

The Rime  
of the  
Ancient Mariner.

IN SEVEN PARTS.

---

IT is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three.  
“By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,  
“Now wherefore stopp’st thou me ?

An ancient  
Mariner  
meeteth three  
Gallants bid-  
den to a wed-  
ding-feast,  
and detaineth  
one.

“The Bridegroom’s doors are open’d 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.

The wedding-guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old sea-faring 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 can not chuse 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 light-house top.

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.

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  
 heareth the bridal  
 music ; but the  
 mariner continueth  
 his tale.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
 Yet he can not chuse but hear ;  
 And thus spake on that ancient man,  
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

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

The ship  
 drawn by a  
 storm toward  
 the south pole.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,  
 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,  
 And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,  
 And it grew wonderous cold :

And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald.

The land of  
ice, and of  
fearful  
sounds, where  
no living  
thing was to  
be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clift  
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,  
The ice was all around :  
It cracked and growled, 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 hailed it in God's name.  
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 a good south wind sprung up behind;  
 The Albatross did follow,  
 And every day, for food or play,  
 Came to the Mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,  
 It perch'd for vespers nine;  
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke  
     white,  
 Glimmered the white Moon-shine.

“ God save thee, ancient Mariner!  
 From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—  
 Why look'st thou so?”—With my cross-  
     bow  
 I shot the ALBATROSS!

And lo! the  
 Albatross  
 proveth a bird  
 of good omen,  
 and followeth  
 the ship as it  
 returned  
 northward,  
 through fog  
 and floating  
 ice.

The ancient  
 Mariner  
 inhospitably  
 killeth the  
 pious bird of  
 good omen.

*THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.*

PART THE SECOND.

THE Sun now rose upon the right :  
 Out of the sea came he,  
 Still hid in mist, and on the left  
 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 !

His ship-  
 mates cry out  
 against the  
 ancient Mari-  
 ner, for killing  
 the bird of  
 good luck.

And I had done an hellish thing,  
 And it would work 'em woe :  
 For all averred, I had killed the bird  
 That made the breeze to blow.  
 Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to sla-  
 That made the breeze to blow !

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
 The glorious Sun uprist :  
 Then all averred, I had killed the bird  
 That brought the fog and mist.  
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
 That bring the fog and mist.

But when the  
 fog cleared  
 off, they jus-  
 tify the same-  
 and thus  
 make them-  
 selves accom-  
 plices in the  
 crime.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
 The furrow\* stream'd off free :  
 We were the first that ever burst  
 Into that silent sea.

The fair  
 breeze con-  
 tinues; the  
 ship enters  
 the Pacific  
 Ocean and  
 sails north-  
 ward, even  
 till it reaches  
 the Line.

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!

The ship hath  
 been sudden-  
 ly becalmed.

\* In the former edition the line was,

The furrow follow'd free;

but I had not been long on board a ship, before I perceived that this was the image as seen by a spectator from the shore, or from another vessel. From the ship itself the *Wake* appears like a brook flowing off from the stern.

All in a hot and copper sky,  
 The bloody Sun, at noon,  
 Right up above the mast did stand,  
 No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
 We stuck, nor breath nor motion,  
 As idle as a painted ship  
 Upon a painted ocean.

And the  
 Albatross  
 begins to be  
 avenged.

Water, water, every where,  
 And all the boards did shrink ;  
 Water water, every where,  
 Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !  
 That ever this should be !  
 Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
 Upon the slimy sea.

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.



And some in dreams assured 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 choak'd with soot.

may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

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 Constantino-politan, Michael Psellus,

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

The ship-mates, 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 RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.*

## PART THE THIRD.

THERE passed a weary time. Each throat  
Was parched, 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.

The ancient  
Mariner be-  
holdeth a sign  
in the ele-  
ment afar off.

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 :

And as if it dodged a water-sprite,

It plunged and tack'd and veer'd.

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

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.

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

A flash of joy.

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !  
 Hither to work us weal ;  
 Without a breeze, without a tide,  
 She steddies with upright keel !

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

The western wave was all a-flame.  
 The day was well nigh done !  
 Almost upon the western wave  
 Rested the broad bright Sun ;  
 When that strange shape drove suddenly  
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth  
him but the  
skeleton of a  
ship.

And straight the Sun was flecked 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,  
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.

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 ?

Like vessel,  
like crew !

*Her* lips were red, *her* looks were free,  
Her locks were yellow as gold :  
Her skin was as white as leprosy,  
The Night-Mair LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,  
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

DEATH, and  
LIFE-IN-  
DEATH have

The naked hulk alongside came,  
And the twain were casting dice ;

“ The game is done ! I’ve, I’ve won ! ”

Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

diced for the  
ship’s crew,  
and she (the  
latter) win-  
neth the an-  
cient Mariner

A gust of wind sterte up behind  
And whistled through his bones ;  
Through the holes of his eyes and the hole  
of his mouth,  
Half whistles and half groans.

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 dews did drip—  
Till clombe above the eastern bar  
The horned Moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether tip.

At the rising  
of the Moon,

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 curs'd me with his eye.

His ship-  
mates drop  
down dead;

Four times fifty living men,  
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,  
They dropped down one by one.

But LIFE-IN-  
DEATH be-  
gins her work  
on the ancient  
Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—  
They fled to bliss or woe!  
And every soul, it passed me by,  
Like the whiz of my CROSS-BOW!

*THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.*

PART THE FOURTH.

“ I FEAR thee, ancient Mariner!  
I fear thy skinny hand!  
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,  
As is the ribbed sea-sand.\*

The wedding-  
guest feareth  
that a spirit is  
talking to  
him;

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,  
And thy skinny hand, so brown.”—

Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!  
This body dropt not down.

But the an-  
cient Mariner  
assureth him  
of his bodily  
life, and pro-  
ceedeth to  
relate his hor-  
rible penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,  
Alone on a wide wide sea!

\* For the two last lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. WORDSWORTH. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the Autumn of 1797, that that this Poem was planned, and in part composed.

And never a saint took pity on  
My soul in agony.

He despiseth  
the creatures  
of the calm,

The many men, so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie:  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Liv'd on; and so did I.

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 cloud, on my weary eye,  
And the dead were at my feet.



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.

But the curse  
 liveth for him  
 in the eye of  
 the dead men.

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.

The moving Moon went up the sky,  
 And no where 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.

In his loneli-  
 ness and  
 fixedness, he  
 yearneth  
 towards the  
 journeying  
 Moon, and the  
 stars that still  
 sojourn, yet  
 still move on-  
 ward ; and  
 every where  
 the blue sky  
 belongs to  
 them, and is  
 their appoint-  
 ed 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.

By the light  
of the Moon  
he beholdeth  
God's crea-  
tures of the  
great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watch'd the water-snakes :  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And when they reared, 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,  
They coiled and swam ; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty  
and their  
happiness.

O happy living things ! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare :  
A spring of love gushes from my heart,  
And I blessed them unaware !  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I blessed them unaware.

He blesseth  
them in his  
heart.

The spell  
begins to  
break.

The self same moment I could pray ;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea.

*THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.*

## PART THE FIFTH.

Oh SLEEP ! it is a gentle thing,  
 Belov'd from pole to pole !  
 To Mary Queen the praise be given !  
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
 That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,  
 That had so long remained,  
 I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;  
 And when I awoke, it rained.

By grace of  
 the holy  
 Mother, the  
 ancient Mari-  
 ner is refresh-  
 ed with rain.

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.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :  
 I was so light—almost  
 I thought that I had died in sleep,  
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth  
 sounds, and  
 seeth  
 strange sights  
 and commo-  
 tions in the  
 sky and the  
 element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :  
 It did not come anear ;  
 But with its sound it shook the sails,  
 That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !  
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,  
 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 ;  
 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 :

Like waters shot from some high crag,  
 The lightning fell with never a jag,  
 A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,  
 Yet now the ship moved on !  
 Beneath the lightning and the Moon  
 The dead men gave a groan.

The bodies of  
 the ship's  
 crew are  
 inspirited,  
 and the ship  
 moves on ;

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.

The helmsman steered, 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—  
 We were a ghastly crew !

The body of my brother's son  
 Stood by me, knee to knee :  
 The body and I pulled at one rope,  
 But he said nought to me.

But not by  
the souls of  
the men, nor  
by demons of  
earth or mid-  
dle air, but  
by a blessed  
troop of an-  
gelic spirits,  
sent down by  
the invocation  
of the guar-  
dian saint.

“ I fear thee, ancient Mariner !”  
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !  
’Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
Which to their corses came again,  
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their  
arms,  
And clustered round the mást ;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their  
mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun ;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the sky-lark sing ;  
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;  
 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  
 In the leafy month of June,  
 That to the sleeping woods all night  
 Singeth a quiet tune.

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

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.

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.

The Sun, right up above the mast,  
 Had fixt her to the ocean;  
 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:  
 It flung the blood into my head,  
 And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-dæmons, 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;  
 But ere my living life returned,  
 I heard and in my soul discerned:  
 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.”



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."

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

*THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.*

## PART THE SIXTH.

## 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;  
 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.  
 See, brother, see! how graciously  
 She looketh down on him.

## FIRST VOICE.

But why drives on that ship so fast,  
Without or wave or wind?

## 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."

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.

All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:  
All fixed on me their stony eyes,  
That in the Moon did glitter.

The Mariner  
hath been  
cast into a  
trance; for  
the angelic  
power  
causeth the  
vessel to drive  
northward,  
faster than  
human life  
could endure.

The super-  
natural mo-  
tion is retard-  
ed; the Ma-  
riner awakes,  
and his pe-  
nance begins  
anew.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,  
 Had never passed away :  
 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 looked far forth; yet little saw  
 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 ;  
 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.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—

It mingled strangely with my fears,  
 Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
 Yet she sailed softly too :  
 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
 On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed  
 The light-house top I see?  
 Is this the hill? is this the kirk?  
 Is this mine own countree?

And the an-  
 cient Mariner  
 beholdeth his  
 native  
 country.

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,  
 And I with sobs did pray—  
 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,  
 And the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
 That stands above the rock :  
 The moonlight steeped in silentness  
 The steady weathercock.

The angelic  
 spirits leave  
 the dead  
 bodies,

And the bay was white with silent light,  
 Till rising from the same,  
 Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
 In crimson colours came.

And appear  
 in their own  
 forms of light.

A little distance from the prow  
 Those crimson shadows were :  
 I turned my eyes upon the deck—  
 Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
 And, by the holy rood !  
 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,  
 Each one a lovely light :

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
 No voice did they impart—  
 No voice; but oh! the silence sank  
 Like music on my heart.

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,  
 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!  
 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.

*THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.*

PART THE SEVENTH.

The Hermit of  
the Wood,

THIS Hermit good lives in that wood  
Which slopes down to the sea.  
How loudly his sweet voice he rears !  
He loves to talk with mariners  
That come from a far countree.

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 !  
Where are those lights so many and fair,  
That signal made but now ? ”



“Strange, by my faith!” the Hermit said—

“And they answered not our cheer!

The planks look warped! and see those  
sails,

How thin they are and sere!

I never saw ought like to them,

Unless perchance it were

The skeletons of leaves that lag

My forest-brook along:

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)

I am a-feared—Push on, push on!

Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,

But I nor spake nor stirred;

The boat came close beneath the ship,

And straight a sound was heard.

Approacheth  
the ship with  
wonder.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,  
Still louder and more dread:  
It reach'd the ship, it split the bay;  
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient  
Mariner is  
saved in the  
Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,  
Which sky and ocean smote,  
Like one that hath been seven days drown'd,  
My body lay afloat;  
But swift as dreams, myself I found  
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,

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked  
And fell down in a fit;  
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,  
Who now doth crazy go,

Laughed 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.”

And now, all in my own countree,  
I stood on the firm land!  
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,  
And scarcely he could stand.

“ 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?”

The ancient  
Mariner  
earnestly  
entreateth  
the Hermit to  
shrieve him;  
and the pe-  
nance of life  
falls on him.

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd  
With a woeful agony,  
Which forced me to begin my tale;  
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
That agony returns;  
And till my ghastly tale is told,  
This heart within me burns.

And ever and  
anon through-  
out his future  
life an agony  
constraineth  
him to travel

from land to  
land,

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:  
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;  
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  
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
'Tis sweeter far to me,  
To walk together to the kirk  
With a goodly company!—

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 !

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !  
 He prayeth well, who loveth well  
 Both man and bird and beast.

And to teach  
 by his own  
 example,  
 love and  
 reverence to  
 all things that  
 God made  
 and loveth.

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,  
 Whose beard with age is hoar,  
 Is gone; and now the Wedding-Guest  
 Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,  
 And is of sense forlorn :  
 A sadder and a wiser man,  
 He rose the morrow morn.