

Four Black Dragons

Stephen Sondheim

I was standing on the beach
Near the cliffs
Of Oshawa
I was spreading out the nets
For the morning sun

It was early in July
And the day was getting hot
And I stopped to wipe my eyes
And by accident I turned
And looked out to sea

And there came
Breaking through the mist
Roaring through the sea
Four black dragons
Spitting fire

And I ran
Cursing through the fields
Calling the alarm
Shouting to the world:

"Four black dragons
Spitting fire!"
And the earth trembled
And the sky cracked
And I thought it was the end of the world

I was rifling through the house
Of some priests
In Uraga
It was only after dawn
They were sleeping still

I had finished with the silks
I was hunting for the gold
When I heard them getting up
So I bolted through a door
Which looked out to sea

And there came

And there came

Breaking through the mist

Boiling through the mist

Roaring through the sea

Rising from the sea

Four black dragons

Four volcanoes

Spitting fire

Spitting fire!
And I ran

And I ran

Cursing down the halls ...

Cursing through the fields ...

Shouting to the priests

Shouting to the world

"Notify the gods!
Four black dragons
Spitting fire!"

And the feet pattered
And the men came down to stare
And the women started screaming like the gulls:

Hai! Hai!

And the crowded into temples
And they flapped about the square:

Hai!

Like the gulls

Hai!
Hai! Hai!
Four black dragons
Spitting fire!

Then the hooves clattered
And the warriors were there
Diving quickly through the panic
Like the gulls

Hai! Hai!

And the swords were things of beauty
As they glided through the air

Hai!

Like the gulls

Hai!
Hai! Hai!
Four black dragons
Spitting fire! And the sun darkened
And the sea bubbled
And the earth trembled
And the sky cracked
And I thought it was the end
Of the world! I had seen
Dragons before
Never so many
Never like these

And I thought it was the end
Of the world!

And it was