

The White Whale

Music: "Waltzing Matilda"

Lyrics: Gary McGath, Copyright 1997

Once a jolly sailor came into New Bedford town,
"Please call me Ishmael, my friend," said he.
"I am looking for a berth aboard a whaling ship.
Who'll come a hunting the white whale with me?"

Met up with two owners of a ship a-heading out,
Gave him a job, though a miniscule fee.
Still he would do well if they could catch a whale or two.
Who'll come a hunting the white whale with me?

Went on with his bunkmate — Queequeg was a cannibal,
Still they got on quite famously.
From what Melville writes, you have to wonder if they're gay.
Who'll come a-hunting the white whale with me?

Up came Captain Ahab, face of stone and leg of wood.
"I've made this trip for revenge," said he.
"We are going to kill the whale whose name is Moby Dick.
Who'll come a-hunting the white whale with me?"

Here the plot bogs down as Ahab's Pequod travels on,
So in the interests of brevity,
I'll skip forty-seven verses in which Ahab asks,
"Who'll come a-hunting the white whale with me?"

Down came the white whale, fearsome in its size and strength,
Which Ahab was the first to see,
And it rammed the Pequod, sinking it into the sea.
Who'll come a-hunting the white whale with me?

Up stood the captain, hurled his harpoon at the whale.
"For hate's sake I spit my last breath at thee!"
And his ghost may be heard if you sail on the sea at night:
Who'll come a-hunting the white whale with me?