

## Argument

*How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.*

## PART I

<p>An ancient Mariner meeteth three gallants bidden to a wedding feast, and detaineth one.</p>	<p>IT is an ancient Mariner, And he stoppeth one of three. 'By thy long beard and glittering eye, Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?</p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p>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.'</p>	<p>5</p>
<p></p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>The Wedding-Guest is spell- bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.</p>	<p>He holds him with his glittering eye — The Wedding-Guest stood still, And listens like a three years' child: The Mariner hath his will.</p>	<p>15</p>
<p></p>	<p>The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone: He cannot choose but hear; And thus spake on that ancient man, The bright-eyed Mariner.</p>	<p>20</p>
<p></p>	<p>'The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd, Merrily did we drop Below the kirk, below the hill, Below the lighthouse top.</p>	<p></p>
<p>The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>25</p>
<p></p>	<p>Higher and higher every day, Till over the mast at noon — —' The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast, For he heard the loud bassoon.</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.</p>	<p>The bride hath paced into the hall, Red as a rose is she; Nodding their heads before her goes The merry minstrelsy.</p>	<p>35</p>
<p></p>	<p>The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast, Yet he cannot choose but hear; And thus spake on that ancient man, The bright-eyed Mariner.</p>	<p>40</p>
<p>The ship drawn by a storm toward the South Pole.</p>	<p>'And now the Storm-blast came, and he Was tyrannous and strong: He struck with his o'ertaking wings, And chased us south along.</p>	<p></p>
<p></p>	<p>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, The southward aye we fled.</p>	<p>45</p> <p>50</p>
<p></p>	<p>And now there came both mist and snow, And it grew wondrous cold: And ice, mast-high, came floating by, As green as emerald.</p>	<p></p>

The land of ice, and 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.

55

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around:  
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,  
Like noises in a swound!

60

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!

70

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,  
It perch'd for vespers nine;  
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
Glimmer'd the white moonshine.'

75

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  
Went down into the sea.

85

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 Mariner for killing  
the bird of good luck.

And I had done an hellish thing,  
And it would work 'em woe:  
For all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird  
That made the breeze to blow.  
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,  
That made the breeze to blow!

95

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.  
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
That bring the fog and mist.

100

The fair breeze continues; the  
ship enters the Pacific Ocean,  
and sails northward, even till  
it reaches the Line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow follow'd free;  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

105

The ship hath been suddenly  
becalm'd.

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.

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

115

And the Albatross begins to  
be avenged.

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

120

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

125

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

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

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.

135

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.

140

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.

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

145

### 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.

145

The ancient Mariner  
beholdeth a sign in the  
element 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.

150

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.

155

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 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!

160

A flash of joy;

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.

165

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

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

170

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.

175

It seemeth him but the  
skeleton of a ship.

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.

180

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. 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

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.

190

Death and Life-in-Death have  
diced for the ship's crew, and  
she (the latter) winneth the  
ancient Mariner.

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.

195

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.

200

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—  
Till clomb above the eastern bar  
The hornéd Moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether tip.

205

At the rising of the Moon,

210

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.

215

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.

220

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!

## 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.

225

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.

230

But the ancient Mariner  
assureth him of his bodily life,  
and proceedeth to relate his  
horrible penance.

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.	245
	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.	250
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.	255
	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.	260
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—	265
	Her beams bemock'd the sultry main, Like April hoar-frost spread; But where the ship's huge shadow lay, The charméd water burnt alway A still and awful red.	270
By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures 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 rear'd, the elfish light Fell off in hoary flakes.	275
	Within the shadow of the ship I watch'd their rich attire: Blue, glossy green, and velvet black, They coil'd and swam; and every track Was a flash of golden fire.	280
Their beauty and their happiness.	O happy living things! no tongue Their beauty might declare: A spring of love gush'd from my heart, And I bless'd them unaware:	285
He blesseth them in his heart.	Sure my kind saint took pity on me, And I bless'd them unaware.	
The spell begins to break.	The selfsame moment I could pray; And from my neck so free The Albatross fell off, and sank Like lead into the sea.	290

## PART V

	'O sleep! it is a gentle thing, Beloved from pole to pole! To Mary Queen the praise be given! She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven, That slid into my soul.	295
By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.	The silly buckets on the deck, That had so long remain'd, I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew; And when I awoke, it rain'd.	300
	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 seeth  
strange sights and  
commotions 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. 310

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. 315

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. 320

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. 325

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  
The dead men gave a groan. 330

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 —  
We were a ghastly crew. 340

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 corse 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.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mix'd, now one by one. 355

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the skylark sing;  
Sometimes all little birds that are,  
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning! 360

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. 365

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. 370

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. 380  
The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

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, 390  
She made a sudden bound:  
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, 400  
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 405  
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." 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, 415  
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. 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?"

*Second Voice:* "The air is cut away before, 425  
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

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

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, 435  
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, 455  
 In ripple or in shade.

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

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 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,  
I heard them coming fast: 505  
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 Wood. 'This Hermit good lives in that wood 515  
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.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve— 520  
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 with  
wonder. "Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit said—  
"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; 545  
The boat came close beneath the ship,  
And straight a sound was heard.

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. 550

The ancient Mariner is saved  
in the Pilot's boat. Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful sound,  
Which sky and ocean smote,  
Like one that hath been seven days drown'd  
My body lay afloat; 555  
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. 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.

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

"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?"

575

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

580

And ever and anon  
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,  
This heart within me burns.

585

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.

590

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!

595

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been  
Alone on a wide, wide sea:  
So lonely 'twas, that God Himself  
Scarce seem'd there to be.

600

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

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

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

He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.'

615

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest  
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.

620

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

625