WENT OVERBOARD... RIPPED  
FROM THE DECK CLEAN--AS  
IF THEY HAD BEEN SAWEED OFF...

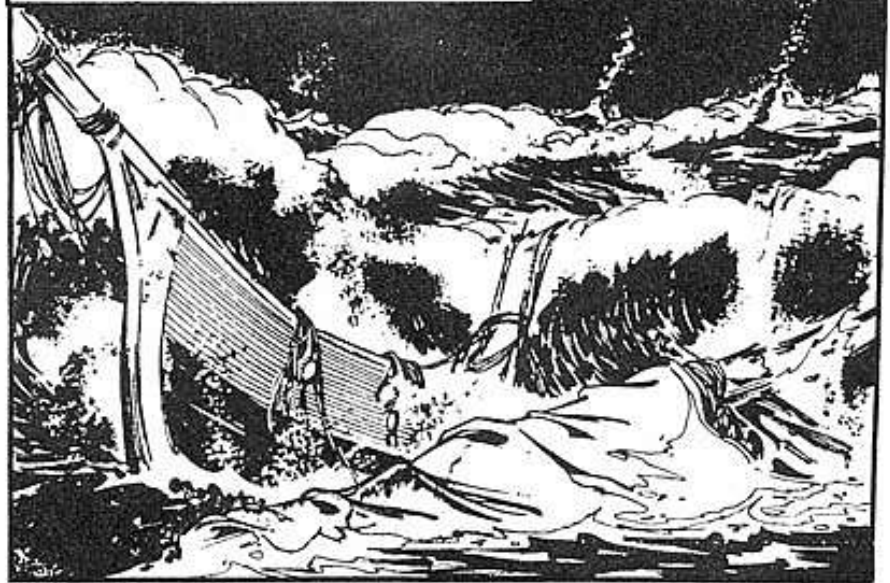
\*...I SAW MY YOUNGEST BROTHER  
TOSSED ABOUT LIKE A LITTLE LEAF IN  
THE SHARP, CRUEL WATERS... I  
SAW HIM DROWN... I SAW HIS BODY  
RIPPED TO RIBBONS BY THE  
HORRIBLE WATERS...\*



"...I THREW MYSELF **FLAT** UPON THE **DECK** AND **GRASPED** A **RINGSBOLT** NEAR THE FOOT OF THE FOREMAST'S **REMAINS**..."



"...FOR SOME MOMENTS THE **BOAT** WAS **COMPLETELY DELUGED** WITH **WATERS** THAT **NEARLY CHOKED** OUR **LUNGS**..."



"...THEN I FELT MY **BROTHER** GRASP MY **ARM** (TO MY GREAT **JOY**--FOR I FELT **SURE** HE HAD BEEN **WASHED OVERBOARD**) AND **SCREAM** INTO MY **EAR** ABOVE THE **DIN** OF THE **RUSHING WAVES** ABOUT US..."

"...YOU HEAR IT?..."



"... I HEAR ONLY THE... SOUNDS OF HELL... WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO HEAR?..."

"...DO YOU NOT HEAR IT?"

"...WE ARE UPON THE **MAELSTRÖM!**"



"...AT FIRST I COULD NOT MAKE OUT WHAT HE MEANT, FOR WE WERE *MILES* FROM THE FAMOUS *MOSKOE-STROM*... THEN I REALIZED THE *UNGOOLY TRUTH*... THE BOAT WAS BEING *SUCKED* AT *ATROCIOUS* SPEED INTO THE *WATER-HOLE*..."



"...AS WE APPROACHED IT WE WERE *BORNE* UPON A *WAVE* WHICH *ROSE UP-LIP-AS IF INTO THE SKY*... I WOULD NOT HAVE *BELIEVED* THAT *ANY WAVE* COULD RISE SO *HIGH*..."

"...THE *MOSKOE-STROM* WAS NOW A *QUARTER* OF A *MILE* DEAD AHEAD OF US... I INVOLUNTARILY *CLOSED* MY *EYES* IN *HORROR*..."



"...AND WHEN IT *SMASHED* US INTO THE *MASS* OF *WATER* AGAIN WE WERE *TOTALLY ENVELOPED* IN *FOAM*..."



"... AS WE EMERGED FROM THE FOAM WE SAW A WAVE ABOVE US OF THE SAME KIND WE'D JUST BEEN ASTRIDE -- AND REALIZED WE WERE DOOMED TO BE CRUSHED..."



"... IT FELL UPON US AND PUMMELED US A MILE BENEATH THE WATER -- WE DOUBTED OUR LUNGS WOULD LAST TILL WE COULD AGAIN RISE TO THE SURFACE..."



"... BUT WHEN WE DID WE WERE -- OH HORRORS -- WE WERE CIRCLING AT GREAT SPEED THE VERY BRINK OF THE MAELSTRÖM..."



"... MY BROTHER, WHO WAS HOLDING INTO A CASKET, THEN SEEMED TO LOSE HIS MIND -- HE SEEMED TO FEEL HIS SECURITY WAS THREATENED AND LET GO OF IT -- MAKING FOR THE SMALL RING WHICH WAS MY OWN SALVATION..."

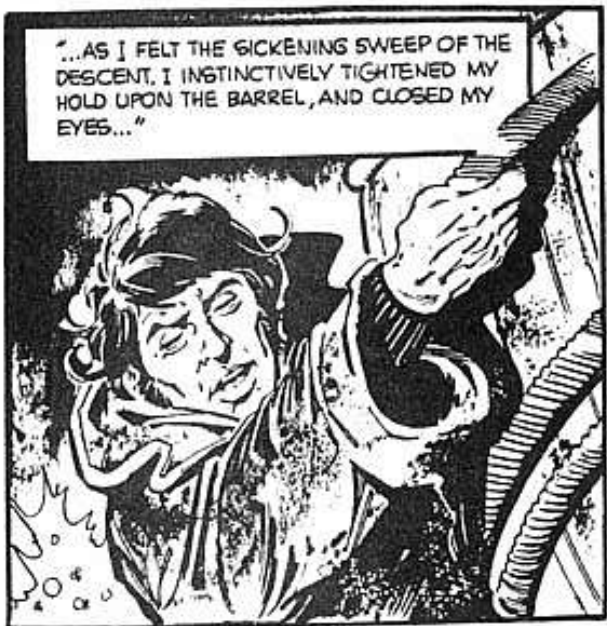


"NO... NO... IT'S NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR THE BOTH OF US..."

"... I NEVER FELT DEEPER GRIEF THAN WHEN HE ATTEMPTED THIS LUNATIC ACT... FOR ALTHOUGH HE WAS A RAVING MANIAC I COULD NOT WILLINGLY TAKE MY BROTHER'S LIFE... AND SO I LET GO THE RING AND RAN FOR THE CASKET FORMERLY HIS..."



"...AS I FELT THE GICKENING SWEEP OF THE DESCENT, I INSTINCTIVELY TIGHTENED MY HOLD UPON THE BARREL, AND CLOSED MY EYES..."



"...NEVER SHALL I FORGET THE SENSATIONS OF **AWE**... AND **HORROR**... AND **ADMIRATION** WITH WHICH I **GAZED** ABOUT ME... THE **BOAT** APPEARED TO BE **HANGING** - AS IF BY **MAGIC** - MIDWAY DOWN UPON THE **INTERIOR SURFACE** OF A **MAGNIFICENT WATER FUNNEL**... WHOSE **SIDES** WERE **PERFECTLY SMOOTH**... AND WE WERE **SPINNING** 'ROUND THE **CENTER** OF THE **MAELSTROM PIT** WITH **BEWILDERING RAPIDITY**..."



"... AS WE FIRST WHIRLED ROUND... I THOUGHT OUR CRAFT **ALONE** IN THE WHIRLPOOL... BUT THEN I BEGAN TO NOTICE **OTHER** OBJECTS FLOATING... DEBRIS, SMALL AND LARGE... PIECES OF HOUSE FURNITURE... BUILDING LUMBER AND TRUNKS OF TREES, BROKEN BOXES, BARRELS... ALL MANNER OF OTHER THINGS..."



"... THE **LARGEST** 'ITEM' WAS THE **PARTIAL WRECK** OF A **DUTCH MERCHANT SHIP** WHICH WAS **IMMEDIATELY, BEFORE OUR VERY EYES, SUCKED STRAIGHTAWAY INTO THE DEPTHS BELOW US...** THE SIGHT OF THIS MADE ME **THINK** SO THAT **MY LIMBS TREMBLED** AND **MY TEETH RIPPED INTO MY LIPS...** IT WAS **OBVIOUS** THAT THE **LARGER** THE **OBJECT** THE **QUICKER** IT WAS **SUCKED** UNDER THE **WHIRLPOOL**... AND **WE**... AND OUR **BOAT**... WERE SO **LARGE** IN **PROPORTION** TO THE **DEBRIS** ABOUT US THAT **OBVIOUSLY** WE WERE TO **KANISH** UNDER THE **DEPTHS** **NEXT...**







"...I SWIRLED ABOUT FOR AN HOUR... WATCHING THINGS SUCKED INTO THE WHIRLPOOL... BUT TO MY ASTONISHMENT CAME TO REALIZE I WAS RISING UP THE WALL OF WATER... NOT DOWN AT ALL..."



"...WHEN I WAS ALMOST AT THE EDGE OF THE TOP A WAVE, OF THE KIND THAT PROPELLED US INTO THE MAELSTRÖM, CAME UP FROM UNDER ME AND LIFTED ME UP AND AWAY COMPLETELY FROM THE WHIRLPOOL'S CENTER ONTO THE OCEAN TOP..."

"...WHERE I WAS RACED AT TREMENDOUS SPEED BY CURRENTS AND WAVES TILL I WAS MILES AWAY FROM THE MAELSTRÖM AND THE WATER CALMED..."



"...AND THERE I WAS PICKED UP BY A FISHING BOAT AND FRIENDS..."

"...YOUR STORY IS FAR TOO FANTASTIC TO BE TRUE..."

"...EITHER THAT OR... FAR TOO FANTASTIC NOT TO BE TRUE..."

"... YOU LOOK AT ME NOW AS AN OLD WHITEHAIR MAN... MY HAIR HAS BEEN THAT WAY SINCE THE DAY I... I WAS IN THE MAELSTRÖM... IT WAS RAVEN-BLACK TWO YEARS AGO..."

"... I WAS 23 YEARS OLD TWO YEARS AGO..."