

# Strongholds Amidst Chaos

by [Romain P. A. Delpeuch](#) (August 2021)



*Knight Errant*, Oskar Kokoschka, 1914

The suns I gazed at lie beyond  
the awful voids the horror spawned  
across your oceans of ordeal,  
across creations more than real.  
As nibbling madness drills new holes  
in dying skulls like pests in scrolls,  
it obfuscates what used to be  
as obvious as a dream-gate key.  
I smoothly sailed a sea of words,  
though obstinate to reach these worlds,  
my keel surrounded on all sides  
by silverfish that plowed the tides.  
A pallid mist surrounded me;  
your flame from there I couldn't see,  
that fire I never ceased to brood,  
an ember in my chest, dark-hued.

Lost echoes reached my bookish ship,  
the scaly leather of its hull.  
A hurricane, a verbal rip,  
woke me from thoughtful drift and lull.  
Faint ripples turned to raging swells.  
The glimpses caught on yonder shores  
of feral shades that let out yells  
felt odious on that land of yours.  
On black and glassy soils I moored.  
Outlandish, specular: the spot  
was ancient, like my own obscured  
and literal desert left to rot.  
Dispelling shades of howling fear,  
climbing ambagiously the stairs  
to your abode, I found you, near  
the cradle of our dreamy heirs...

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Romain P. A. Delpuch was born and bred in south-west France where he still lives. His poetry and short fiction appear, or are forthcoming, in *New English Review*, [Terror House Magazine](#) and [The Ekphrastic Review](#). You can follow him on [twitter](#).

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