

HERMAN MELVILLE



Portrait by Joseph Oriel Eaton (1870)

- 1819-1891
- Born in New York
- Dutch Calvinist family
- Both grandfathers fought in the American Revolution
- Worked as a sailor
- Part of the "American Renaissance"

SEAFARING EXPERIENCE

- January 1841: Melville sails from New Bedford on the "Acushnet"
- July 1842: Melville deserted in the Marquesas, exoticizing life on the volcanic islands in *Typee* (1846)
- *Omoo* (1847) fictionalized Melville's participation in a mutiny on the "Lucy Ann" whaleship and escape from jail in Tahiti
- Back in Nantucket, Melville joined the "Charles & Henry" as a harpooner, which he left in Hawaii in 1843
- October 1844: Melville returns to land to begin writing

Melville's father-in-law Judge Lemuel Shaw upheld the constitutionality of the Fugitive Slave Act (1850)

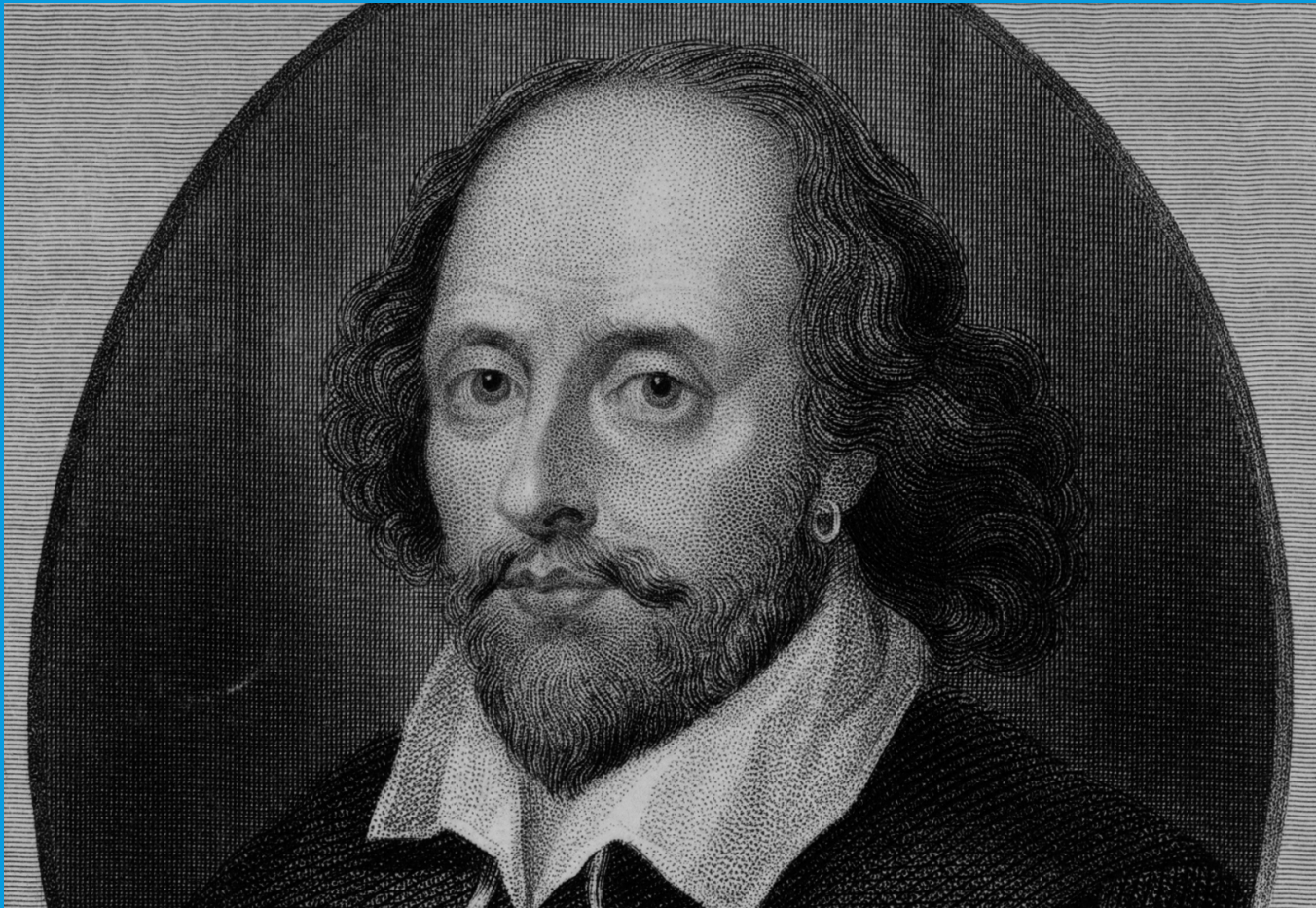
CAUTION!!

COLORED PEOPLE
OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,
You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the
Watchmen and Police Officers
of Boston,
For since the recent **ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN,** they are empowered to act as
KIDNAPPERS
AND
Slave Catchers,
And they have already been actually employed in **KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES.** Therefore, if you value your **LIBERTY,** and the *Welfare of the Fugitives* among you, *Shun* them in every possible manner, as so many **HOUNDS** on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.

Keep a Sharp Look Out for
KIDNAPPERS, and have
TOP EYE open.

APRIL 24, 1851.

Poster by Theodore Parker



William Shakespeare

"Believe me, my friends,
that men not very much
inferior to Shakespeare,
are this day being born on
the banks of the Ohio"—
Melville, "Hawthorne and
His Mosses" (1850)

MELVILLE'S OBITUARY

“Herman Melville died yesterday at his residence, 104 East Twenty-sixth Street, this city, of heart failure, aged seventy-two. He was the author of *Typee*, *Omoo*, *Mobie Dick*, and other sea-faring tales, written in earlier years. He leaves a wife and two daughters, Mrs. M. B. Thomas and Miss Melville.”—*The New York Times*, September 29, 1891

MOBY-DICK (1851)

MOCHA DICK

1839.]

'Mocha Dick,' of the Pacific.

377

MOCHA DICK:

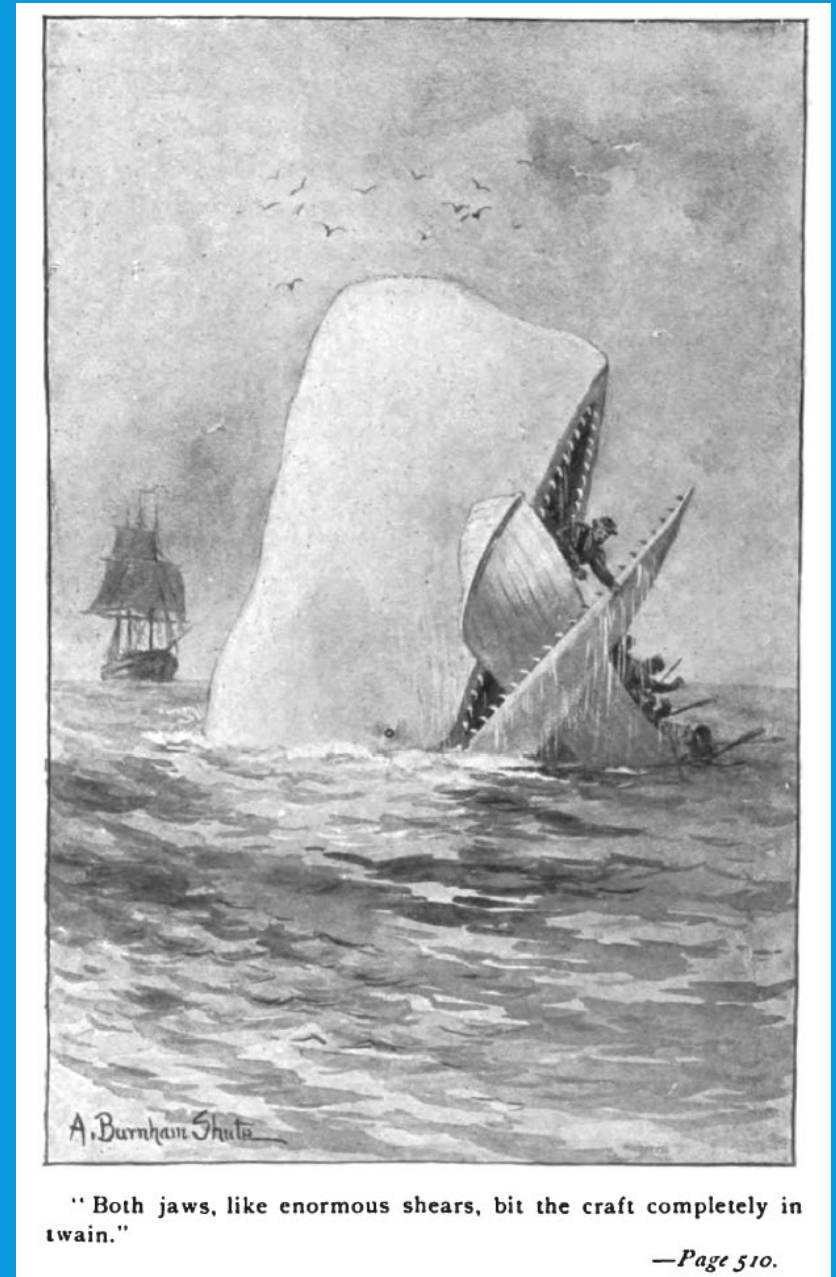
OR THE WHITE WHALE OF THE PACIFIC: A LEAF FROM A MANUSCRIPT JOURNAL.

BY J. N. REYNOLDS, ESQ.

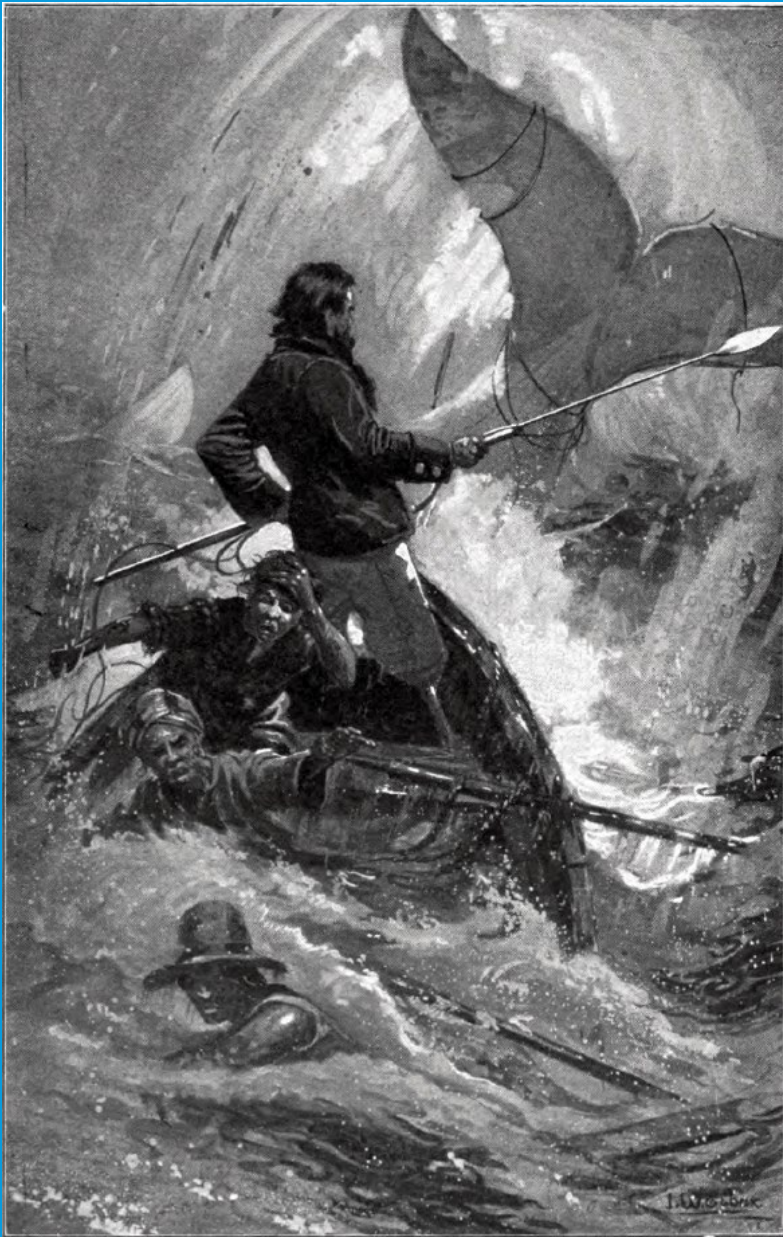
WE expected to find the island of Santa Maria still more remarkable for the luxuriance of its vegetation, than even the fertile soil of Mocha; and the disappointment arising from the unexpected shortness of our stay at the latter place, was in some degree relieved, by the prospect of our remaining for several days in safe anchorage at the former. Mocha lies upon the coast of Chili, in lat. $38^{\circ} 28'$ south, twenty leagues north of Mono del Bonifacio, and opposite the Imperial river, from which it bears w. s. w. During the last century, this island was inhabited by the Spaniards, but it is at present, and has been for some years, entirely deserted. Its climate is mild, with little perceptible difference of temperature between the summer and winter seasons. Frost is unknown on the lowlands, and snow is rarely seen, even on the summits of the loftiest mountains.

Named for Mocha Island off the Chilean coast, Mocha Dick was a real albino sperm whale, slain by whalers in 1838. Jeremiah Reynolds related the story in *The Knickerbocker* in 1839

“I have written a wicked book,
and feel spotless as the lamb”—
Melville to Nathaniel
Hawthorne (November 1851)



Augustus Burnham Shute



I.W. Taber illustration from 1902 edition

Themes:

- Rewriting Shakespearean tragedy
- Democracy and pluralism
- Calvinist theology
- Orphans
- Civilization vs. savagery
- Human/animal divide
- Hieroglyphics and hermeneutics
- Against sentimentalism
- Homosocial bonds
- Cross-racial relationships
- Resource extraction

ISHMAEL

BIBLICAL NAMESAKE

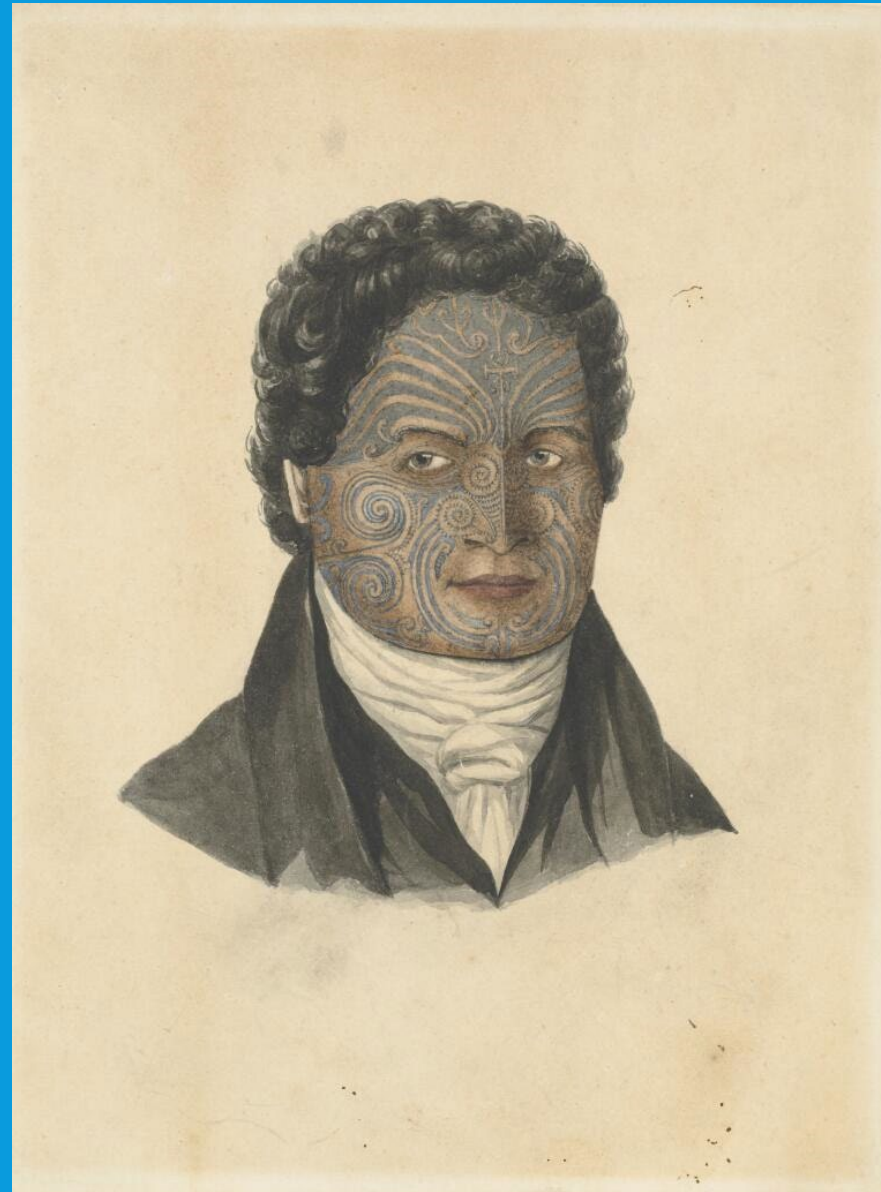
“And God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.” Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.” (Genesis 21:15-21)

TOLERANCE

“Not ignoring what is good, I am quick to perceive a horror, and could still be social with it—would they let me—since it is but well to be on friendly terms with all the inmates of the place one lodges in” (22)

QUEEQUEG

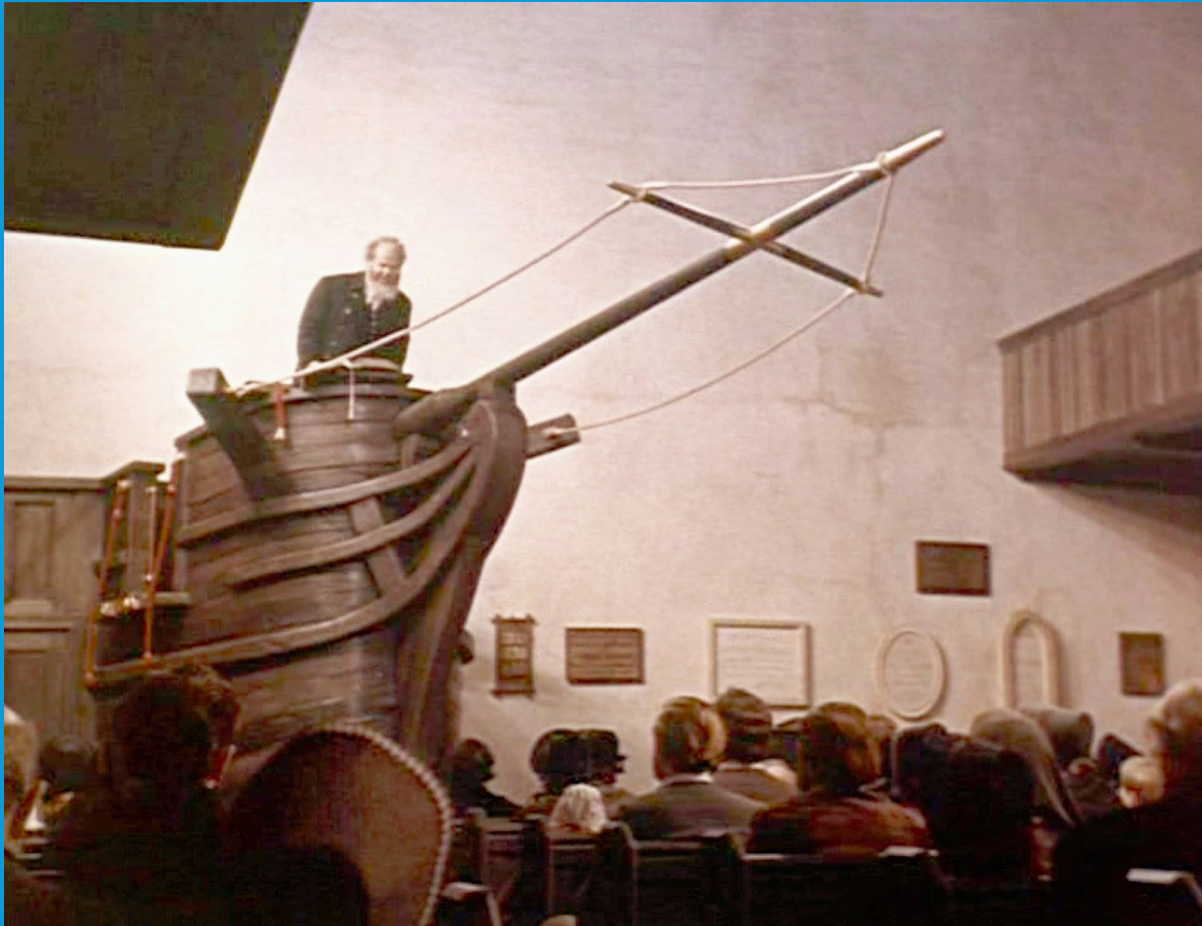
“For all his
tattooings he was
on the whole a
clean, comely
looking cannibal”
(36)



John Sylvester, [Portrait of Te Pahi Kupe](#)

FATHER MAPPLE

ANAPHORA



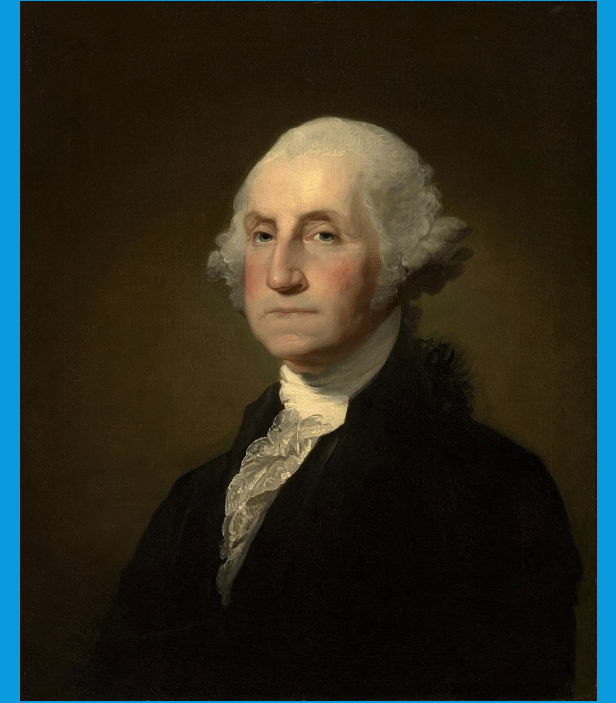
Orson Welles as Father Mapple in the 1956 film

“Delight is to him—a far, far upward, and inward delight—who against the proud gods and commodores of this earth, ever stands forth his own inexorable self”
(54)

"Queequeg was
George Washington cannibalistically
developed" (55)



Peter the Great, Jean-Marc Nattier, 1717



George Washington, Gilbert Stuart, 1796

"But like Czar Peter content to toil in the shipyards
of foreign cities, Queequeg disdained no seeming
ignominy, if thereby he might gain the power of
enlightening his untutored countrymen" (59)

THE PEQUOD

MOBY-DICK

OR, THE WHALE
HERMAN MELVILLE



FOREWORD BY NATHANIEL PHILBRICK

PENGUIN CLASSICS  DELUXE EDITION

ART: TONY MILLIONAIRE

“A cannibal of a craft, tricking herself forth in the chased bones of her enemies” (70)

CHARLES W. MORGAN

- Launched July 21, 1841
- Crew of 35 sailors
- Made 37 voyages over 80 years
- Last surviving wooden whaleship



CAPTAIN AHAB

"He's a grand, ungodly, god-like man, Captain Ahab"--Peleg (78)

WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY

Emerson

"Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater."

Melville

"It's a mutual joint-stock world, in all meridians. We cannibals must help these Christians" (64)

SHAKESPEARE

Emerson

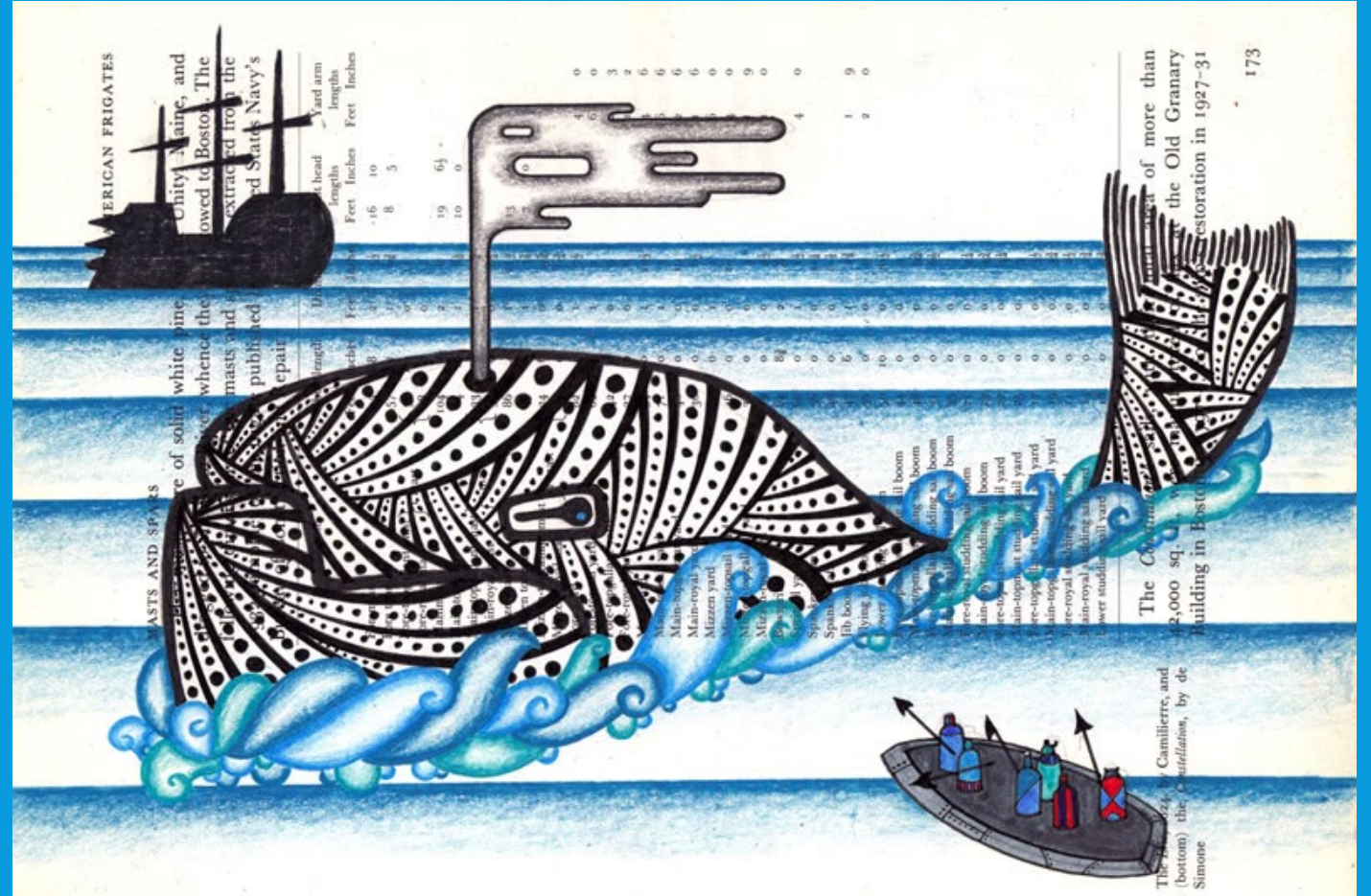
"Shakespeare will never be made by the study of Shakespeare"

Melville

"Believe me, my friends, that men not very much inferior to Shakespeare, are this day being born on the banks of the Ohio"

STARBUCK

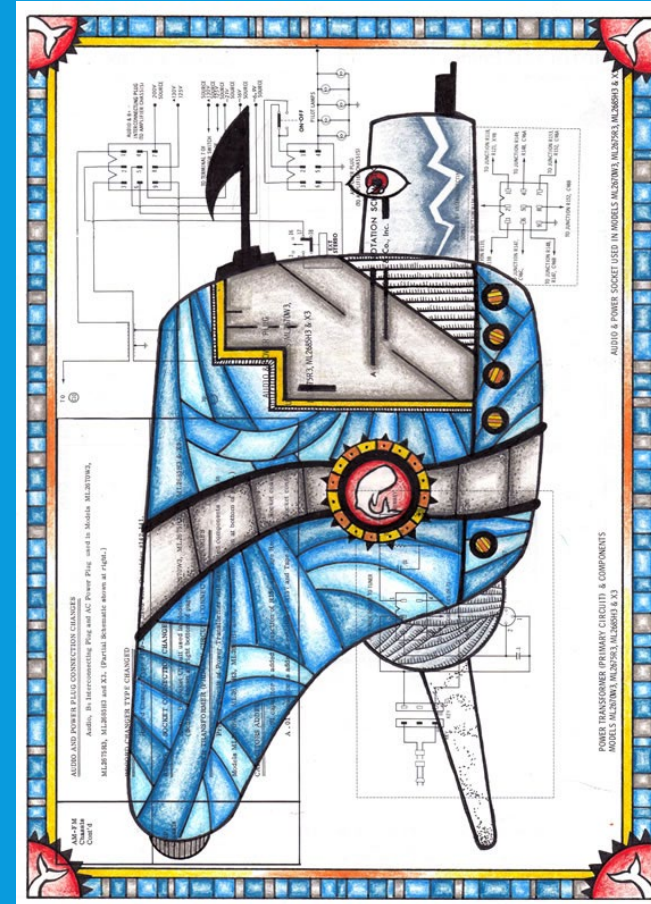
“Starbuck was no crusader after perils” (102)



Matt Kish

CAPTAIN AHAH

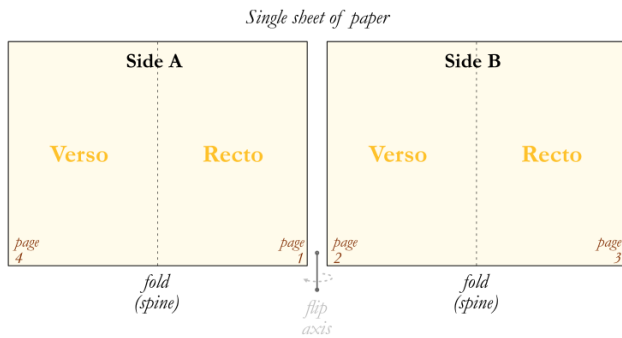
- King Ahab
- King Lear
- Milton's Satan
- Prometheus



Matt Kish

FOLIO

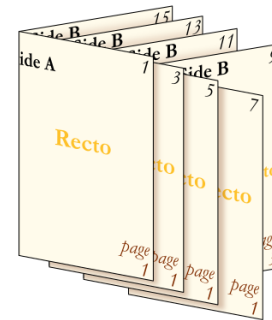
abbreviated
fo 2°



- 4 pages of printed text
- 2 on each side
- 1 fold
- creates 2 leaves
- each leaf is 1/2 size of the original sheet

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folio>

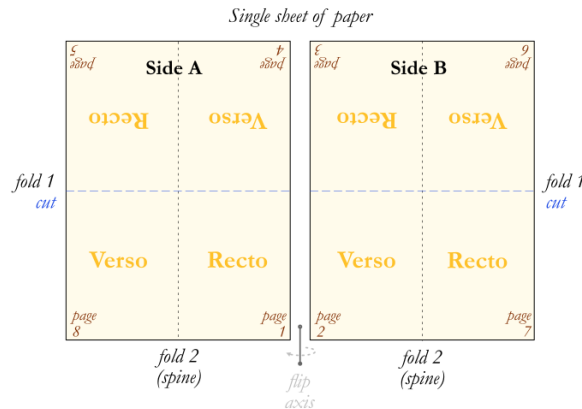
Example of a Folio Gathering



Folios would be inserted within each other to form, for example, gatherings of 8 leaves (above). Gatherings are sewn through the central fold prior to binding the book. Multiple gatherings are stacked and made into a book.

QUARTO

abbreviated
Qto, 4to or 4°

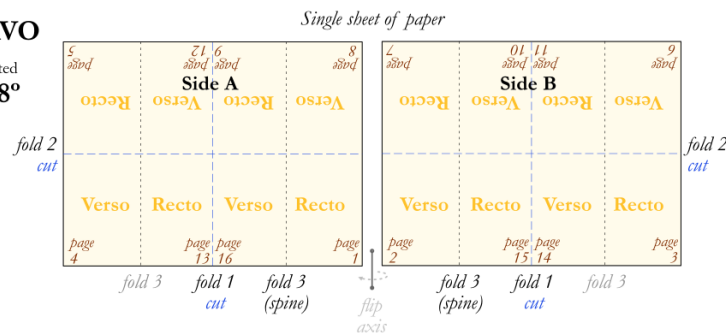


- 8 pages of printed text
- 4 on each side
- 2 folds, 1 cut
- creates 4 leaves
- each leaf is 1/4 size of the original sheet

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quarto>

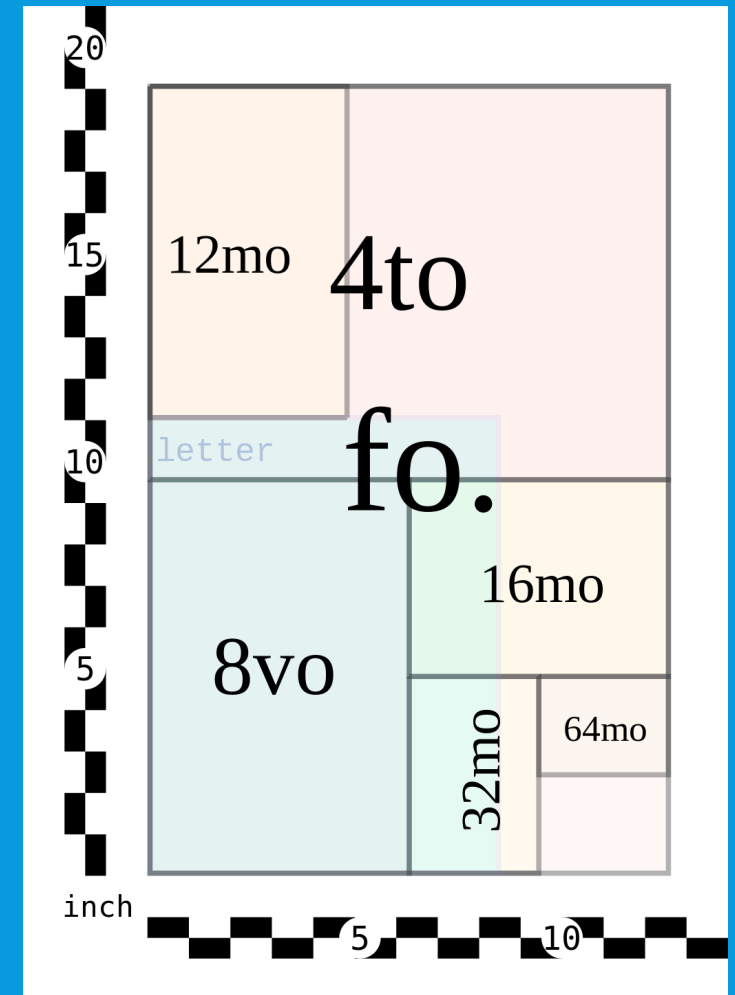
OCTAVO

abbreviated
8vo, 8°



- 16 pages of printed text
- 8 on each side
- 3 folds, 2 cuts
- creates 8 leaves
- each leaf is 1/8 size of the original sheet

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octavo>



[Любослов Езыкн](#)

For "left-to-right reading" books.

AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE

Macbeth Act V

“Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, / That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, / And then is heard no more. It is a tale / Told by an idiot, **full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing**”

Moby-Dick, “Cetology”

“But I omit them as altogether obsolete; and can hardly help suspecting them for mere sounds, **full of Leviathanism, but signifying nothing**” (124)

SHAKESPEAREAN LANGUAGE

Henry IV Act I

"To pluck bright honor
from the pale-
faced moon,
Or dive into the bottom
of the deep,"

"The Specksynder"

"Oh, Ahab! What shall
be grand in thee, it
must needs be plucked
at from the skies, and
dived for in the deep,
and featured in the
unbodied air!" (127)

THE QUARTER-DECK

“And this is what ye have shipped for, men! To chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out”—Ahab (139)

““Vengeance on a dumb brute!’ cried Starbuck, ‘that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous’” (139)

“All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event—in the living act, the undoubted deed—there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the white whale is that wall, shoved near to me. Sometimes I think there’s naught beyond”—Ahab (140)

THE WHITE WHALE

“All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby Dick. He piled upon the whale’s white hump the sum of all the general rage and hate felt by his whole race from Adam down; and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart’s shell upon it” (156)

Sublime

White Elephant (Thai)

Snow-white charger (German)

White forked flame (Persian)

Snow-white bull (Greek)

White dog (Iroquois)

White Steed of the Prairies

White throne (Christian)

Terrifying

White Squall

White Friar

White Tower

White Mountains

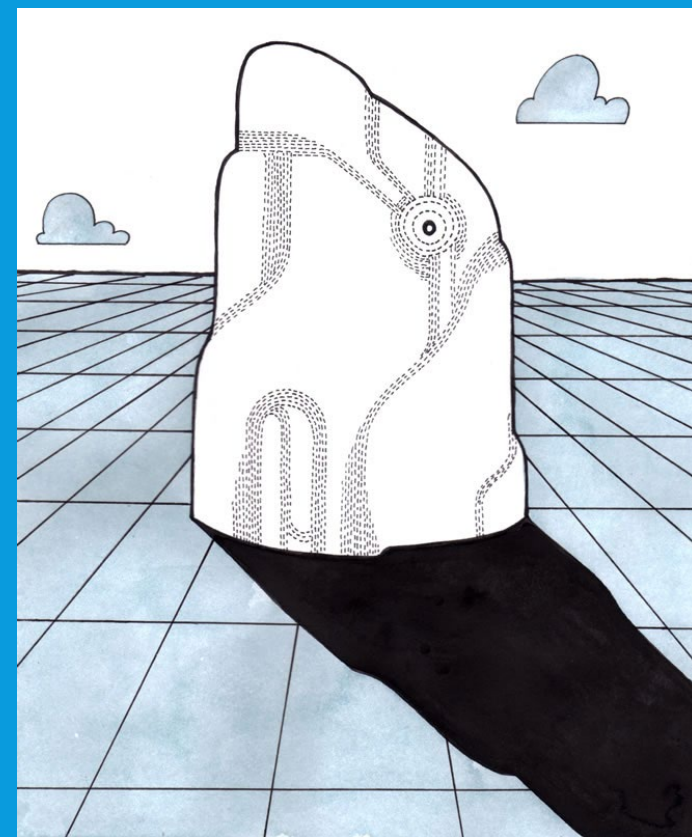
White Sea

Albatross

Polar bear

Great White Shark

“Is it that by its indefiniteness it shadows forth the heartless voids and immensities of the universe, and thus stabs us from behind with the thought of annihilation, when beholding the white depths of the milky way? Or is it, that as in essence whiteness is not so much a color as the visible absence of color, and at the same time the concrete of all colors; is it for these reasons that there is such a dumb blankness, full of meaning, in a wide landscape of snows—a colorless, all-color of atheism from which we shrink?” (165)



Matt Kish

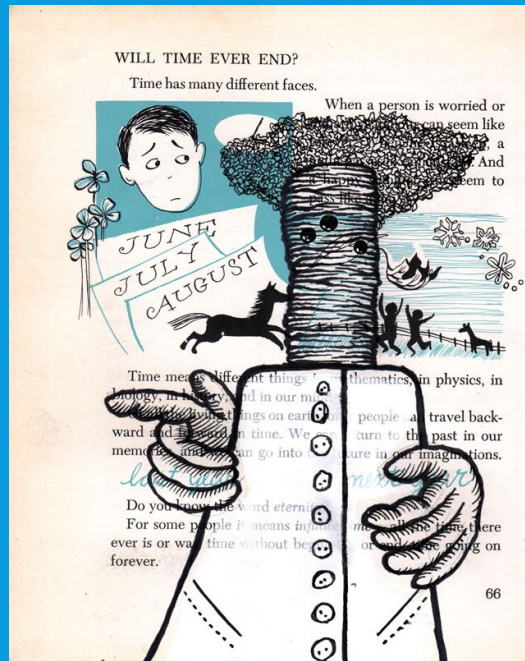
Slavery

Cannibalism

Appetite



STUBB'S SUPPER



Matt Kish

“Your voraciousness, fellow-critters, I don’t blame ye so much for; dat is natur, and can’t be helped; but to gobern dat wicked natur, dat is de pint. You is sharks, sartin; but if you gobern de shark in you, why den you be angel; for all angel is not’ing more dan de shark well goberned”—Fleece (238)

THE WHALE AS A DISH

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." (Matthew 11:21-22, KJV)

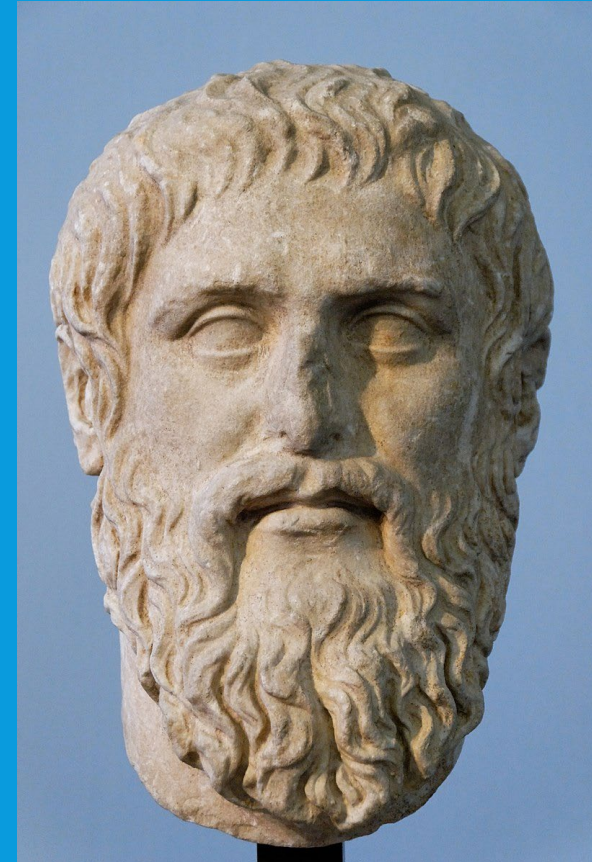
"Cannibals? Who is not cannibal? I tell you it will be more tolerable for the Fejee that salted down a lean missionary in his cellar against a coming famine; it will be more tolerable for that provident Fejee, I say, in the day of judgment, than for thee, civilized and enlightened gourmand, who nailest geese to the ground and featest on their bloated livers in thy paté-de-fois-gras" (242)

- "... yet such vital strength yet lurked in his Egyptian chest . . ." (157)
- "These are hieroglyphical; that is, if you call those mysterious cyphers on the walls of the pyramids hieroglyphics" (246)
- "Speak, thou vast and venerable head" (249)



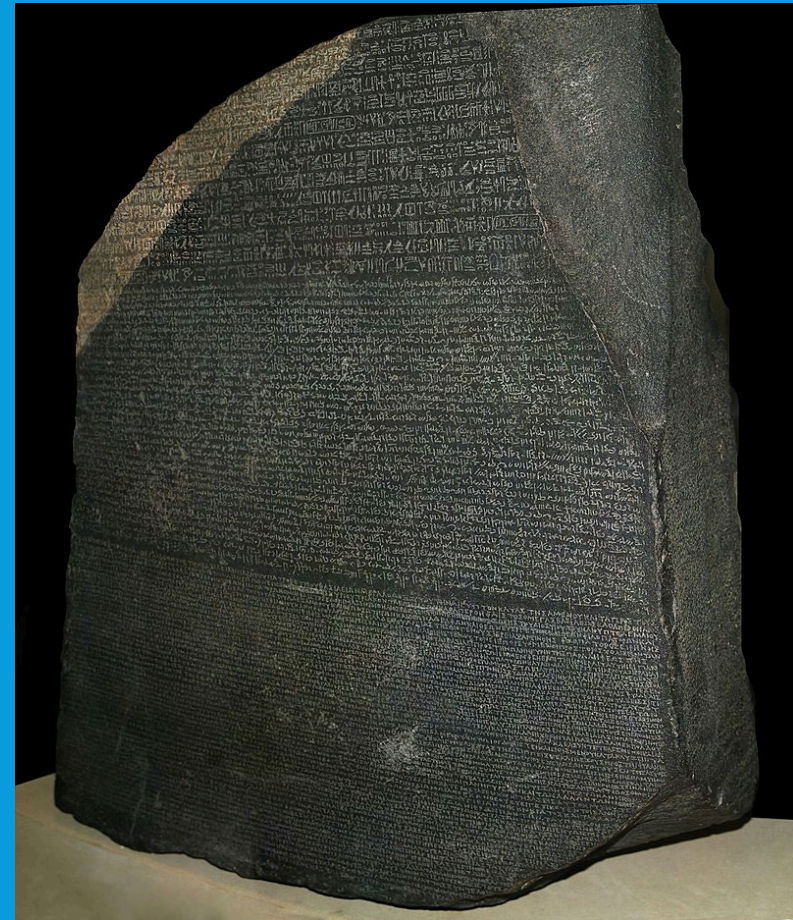
PLATO

- "This Right Whale I take to have been a Stoic; the Sperm Whale, a Platonian, who might have taken up Spinoza in his latter years" (267)
- "How many, think ye, have likewise fallen into Plato's honey head, and sweetly perished there?" (273)



THE PRAIRIE

“But there is no Champollion to decipher the Egypt of every man’s and every being’s face. Physiognomy, like every other human science, is but a passing fable” (274-275)



The Rosetta Stone, Hans Hillewaert

THE TAIL

The Tail

"Dissect him how I may, then, I but go skin deep . . . **Thou shalt see my back parts, my tail, he seems to say, but my face shall not be seen.** But I cannot completely make out his back parts; and hint what he will about his face, I say again he has no face" (296)

Exodus 33:23

"Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will take away my hand, and **you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.**"

THE DOUBLOON



“The firm tower, that is Ahab; the volcano, that is Ahab; the courageous, the undaunted, and victorious fowl, that, too, is Ahab; all are Ahab”—Ahab (332)

INTERPRETATION

“A dark valley between three mighty, heaven-abiding peaks, that almost seem the Trinity, in some faint earthly symbol. So in this vale of Death, God girds us round; and over all our gloom, the sun of Righteousness still shines a beacon and a hope”—Starbuck (333)

“I look, you look, he looks; we look, ye look, they look”—Pip (335)

QUEEQUEG IN HIS COFFIN

“And this tattooing, had been the work of a departed prophet and seer of his island, who, by those hieroglyphic marks, had written out on his body a complete theory of the heavens and the earth, and a mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth” (366)



Matt Kish

PROPHECY

Macbeth—Weird Sisters

- "Be bloody, bold, and resolute. / Laugh to scorn / The power of man, for none of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth."
- "Macbeth shall never vanquished be until / Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill / Shall come against him"

Moby-Dick—Fedallah

- "But I said, old man, that ere thou couldst die on this voyage, two hearses must verily be seen by thee on the sea; the first not made by mortal hands; and the visible wood of the last one must be grown in America"
- "I shall still go before thee thy pilot"
- "Hemp only can kill thee" (377)

THE CANDLES



Matt Kish

“Come in thy lowest form of love, and I will kneel and kiss thee; but at thy highest, come as mere supernal power; and though thou launchest navies of full-freighted worlds, there’s that in here that still remains indifferent. Oh, thou clear spirit, of thy fire thou madest me, and like a true child of fire, I breathe it back to thee”—Ahab (382)

THE PEQUOD MEETS THE RACHEL

"A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for
her children,
because they are no more."
(Jeremiah 31:15)

"My boy, my own boy, is
among them. For God's sake—I
beg, I conjure' . . . Ahab still
stood like an anvil, receiving
every shock, but without the
least quivering of his own"
(398)

THE SYMPHONY

“I feel deadly faint, bowed,
and humped, as though I were
Adam, staggering beneath
the piled centuries since
Paradise. God! God! God!—
crack my heart!—stave my
brain!—mockery! mockery!
bitter, biting mockery of grey
hairs”—Ahab (406)

“Close! stand close to
me, Starbuck; let me
look into a human eye;
it is better than to gaze
into sea or sky; better
than to gaze upon
God”—Ahab (406)

FREEDOM VS DETERMINISM

“Is Ahab, Ahab? Is it I, God, or who, that lifts this arm? But if the great sun move not of himself; but is as an errand-boy in heaven; nor one single star can revolve, but by some hidden power; how then can this one small heart beat; this one small brain think thoughts; unless God does that beating, does that thinking, does that living, and not I”—Ahab (406-407)



Matt Kish

THE CHASE: SECOND DAY

"Great God! but for one single instant show thyself," cried Starbuck; 'never, never wilt thou capture him, old man—In Jesus' name no more of this, that's worse than devil's madness. Two days chased; twice stove to splinters; thy very leg once more snatched from under thee; thy evil shadow gone—all good angels mobbing thee with warnings:-what more wouldst thou have?"—
Starbuck (418)

"Ahab is forever Ahab, man. This whole act's immutably decreed. 'Twas rehearsed by thee and me a billion years before this ocean rolled. Fool! I am the Fates' lieutenant; I act under orders"—Ahab
(418)

EPILOGUE

“It was the devious-cruising Rachel, that in her retracing search after her missing children, only found another orphan” (427)