



Queen of the Black Coast

Robert E. Howard (1906 - 1936)

Read by:	Phil Chenevert	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	1 hours 28 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1206
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Genre:	Fantasy Fiction, Science Fiction		

We begin as the ever just Conan has refused to betray a friend to a fascist magistrate in the port city of Argos, emphasizing his point by killing the man. Conan forces his way onto a sailing barge and soon finds himself set upon by a gang of pirates led by Bêlit, the Queen of the Black Coast. His mates on the Argus are no match for the pirates, and Conan jumps ship and is spared by Bêlit, who admires his ferocity and other manly virtues. She asks him to be her mate. Together they plunder and terrorize the Black Coast, eventually sailing up river to find a lost treasure, skulking hyenas and a winged monster among ancient ruins. Amidst various horrors they carry on a deep theological dialog intermixed with intense romance until Bêlit acquires a cursed jeweled

necklace that renders her mad and leads to her demise. Conan fights his way out with the help of her spirit, avenges her death and sends her off with a Viking funeral. First published in *Weird Tales* in May 1934, the epic sweep and intense (and atypical) romance mark *The Queen of the Black Coast* as one of the favorites of Conan aficionados.

Robert Ervin Howard (January 22, 1906 – June 11, 1936) was an American pulp fiction author best known for his character Conan the Barbarian and considered the father of the “sword and sorcery” fantasy fiction subgenre. Born and raised in Texas, his father was a country doctor who had a penchant for get-rich-quick schemes. The resulting financial problems led to marital difficulties and frequent moves. His mother, who suffered from tuberculosis his entire life, felt she had married beneath her station. As a child Howard dreamed of becoming an author of adventure fiction and achieved his first success at age 23. His writings were published in a wide selection of magazines, journals, and newspapers in several genres. The main outlet for his stories was the Depression-era pulp magazine *Weird Tales*, which featured Conan the Barbarian, a character whose cultural impact has been compared to that of such icons as Batman, Count Dracula, James Bond, Sherlock Holmes, and Tarzan. Howard remains a popular author, with his best works still continuously in print. His suicide at the age of 30 led to speculation about his mental health: when he learned that his mother had entered a permanent coma, he walked out to his car and shot himself in the head.