

***The Rhyme of an  
Ancient Mariner***

***Samuel Taylor  
Coleridge***

*PART I*

*An ancient Mariner  
meeteth three  
gallants bidden to a  
wedding feast, and  
detaineth one.*

*It is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three.  
'By thy long beard and glittering eye,  
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?  
The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,  
And I am next of kin;  
The guests are met, the feast is set:  
May'st hear the merry din.'  
He holds him with his skinny hand,  
'There was a ship,' quoth he.  
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!  
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.*

5

*The Wedding-Guest is  
spell-bound by the  
eye of the old  
seafaring man, and  
constrained to hear  
his tale.*

*He holds him with his glittering eye—  
The Wedding-Guest stood still,  
And listens like a three years' child:  
The Mariner hath his will.  
The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:  
He cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.  
'The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the kirk, below the hill,  
Below the lighthouse top.*

10

15

20

*The Mariner tells how  
the ship sailed  
southward with a  
good wind and fair  
weather, till it  
reached the Line.*

*The Sun came up upon the left,  
Out of the sea came he!  
And he shone bright, and on the right  
Went down into the sea.  
Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon——'  
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon.*

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30

*The Wedding-Guest  
heareth the bridal  
music; but the  
Mariner continueth  
his tale.*

*The bride hath paced into the hall,  
Red as a rose is she;  
Nodding their heads before her goes  
The merry minstrelsy.  
The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
Yet he cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.*

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40

*The ship drawn by a  
storm toward the  
South Pole.*

*'And now the Storm-blast came, and he  
Was tyrannous and strong:  
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.*

With sloping masts and dipping prow, 45  
 As who pursued with yell and blow  
 Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
 And forward bends his head,  
 The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,  
 The southward aye we fled. 50  
 And now there came both mist and snow,  
 And it grew wondrous cold:  
 And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
 As green as emerald.  
 The land of ice, and 55  
 of fearful sounds,  
 where no living thing  
 was to be seen.  
 And through the drifts the snowy clifts  
 Did send a dismal sheen:  
 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—  
 The ice was all between.  
 The ice was here, the ice was there, 60  
 The ice was all around:  
 It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,  
 Like noises in a swound!  
 Till a great sea-bird,  
 called the Albatross,  
 came through the  
 snow-fog, and was  
 received with great  
 joy and hospitality.  
 At length did cross an Albatross,  
 Thorough the fog it came;  
 As if it had been a Christian soul,  
 We hail'd it in God's name. 65  
 It ate the food it ne'er had eat,  
 And round and round it flew.  
 The ice did split with a thunder-fit;  
 The helmsman steer'd us through!  
 And lo! the Albatross  
 proveth a bird of good  
 omen, and followeth  
 the ship as it returned  
 northward through  
 fog and floating ice.  
 And a good south wind sprung up behind;  
 The Albatross did follow,  
 And every day, for food or play,  
 Came to the mariners' hollo!  
 In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud, 75  
 It perch'd for vespers nine;  
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
 Glimmer'd the white moonshine.'  
 The ancient Mariner  
 inhospitably killeth  
 the pious bird of good  
 omen.  
 'God save thee, ancient Mariner!  
 From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—  
 Why look'st thou so?'—'With my crossbow  
 I shot the Albatross. 80

PART II

'The Sun now rose upon the right:  
 Out of the sea came he,  
 Still hid in mist, and on the left 85  
 Went down into the sea.  
 And the good south wind still blew behind,  
 But no sweet bird did follow,  
 Nor any day for food or play  
 Came to the mariners' hollo!  
 90  
 His shipmates cry out  
 against the ancient  
 And I had done an hellish thing,  
 And it would work 'em woe:

*Mariner for killing the bird of good luck.* *For all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird  
That made the breeze to blow.* 95  
*Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,  
That made the breeze to blow!*

*But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.* *Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
The glorious Sun uprist:  
Then all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird  
That brought the fog and mist.* 100

*The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.* *'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
That bring the fog and mist.  
The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow follow'd free;  
We were the first that ever burst* 105  
*Into that silent sea.*

*The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.* *Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea!* 110  
*All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.*

*And the Albatross begins to be avenged.* *Day after day, day after day,* 115  
*We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.*

*Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.  
The very deep did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!* 120  
*Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy sea.*

*A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They* *About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green, and blue, and white.* 130  
*And some in dreams assuréd were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;  
Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
From the land of mist and snow.*

*And every tongue, through utter drought,  
Was wither'd at the root;  
We could not speak, no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.* 135

*are very numerous,  
and there is no  
climate or element  
without one or more.*

*The shipmates in  
their sore distress,  
would fain throw the  
whole guilt on the  
ancient Mariner: in  
sign whereof they  
hang the dead sea-  
bird round his neck.*

*The ancient Mariner  
beholdeth a sign in  
the element afar off.*

*At its nearer  
approach, it seemeth  
him to be a ship; and  
at a dear ransom he  
freeth his speech from  
the bonds of thirst.*

*A flash of joy;*

*And horror follows.  
For can it be a ship  
that comes onward  
without wind or tide?*

*It seemeth him but  
the skeleton of a ship.*

*Ah! well a-day! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young!  
Instead of the cross, the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.*

*PART III*

*'There passed a weary time. Each throat  
Was parch'd, and glazed each eye.  
A weary time! a weary time!  
How glazed each weary eye!*

*When looking westward, I beheld  
A something in the sky.  
At first it seem'd a little speck,  
And then it seem'd a mist;  
It moved and moved, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.*

*A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!  
And still it near'd and near'd:  
As if it dodged a water-sprite,  
It plunged, and tack'd, and veer'd.*

*With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
We could nor laugh nor wail;  
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!  
I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,  
And cried, A sail! a sail!*

*With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
Agape they heard me call:  
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,  
And all at once their breath drew in,  
As they were drinking all.*

*See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!  
Hither to work us weal—  
Without a breeze, without a tide,  
She steadies with upright keel!  
The western wave was all aflame,  
The day was wellnigh done!*

*Almost upon the western wave  
Rested the broad, bright Sun;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the Sun.*

*And straight the Sun was fleck'd with bars  
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!),  
As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd  
With broad and burning face.  
Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
How fast she nears and nears!  
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,*

140

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*Like restless gossameres?*

*And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton ship. Like vessel, like crew!* *Are those her ribs through which the Sun Did peer, as through a grate? And is that Woman all her crew? Is that a Death? and are there two? Is Death that Woman's mate?* 185

*Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.* *Her lips were red, her looks were free, Her locks were yellow as gold: Her skin was as white as leprosy, The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she, Who thicks man's blood with cold. The naked hulk alongside came, And the twain were casting dice; "The game is done! I've won! I've won!" Quoth she, and whistles thrice.* 190

*No twilight within the courts of the Sun.* *The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out: At one stride comes the dark; With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea, Off shot the spectre-bark. We listen'd and look'd sideways up! Fear at my heart, as at a cup, My life-blood seem'd to sip! The stars were dim, and thick the night, The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd white; From the sails the dew did drip—* 195

*At the rising of the Moon,* *Till clomb above the eastern bar The hornéd Moon, with one bright star Within the nether tip.* 200

*One after another,* *One after one, by the star-dogg'd Moon, Too quick for groan or sigh, Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang, And cursed me with his eye.* 205

*His shipmates drop down dead.* *Four times fifty living men (And I heard nor sigh nor groan), With heavy thump, a lifeless lump, They dropp'd down one by one.* 210

*But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.* *The souls did from their bodies fly— They fled to bliss or woe! And every soul, it pass'd me by Like the whizz of my crossbow!* 215

PART IV

*The Wedding-Guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him;* *'I fear thee, ancient Mariner! I fear thy skinny hand! And thou art long, and lank, and brown, As is the ribb'd sea-sand. I fear thee and thy glittering eye, And thy skinny hand so brown.'*— 225

*But the ancient* *'Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!* 230

Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance. *This body dropt not down. Alone, alone, all, all alone, Alone on a wide, wide sea! And never a saint took pity on My soul in agony.* 235

He despiseth the creatures of the calm. *The many men, so beautiful! And they all dead did lie: And a thousand thousand slimy things Lived on; and so did I.* 240

And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead. *I look'd upon the rotting sea, And drew my eyes away; I look'd upon the rotting deck, And there the dead men lay. I look'd to heaven, and tried to pray; But or ever a prayer had gusht, A wicked whisper came, and made My heart as dry as dust. I closed my lids, and kept them close, And the balls like pulses beat; For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky, Lay like a load on my weary eye, And the dead were at my feet.* 245

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men. *The cold sweat melted from their limbs, Nor rot nor reek did they: The look with which they look'd on me Had never pass'd away. An orphan's curse would drag to hell A spirit from on high; But oh! more horrible than that Is the curse in a dead man's eye! Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse, And yet I could not die.* 255

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival. *The moving Moon went up the sky, And nowhere did abide; Softly she was going up, And a star or two beside— Her beams bemoock'd the sultry main, Like April hoar-frost spread; But where the ship's huge shadow lay, The charmed water burnt alway A still and awful red.* 265

By the light of the *Beyond the shadow of the ship,* 270

Moon he beholdeth    *I watch'd the water-snakes:*  
 God's creatures of the    *They moved in tracks of shining white,* 275  
 great calm.    *And when they rear'd, the elfish light*  
    *Fell off in hoary flakes.*  
    *Within the shadow of the ship*  
    *I watch'd their rich attire:*  
    *Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,* 280  
    *They coil'd and swam; and every track*  
    *Was a flash of golden fire.*  
 Their beauty and    *O happy living things! no tongue*  
 their happiness.    *Their beauty might declare:*  
    *A spring of love gush'd from my heart,* 285  
 He blesseth them in    *And I bless'd them unaware:*  
 his heart.    *Sure my kind saint took pity on me,*  
    *And I bless'd them unaware.*  
 The spell begins to    *The selfsame moment I could pray;*  
 break.    *And from my neck so free* 290  
    *The Albatross fell off, and sank*  
    *Like lead into the sea.*

PART V

*'O sleep! it is a gentle thing,*  
    *Beloved from pole to pole!*  
    *To Mary Queen the praise be given!* 295  
    *She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,*  
    *That slid into my soul.*  
 By grace of the holy    *The silly buckets on the deck,*  
 Mother, the ancient    *That had so long remain'd,*  
 Mariner is refreshed    *I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew;* 300  
 with rain.    *And when I awoke, it rain'd.*  
    *My lips were wet, my throat was cold,*  
    *My garments all were dank;*  
    *Sure I had drunken in my dreams,*  
    *And still my body drank.* 305  
    *I moved, and could not feel my limbs:*  
    *I was so light—almost*  
    *I thought that I had died in sleep,*  
    *And was a blesséd ghost.*  
 He heareth sounds    *And soon I heard a roaring wind:* 310  
 and seeth strange    *It did not come anear;*  
 sights and    *But with its sound it shook the sails,*  
 commotions in the    *That were so thin and sere.*  
 sky and the element.    *The upper air burst into life;*  
    *And a hundred fire-flags sheen;* 315  
    *To and fro they were hurried about!*  
    *And to and fro, and in and out,*  
    *The wan stars danced between.*  
    *And the coming wind did roar more loud,*  
    *And the sails did sigh like sedge;* 320  
    *And the rain pour'd down from one black cloud;*



*The Moon was at its edge.  
 The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
 The Moon was at its side;* 325  
*Like waters shot from some high crag,  
 The lightning fell with never a jag,  
 A river steep and wide.*  
*The bodies of the ship's crew are  
 inspired, and the ship moves on;* *The loud wind never reach'd the ship,  
 Yet now the ship moved on!  
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon* 330  
*The dead men gave a groan.  
 They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose,  
 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;  
 It had been strange, even in a dream,  
 To have seen those dead men rise.* 335  
*The helmsman steer'd, the ship moved on;  
 Yet never a breeze up-blew;  
 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
 Where they were wont to do;  
 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—* 340  
*We were a ghastly crew.  
 The body of my brother's son  
 Stood by me, knee to knee:  
 The body and I pull'd at one rope,  
 But he said naught to me.'* 345  
*But not by the souls of the men, nor by  
 demons of earth or middle air, but by a  
 blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent  
 down by the invocation of the  
 guardian saint.* *'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!  
 Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest:  
 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
 Which to their corpses came again,  
 But a troop of spirits blest:* 350  
*For when it dawn'd—they dropp'd their arms,  
 And cluster'd round the mast;  
 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,  
 And from their bodies pass'd.* 355  
*Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
 Then darted to the Sun;  
 Slowly the sounds came back again,  
 Now mix'd, now one by one.  
 Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
 I heard the skylark sing;* 360  
*Sometimes all little birds that are,  
 How they seem'd to fill the sea and air  
 With their sweet jargoning!  
 And now 'twas like all instruments,  
 Now like a lonely flute;* 365  
*And now it is an angel's song,  
 That makes the Heavens be mute.  
 It ceased; yet still the sails made on  
 A pleasant noise till noon,  
 A noise like of a hidden brook* 370

*In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.*

*Till noon we quietly sail'd on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe:  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,  
Moved onward from beneath.*

375

*The lonesome Spirit  
from the South Pole  
carries on the ship as  
far as the Line, in  
obedience to the  
angelic troop, but still  
requireth vengeance.*

*Under the keel nine fathom deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The Spirit slid: and it was he  
That made the ship to go.  
The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.*

380

*The Sun, right up above the mast,  
Had fix'd her to the ocean:*

385

*But in a minute she 'gan stir,  
With a short uneasy motion—  
Backwards and forwards half her length  
With a short uneasy motion.*

*Then like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound:*

390

*It flung the blood into my head,  
And I fell down in a swoond.*

*The Polar Spirit's  
fellow-demons, the  
invisible inhabitants  
of the element, take  
part in his wrong;  
and two of them  
relate, one to the  
other, that penance  
long and heavy for  
the ancient Mariner  
hath been accorded to  
the Polar Spirit, who  
returneth southward.*

*How long in that same fit I lay,  
I have not to declare;*

395

*But ere my living life return'd,  
I heard, and in my soul discern'd  
Two voices in the air.*

*"Is it he?" quoth one, "is this the man?"*

*By Him who died on cross,  
With his cruel bow he laid full low  
The harmless Albatross.*

400

*The Spirit who bideth by himself  
In the land of mist and snow,*

*He loved the bird that loved the man  
Who shot him with his bow."*

405

*The other was a softer voice,  
As soft as honey-dew:  
Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,  
And penance more will do."*

410

#### PART VI

*First Voice: "But tell me, tell me! speak again,  
Thy soft response renewing—*

*What makes that ship drive on so fast?  
What is the Ocean doing?"*

*Second Voice: "Still as a slave before his lord,  
The Ocean hath no blast;*

415

*His great bright eye most silently  
Up to the Moon is cast—*

If he may know which way to go;  
 For she guides him smooth or grim. 420  
 See, brother, see! how graciously  
 She looketh down on him."  
 The Mariner hath been cast into a  
 trance; for the angelic power causeth the  
 vessel to drive northward faster  
 than human life could endure. First Voice: "But why drives on that ship so fast,  
 Without or wave or wind?" 425  
 Second Voice: "The air is cut away before,  
 And closes from behind.  
 Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!  
 Or we shall be belated:  
 For slow and slow that ship will go,  
 When the Mariner's trance is abated.' 430  
 I woke, and we were sailing on  
 As in a gentle weather:  
 'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;  
 The dead men stood together. 435  
 All stood together on the deck,  
 For a charnel-dungeon fitter:  
 All fix'd on me their stony eyes,  
 That in the Moon did glitter.  
 The pang, the curse, with which they died,  
 Had never pass'd away: 440  
 I could not draw my eyes from theirs,  
 Nor turn them up to pray.  
 The curse is finally expiated. And now this spell was snapt: once more  
 I viewed the ocean green,  
 And look'd far forth, yet little saw 445  
 Of what had else been seen—  
 Like one that on a lonesome road  
 Doth walk in fear and dread,  
 And having once turn'd round, walks on,  
 And turns no more his head; 450  
 Because he knows a frightful fiend  
 Doth close behind him tread.  
 But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
 Nor sound nor motion made:  
 Its path was not upon the sea,  
 In ripple or in shade. 455  
 It raised my hair, it fann'd my cheek  
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
 It mingled strangely with my fears,  
 Yet it felt like a welcoming. 460  
 Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
 Yet she sail'd softly too:  
 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
 On me alone it blew.  
 And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his  
 native country. O dream of joy! is this indeed 465  
 The lighthouse top I see?  
 Is this the hill? is this the kirk?

Is this mine own countree?  
 We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,  
 And I with sobs did pray— 470  
 O let me be awake, my God!  
 Or let me sleep alway.  
 The harbour-bay was clear as glass,  
 So smoothly it was strewn!  
 And on the bay the moonlight lay, 475  
 And the shadow of the Moon.  
 The rock shone bright, the kirk no less  
 That stands above the rock:  
 The moonlight steep'd in silentness  
 The steady weathercock. 480  
 And the bay was white with silent light  
 Till rising from the same,  
 Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
 In crimson colours came.  
 A little distance from the prow 485  
 Those crimson shadows were:  
 I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—  
 O Christ! what saw I there!  
 Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
 And, by the holy rood! 490  
 A man all light, a seraph-man,  
 On every corse there stood.  
 This seraph-band, each waved his hand:  
 It was a heavenly sight!  
 They stood as signals to the land, 495  
 Each one a lovely light;  
 This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
 No voice did they impart—  
 No voice; but O, the silence sank  
 Like music on my heart. 500  
 But soon I heard the dash of oars,  
 I heard the Pilot's cheer;  
 My head was turn'd perforce away,  
 And I saw a boat appear.  
 The Pilot and the Pilot's boy, 505  
 I heard them coming fast:  
 Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy  
 The dead men could not blast.  
 I saw a third—I heard his voice:  
 It is the Hermit good! 510  
 He singeth loud his godly hymns  
 That he makes in the wood.  
 He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away  
 The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

The Hermit of the 'This Hermit good lives in that wood 515

Wood. Which slopes down to the sea.  
 How loudly his sweet voice he rears!  
 He loves to talk with marineres  
 That come from a far countree. 520  
 He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—  
 He hath a cushion plump:  
 It is the moss that wholly hides  
 The rotted old oak-stump.  
 The skiff-boat near'd: I heard them talk,  
 "Why, this is strange, I trow! 525  
 Where are those lights so many and fair,  
 That signal made but now?"  
 Approacheth the ship "Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit said—  
 with wonder. "And they answer'd not our cheer!  
 The planks looked warp'd! and see those sails, 530  
 How thin they are and sere!  
 I never saw aught like to them,  
 Unless perchance it were  
 Brown skeletons of leaves that lag  
 My forest-brook along; 535  
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,  
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,  
 That eats the she-wolf's young."  
 "Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—  
 (The Pilot made reply) 540  
 I am a-fear'd"—"Push on, push on!"  
 Said the Hermit cheerily.  
 The boat came closer to the ship,  
 But I nor spake nor stirr'd;  
 The boat came close beneath the ship, 545  
 And straight a sound was heard.  
 The ship suddenly Under the water it rumbled on,  
 sinketh. Still louder and more dread:  
 It reach'd the ship, it split the bay;  
 The ship went down like lead. 550  
 The ancient Mariner Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful sound,  
 is saved in the Pilot's Which sky and ocean smote,  
 boat. Like one that hath been seven days drown'd  
 My body lay afloat;  
 But swift as dreams, myself I found 555  
 Within the Pilot's boat.  
 Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,  
 The boat spun round and round;  
 And all was still, save that the hill  
 Was telling of the sound. 560  
 I moved my lips—the Pilot shriek'd  
 And fell down in a fit;  
 The holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
 And pray'd where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy, 565  
 Who now doth crazy go,  
 Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while  
 His eyes went to and fro.  
 "Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see  
 The Devil knows how to row." 570  
 And now, all in my own countree,  
 I stood on the firm land!  
 The Hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,  
 And scarcely he could stand. 575  
 "O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!"  
 The Hermit cross'd his brow.  
 "Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—  
 What manner of man art thou?"  
 Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd 580  
 With a woful agony,  
 Which forced me to begin my tale;  
 And then it left me free.  
 And ever and anon 585  
 throughout his future  
 life an agony  
 constraineth him to  
 travel from land to  
 land;  
 Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
 That agony returns:  
 And till my ghastly tale is told, 585  
 This heart within me burns.  
 I pass, like night, from land to land;  
 I have strange power of speech;  
 That moment that his face I see,  
 I know the man that must hear me: 590  
 To him my tale I teach.  
 What loud uproar bursts from that door!  
 The wedding-guests are there:  
 But in the garden-bower the bride  
 And bride-maids singing are: 595  
 And hark the little vesper bell,  
 Which biddeth me to prayer!  
 O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been  
 Alone on a wide, wide sea:  
 So lonely 'twas, that God Himself 600  
 Scarce seeméd there to be.  
 O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
 'Tis sweeter far to me,  
 To walk together to the kirk  
 With a goodly company!— 605  
 To walk together to the kirk,  
 And all together pray,  
 While each to his great Father bends,  
 Old men, and babes, and loving friends,  
 And youths and maidens gay! 610  
 Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!  
 He prayeth well, who loveth well  
 And to teach, by his  
 own example, love  
 and reverence to all

*things that God made and loveth.* *Both man and bird and beast.* 615  
*He prayeth best, who loveth best*  
*All things both great and small;*  
*For the dear God who loveth us,*  
*He made and loveth all.'*  
*The Mariner, whose eye is bright,* 620  
*Whose beard with age is hoar,*  
*Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest*  
*Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.*  
*He went like one that hath been stunn'd,*  
*And is of sense forlorn:*  
*A sadder and a wiser man* 625  
*He rose the morrow morn.*

**Freeditorial** 