

MOBY DICK

PART ONE

ACT 1

TITLES OVER:

EXT. NANTUCKET HEADLANDS - EVENING

Majestic black cliffs tower over the rocky coastline of the Atlantic seaboard. A stormy winter sky. Dwarfed by this mighty vista, a speck of a man descends toward the grey vastness of the ocean.

EXT. NANTUCKET SHORELINE - EVENING

Powerful waves crash against coastal rocks. ISHMAEL (late 20's), an inquisitive young man with an amiable, intelligent face, ventures along a beachside trail against the beating wind, toting a small satchel.

EXT. NANTUCKET -EVENING

An 1850's whaling seaport. Muddy streets and an old, rain-slicked dock. A cold, stark, unforgiving place. Tall-masted ships sway beside the dock, wind buffeting their furled rigging. In b.g., a glimpse of a dramatic sunset between darkening thunderheads.

EXT. DOCKSIDE SHEDS - EVENING

THREE NANTUCKET WOMEN in dark clothes and shawls collect baskets from a storage shed, their faces etched by years of hardship and woe. A look of widows about them.

Ishmael passes before them, and we follow him through a clutter of barrels and ship refuse into town.

EXT. NANTUCKET STREET - EVENING

A short block of brick houses and taverns. A FEW PEOPLE scurry about, hugging buildings to escape the storm.

Ishmael bundles along the sidewalk, drawn to the warm glow of oil lamps behind thick-paned windows.

Across the street, ELIJAH, a stooped, scrawny old man wrapped in a tattered oilskin cape, watches Ishmael with demented eyes, muttering to himself.

Ishmael pauses under a tavern sign with a harpoon crucifix, "THE CROSSED HARPOONS". He peers through the window:

INT. THE CROSSED HARPOONS -EVENING

Shabby but lively, a loud revelry in progress.

EXT. NANTUCKET STREET -EVENING

As Ishmael looks in, the tavern door swings open. A jovial, barrel-chested man (STUBB) clamors out with TWO DOXIES in each arm, laughing spiritedly. Ishmael backs up against the window to steer clear. Stubb and his prostitutes bustle off into the stormy night.

Ishmael considers the tavern and digs out a few meager coins from his pocket. Someone distracts him:

Crazy, old Elijah eyeballs him from across the street.

Ishmael reacts and protectively pockets his coins. He moves on.

A short distance further, another tavern with a sign overhead, swinging in the wind: "THE SPOUTER-INN, PETER COFFIN, PROPRIETOR". Ishmael glances through the window.

INT. SPOUTER INN - EVENING

Shabbier than the last inn, poorly lit.

EXT. NANTUCKET STREET - EVENING

Ishmael nods to himself. Perfect. He steps inside, as lightning flashes and thunder CRACKS behind him.

Elijah suddenly appears at the window, the lightning

reflecting his wild eyes. Staring inside, he licks his lips for want of a drink then wraps his cape around himself to stave off the windy chill. He wanders off, babbling incoherently.

INT. SPOUTER INN -EVENING

A deserted anteroom. VOICES drift in from a rear dining room, its doorway framed by a huge whale jawbone.

Ishmael drops his satchel, removes his coat and hangs it on a rack. He stops to notice a painting on a dark wall. Trying to make out its massive center image, Ishmael draws closer to focus on the eye of a mammoth sperm whale:

A terrifying depiction of a monstrous leviathan, leaping over a ship's tall masts.

Ishmael is transfixed by it. A voice startles him:

COFFIN (O.S.)

Goin' to sea, are ye?

PETER COFFIN, the stout tavern owner, appears in the jawbone doorway and looks him over amusedly. Ishmael smiles eagerly and steps over to the inn counter.

ISHMAEL

Aye, that I am.

Moving behind the counter, Coffin turns the registration book around, takes a pen and dips it into an inkwell.

COFFIN

Ship's mate, I suppose?

ISHMAEL

No.

He takes the pen and signs his name, Coffin watching him.

COFFIN

A passenger, then?

ISHMAEL

Not very likely. A passenger needs a wallet, and that's just a slice of leather when

there's nothing in it.

COFFIN

A commodore, then? Or a cook?

Ishmael laughs. As if echoing him, a GUST OF LAUGHTER blows in from the dining room.

ISHMAEL

No, a simple sailor, jumping from spar to spar like a grasshopper in a May meadow... like a slave you might say, but who isn't a slave? Tell me that?

COFFIN

I suppose then you're goin' whalin'?

ISHMAEL

Aye! Might ye have a room then for a simple sailor, Mister...Coffin, is it?

COFFIN

Aye. If ye got no objection to sharin' a blanket with a simple harpooner.

ISHMAEL

Harpooner? Well...I'd rather put up with half any decent man's blanket than wander further on so bitter a night.

Another GALE OF LAUGHTER from the dining area. Ishmael peers curiously around the counter to see the doorway:

A room filled with bawdy, gruff-looking men. Standing close by the doorway is FLASK, a short, pugnacious mariner in a restless mood.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Could that be him, sir? The harpooner you mentioned?

COFFIN

No...that's Mister Flask, with the rest of the Grampus

crew. Just landed. Liquor's
already gone to their heads!

Flask quickly takes his leave and crosses the anteroom
toward the front door. Coffin chuckles at him:

COFFIN (cont'd)
Off lookin' to board another
ship, are ye, Flask?

Flask nods with a haughty sneer, glancing over Ishmael.
He swaggers out without a word.

COFFIN (cont'd)
Well, that's that. As I
expected. He's already sick
of solid ground. Burns his
feet, it does. Firm land,
I mean.

INT. SPOUTER INN HALLWAY -EVENING

Oil lamp in hand, Coffin leads Ishmael through a narrow,
twisty corridor of labyrinthine turns and steps.

Up three steps and down, around a corner and over another
set of steps, passing dim-lit doors. Coffin walks fast, Ishmael
struggling to keep up. As they pass one door...

A giggling, half-naked girl (one of Stubb's Doxies)
spills out. Stubb yanks her back inside, slams the door.

Ishmael pauses to look back, puzzling over their MUFFLED LAUGHTER.
Coffin glances back with a chortle.

COFFIN
That Mister Stubb ain't seen
a skirt in narry two years.
(waves him on)
Step lively, lad, I haven't
got all night.

INT. SPOUTER INN ROOM -EVENING

The door opens into a dark room with sparse furnishings
and a modest-sized bed. Coffin lights an oil lamp.

COFFIN
This whale oil's gettin' a

bit low. I'd best refill
it tomorrow...

Ishmael regards the bed ambivalently.

ISHMAEL

Seems a trifle small for two
grown men.

COFFIN

Well, if you're goin' to go
whalin', ye better get used
to that sort of thing. Why,
look at that bed! It's the
largest one in the house!
Sal and me slept in that bed
the night we were spliced.
Plenty of room...

ISHMAEL

Mind ye, I'm not complaining,
Mister Coffin...I'd just like
to know what kind of man I'd
be sharing it with.

COFFIN

Well, it's almost Sunday.
That harpooner likely anchored
somewhere else for the night.
Make yerself comfortable,
Mister...what's yer name?

Ishmael turns an innocent smile.

ISHMAEL

Call me...Ishmael.

Coffin nods and exits, closing the door behind him.
Ishmael gazes around the room. In a corner sits a
giant sea chest with mysterious, painted designs.
Pondering it, Ishmael takes off his boots and pants,
crawls under the bed's blanket and leans toward the
bedside oil lamp. He blows it out.

EXT. CAPTAIN AHAB'S HOME -NIGHT

Lightning illuminates a two-story brick house on the
outskirts of town. Lamplights burn behind the windows

of both floors.

Passing before the second-floor light, a man's shadow paces back and forth with feverish intensity.

INT. CAPTAIN AHAB'S HOME -NIGHT

A lamp casts a shuddery glow over a pale, haggard woman (AHAB'S WIFE) who sits before the dying embers of a hearth, wrapped in a woolen shawl. Close beside her sits a timid, 12-year-old boy (AHAB'S SON), slight of build with an angelic face.

Eyes turned to the ceiling, both listen apprehensively to a METHODIC, DRY THUNK on the wood floor upstairs, pacing relentlessly...the FOOTFALLS OF A PEG LEG.

A LOUD KNOCK at the door -- the two jump out of their skins. Upstairs, the PACING STOPS. Unmoving, the Wife stares at the door. A tense beat.

Another UNSETTLING KNOCK. The Wife nervously fingers her shawl. The Son sits rigidly. Both waiting...

ANGLE ON a staircase, the top half blocked from view by a wooden overhang. From the top of the stairs, a steady THUNK-CLOP, THUNK-CLOP. Finally, a foot steps down into view...then a white whale-bone peg leg. It descends slowly and painfully, as we see elaborate leather straps connecting it to a severed thigh.

The Wife and Son watch with fear, mesmerized.

On the staircase, a man's chest lowers into view... then the face of CAPTAIN AHAB. A face of fury and power, molded in bronze, eyes black as night. A long white scar streaks down from his bald crown to his collar. A fierce visage set in granite.

A third BOOMING KNOCK at the door. Ahab glances at his wife and child, his expression unchanged. The anxious-faced Wife trembles.

Dragging his peg leg to the door with agonizing THUNKS, Ahab opens it into the night...

An icy GUST sweeps inside -- the lamp flickers out, cinder sparks fly from the hearth!

Silhouetted against the harsh storm, FIVE GHOSTLY FIGURES fill the doorway. Their faces unseen, one with a turbaned head. A lightning flash gives us a quick glimpse -- sinister, demonic Arab faces.

EXT. NANTUCKET STREET -LATE NIGHT

Few lights are still burning, the storm died down. The street is obscured by fog.

A tall figure (QUEEQUEG) looms in the fog, carrying a lethal-looking harpoon like a shepherd's staff. He struts his way toward the Spouter Inn.

INT. SPOUTER INN ROOM -LATE NIGHT

In bed, Ishmael arouses from deep slumber, sensing something. Then he settles back to sleep.

INT. SPOUTER INN HALLWAY - LATE NIGHT

Viewed from Ishmael's door, the tall, ominous figure lumbers down the dark hall toward us.

INT. SPOUTER INN ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Ishmael is startled awake by a LOUD CREAK of the door. He peeks out of the covers. The tall figure enters and leans his immense harpoon gently against a wall, as if it were delicate china. He lights a small candle on a dresser.

A dark-skinned Polynesian, Queequeg's clean-shaved face is covered with strange, exotic tattoos. His face is ferocious-looking and yet tranquil, almost innocent in character. He pulls a satchel off his shoulder, opens it and takes out what vaguely resembles a doll's head.

Obscure in the dim light, Ishmael watches in awe.

It's a shrunken human head. Queequeg lifts it up to the candlelight and chants some indecipherable words to it.

Ishmael stares warily from his covers.

Queequeg abruptly stops his invocation, stuffs the head back into his satchel and moves the candle to the bedside table. He quickly undresses.

Ishmael can't take his eyes off the muscular, tattooed body -- as Queequeg leaps into the bed beside him.

Still unaware of Ishmael's presence, Queequeg produces a long tomahawk pipe, leans toward the candle, lights the pipe and sits back in bed, puffing serenely.

He rests his free hand down next to him...directly onto Ishmael's face.

Ishmael stiffens with fear. Queequeg freezes. Ishmael tries to jump out of bed -- but Queequeg grabs him by his nightshirt collar and firmly holds him down. He deftly wields his tomahawk, its blade against Ishmael's throat.

QUEEQUEG

Who de debel is you?! You
don't speak up, I kill-e!

Ishmael gapes up in strangled terror, gasping.

ISHMAEL

(cries out)

Landlord! Mister Coffin!

Queequeg's frown tightens, though somehow more curious than angry. He presses the blade of the tomahawk harder against Ishmael's throat and growls:

QUEEQUEG

Speak! Tell-ee me who ye be
or, dam-me, I kill-ee!

The door to the room flies open. Coffin steps quickly inside. An amused smile, as he feigns concern.

COFFIN

Look here, Queequeg, stop
that!

Queequeg turns his attention to Coffin, just long enough for Ishmael to wriggle away. Ishmael scrambles out of the bed, outraged, to Coffin:

ISHMAEL

Why didn't you tell me this...
 harpooner I'm sharing a bed
 with is a bleedin' CANNIBAL,
 for Christ's sake?!

Coffin pays no attention to Ishmael as he faces Queequeg.

COFFIN

Queequeg, listen to me...you
 sabbee me, I sabbee you, no?

Queequeg nods thoughtfully. He lights his tomahawk pipe,
 smoke enveloping his tattooed face.

COFFIN

This man sleep here in this
 bed. With you, you sabbee?

Queequeg nods again. He looks at Ishmael, who stares
 with open dismay at this immense Polynesian harpooner.

QUEEQUEG

Me sabbee plenty.
 (points at Ishmael)
 You get-ee in.

Ishmael glances at Coffin, who grins and nods at the
 bed. Queequeg, smiling good-heartedly, hands his pipe
 to Ishmael. Hesitating but more relaxed, Ishmael takes
 it and draws a mouthful of smoke. And promptly gags.
 Tears and coughing. Queequeg laughs, loud and hard.

EXT. NANTUCKET HARBOR DOCK -LATE NIGHT

The storm over, the harbor is silent and deathly still.
 The dock is dense with fog.

Amidst a dockside rubble of discarded sails, old Elijah
 half-sleeps fitfully, huddled under a filthy sailcloth, covered
 in frost.

GROUPED FOOTSTEPS startles him wide awake. Among them,
 the unmistakable SOUND of a PEG LEG STRIKING STONE.
 Elijah stares out with troubled dread:

Like apparitions of the night, six dark shapes materialize
 out of the fog and march toward a docked, three-masted

whaling ship. The Pequod. They strut inexorably up the gangplank, their central figure's STEPS bold and clear. THUNK-CLOP, THUNK-CLOP...

FADE OUT.

ACT 2

INT. SPOUTER INN ROOM -MORNING

Cold sunlight peeks into the room from the only window. Queequeg sleeps, his arm wrapped around Ishmael's chest. Ishmael lies awake, immobilized by Queequeg's unconscious embrace.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg!

A loud snore. Ishmael puts some serious effort into trying to liberate himself, to no avail.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

(louder)

Queequeg...wake up, ye big, savage oaf! In the name of goodness...WAKE UP!

He writhes, pushes and strains his way free of the giant harpooner, who slowly wakes. Ishmael drops his feet to the floor and shakes his head. To himself:

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Must be dreamin' of his savage wife, back in whatever savage place he escaped from!

Queequeg's eyes open. He grins at Ishmael, yawns and leaps out of bed with amazing agility.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Good morning to ye too, big king of the typhoon snore...

Ishmael stares with bewilderment at his brown torso, covered with tattoos from head to toe. Queequeg's grin is friendly, as though he were used to being gawked at.

INT. SPOUTER INN DINING ROOM -MORNING

A vast platter of steaming steaks is plopped down on a

large table by a stout, red-faced woman, SAL COFFIN.

As soon as the platter is on the table, the sharp spear of a harpoon stabs a fat cut of bloody red meat. Queequeg transfers the steak to his plate with quiet ceremony, the entire maneuver performed with exquisite gentleness and good manners. Setting aside his harpoon on the floor, he digs in.

Ishmael watches him, baffled. The rest of the men don't seem to have noticed anything unusual. They reach for meat and bread, far less politely, and noisily chow down. A brown and brawny bunch, Stubb and Flask among them. Ishmael glances behind him:

BULKINGTON, a handsome, stalwart seaman with a quiet reserve, sits at another table with his young, pretty FIANCEE. They talk in low voices, holding hands.

Ishmael turns back...the platter of steaks is almost empty. He takes the last cut, a small, overcooked portion. Studies it with resignation. He's about to cut into it, when his steak is removed by Sal...

She grins and presents him with a whole new platter piled high with fine, rare slices. Stubb and Flask chuckle at Ishmael. Sal gives them a stern look.

SAL

What're YOU laughin' at, ye chowder-headed bumpkins?!

(to Ishmael)

Eat, young man! No one here's in a more privileged position than any other. Ye haven't gone to sea yet, have ye? Out there a lowly sailor's got to wait for a second mate to help himself...

(pokes at Stubb)

...like this boobie here! Or he's got to wait for this greasy baboon of a third mate HERE!

She give Flask a nudge, knocking the cap off his head.

SAL (cont'd)

But not in MY establishment!

(back to Ishmael)

So eat, laddie! Eat!

ISHMAEL

Yes indeed, ma'am!

He reaches enthusiastically for the platter, Stubb and Flask laughing heartily at him.

Queequeg stabs up a steak with his harpoon and drops it on Ishmael's plate with a big grin. Ishmael smiles back, getting used to his new friend.

EXT. NANTUCKET STREET -DAY

A clear, crisp winter day on the now crowded street.

Ishmael and Queequeg emerge from the Spouter Inn, Ishmael pushing an old wheelbarrow piled up with his satchel and Queequeg's sea chest.

Puffing on his tomahawk, Queequeg reaches into his bag and produces the shrunken head. Ishmael reacts, glancing around self-consciously.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg, put that thing away! These good Nantucket Christians will take you for the devil himself.

QUEEQUEG

(puzzledly)

Why do-ee say?

ISHMAEL

For God's sake, it's a man's head! A very dead real man, too! Nantucketers don't carry the dead around in their bags! They bury 'em, don't ye know that?

QUEEQUEG

Aye! Nantucketers buy-em too, I tell-ee! For many coins!

However, Queequeg puts away the head. He withdraws a wooden statuette from his bag and gestures over it.

QUEEQUEG

Me Yojo tell-ee what ship

Queequeg and-ee ship out on!
 He sabbee! Yojo and-ee,
 sabbee?

Ishmael looks down at the statuette, then inquisitively
 at Queequeg.

ISHMAEL

You're sayin' your...Yojo
 wants ME to choose a ship?
 Is that what you mean?

QUEEQUEG

Aye.

ISHMAEL

Will ye be shippin' out with
 me then? Is that what you're
 trying to tell me, Queequeg?

Queequeg nods with a bright grin, his sharpened teeth
 white as snow. He reaches into his bag again and brings
 out a handful of coins. Dropping them unceremoniously
 to the ground, he stops and crouches there.

Ishmael stops and sets down the wheelbarrow, watching
 him curiously.

Queequeg divides the coins into two separate piles,
 pockets half of them, then stands and plops the other
 half into Ishmael's hand.

Ishmael doesn't understand, but Queequeg has already
 turned away to continue on down the street. Ishmael
 grabs the barrow and catches up to him.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg! Wait, stop...AVAST
 there, mate!

Queequeg stops and waits, puffing patiently on his pipe.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Listen, my friend...this is
 simply out of the question!
 What the devil is the matter
 with ye?!

A puzzled, hurt look from Queequeg.

QUEEQUEG

Ee don't want ship out wid
Queequeg?

Ishmael tries to hand the coins back to Queequeg, who ignores the gesture, waiting for an answer.

ISHMAEL

No...I mean yes, of course
I will! What I mean is...
YOU'RE better suited to pick
out a whaler best fitted to
carry us, not I.

(pushes coins back)

And I shall certainly not
take your money!

Not looking at the coins, Queequeg thoughtfully exhales smoke, trying to understand.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Listen, Queequeg...I fear I
must make a confession.

(leans closer)

I used to be a school teacher.
D'ye know what that is?

QUEEQUEG

Aye. Missionary.

ISHMAEL

Well, not exactly. What I'm
tryin' to say is...I never
jumped a spar in my life.

QUEEQUEG

Ishmael no sailor?

ISHMAEL

(embarrassed)

Aye. Me no sailor. It's
just, ye see...I have this
burnin' desire to go to sea.

Queequeg grins, understanding perfectly. He pats the satchel with utter confidence.

QUEEQUEG

Yojo sabbee. Ishmael pick
ship.

He takes over the wheelbarrow and pushes on. Ishmael catches up with him, and the two stride together toward the port. Ishmael smiles, feeling better now. Queequeg SINGS a lyrical Polynesian TUNE to himself, smiling aside at LOCAL CHILDREN, who gawk up at him as he passes by.

EXT. NANTUCKET DOCK -DAY

At the bustling dockside, the Pequod is being fitted for a long voyage.

EXT. PEQUOD (DOCKED) - DAY

A short, bent SHIP'S CARPENTER with a wrinkled face oversees the loading of lumber. His body is wracked with arthritis, but for his powerful arms and hands.

An old, grizzled SHIP'S COOK watches, as DOCKHANDS carry food stores and water barrels on deck.

By his side is PIP (12), a black cabin boy of small stature with a playful face. Merry as a cricket and bright as a cherub. He toys with a tambourine as he watches the bustle of activity. A cheerful presence, clearly appreciated by the men at work.

Overseeing the loading operation from an old wicker chair by the gangplank is a heavy-set, retired captain, PELEG, dressed in the Quaker style. He watches with sharp-eyed care at every passing item, writing them down on a thick ledger.

The SOUND of Queequeg's powerful CHANTING VOICE wafts over the dock. SHIP'S CREWMEN steal glances at the curious duo down below, as they approach.

EXT. NANTUCKET DOCK - DAY

Queequeg ceases his chanting, scanning the contours of the Pequod's tall masts. Ishmael looks up with him, studying the old vessel with admiration and curiosity.

ISHMAEL

It's an old ship...preparing
for a long voyage, I gather.

QUEEQUEG

Aye. She be long-seasoned
ship.

ISHMAEL

And covered with whale teeth!

Their eyes lower to the deck, where each bulwark is decorated with the long sharp teeth of sperm whales, some used for fastening ropes. Queequeg nods, but says nothing. Ishmael ponders the whole ship.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

There's something a bit...
melancholy about her, if
you ask me.

As if to contradict him, Pip PLAYS his tambourine and hums in a light, angelic voice. Queequeg smiles at him, some vague brotherly connection between them.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Well...I suppose Yojo's made
our choice for us.

He musters courage and struts up the gangplank, trying to look swarthy. Queequeg waits on the dock, smoking and leaning on his harpoon, still assessing the Pequod.

EXT. PEQUOD (DOCKED) -DAY

Ishmael stops before Peleg, who barely acknowledges him.

ISHMAEL

Beg pardon, sir? Might this
be the Captain?

Peleg stops writing and faces Ishmael with a closed expression.

PELEG

Supposing it be. What d'ye
want with him?

ISHMAEL

I was thinking of shippin'.

Peleg frowns and looks him over critically.

PELEG

You're no Nantucketer. What d'ye know about whaling?

ISHMAEL

Nothing, sir, but I want to see what whaling is. I want to see the world.

PELEG

(laughs at that)

Can't you see the world from where ye stand, young man? You want to see what whaling is, do ye? Are ye man enough to pitch a harpoon down a live whale's throat, then jump after it? Well, I'll tell ye this much: there's death in this business, and it can bundle a man quite quickly into eternity. Does that frighten ye?

ISHMAEL

No sir, it does not.

PELEG

I see. Then have ye clapped eyes yet on Captain Ahab?

A ripple of discreet CHUCKLING from the crewmen nearby. Pip taps his tambourine forbodingly. Ishmael's puzzled but remains undaunted.

ISHMAEL

Captain Ahab, sir? Who is Captain Ahab?

BILDAD, another older gentleman, appears from below deck. As thin as Peleg is round, he glances over Ishmael with a dry, tight-lipped expression.

BILDAD

"Who is Ahab?" Who is THIS, Peleg?

PELEG

He says he's our man, Bildad!
He wants to ship!

BILDAD

Do ye, now?

ISHMAEL

I do! Yessir!

BILDAD

His lungs are sort of soft.
(to Ishmael)
Captain Ahab is the captain
of this ship, young fellow.

ISHMAEL

But I thought I WAS speakin'
to the Captain, sir.

PELEG

You're speaking to Captain
Bildad. I'm Captain Peleg.
We own this fine specimen,
and it's our job to see to
it that she's fitted out
with all her needs...
(a doubtful look)
Including, sir, a crew with
goodly experience.

Frustrated that he's failing this interview , Ishmael
glances back toward Queequeg for support.

EXT. NANTUCKET DOCK - DAY

Queequeg sits on the wheelbarrow of their belongings, obliviously
smoking his tomahawk pipe.

EXT. PEQUOD (DOCKED) - DAY

On his own, Ishmael turns back to Peleg.

ISHMAEL

Where IS this Captain Ahab,

sir?

PELEG

What do ye want with him?

ISHMAEL

To see him. I'd like to...
see him.

The men at work now slow their pace, eavesdropping. Pip rattles his tambourine at an ominous tempo, until the Cook gestures him to cease.

PELEG

That's highly unlikely. He won't always see me, so I rather doubt he'll see you! A strange man, he is indeed...

(to Bildad)

A great, ungodly, god-like man, I'd say.

BILDAD

Aye, but above the common.

PELEG

(to Ishmael)

He doesn't speak much...but when he does, you'd do well to listen.

A huge shadow crosses over them. Peleg and Bildad fall silent as they look up.

Queequeg towers over them, standing behind Ishmael with his harpoon. He nods at Ishmael, encouraging him to introduce him. Ishmael understands.

ISHMAEL

This is my friend Queequeg. He wants to ship, too.

Both the captains look Queequeg over with some dismay. Everyone on board turns to regard this tattooed giant.

PELEG

"Quohog"? Doesn't look like much of a Christian to me.

ISHMAEL

Why, he's killed more whales
than you can count...

Queequeg rests a hand on his shoulder to stop him. He coolly faces the captains and points at a small, dark knothole on the farthest mast.

QUEEQUEG

Cap'n, ee see him small dark
spot on mastwood there? Ee
see him? Well, s'pose him
one whale eye! Well, den...

He raises the harpoon and effortlessly darts it...

An Olympic throw across the deck -- past Bildad's nose, over the Cook's head -- a bull's eye into the mast target! The big iron quivers mightily.

Queequeg playfully hauls at the harpoon line and gives the two shocked captains a broad grin.

QUEEQUEG (cont'd)

Dat whale dead!

A silent beat. Bildad turns excitedly to his partner.

BILDAD

Quick, Peleg, quick, get the
ship's papers! We must have
Quohog here, I mean Hedgehog,
whatever his name is!

Peleg scrambles for a ledger, opens it up. He extends a pen to Queequeg, anxious for him to sign.

PELEG

Look here...we'll give you
one-ninetieth percent, that's
a higher cut of the ship's
whale-oil cargo than we've
ever given any harpooner!
So what say ye?

QUEEQUEG

What be about me friend?

PELEG

Oh, all right then...we'll
 sign him on too.
 (to Ishmael)
 But you earn only a fifth of
 what HE gets!

Ishmael and Queequeg exchange pleased grins.

EXT. NANTUCKET DOCK -DAY

Ishmael and Queequeg stride back down the dock, their
 belongings left behind. Both in high spirits.

VOICE

Hist! Shipmates!

Distracted by a craggy voice behind them, the two slow
 their pace and glance around.

Elijah, the demented old man from last night, beckons
 them from inside the open doorway of a blacksmith shed.

ELIJAH (cont'd)

Shipmates! Come hither!

Ishmael and Queequeg stop and regard him curiously.
 He beckons them frantically. They venture closer.

INT. BLACKSMITH SHED - DAY

A shadowy, deserted place. Blacksmith tools hang
 like ancient weapons. Half in the sunlight of the
 doorway, Ishmael and Queequeg face Elijah, who
 remains in shadow.

ISHMAEL

What d'ye want, old man?

The ragged old codger looks them both over like a man possessed.
 In a harsh, broken breath:

ELIJAH

Have ye shipped in that
 ship then, have ye?!

Ishmael trades looks with Queequeg, who regards Elijah
 more with apprehension than curiosity.

ISHMAEL

The Pequod? Why yes, we've just signed the articles.

ELIJAH

The articles, eh? Anything in there about your SOULS?!

Fire in his eyes, as if this were a revelation.

ELIJAH (cont'd)

No? Perhaps you haven't got any!? No matter! I know plenty of men haven't got a soul -- good luck to 'em! Better off for it, some of 'em! A soul's sort of a fifth wheel to a wagon, don't ye think?

ISHMAEL

What're ye jabberin' about?

Elijah gestures outside with great flourish.

ELIJAH

Oh, but HE's got enough to make up for the rest of us... plenty more than enough!

ISHMAEL

Let's go, Queequeg. This fellow's broken loose from his moorings...

ELIJAH

I'm tellin' ye about OLD THUNDER! Haven't seen Old Thunder yet, have you?

ISHMAEL

Who's Old Thunder?

ELIJAH

Captain Ahab! Ye haven't seen him yet, have ye?

Queequeg shakes his head slowly. Ishmael looks away, exasperated. Elijah cackles maniacally.

ELIJAH

No, I didn't think so! Did they tell ye about him?

ISHMAEL

I know all I need to know.

ELIJAH

All about it, eh? You sure now? But is all ye need to know ever enough, I ask you!?

Ishmael starts to leave, but Queequeg detains him.

ELIJAH (cont'd)

So you've shipped then, have ye? Names down on paper? Well, what's to be will be... then again perhaps it won't! Anyhow, it's all fixed, all been arranged! Has been for a long time!

ISHMAEL

What? What's been fixed? What're ye blatherin' about?

ELIJAH

The prophecy, mate! The prophecy of the PEQUOD! All aboard her will perish, save one man! All but one!

Ishmael frowns at the old lunatic, fed up with this nonsense. Queequeg stares, frozen in place.

ELIJAH (cont'd)

Didn't know THAT, did ye, mates?! Did ye?! Did ye?!

ISHMAEL

Come along, Queequeg. Let's leave this fool to his ravings.

Queequeg can't take his eyes off Elijah, a hint of fear in his eyes. Ishmael tugs at Queequeg, and they leave Elijah cackling at them from the shed doorway.

ELIJAH

All but one! All but one!

EXT. NANTUCKET DOCK - DAY

They exit the blacksmith shed and move on toward town. Ishmael looks a bit disturbed but tries not to show it. Queequeg is deeply perturbed. Ishmael notices this and jostles him.

ISHMAEL

Don't take it to heart, he's just some crazy old loon...

QUEEQUEG

Ishmael? What be a soul?

ISHMAEL

A soul? Well, that's a difficult question...

He hears a CHURCH BELL RINGING in the distance.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Ye believe in God, Queequeg? Y'know...like a big chief over all men?

QUEEQUEG

Like Yojo.

ISHMAEL

I reckon so, but bigger than that. Like a captain of the stars.

He notices TOWNSPEOPLE moving toward a white clapboard church with a tall steeple. Thinking to himself.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

I can't really explain it to ye...but I can SHOW ye.

EXT. NANTUCKET CHURCH -DAY

Ishmael and Queequeg approach the church. Queequeg stops before it, hesitating. He's never been inside one before, and it unnerves him a little.

ISHMAEL

It's just a house of God,
 Queequeg...OUR god, that is.
 (urges him on)
 Trust me. Ye can learn all
 about the soul here.

Queequeg nods, trusting him implicitly. They move on.

INT. CHURCH -DAY

A CONGREGATION is gathered in pews, facing a pulpit unlike any other -- built to exactly replicate the bow of a ship. Its towering platform forms the mock ship's sharp prow.

Ishmael and Queequeg enter quietly and take a rear seat, Queequeg drawing stares.

Among the worshippers sits STARBUCK (30's), a sharp, good-looking, experienced seaman with a pragmatic way about him, full of watchful curiosity. Beside him, his seasoned WIFE and TWO beautiful CHILDREN. Nearby sit Bulkington and his Fiancee, their hands clenched tight. Starbuck's Wife glances toward Bulkington's bride: the girl looks tense and anxious.

Up front sits Ahab's weary Wife, red-eyed from long nights of tears. And her son, a fixed, distant gaze.

From the high pulpit looms FATHER MAPPLE, a patronly, messiah-like figure.

In the rear pews, Ishmael recognizes the minister and nudges Queequeg, whispering aside.

ISHMAEL

That's Father Mapple. I hear
 he used to be a harpooner.

Father Mapple scans the scattered gathering before him with a furrowed brow and waves them all closer. With a deep, penetrating voice:

MAPPLE

Come closer, shipmates! You
 there, side away to larboard!
 And you, gangway to starboard!

Midship! Midship!

A rustle of feet, as everyone quickly rises and takes new seats closer to the pulpit. Father Mapple waits as they settle down. He lifts his closed eyes, as if praying from the bottom of the sea. Then looks down, every word like God's commandment:

MAPPLE (cont'd)

The Book of Jonah! First chapter, last verse -- look down and read it, mates!
"And God had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah!"

Below him, the SOUND of pages turning, MUTED MUMBLINGS.

MAPPLE (cont'd)

The Lord called upon Jonah to cry out against wickedness, but instead Jonah fled from God's command! WHY? Why did he willfully disobey God? Because he thought it was too HARD!

The congregation stops turning pages, everyone mesmerized by the resonance of his voice.

MAPPLE (cont'd)

TOO HARD! Why, everything God commands us to do is hard! That is why He commands more often than He tries to persuade! He knows that if we obey Him, we DISOBEY OURSELVES! That is hard! It is hard because we cannot flee from his command, as Jonah tried to do...hard because God is everywhere and there is no hope of escaping Him!

(dramatic pause)

Now, imagine poor Jonah... prowling among ships like a burglar, rushing to cross the seas and escape from his God! But how could he do so? By thinking that a ship made by

men will carry him to places
where God does not reign?!

Ahab's Wife listens, as if these words were directed
at her. Tears stream down her face.

MAPPLE (cont'd)

And now the time of tide has
come. The ship casts off her
lines and sets away on the
great, wide ocean. But the
sea rebels! Oh, and the wind!
Every sail tears, every plank
thunders with trampling feet!

(beat)

But Jonah does not see the
black sky nor the raging sea
all around him! He does not
see it -- he does not CARE!

Ishmael and Queequeg listen, entranced. So too does
Starbuck and his family.

MAPPLE (cont'd)

The God-fugitive is plainly
known to all on board, and
so they blame HIM for the
tempest upon them! So they
lift up Jonah like an anchor
and drop him into the sea!

MAPPLE (cont'd)

(booming stormily)

And God comes upon him in a
MIGHTY WHALE! Clamps all his
ivory teeth about him! Then
swallows him whole into the
belly of hell -- and dives
ten thousand fathoms down to
living GULFS OF DOOM!

The men wince, the wives cringe in vicarious horror.
The children hide their faces in their parent's arms.

Having made his effect, Father Mapple softens his voice:

MAPPLE (cont'd)

To the watery world of woe.
There among the ocean bottom's

bones did Jonah cry out his
 repentance. And God in that
 whale breached and vomited
 out Jonah upon the land. And
 ever after, Jonah preached the
 truth in the face of falsehood,
 against the proud commodores
 of this earth, and stood forth
 his inexorable self!

He turns to every face in the congregation, appealing to
 each one, beseeching them.

MAPPLE (cont'd)

Shipmates, my brethren of the
 sea...hear me. Delight to him
 who gives no quarter in the
 truth. But woe to him who would
 NOT be true, even though to be
 false would be his salvation!

Over this, we feature the faces of Starbuck, listening
 with grave understanding...Ahab's wife, eyes clenched
 in grief...and finally Ishmael and Queequeg. The
 Christian and the pagan, trying to fathom the words.

MAPPLE (cont'd)

Brothers, let us pray...
 (his eyes closed)
 Dear heavenly father, may we
 strive to be thine, more than
 to be this world's or our own.
 For what is a man that he should
 not live out the lifetime of
 his God?

A long silence over the congregation.

FADE OUT.

ACT 3

EXT. NANTUCKET BAY - DAY

The distant Pequod sets sail out of the harbor beneath a
 dramatic sky. She passes the headlands, bound for sea.

EXT. NANTUCKET HEADLANDS - DAY

The tiny figures of women hasten to the top of the great black cliffs.

EXT. CLIFF PROMONTORY - DAY

NANTUCKET WIVES in their bleak dresses and shawls run in scattered groups to a high vantage point. They collect together on the promontory, all eyes cast seaward to catch a last glimpse of their husbands' dwindling ship.

Among them is Starbuck's Wife, a face of sad remorse. Stubb's two Doxies, gushing tears. Ahab's grieving Wife, who has no more tears left to cry. All bear the look of women who have become widows in their men's lifetimes.

Standing alone, Bulkington's Fiancee gazes forlornly out, hugging herself with anxious dread. Starbuck's Wife approaches and lays a comforting arm around her.

From their view, the Pequod shrinks into the horizon.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

The magnificent Pequod drives to windward, her great sails full to bursting. She plunges through the big swells of choppy Atlantic waters.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) -MIDDECK/QUARTERDECK - DAY

A pitching deck, alive with activity. Sailors scurry about, climbing ladders, reefing sails, trimming yards under the calm commands of First Mate Starbuck.

STARBUCK

Back the main yard there!
Up helm! Hearts alive now!

Struggling on a taut halyard from middeck, Ishmael pulls with difficulty. Queequeg pulls with powerful ease.

Third Mate Flask, pulling rank to make up for his low stature and ignorance, shouts at those on the rope.

FLASK

Pull, ye monkeys, or by gor
I'll give ye a good sea toss!

He turns on Ishmael who stops, his soft hands blistering.

FLASK (cont'd)
Go to it, landlubber, pull!
Flukes and flames, boy, are
ye that green in the gills?!

ISHMAEL
Not that green, sir!

He keeps pulling, despite the pain. Queequeg gives Flask a surly look.

FLASK
What're YOU lookin' at, ye
dumb, painted savage?!

Second Mate Stubb leans over the quarterdeck bannister, smoking a proverbial short black pipe.

STUBB
Lookin' at a dumber one, I'd
say!

He laughs and turns, calling to a lookout high aloft.

STUBB (cont'd)
Ho! Masthead there! Look
sharp! We'll be sightin' for
whales from sunup to sundown!
If ye see one, split yer
lungs, d'ye hear?!

EXT. MASTS - DAY

High on the topgallant mast stands harpooner TASHTEGO, an American Indian with long hair and the noble face of a warrior hunter. A muscled giant like Queequeg.

Climbing a swaying rope ladder in the breeze is another harpooner DAGOO, a coal-black barbarian with huge gold loops in his ears. Another giant.

A strong gust of wind hits the sails. The men react immediately, scrambling over spars like nimble spiders.

STARBUCK (O.S.)

Hands by the halyards! In
top-gallant sails! Stand by
to reef topsails!

STUBB (O.S.)
Jump, my jollies!

Dagoo and others tumble toward the topmasts, among them Bulkington. The two men taunt each other good-naturedly as they go about their dangerous business, shouting between masts:

BULKINGTON
The squall! Jump the squall!
Lend me yer earring, Dagoo,
so I can secure this sail!

DAGOO
Come and get it, white skin!

Both laugh, as they climb right over the canvas of the billowing sails.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

The halyard pulling stops. Ishmael nurses his palms and staggers across the heaving deck, a bit seasick.

A ship's boom swings across the deck, about to broadside him -- Queequeg yanks him out of the way. Both topple across the deck together. Stubb bellows a laugh.

STUBB
One hand for the ship, Mister
Ishmael, one hand for yerself!

Ishmael rises to his feet, nods his thanks to Queequeg, humiliated but keeping his pride. To Stubb:

ISHMAEL
Aye, aye, sir. But I don't
think it's proper to make
jest of another man's peril.

STUBB
Aye, but you're wrong! It's
laughter that's the final
consequence of everything!
The only comfort a man has,

and the wisest one!

ISHMAEL

The easiest, you mean.

Stubb leaps down from the quarterdeck and claps him on the shoulder with a hard but friendly whack.

STUBB

The ONLY comfort, shipmate,
and the wisest, I tell you!
Wise Stubb, that's what they
call me -- and that's because,
whatever happens, I go to it
laughing!

Another bellowing laugh. Ishmael nods, accepting that. Flask joins them, hard-eying Ishmael as he faces Stubb.

FLASK

Just don't ever let fightin'
FLASK catch ye laughin' at
'im, Stubb!

(nods at Ishmael)

So what're we goin' to do
with this pup?

(to Ishmael)

Yer own mother would make a
better sailor.

ISHMAEL

I'm tryin' my best, sir.

Flask picks up a bucket and tosses it roughly to him.

FLASK

Then try this! Swab the deck,
since that's all yer good for.

Ishmael resigns himself to it. Pip dances by, banging cheerily on his tambourine, lifting Ishmael's spirits.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

By the deckhouse, Starbuck watches all that goes on around him. He glances toward the closed door of the Captain's cabin. No Ahab in sight. He calls out:

STARBUCK

Mister Bulkington! Give us
a good song to speed us on!

Alighting down on deck, Bulkington turns with reserved manner. Then BELTS OUT a song with unexpected relish:

BULKINGTON

In the Indian Ocean, Pacific
Ocean, no matter what ocean:
pull ahead, yo heave O! Soon
ye'll hear the cry "Town O!"

The whole crew joins in, as they work from deck to masts.

CREWMEN

"There she blows, hard up,
square the yards then, steady,
lads, so!" cries the Captain.
Soon as we get near boys, in
with the gear, boys, swing the
crane clear, boys, pull ahead
now, yo heave O!

Swabbing the deck on his knees, Ishmael winces from his bruised hands but manages a smile and sings awkwardly along. Queequeg kneels down and joins him at washing the deck. Singing too.

Nearby, the arthritic Carpenter drills a short hole in the planking. Ishmael watches him, noticing other holes all around the deck in random places.

ISHMAEL

What're those holes for, sir?

CARPENTER

Captain's orders -- mind yer
own business!

Taken back by that, Ishmael keeps swabbing. He gazes up toward the Captain's cabin door with ambivalent curiosity. Toiling beside him, Queequeg follows Ishmael's eyes.

QUEEQUEG

Ship wid no cap'n. Yojo no
sabbee dis.

Stubb passes by. Ishmael rises to rest his hands.

ISHMAEL

Mister Stubb, sir? Will he ever make an appearance, do ye suppose? Ahab, I mean?

STUBB

Your guess is as good as mine.

ISHMAEL

Will we see a whale soon, I wonder?

STUBB

We will and ye'll soon not forget it! Ye haven't lived, young monkey, 'til you've raised a whale!

He moves on. Ishmael stares out over the rolling sea.

INT. FORECASTLE -NIGHT

Cramped, claustrophobic crews' quarters. Walls of bunks around dining tables, all too small for some thirty men. A rowdy, sweaty atmosphere, oil lamps swinging.

Motley crewmen queue before a steaming turrine at a Parsons table, as the Cook ladles chowder into their bowls. Two of them, PERTH and DOUGH-BOY, examine their bowls of watery stew with disgust.

PERTH

Blast! Chowder for breakfast, chowder for supper...

DOUGH-BOY

This swill ain't fit for a dog!

COOK

Mind yer tongue, swabby, or I'll cut it off and add it to the pot!

He brandishes a formidable kitchen knife. Then fills a bowl for the Carpenter, who nods slyly at a big beetle skittering across the turrine table.

CARPENTER

Add that, Cook -- mebbe it'll
improve the flavor.

The others laugh. Sneering sourly at him, the Cook jabs down his knife to kill the insect. He misses. The Carpenter whips out a hammer and swings down -- WHACK! Bull's eye. He grins at the pouting Cook.

The men take their bowls to a dining table. The Carpenter plops down beside the BLACKSMITH, a begrimed old salt with burn scars all over his flesh. Perth and Dough-Boy sit next to them.

PERTH

Say, carpenter, where d'ye
keep your rum these days? I'm
itchin' for a taste.

CARPENTER

What rum? It's against ship's
orders, ye know that.

Nearby, Ishmael straddles a bench with Queequeg, who swaths Ishmael's raw, bleeding hands with cloth strips.

PERTH

Lookit them two lovebirds...
(to Ishmael)
Careful with your hand, mate,
your slave there might be
mistakin' it for supper!

Queequeg turns with noble dignity.

QUEEQUEG

Queequeg no slave. Queequeg
son to island king.

The other two laugh at that. Perth bows mockingly.

PERTH

Oh, a thousands pardons, your
Majesty!

DOUGH-BOY

Hail to the prince of savages!

Two brawny hulks sit opposite them: red Tashtego and black Dago, giving them looks to kill. Perth and

Dough-Boy turn to their stew, suddenly quiet.

Ishmael looks at Queequeg as he finishes bandaging.

ISHMAEL

You pagans need to teach us
Christians the art of kindness.

QUEEQUEG

No matter. Queequeg-ee be
friends, aye? Queequeg hungry!

ISHMAEL

Aye! Grub ho!

They rise and wend their way to the Cook's turrine.

Stubb and Flask enter. The men's rabble rousing settles
down to a respectful lull.

STUBB

At ease, ye sons of bachelors!
We ain't the Capt'n, after all.

TASHTEGO

What capt'n? He don't exist.

Stubb and Flask observes Ishmael with his swathed hands, holding
his bowl with great difficulty as the Cook
ladles out stew.

STUBB

You're in a sad pickle, lad.

FLASK

What say we open some grog
to quell his growin' pains?

STUBB

Not without permission from
the Capt'n.

FLASK

To hell with permission...
He makes for the Carpenter's bunk and kicks open a tool
box -- revealing a hidden rum bottle. Flask snatches it
up. The Carpenter jumps up, alarmed.

CARPENTER

See here! That's my medicine!

FLASK

Potent medicine, I'll wager...

He pops out the cork with his teeth and starts to take a swig -- Stubb grabs it away from him.

STUBB

No medicine for you, Flask!
Let's christen our new pup...
(to Ishmael)
Come here, me boy! This'll
cure ye...

Ishmael turns, gingerly holding his bowl. Stubb pours rum over his bandaged hands. Ishmael drops the bowl -- screams in pain! Stubb pushes the bottle at him.

STUBB (cont'd)

Quick! Drink, lad, it'll
kill the pain...

Agonizing, Ishmael grabs the bottle with hot hands and takes a quick, deep swig. He spits out a mouthful and gasps, his insides burning worse than his hands.

STUBB (cont'd)

Go on -- take another! Ye
may be dry for a long spell
to come!

Looking around at the mates GOADING him on, Ishmael takes the challenge. He chugalugs from the bottle.

FLASK

Aye! That's the manly way!

Aloof on his bunk in b.g., Bulkington watches them.

STUBB

Well done, sailor!

Ishmael can't speak, his breath on fire, sinking faintly on a bench. Queequeg pounds his back to revive him.

The others eye the bottle, anxious for a taste. Their grubby hands grope for it, but Flask pushes them back.

FLASK

Easy, this ain't for you...

(to Ishmael)

Go to it, pup! Drink to yer
first whale kill!

Woozy Ishmael downs another healthy swallow, getting
used to the burn. Getting drunk.

The men laugh and urge him on, their MERRIMENT rising
in pitch, until...

In b.g. comes a familiar THUNK-CLOP, THUNK-CLOP...

STUBB

Hist! Cut your seizings!

The crew falls silent, eyes on the swaying ceiling.
The RHYTHMIC THUNK-CLOP of a pacing peg leg on deck.
Then it stops. A long, quiet beat between the men.
Stubb turns to Ishmael, in a low voice:

STUBB (cont'd)

He lost that leg to a whale,
is what I heard. Devoured,
it was! Chewed up by the
most monstrous fish that
ever chipped a boat!

FLASK

Aye...a terrifyin' creature,
they say, and fearful angry!

STUBB

Well, no whale's ever happy
to be hunted. I wouldn't want
any man in my boat who ain't
afraid of 'em.

FLASK

An' I don't want any who are!

(to Ishmael)

Why, I've lowered for a sperm
whale from a leaking ship in
a gale off Cape Horn!

Weaving drunkenly, Ishmael listens fascinated.

ISHMAEL

What about Captain Ahab?

STUBB

Ahab? He's hunted more whales
than all of us put together.

FLASK

Killed fifteen of 'em between
a sunrise and a sunset!

ISHMAEL

What of the whale that took
his leg? Did he kill it too?

STUBB

Bulkington would know. He
was there.

All faces turn to Bulkington, far removed in his bunk.

FLASK

Tell us, mate! Tell us what
happened to the Capt'n?

STUBB

Aye, spin us a yarn!

Everyone waits with anticipation. Bulkington just
stares at the ceiling, then replies with finality:

BULKINGTON

I don't wish to speak of it.

He says no more, the others groaning disappointedly.
Ishmael keeps drinking, plowed under. Stubb turns to
him, feeding his imagination.

STUBB

I'll tell ye this much, pup.
A good-sized sperm whale can
ram, shiver and sink a ship
in a matter of seconds!

FLASK

Aye -- even a Man o' War!

TASHTEGO

An' dey thirst for human

blood!

STUBB

Why, sharks are so a-feared
of 'em, they dash themselves
into rocks just to flee a
whale's wake!

Drunken Ishmael listens with wide-eyed terror. Pip dances around the quarters, breaking the tension.

PIP

Crish, crash! Blang-whang!
I've heard all that chat now!
Makes me jingle all over!

THUNK-CLOP, more pacing above deck. Pip stops. A dead pause among the crew, all eyes turned upward.

The PEG LEG paces ceaselessly. Back and forth, back and forth.

FADE OUT.

ACT 4

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - MORNING

A bright, cloudless day. The Pequod sails along on a calm sea.

INT. FORECASTLE - MORNING

In his bunk, groggy-eyed Ishmael awakens. A splitting hangover. He sits up painfully with his bandaged hands and focuses on the bustle of men around him:

Deckhands wash and dress, preparing for the morning watch. Queequeg shaves before a shard of mirror with the razor edge of his harpoon.

A sailor has his head down on a bench, the Carpenter about to pierce his ear with a nail and hammer.

Ishmael rises and shuffles to a wash bin, holding his aching head. He winces to the RAP of a hammer -- and a sailor's SCREAM.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) -MIDDECK - MORNING

Starbuck and Stubb are on watch, gauging the wind and the luff of the sails. Starbuck shouts up:

STARBUCK

Helm there! Luff a point!

The SHIP'S STEWARD rings a bell for the morning watch. Stubb booms down into the forecandle:

STUBB

First watch! All hands on deck! Come along, ye solemn rogues, cease your preening!

The rest of the crew spill onto the deck, hastening to their duties. Stubb grins at a hung-over Ishmael, shouting close:

STUBB (cont'd)

You're on morning lookout, sailor! Get aloft!

Ishmael grimaces. Nursing sore hands, he looks up apprehensively at the towering masthead.

Queequeg steps between them.

QUEEQUEG

Beg-ee pardon, sir! Queequeg go aloft!

STUBB

Nay, every man takes his turn.

He whacks Ishmael's aching back, a quick laugh.

STUBB (cont'd)

This mother's boy has got to earn his salt! Hop to it!

ISHMAEL

Aye, aye, sir...

Steeling himself, Ishmael takes the first rungs of the

rope ladder with swathed hands and painfully hoists himself up. He climbs up slowly, unaccustomed to the wide rungs.

STUBB

Jump to it! Legs, man, legs!

EXT. MAST - MORNING

Ishmael climbs faster with all his strength, the ladder swaying in the wind. The higher he climbs, the more the ship seems to pitch and toss. He looks down:

A dizzying view of a tiny deck, blue sea all around.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

Queequeg waves to urge him on. By now, most of the crew are watching Ishmael's virgin climb. Starbuck sidles over beside Stubb with amusement and concern.

STARBUCK

You are a cruel taskmaster,
Mister Stubb.

STUBB

Aye, but we'll make a seaman
of him yet.

EXT. TOPMAST - MORNING

High aloft, Ishmael braves it to the topgallant mast. The lookout top under his feet are two thin sticks, a hundred feet above deck. Like standing on weaving stilts. Ishmael perches himself, holding on for dear life. He's made it.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

The crew CHEERS. Grinning Stubb shouts up:

STUBB

Keep your weather eye open
and look sharp!

EXT. TOPMAST - MORNING

Towering over vast ocean, Ishmael forgets his pain and scans the magnificent vista. An exhilarating experience.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

Men busy at work. Flask tosses Pip his tambourine.

FLASK

Give us some cheer, Pip!
Bang it, rig it, make fire
flies and rattle our teeth!

Pip plays it and dances a fast jig, skipping merrily around the middeck, toward the quarter deck...then suddenly stops. His eyes fix on an unsettling sight.

Starbuck, Stubb, Flask, all deckhands cease their duties and fall silent. Staring in Pip's direction:

EXT. QUARTERDECK - MORNING

Captain Ahab looms high before the deckhouse. A godlike figure in bronze, braced against the wind. With his peg leg and white scar on his face, he's a frightening sight.

Flanked behind him are the five Arabs we glimpsed at the outset, dressed in strange attire. FEDALLAH, the turbaned one, sports a sinister, dark-eyed face with an ugly smile of broken teeth. Ahab's personal harpooner, his shadow.

Ahab glares down at the men scattered around the middeck, searching their faces.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

Everyone faces him, silent and still. The three ship's mates draw close together, their voices low:

STUBB

Who are them funny-lookin'
boys with the Capt'n?

STARBUCK

Stowaways, it looks like.

FLANK

I don't like the look of 'em.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - MORNING

Scanning faces, Ahab finally spots Starbuck. He hobbles vigorously forward with a fixed glare.

AHAB

Mister Starbuck!

STARBUCK

Sir!

AHAB

Send everybody aft, Mister Starbuck! Everybody, y'hear?!

STARBUCK

Yessir! All hands aft!

Ahab THUNK-CLOPS along the bannister, glancing aloft.

AHAB

Mastheads up there! Come down!

EXT. MASTS - MORNING

The men on the yards descend quickly, sliding down sails and halyard ropes.

High on his perch, Ishmael climbs down urgently, no longer afraid, anxious to get below.

EXT. AFT DECK - MORNING

Ahab climbs down and paces the deck with a familiar PEG-LEG SOUND. A restless, dark-spirited figure.

Starbuck comes before him, followed by the crew.

STARBUCK

All men assembled, Captain!

Ahab keeps pacing, deep in thought.

Looking on, Stubb whispers aside to Flask.

STUBB

Look at him, Flask, there's
something like a chick in
him, peckin' at his shell,
fightin' to get out!

FLASK

Maybe he's got us all here
to show us how well he
walks on one leg.

The last to arrive, Ishmael cranes his neck behind the others to get a better view of the Captain.

Ahab stops pacing and plants a whalebone peg into one of the Carpenter's deck holes, rooting himself. He faces the crew. A deep, throaty resonance, loud and forceful:

AHAB

What do ye do when ye see a
WHALE, men?!

The men look momentarily puzzled. Then, a tentative chorus:

CREWMEN

Sing out...sing out for him!

A beat, then Ahab's glare dissolves away to a slow but infectious smile. He nods approvingly.

AHAB

Good! And what next?

FLASK

Lower away, and after him!

AHAB

And what tune do ye pull to
in your whaleboats? As ye
go after him?

STUBB

A dead whale or a sunk boat!

Ahab slams his fists down onto the bulwark -- BARKS with guttural satisfaction. He reaches into his vest

pocket, withdraws his hand and holds something up in the air for all to see: a large Spanish gold coin.

The men edge curiously closer. Ahab brandishes it high before them.

AHAB

Look, men...d'ye see this?!
'Tis an ounce of Spanish
gold! A sixteen-dollar
piece!

An enthusiastic murmur among the crew. Pip rattles his tambourine. The murmur quickly dies down, as Ahab makes his way down to middeck. The sharp THUNK-CLOP of his peg leg rings out like a bell.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

Ahab struts the full length of the ship, moving from peghole to peghole to anchor himself whenever he stops, the long deck his actor's stage. The volcanic fire inside him burns the air all about him.

AHAB (cont'd)

Look closer, mates! D'ye
see it?

All eyes shift back and forth between the gold piece and Ahab's fiery eyes. Starbuck glances toward Fedallah, immobile in b.g. Puzzled by it all.

Ahab reaches the awestruck Carpenter with his toolbox.

AHAB (cont'd)

Carpenter, hand me yon hammer!
And one strong iron nail!

The Carpenter produces the hammer from his belt and digs quickly into his box. Ahab turns to scan the gruff faces all around him.

Men avoid his eyes, looking only at the coin.

The Carpenter offers the hammer and a nail. Ahab snatches them and half-strides back across the deck to the main mast. His voice begins with a low,

intense growl, building to a roar:

AHAB (cont'd)

Whosoever of ye raises me a
white-headed whale...aye,
white-headed with a wrinkled
brow and a crooked jaw...
whosoever raises me that
snow-white whale with holes
punctured in his starboard
fluke, I say...whosoever
among ye raises me that
ACCURSED WHITE WHALE...HE
shall have this gold ounce!

More murmurs from the crew, louder and more excited.
Stubb and Flask exchange hushed, animated words.
Starbuck watches in amazed silence.

Detached from the crowd, only Bulkington shows no
reaction. He stares seaward with a grim face.

The three big harpooners exchange challenging grins.
Tashtego steps forward.

TASHTEGO

Must be dat whale folks call
Moby Dick, eh, Capt'n?

On Ahab's face, a remarkable transformation. He turns
toward Tashtego, his low voice like an animal snarl:

AHAB

Moby Dick! Do ye know the
white whale then, Tashtego?

Dagoo speaks out before Tashtego can answer, Ahab's
head shifting to him with reptilian speed.

DAGOO

Aye! That whale has an odd
spout, too...mighty large
and...bushy with white wool.
That the one, Capt'n?

QUEEQUEG

Queequeg sabee him! Him got
many iron spears in him hide,
Cap'n! All twisketee...like...

AHAB

Like twisted metal! Aye, like
corkscrews!

His brow clears, his voice a roar of barely contained
emotion:

AHAB

Aye, Queequeg, the harpoons lie
all twisted in him like so many
corkscrews! Aye, Dagoo...his
spout is a big one, like a whole
shock of wheat, as thick as a
pile of Nantucket wool! Aye,
Tash...by death and devils,
that white whale is MOBY DICK!
'Tis MOBY DICK ye have seen...
MOBY DICK!

The name seems to strangle him. A spontaneous SHOUT
erupts from the men around him, sharing his rage.
Ishmael watches, engrossed in the high drama of this
moment. Finally, Starbuck steps soberly forward.

STARBUCK

I have heard of Moby Dick,
Captain. Was it not Moby
Dick that took off your leg?

Ahab spins around to face Starbuck, his face aflame.

AHAB

Who told ye that?

STARBUCK

It's common knowledge, sir.

AHAB

Aye, Mister Starbuck...aye!
(to his crew)
Aye, my hearties all round...
'twas Moby Dick that dismasted
me! Moby Dick that reaped away
my limb like a mower a blade of
grass! Moby Dick that brought
me to this...DEAD STUMP I stand
on now! Aye! 'Twas that
damnedable beast that razed me!
Made a poor pegging lubber of
me...forever and a day!

He lifts his hands, clenched around both coin and hammer.

AHAB (cont'd)

MOBY DICK! And I'll chase
that white whale round Good
Hope, round the Horn -- and
round PERDITION'S FLAMES
before I give him up!

Starbuck reacts, bewildered by Ahab's outburst. He watches disturbed, as the men SHOUT "Ayes!" of support. Ahab steps from man to man, right up to each face.

AHAB (cont'd)

This is what ye have shipped
for, men! To chase that white
whale on both sides of land
and over all the oceans --
'til he spouts black blood
and rolls dead out!

He turns to the main mast. Slams the gold coin high on the mast wood, places a nail to it and hammers the coin fast to the mast. Then turns back, calling the Steward.

AHAB

Steward! Go draw a great
measure of grog!

(to his crew)

What say ye, men? Will ye
splice hands on it? Now?!
I think ye do look brave!

The harpooners are first to react.

TASHTEGO

Aye, aye!

DAGOO

A sharp eye for the white
whale!

QUEEQUEG

Sharp spear for Moby Dick!

The rest now join in a CHORUS of "Aye, ayes!" Ahab nods, deeply moved by their reaction.

AHAB

God bless ye, men!

The Steward rolls out a grog barrel to the CHEERING crew. Cups are filled to the brim. Ahab turns to notice the concern on Starbuck's face.

AHAB (cont'd)

What ails ye, Mister Starbuck?

Why the long face?

Starbuck is hesitant to respond.

AHAB (cont'd)

Will ye not chase the white whale, then? Not game for Moby Dick, are ye?

STARBUCK

Oh, I am. I'm game for the jaws of death, if it's part of the business we're here for. I came to hunt whales, not my commander's vengeance. How many barrels of oil will your vengeance yield, I ask ye?

Ahab studies Starbuck with a colder, narrower eye.

AHAB

I see. Is money to be the measure of everything we do, then? Then let me tell ye: my vengeance will fetch a great premium -- HERE!

He slams his fist against his own chest. An electric beat between them, Starbuck shaken by him.

STARBUCK

What d'ye wish of me, Captain?

AHAB

Help me strike a fin! Not an impossible, nor wondrous feat for you -- the best lance out of all Nantucket! Surely YOU, of all the crew, would not be the one to hang back! Speak, man!

Starbuck wearily meets his fiery eyes, sapped by his

energy. He says nothing. Ahab's brow darkens.

AHAB (cont'd)

Your silence speaks loudly, sir.

(turns away)

The measure, men! The measure!

He abandons Starbuck, leading the party with animated bravado, passing around cups. Starbuck shakes his head.

STARBUCK

May God help us all.

AHAB

Drink and pass! Round with
it, round! Short draughts,
long swallows, my braves...

(drinks deep)

Ahh, t'is hot as Satan's hoof!

Well done, almost drained!

Hand me another, boy, here's

a hollow! So brimming life

is gulped and gone, men!

Steward! Refill!

He downs a cupful in one long draught. Despite his peg leg, he suddenly leaps agilely onto one of the whaling boats.

The crew watches, amazed by his charismatic energy, intimidated by him. All but Starbuck.

AHAB (cont'd)

Attend now, mates, flank me!

Harpooners, stand here with

your irons! And ye mariners,

all of you, ring me in...let

me revive a noble custom of my

fishermen fathers before me!

Stubb, Starbuck and Flask grab their lances. Queequeg, Tashtego and Dagoo appear, carrying two harpoons each. Ahab waves them closer around the whaling boat.

Ishmael bears silent witness: something mystical in the aspect of bald, scarred Ahab towering above the rest in the boat, his black coat flapping about him.

AHAB (cont'd)

Advance, mates! Cross your
lances full in front of me!
Now let me touch the axis!

Ahab leans down and grasps the three lances at their
crossed center, peering intently into each man's eyes.

Stubb and Flask can't sustain his inflamed glare and turn their
eyes away from his. Starbuck gazes evenly at him.

AHAB (cont'd)

Did ye three feel the full
force SHOCK of it?! Mine own
electric thing?! Now mates,
be my appointed cup-bearers to
your three pagan kinsmen there...

He abruptly pushes away their lances, breaking the spell.
Then he turns his laser-like focus on the harpooners,
standing behind the mates.

AHAB (cont'd)

Draw the poles, harpooners!

The three giant harpooners quickly remove the iron part
of their harpoons like proud knights before their king.
They step up to Ahab with ritualistic fervor and -- with perfect
timing -- thrust the irons toward him.

Ahab reaches down from the whaleboat -- slams his open
palm onto a sharp blade. Blood gushes from his hand.
Unflinchingly, Ahab rises with bold majesty.

AHAB (cont'd)

Now cant them! Turn them
over, I say! Show me the
goblet end! Turn up the
socket! So...so! Now hold
them while I fill! Steward,
bring me your flask!

The Steward hands him a flask. Ahab fills the harpoon
sockets with grog, full to the brim...dripping drops of
his own blood into each socket.

AHAB (cont'd)

Now, three to three, ye stand.
Commend these murderous chalices...

touch them, and ye shall become
parties to an indissoluble league!
The three harpooners clink the sockets together.

AHAB (cont'd)
Drink, my brave harpooners!
Drink and swear, you that stand
the bow of whaleboats!

The harpooners guzzle down the mixed rum and blood,
to the last drop. Ahab glances toward a shocked
Starbuck.

AHAB (cont'd)
Behold, Mister Starbuck! The
deed is done!
(to whole crew)
Drink, all of ye! And swear
DEATH to Moby Dick! May God
hunt us all if we do not hunt
Moby Dick to his death!

The crew, caught up in the moment, down their own
cups -- then BURST INTO SHOUTS, cups raised to their
captain.

CREWMEN
Death to Moby Dick! Death
to Moby Dick!!

Every man of them...the harpooners, Stubb, Flask,
Ishmael, Perth, Dough-Boy, Carpenter, Blacksmith,
little Pip, even Bulkington.

Only Starbuck refrains, away from the crowd.

On the whaleboat, Ahab glances across the ship and
sees Starbuck's aloofness. His dark eyes focus
sharply on him. Long, unsettling looks between them.
A moment of impending conflict.

FADE OUT.

ACT 5

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - SUNSET

The Pequod drifts on a light wind, her progress slow.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN -SUNSET

Two polished harpoons reflect the last rays of the sunset. A spartan cabin, twisted sheets on a bunk. Hunched over a table scattered with sea charts, Ahab pores over the four oceans. His pencil traces over a confused jumble of drawn lines...the courses of whales.

STARBUCK (O.S)

Permission to enter, Captain.

Ahab grunts an affirmative, too preoccupied to look up. Starbuck enters and waits respectfully, a little tense.

STARBUCK

You sent for me, sir?

AHAB

Mister Starbuck. We are inexorably bound together for the duration of this voyage. You and I are intelligent men, shippin' with savages. We need not be strangers.

STARBUCK

I do not wish it, Captain, I am tied to thee.

AHAB

Good. Good!

He gestures him closer, pointing over his charts.

AHAB

See here, Starbuck. 'Tis the migratory route of the sperm whale. No ship ever sailed her course with one tithe of such marvelous precision. From the Azores to St. Helena, around the Cape, to the Sea of Japan.

Standing close, Starbuck studies Ahab more than the map.

STARBUCK

Time and tide flow wide, sir. Moby Dick has the round watery

world to swim in.

AHAB

Mister Starbuck, I know his latitudes, his seasons, the driftings of his food...

AHAB (cont'd)

I know his sightings, from the Seychelle ground to Volcano Bay.

STARBUCK

Where lies Nantucket? Ah here...

(points on map)

...where our wives and children will carry the wee babes up the hill to catch first glimpse of these sails. Your wife and son will be among them, sir.

Ahab's face flinches. A sensitive chord has been struck.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

We must not disappoint them.

I am no crusader after perils, Captain. My course is set to return safely home -- with a full hold. 'Tis the object of our endeavor.

Ahab looks up impatiently, eying him with darkened brow.

AHAB

Hear me. 'Til this be done,
my boy's face is to me as the palm of this hand. A lipless, unfeatured blank. My vengeance, this very act, was rehearsed by you and me a billion years before this ocean rolled.

(draws him near)

All visable objects are but pasteboard masks, behind which some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the moldings of its features. If man will strike, strike THROUGH the mask! How else can a prisoner escape but by thrusting through the wall?

STARBUCK

The white whale is this mask,
sir, this wall?

Ahab paces the room, his peg leg scraping the floor.

AHAB

Aye! He tasks me...he heaps
me...he galls me! I see in him
outrageous strength, inscrutable
malice! THAT is what I hate!

STARBUCK

But vengeance on a dumb brute,
sir! That took your leg from
blindest instinct?!

AHAB

And I'll wreck my hate upon him!

STARBUCK

'Tis madness to be so enraged!
To seek vengeance on a dumb
thing -- 'tis blasphemy!

Ahab turns to confront him, his words charged with fury.

AHAB

BLASPHEMY?! Don't talk to me
of blasphemy, man!

He glares out the window at the sunset, shaking a fist.

AHAB

I would strike the SUN if it
insulted me! What I've dared
I've willed, and what I've
willed I WILL DO!

(turns to him)

You look pale. You think me
mad, don't ye? I'm not mad...
I am madness maddened!

Starbuck stares in utter shock. He shakes his head.

STARBUCK

Sir, I'm not much for fighting
a fish that too much persists
in fighting me. I'm here to

kill whales for my living, not
to be killed by them for theirs.
But...you are the Captain.

AHAB

Aye. I AM the Captain.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - NIGHT

The Pequod drifts through a starry night. A myriad of moonlit sequins across the water.

INT. FORECASTLE -NIGHT

A besotted crew SINGS WHALING SONGS, sprawled about tables and bunks like slovenly pirates. Their cups empty, most of them too drunk to move.

Ishmael wends through them and turns down a corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR -NIGHT

Ishmael passes a doorway into the mates' quarters and glances inside:

INT. MATES' QUARTERS - NIGHT

A quiet, more civilized scene. Starbuck reads alone from a bible. Stubb and Flask play a game of Draught.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Ishmael emerges from below and breathes in the sea air. He looks toward Fedallah and his strange crew: setting up camp in a spare whaleboat. Bedding and food have been laid out, as if they were on a different ship from the rest of the crew. They converse in low, guttural ARABIC.

Ishmael turns to the side for solitude, gazing over the moonlit sea. Then realizes he's not alone...

Ahab stands some yards away by the bulwark, also gazing out. He produces a pipe and lights it, cupping the bowl with bony hands. A ship's lamp casts a flickering light across his weathered visage.

Ishmael retreats a step into shadow, afraid of the man, yet fascinated by him.

Unaware of him, Ahab smokes in silence. He takes the pipe from his mouth and stares at it, shaking his head. His voice unusually subdued:

AHAB

Old pipe...hard it goes that
even YOUR pleasure is gone.

He gazes up at the bright moon.

AHAB

Time was when the moonlight
soothed me. No more. This
lovely light, it lights me not.
All loveliness is anguish to me
now, since I can never enjoy.
Damned -- most subtly and
malignantly. Damned in the
midst of Paradise!

He starts to turn away -- suddenly winces from a sharp pain in his severed thigh. He grips the pipe tighter, as if transferring his anger and pain to the object in his hand.

AHAB

What business have I with
pleasure?! ANY pleasure!...

With sudden disgust, he tosses the pipe overboard.

Hidden in the shadows, Ishmael stares down:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - NIGHT

The pipe tumbles down to sea, its sparks scattering... extinguished in a sudden FIZZ as it hits the water.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Without another word, Ahab THUNK-CLOPS away. Ishmael gazes after him, baffled by him.

INT. FORECASTLE - NIGHT

Most of the crew are dead asleep. Ishmael steps quietly among the cramped bunks. No sound but for men's snores, the whish of water against the hull.

Ishmael pauses to smile at Queequeg, who sleeps with one

arm clutching his harpoon. He makes his way to his bunk. Stops to discern another distant SOUND beyond the hull:

An eerie, haunting, watery MELODY from deep in the ocean, miles away.

Pip is awake on his bunk, ears close to the hull, as he listens to the mysterious SOUND. Ishmael crouches beside him, fondly watching the boy. Their eyes meet.

ISHMAEL

Is it mermaids, lad?

PIP

Whales, sir. They're singin' to each other.

Pip smiles in the dim light. Ishmael returns the smile and retires into his own bunk, listening too.

WHALE SONGS seem to fill the forecastle's cramped space.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA -DAY

A tropical sea under a beating sun. Swells roll over translucent, turquoise waters. Under full sail, the Pequod drives to windward.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) -TOPMAST - DAY

Suddenly -- an excited cry from Dago on the lookout, loud and insistent.

DAGOO

There she blows!! There!
There! She BLOWS!!

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Ahab yanks his peg leg out of its anchorage and hauls up a ladder by his arms alone.

AHAB

Where away?!

DAGOO (O.S.)

On the lee beam, sir! Half

a rifle shot off!

Starbuck, Stubb and Flask rush to the side to look out.

STARBUCK

There go flukes!

STUBB

By thunder! A whole school
of 'em!

The deck becomes a frenzy of activity. Queequeg and Tashtego emerge from below, harpoons ready.

EXT. TOPMAST - DAY

Dago swings between halyards like a trapeze artist,
slides a hundred feet down -- and alights on the deck.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Fedallah appears at Ahab's side, waiting expectantly.

AHAB

Steward! Fetch me my glass!

The Steward dashes over with an eyeglass. Ahab snatches it, extends the scope and peers through it, searching.

AHAB

Time! Quick, steward!

STEWARD

Thirteen hours, sir!

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

Viewed through the eyeglass, a dozen whale flukes beat through the swells, all grey. No white ones.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Ahab snaps the eyeglass closed, disappointed. He pulls out a small book from his pocket and jots down the hour. Starbuck hurries up to him.

STARBUCK

Ready to lower boats, sir!

Ahab glances aside, disinterested in the whole business.

AHAB

Aye. Lower away.

Starbuck rushes off. Fedallah SPUTTERS ARABIC to Ahab with a toothy grin, itching to go out.

AHAB (cont'd)

You too, then.

He turns away, gripping a rail to help his crippled way.

EXT. SHIP'S SIDE - DAY

Cranes are thrust out, line tubs fixed in their places and whaling boats swung over to be lowered, sailors working frantically.

Three boats lower fast, chains CLANKING, ropes HISSING, and splash onto the water. A clamor of SHOUTS, rowers, harpooners and the three mates scrambling down ladders, into their respective boats.

A fourth spare boat is lowered by Fedallah's crew, aloof from the others, working silently and efficiently.

In Starbuck's boat, Ishmael mans the oars with others, brimming with anticipation of his first whale hunt. Queequeg attaches rope lines to his harpoons. The boat casts away from the ship.

Stubb cries out from his boat, as they too cast off.

STUBB

Well, here goes for a cool
dive at death and destruction!
And let the devil fetch the
hindmost!

Casting off in his boat, Flask gestures outward in dismay.

FLASK

Would ye lookit that?!

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

Fedallah's boat is already rowing out across the water, way ahead of them.

EXT. SHIP'S SIDE - DAY

STUBB

(mockingly)

There's a pretty fellow now!
Let's give 'em jackals a run
for their money!

All three boats row out at a furious pace.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

A school of sperm whales breach in the rolling sea. Spouts of misty air. They move at a slow, tranquil pace, unaware of hunters headed in their direction.

From an airborne view: four boats in pursuit of the school. Fedallah's remains far in the lead, the other three racing to catch up, all close together.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT -DAY

Ishmael rows arduously, working up a sweat. He looks over the rise of a long swell, just in time to see great spouts. Queequeg, the lead rower, rows like a dynamo, guiding the pace. Starbuck works the tiller.

STARBUCK

There she blows again, right
ahead, boys...lay back!

He watches the school of whales, then glances back at the other two boats behind his:

Flask's boat fast approaches, Dagoo at the bow, rowing with as much power as Queequeg.

EXT. FLASK'S BOAT -DAY

Flask shouts to Starbuck, pointing toward the Arabs' boat.

FLASK

Who are those devils, sir?!
Did the Capt'n bring 'em along

to make fools of us all!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT -DAY

STARBUCK

Never mind them! Give way,
pull out more to leeward!

Stubb's boat, Tashtego at the bow, pulls ahead.

EXT. STUBB'S BOAT -DAY

Stubb roars with laughter, as his boat passes them.

STUBB

Pull, pull, my children, my
little ones!

(to Flask)

What difference who they are...
they're five more hands come
to help us! More the merrier,
I say! But let's give 'em a
bit of sport!

(to oarsmen)

Snap your oars, you rascals!
Long and strong, ragamuffins,
you sorry rascalions...give
way! Give way! Pull, pull!

His boat pulls ahead, disappearing behind a tall swell.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT -DAY

Ishmael, rowing exhaustedly near Starbuck, turns to him.

ISHMAEL

What do YOU think of those
new boys, Mister Starbuck?

STARBUCK

Smuggled on board to do Ahab's
personal bidding, I warrant...

(urging them on)

Spring, men, spring! There's
a fortune of oil out there,
swimming right ahead of us!
That's what we came for and
that's our duty! Duty and
profit, hand in hand! Pull!

Their boat drops into a deep trough. Just then, one of the sperm whales breaches directly in front of them.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Queequeg! Quick!

Queequeg tosses his oar and jumps up to the bow with his harpoon. Before he has a chance to do anything...

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

Fedallah's boat suddenly appears directly in front of Starbuck's boat -- surfing down the swell at terrific speed to intercept the whale!

EXT. FEDALLAH'S BOAT -DAY

Working silently like professional killers, the oarsmen a powerful lot. Fedallah swiftly takes the harpooner's position at the bow. The oarsmen stop rowing and, in perfect unison, lift their oars in the air.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

Fedallah throws his harpoon with deadly force! The harpoon penetrates the whale's flank, the effect instantaneous -- the water boils in a raging, bloody foam, as the whale thrashes in agony!

EXT. FEDALLAH'S BOAT - DAY

Fedallah launches a second harpoon into his stricken prey with a loud, primitive SHOUT OF TRIUMPH!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT -DAY

A second whale suddenly breaches next to Starbuck's boat, too close -- its huge body striking the hull! The boat tips precariously.

STARBUCK

There! There! Give it to him!

Queequeg manages to thrust out his harpoon from the violently rocking boat. The harpoon misses.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

Instantly, Flask's boat streaks in for the kill.

EXT. FLASK'S BOAT - DAY

Tashtego quickly raises and slams his harpoon deep into the body of the huge creature! Blood gushes!

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

The whale's tail jerks upward, catching Flask's boat -- flipping it skyward! Flask and his crew are thrown high into the churning sea, far from view!

Too close to Starbuck's boat, thrashing flukes slap down against the water with crashing power -- and send a wave that almost tips his boat over!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

The force sends the crew spilling into the drink!

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA -DAY

Starbuck's men flail about in the turbulent water, trying to reach their boat.

Ishmael splashes frantically in the watery chaos, whales all around him. Waves from the slapping tail plow over him, frothing up water like an eggbeater. Losing strength, Ishmael sinks beneath the surface!

EXT. UNDERWATER -DAY

Ishmael sinks fast amidst the enormous shapes of whales, behind him an underwater cloud of blood. Eyes wide open as he flails, he glimpses an amazing sight:

Across the deep blue, a mother whale with her cub. A half-dozen bull whales circle protectively around her.

Queequeg suddenly appears from behind -- grabs Ishmael by the waist and quickly swims back to the surface.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA -DAY

Queequeg surfaces with Ishmael in tow. Ishmael spits out water, coughing and gagging. Fedallah's boat appears, as if by incarnation.

EXT. FEDALLAH'S BOAT -DAY

Standing proudly in the bow, Fedallah grins down contemptuously down at Queequeg and Ishmael in the water. He reaches out and hauls them both into the boat with superhuman strength. Catching his breath, Ishmael looks out at the settling sea:

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

A dead, blood-soaked sperm whale floats, fluke out. Fedallah's kill. A distance off, Starbuck's boat, men climbing back into her. But not a sign of Flask's boat.

Stubb's boat drifts into view toward Fedallah's boat.

EXT. STUBB'S BOAT - DAY

Stubb looms in the stern, his jaw set. Missing all the action, he's not laughing now. He glances at the dead whale...then turns his envious eyes on the grinning Arab. Scanning the horizon of high swells, Stubb cups his hands and shouts:

STUBB

Flask! You impious old smut!
Where the devil are ye?!

No reply. Just the distant SOUND of CRYING WHALES.

EXT. CARIBBEAN - DAY

The three boats return to ship, Fedallah's boat towing the dead whale behind it. The hunt is over, leaving behind a vast sea of blood.

FADE OUT.

ACT 6

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) -QUARTERDECK - DAY

Ahab stands alone at the taffrail, staring out into the horizon. He barely acknowledges the activity below.

EXT. SHIP'S SIDE - DAY

The giant dead sperm whale is fastened to the hull by dozens of ropes hauled in by deckhands.

Fedallah jumps on the whale's back like an acrobatic, using it as a stepping stone to climb aboard.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Fedallah leaps on deck, as Pip dances and tambourines around him. The old Carpenter bangs a bell with his hammer, applauding him.

Stubb and Tashtego climb aboard and shoot dagger looks at the Arab, a mix of admiration and resentment. Fedallah casually picks his teeth with a tapering, knife-long fingernail.

They help aboard Ishmael...wet, shivering, in shock. Then come Starbuck and Queequeg, both soaked to the bone but composed as if nothing had happened.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Starbuck reports to Ahab at the taffrail, the Captain gazing seaward as if oblivious.

STARBUCK

Lost a boat, sir. Permission to send out a search party.

AHAB

Permission denied.

Starbuck is stunned. Ahab just stares out at the rolling swells.

STARBUCK

Beg pardon, sir??

Ahab slowly raises his arm and points a bony finger far out to sea, toward the top of a big swell. Starbuck strains to see out:

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA -DAY

A floating speck far on the horizon...an overturned whaleboat. On the upturned bow stands Dagoo. Short Flask sits on his shoulders, waving his arms like a semaphore. The rest of the men cling to the boat from the water.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

AHAB

There, see? There's Mister Flask...in the middle of a blinded ocean.

Starbuck peers at the strange sight and shakes his head. The rest of the crew look out and CHEER. Stubb laughs heartily. Pip drums his tambourine, dancing a jig.

AHAB (cont'd)

Ye'd better get 'em on board, Mister Starbuck, before the sharks discover 'em.

He hobbles away to his cabin. Pip shakes his tambourine at him, humming a light tune. Ahab glares at him. Pip stops playing and edges fearfully back. Regarding the boy thoughtfully, as if noticing him for the first time, Ahab allows a hint of a smile. Pip dances off.

INT. FORECASTLE -DAY

Men dry off and change clothes. Queequeg rubs down shivering Ishmael who's still traumatized, his teeth rattling.

Dagoo and his crew climb below deck, all dripping wet but cheerful and laughing loudly.

Ishmael turns to Queequeg.

ISHMAEL

Why is everyone so damn merry?
We almost drowned!

QUEEQUEG

Habben all dime, friend! All
dime! Dat is whaling!

Queequeg laughs. It's infectious, and others joins in.

INT. MATES' QUARTERS - DAY

Starbuck and Flask change clothes, while Stub lights his pipe and Pip collects their wet garments. Flask strips off a shirt and tosses it sourly.

FLASK

That damned foreign monkey...
takin' our rightful whale like
that!

STUBB

Aye! What manner of creature
is he, anyway?

STARBUCK

A creature from our dreams.

FLASK

How d'ye mean? Like a ghost?

STARBUCK

A devil, perhaps.

STUBB

Man's the devil, all right!
The reason ye can't see his
tail is because he tucks it
out of sight!

PIP

An' it's coiled in his boots!

Stubb laughs at that, ruffling the boy's hair.

FLASK

Did ye hear the way he talks
to the Capt'n in that slithery
tongue? What d'ye suppose
they talk about?

STARBUCK

Striking up a bargain, I'd say.

STUBB

That's it, Starbuck! Ahab's
hard after that white whale,
ain't he? Mebbe that devil is
tryin' to get him to swap away
his silver watch or, or...

STARBUCK

Or his soul.

EXT. QUARTERDECK -NIGHT

Ahab stands on one of his sleepless watches, his whalebone leg firmly rooted in a peghole. He gazes into the sea, listening to the exotic HUMMING of a BEDOUIN SONG from Fedallah's crew in the spare boat.

The only other SOUND comes from the whale carcass tied alongside the ship...the SAVAGING OF SHARKS.

Ahab turns to observe a commotion below:

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Stubb hastens across the deck, accompanied by the Cook, Flask, Ishmael and the Carpenter, who carries a lamp rigged to the wooden staff of a harpoon. Queequeg, Dago and Tashtego follow them with spears and lances.

STUBB

A steak, a steak, by heaven,
before I sleep!

They make their way toward the ship's side to which the carcass is lashed. All the men look down at the hump of the whale's immense forehead.

Fedallah silently drifts past them. Startled by him, Stubb turns to the others with a look of scorn.

STUBB

Ah, now wait, shipmates...
wait! Ain't this the devil
that killed the whale?

He bows mockingly to Fedallah, who returns a skeletal grin.

STUBB (cont'd)

The harpooner's choice of
steak, eh? Is that what ye
came for?

Ignoring him, Fedallah spits down at the carcass of the whale with pure contempt. Tauntingly, he steps up to the gold coin on the mast and taps it, as if it were already his. Then returns to his crew in the spare boat.

Stubb laughs and leans over the bulwark. He takes the harpoon-lamp from the Carpenter and shines it down on the ferocious scene below: sharks in a feeding frenzy, ripping at the dead whale.

STUBB

Well, that foreign devil may
care not for whale steaks,
but I'll eat this fish in
one mouthful!

(to harpooners)

Ready, boys...

Stubb throws the harpoon-lamp -- impaling it into the whale's forehead. Queequeg, Dagoo and Tashtego leap over the side.

EXT. WHALE CARCASS - NIGHT

They land on the giant whale's head, Queequeg and Dagoo carrying sharp cutting spears. They climb down toward the tail, while Tashtego keeps guard against the sharks with lances in both hands.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Ishmael leans over the bulwark, staring awestruck at the infernal scene and the intrepid harpooners.

STUBB

Just the tender bits, boys!

EXT. WHALE CARCASS - NIGHT

Queequeg and Dagoo BARK SIGNALS to each other as they struggle their way to the tail of the carcass.

Despite their precarious position, the slippery whale and the unpredictable swells, Queequeg and Dagoo cut into the lower part of the whale's tail. Queequeg slices out a large chunk of red meat, when...

An enormous shark lunges out of the water at him!
It almost snatches the bloody meat -- but Queequeg tosses it to Dagoo.

Queequeg slips and starts to slide down the tail section -- directly toward the massive jaws of the shark! He slams his cutting spear into the whale and pulls himself up.

Tashtego spears the shark. A quick, thrashing death.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Ahab observes the antics of his men below with half a smile. Then returns to his watch, gazing dead to sea like a stone sentinel.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

The harpooners have returned, the others all huddled around something. Stubb pushes his way in between them, as we move in to reveal: five whale steaks, sizzling on a rudimentary grill.

Behind the grill, the Cook works fast, sprinkling whole spices on the meat, chopping them directly onto the barbecued steaks.

STUBB

Be quick about it, cook! I'm famished!

COOK

Awright, awright, don't be in such a bleedin' rush...

He forks out a couple of steaks onto two wood plates. Stubb reaches for a plate.

STUBB (cont'd)

This one's for the Capt'n...

He takes it away, hurrying up onto the quarterdeck.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Stubb respectfully offers the plate of steaming meat.

STUBB

Capt'n, sir. Would ye care
to have first honors, sir?

Ahab shakes his head gravely, not veering from his watch. Stubb shrugs and climbs back down.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Stubb sits down with Flask at a makeshift table, complete with napkins, knives and forks. In b.g., Ishmael, the Carpenter and the harpooners hungrily watch the ceremony. The two officers dig into their steaks with relish, Stubb leaning over in a low voice:

STUBB (cont'd)

Poor Capt'n. The whale eats
him, 'stead of him eatin' the
whale.

Flask listens to the shark's savagings, annoyed.

FLASK

Blast those critters...they're
kicking up such a shindy I'm
losin' me appetite!

At the grill, the Cook forks out the last three steaks onto a platter. The Carpenter steps over and gloats at them with salivating eyes.

CARPENTER

Cook, lemme have one o' those,
will ye?

COOK

Are ye daft?! Officers only.

CARPENTER

But there's three steaks!

COOK

Aye, one's a second helpin' fer
Stubb, one's for me.

CARPENTER

That's one left, ain't it?!

COOK

That one's for me too.

CARPENTER

Have a heart, damn ye!

The Cook irritably grabs a cutting spear from Queequeg.

COOK

Ye want a steak?! Go get it
yerself!

CARPENTER

Wot?! Down there?!

COOK

G'won then!

He shoves the spear into his hand. The Carpenter stares anxiously down over the bulwark. Everyone watches him considering it. Hesitating, he climbs over the rail with arthritic slowness. Then freezes on the bulwark, looking down fearfully at the loudly thrashing sharks.

FLASK

G'won, what're ye waitin' for?!

The Carpenter looks back. The Cook nods mockingly.

COOK

An' tell 'em to be quiet while
yer at it!

Stubb, Ishmael and the others all burst out laughing. Humiliated, the Carpenter glares at the Cook's vulgar grin. Down below, SPLASHING SOUNDS from two fighting sharks -- the Carpenter jumps back off the rail in holy terror. An explosion of laughter all around.

EXT. MIDDECK -DAY

A complex whale-processing factory is under way: the carving of a dead whale and the melting of its blubber. The whale's skin is peeled up from the floating carcass by chains and pulleys from the lower masthead on a huge blubber hook. Like a peeled orange, the skinned whale

rolls over and over in the water.

The deck careens from the tremendous weight. Sailors crowd the windlass, tugging and turning it, singing:

CREWMEN

Our captain stood upon the deck,
A spy glass in his hand,
A viewin' of those gallant whales
That blew at every strand!

Other deckhands slice tons of blubber into huge chunks with mincing spades.

They haul them to the try-works, two giant pots on iron furnaces. Smoke billows and flames lick out, as the Blacksmith feeds wood into the open furnaces.

The blubber chunks are pitched into the scalding pots to be boiled down, as the men sing on:

CREWMEN (cont'd)

Your tubs in your boats, boys,
And by your braces stand,
We'll have one of those whales,
Hand, boys, over hand!

Large barrels are filled with gallons of whale oil, sealed and rolled down the gaping maw of a bow hatch into the barrel hold, deep in the bowels of the ship.

CREWMEN (cont'd)

So be cheery, my lads!
May heart your hearts never fail!
While the bold harpooner
Is striking the whale!

The deck plankings stream with freshets of oil and blood, littered horrifically with bones and blubber. During all this labor, Fedallah and his Arabs recline lazily in the spare boat, oblivious to everyone. Scowling at the lollygaggers, Flask turns to Stubb.

FLASK

Lookit 'em devils, Stubb...
idlin' away while the rest of
us slave! I got a good mind
to stove their boat and send
'em to Davy Jones!

EXT. MAIN MAST - DAY

High aloft in the rigging, Ishmael paints the spars with tar. Queequeg does the same beside him, both of them hanging precariously over a fifty-foot drop. His hands healed and strong, Ishmael no longer shows any fear.

Below him, a crow's nest view: a deck swathed in gore.

Revolted by the sight, Ishmael shakes his head woefully.

ISHMAEL

Heaven help us...we're the
vultures of the sea.

QUEEQUEG

No sabbee what-ee mean.

ISHMAEL

I mean there's no savagery of
beasts that's not infinitely
outdone by that of men.

His eyes fall on: Ahab, emerging from his cabin, loaded down with charts, his log book and a quadrant.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Ahab sets the charts and book on a capstan, raises the quadrant to his eye. Then he spreads the charts out, opens the log book, reads from it, checks the charts and reads again. All with a frantic edge.

Giving up, he paces like a caged beast, PEG-LEGGING from port to starboard, ignoring the middeck hustle and bustle. Starbuck approaches him, clearly agitated.

STARBUCK

Sir! I must request that
ye put those foreign boys to
work. Their slovenliness is
affectin' the morale of the
crew.

Ahab keeps pacing, as if not hearing him, scanning the sea with murderous frustration. Starbuck shifts over to block his way, adamant.

STARBUCK (cont'd)
Did ye not hear me, Captain?

Ahab stops to glare at him, his jaw tight.

AHAB
They're not here to tend ship,
or any other business, Mister
Starbuck. None but one single
purpose -- to hunt down and
slay Moby Dick!

Starbuck starts to reply, but an OUTCRY interrupts him:

LOOKOUT (O.S.)
Sail ho! Sail to larboard!

Excited murmurs spread among the men, as they race toward the port side to view a distant vessel in b.g. The Steward materializes with the eyeglass and hands it to Ahab, who grabs it and takes a quick look at the ship.

AHAB
English.

He lowers the eyeglass, deliberating to himself.

AHAB (cont'd)
Prepare for visitors.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAY

The two whaling ships, of almost identical design, heave to and drift side by side.

A small boat rows toward the Pequod. The other ship bears the name "SAMUEL ENDERBY". From her deck, the SOUNDS of ACCORDION MUSIC and FESTIVE REVELRY.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) -MIDDECK - DAY

The Pequod crew hugs the bulwarks to view the Enderby's distant deck:

EXT. ENDERBY (AT SEA) - DAY

A wild celebration seems to be taking place on board. SAILORS are drinking and carousing, dancing with beautiful, colorfully attired POLYNESIAN GIRLS.

In sharp contrast to the somber Pequod, it's a ship of laughter and joy.

FADE OUT.

ACT 7

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - MIDDECK - DAY

Viewed from our deck: the happy, drunken Enderby crew crowd the bulwarks, facing us. They wave flasks of grog, SHOUTING across and gesturing us to join them.

Scanning across the faces of our crewmen, we see the eager anticipation of licking lips and ogling eyes. Ishmael gawks at the LAUGHING native girls, their voices like sweet music. Queequeg nods knowingly to himself, a nostalgic look.

Sunning in the whaleboat, only Fedallah's crew shows no interest.

Flask turns to Stubb, unable to take his eyes off the girls.

FLASK

Heaven seize me, that's a purty sight! A man forgets how awful lonesome it gets out here.

STUBB

Aye. Those crack fellows have done well for themselves.

Starbuck smiles at the men. Beside him, Ahab sees and hears nothing but the ENDERBY CAPTAIN climbing up the ship's side with his ESCORTS. Starbuck turns to Ahab.

STARBUCK

Permission to lower boats, sir. The boys deserve a short gam.

AHAB
Permission denied.

STARBUCK
(surprised)
But, sir. It's expected...

Ignoring him, Ahab faces the Enderby Captain climbing aboard with a one-handed grip. A stout-bellied man of relaxed authority, island garlands around his neck.

AHAB
Welcome aboard the Pequod,
sir. I'm Captain Ahab. You
are a whaling ship, I see.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN
Aye, Captain! Thank you. I'm
Captain Dowling.

He reaches out a right hand to shake his hand, his left hand behind his back. Ahab nods with stubborn gloom, finding this man too jolly for his taste.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN (cont'd)
We're a full ship, sir, and
homeward bound!

AHAB
I'm an empty ship and outward
bound.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN
Then we'll bring ye good luck!
My boys even won themselves a
few brides from the Fiji Isles,
as you can see...

Impatient with this ceremony, Ahab gets to the point.

AHAB
Hast thou seen a WHITE WHALE?

The Enderby Captain grins at Ahab, mischievously.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN
THE white whale, d'you mean?
Moby Dick, as some call him?

Ahab twitches, a shocked beat. Before he can reply, the Enderby Captain swings out his other arm from behind -- a white whale-bone arm with a hook.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN (cont'd)
See you this?

Ahab studies the arm with astonishment, then lifts his eyes to the Englishman's playful expression, who glances down at Ahab's peg leg.

AHAB
Ha! You've an arm that cannot hold and I've a leg that cannot run!
(eyes narrowing)
The white whale?

ENDERBY CAPTAIN
The white whale.

All the crew turn to stare at his whalebone limb.

AHAB
HE took that arm off, did he?

ENDERBY CAPTAIN
And that leg, too?

Understanding silence between them. Unexpectedly, the Enderby Captain laughs uproariously.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN
A great, bouncing whale, was he?! Old as Genesis, with a milky white head?!

AHAB
(seething inside)
Harpoons sticking in all over his hump?!

ENDERBY CAPTAIN
Aye! And in a boiling rage!

AHAB
Mine! MY harpoons!

He can barely contain his rage.

AHAB (cont'd)

Tell me, sir! Tell me what happened!

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

(gestures at his arm)

Oh, a shocking bad wound it was, Capt'n Ahab! My surgeon did his damndest but he had to cut it off soon as it went black! Thank the stars I brought me wife on the voyage! She's been a great comfort to me--

AHAB

What about the WHITE WHALE?!

His black look kills the Englishman's merriment, who regards him oddly.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

Well, to the point, after he stove my boats, we didn't see him again for some time.

AHAB

Did you cross his wake again, is what I'm askin'?!

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

Twice.

AHAB

Are you saying that ye could not...fasten?!

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

Why would I WANT to?! Isn't one limb enough? That white monster doesn't bite -- he SWALLOWS!

Reacting, Ishmael and the other men look on with horror.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN (cont'd)

I have a wife on board and a profitable homecoming! Why should I take the risk?

A beat, Ahab pacing agitatedly as the man chatters on.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN (cont'd)

No thank you, no more white
whales for me! He's best
left alone, don't you think?

Ahab's eyes enlarge, turning to him with great contempt.

AHAB

He is, but he'll be hunted for
all that, sir! What's best
left alone is not always what
least invites! Like a cursed
magnet is that whale to me,
d'ye understand?! How long
since you saw him last?

The Enderby Captain squints at Ahab, then laughs.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

Bless my soul, sir! Your blood's
at the boiling point!

His laughter is short-lived. Ahab suddenly spins around
to Starbuck.

AHAB

Mister Starbuck, prepare to
make way. We've wasted enough
time!

(to Enderby Captain)

Good day, Captain!

Ahab stomps toward the helm. After a bewildering pause,
the Enderby Captain looks at Starbuck.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

What's the matter with him?!
Has he lost his senses?

STARBUCK

No offense, I'm sure, sir...
it's no doubt the pain in his
bleeding stump.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

Hmphh! The man's mad!

He turns indignantly away to deboard, signaling his men.

ENDERBY CAPTAIN (cont'd)

Away, boys! I'll not spend
another moment on this ship...

Starbuck stares after the Englishman, not moving. All around him, the crew is frozen in stunned amazement.

AHAB

Mister Starbuck, did ye not
hear me?! Prepare to sail!

Starbuck stares angrily back at him, rooted to the spot. Ishmael and the rest gaze anxiously away at the NOISY celebration aboard the Enderby, deprived of their much-needed furlough.

The Enderby Captain climbs to his boat, shouting up:

ENDERBY CAPTAIN

Do not be a fool, Capt'n! Do
not pursue Moby Dick, I warn
ye! Beware, sir, he's a demon!
(thunderously)
Beware the BLASPHEMER'S END!

AHAB

Curses throttle ye...
(shouts down)
Starbuck! Set sail, I say!
Obey me, damn ye! NOW!

Starbuck turns to the crew, a walking powderkeg.

STARBUCK

Man the sheets! Jump to it!

The deck becomes a flurry. Sailors scramble about and climb the masts to unfurl sails. Many of them glance toward the Enderby with open discontent.

As everyone works, a tense undertone of mutiny.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA -DAY

From afar, the two ships part in opposite directions.

The Pequod drives hard to southerly winds. A ship alone on the blue-green expanse.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - MIDDECK -DAY

Ishmael tightens a halyard at the main mast. Stubb fixes a brace beside him. Ishmael glances at the glistening gold coin hammered to the mast, then looks away toward the Captain:

Ahab is at his usual watch facing dead to windward, brooding with stormy thoughts.

ISHMAEL

I fear the old man's a little
out of his wits.

Flask passes by, darting a disgruntled glance at Ahab.

FLASK

Blast his eyes...he has no
heart!

STUBB

Agh, I've seen worse. Better
to sail with a moody good
captain than a merry bad one.

Pip sits on a capstan with his untouched tambourine, watching the ill mood around him.

Perth and Dough-Boy swab the deck, SQUABBLING AD-LIB with each other in low, angry voices.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Starbuck draws near Ahab, determined to speak his mind.

STARBUCK

Captain Ahab, sir--

AHAB

Not now! Leave me be.

Exasperated, Starbuck glares at him and turns away. He looks down to witness a scene below:

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Perth dumps a swab bucket and splashes Dough-Boy.
A fight quickly breaks out! Perth pulls a knife --
until Stubb grabs his wrist and yanks it away.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Drawn to the commotion, Ahab leans over the bridge
rail with Starbuck.

AHAB

Trouble there, Second Mate?

STUBB

Nothin' of concern, sir.

Ahab turns away. Starbuck talks to his back, persistent:

STARBUCK

The men are out of sorts.
We may not see another ship
for months, Captain, and it
does not bode well that we
deprive 'em of even a little
recreation.

AHAB

They are whalers, Mister
Starbuck. This is not a
society ball.

The Steward rings the watch bell, breaking the tension.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Stubb pushes the knife back to Perth, low-voiced.

STUBB

Get below, Perth!

PERTH

He started it--

STUBB

Quiet! Go swab the foc'sle
'til ye learn your manners!

Perth struts sullenly away.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Starbuck stares intently at the Captain's back. Ahab turns and gives him a dismissing look.

AHAB

To your duties, Starbuck.

STARBUCK

Aye, aye...SIR.

INT. FORECASTLE - DAY

Fetching a bucket, Perth extracts a hidden flask from under his bunk. He sneaks a long, deep swig.

Starbuck barrels downstairs, in a foul state of mind.

STARBUCK

Perth!

Perth quickly reconceals his cache and grabs the bucket.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Get aloft to the lookout!

PERTH

But it ain't my watch, sir.

STARBUCK

I want ye where I can see ye.

Perth drops the bucket and ambles disgruntledly toward the stairs, a little drunk.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Get along, ye shabby rascal,
or I'll give ye a whale-bonin'!

PERTH

Ye needn't speak so harshly--

Starbuck shoves him up the steps.

STARBUCK

On your way!

EXT. MASTHEAD - DAY

High aloft, Perth climbs the main mast to the lookout, GRUMBLING to himself all the way.

He looks down to see Starbuck crossing the deck and scowls down at him.

PERTH

Damned St. Jago monkey...

Inches above him, a loose hoisting block dangles and swings precariously in the breeze.

Sneering downward, Perth spits toward the deck.

PERTH (cont'd)

May God sink the lot of ye!

A squall picks up. Perth turns back up -- the block hits him square in the face! Dazed, he lets go the ropes...

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Crossing the deck, Starbuck stops to hear...

A sudden SCREAM from above! Everyone looks up at...

Perth's plummeting figure! He CRASHES DOWN on the deck with full impact -- right in front of Starbuck!

Deckhands rush to Perth, lying in a twisted sprawl. His neck broken.

Starbuck looks on in horror.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - SUNSET

A blood-red sunset and spectacular, billowing clouds frame the Pequod...her sails furled.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - MIDDECK - SUNSET

A sail-swathed corpse rests on a bulwark board. A somber crew gathers around the ship's side, their set faces aglow in the sunset. The Captain and the three mates stand by the bulwark around the body.

Ahab opens a bible to begin reading. Strangely, he can't bring himself to speak the printed words before him. He gruffly hands the bible over to Starbuck. Frowning at him, Starbuck reads the last rites:

STARBUCK

"They go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters. These see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep"...

EXT. TOPMAST - SUNSET

Perched high aloft, Ishmael witnesses the sea burial below, sun and wind burning his face.

EXT. MIDDECK - SUNSET

In the spare whaleboat, Fedallah and his Arabs pass around a hooker pipe, oblivious to the Christian ceremony. Fedallah exhales smoke with languid disregard.

Starbuck finishes the rites in his own words:

STARBUCK

Lord of all the seas, we here commend this mariner's spirit into thy hands...

He nods to Stubb and Flask, and they tip the bulwark board...Perth's body drops into the sea with a small SPLASH. And disappears into its watery grave.

A long beat, as the men gaze down.

AHAB

So be it, then. We're born in throes, 'tis only fit that we should live in pains and die in pangs...only to end in an unmarked grave.

Starbuck, a tinderbox of bitter emotions, mutters to him in a low voice:

STARBUCK

To what end might that be,
sir? To a "blasphemer's end,"
as the English captain said?

Ahab glares at him with a blackened brow. Starbuck
shuts the bible and gazes back, trying nobly to
contain himself.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Life holds US, sir. We do
not hold IT.

Ahab faces him, raising his voice for all to hear.

AHAB

Do ye dare to question me?!

STARBUCK

I don't dare, sir, I only
think. I blame myself for
this good sailor's death...

AHAB

A careless sailor!

STARBUCK

Perhaps. But the men see it
as an ill prophecy.

AHAB

Prophecy?!

He wheels about to face the crew. All around, the men
edge fearfully back.

AHAB (cont'd)

PROPHECY?!

He scans their faces...ignorant, superstitious faces.

AHAB (cont'd)

I'll give ye a prophecy, my
shipmates. Death to Moby Dick!
Aye! I'll be both a prophet
and fulfiller then!

He THUNK-CLOPS between them, moving from face to face

with a quickening pace and rising voice to galvanize them. Starbuck watches him gravely.

AHAB (cont'd)

And the fulfillment of this
prophecy is what ye have all
agreed to share with me!

(a raised fist)

Death to my dismemberer --
to Moby Dick! That's more
than even the greatest GODS
could do, I tell ye!

His effect on them is hypnotic, his passion burning
with redoubled fury as he shouts:

AHAB (cont'd)

The gods've knocked me down,
they've mocked this captive
king -- but I am up again!
Now it is THEY who take to
their heels and run! Hiding
from ME!

Wild-eyed, Ahab turns to glower defiantly at the
cloudy, red sunset.

AHAB (cont'd)

Come! Come out behind your
cotton clouds! Come and
strike ME! I have no long
guns to reach ye -- only
THESE!

(raises his hands)

My bony fingers! Come then!
See if ye can swerve me!

Ahab laughs defiantly and faces Starbuck with fire in
his eyes, shaking a fist at him.

AHAB (cont'd)

Serve ME?! Ye cannot swerve
me! Else ye swerve yourself...

EXT. TOPMAST - SUNSET

On his lookout, Ishmael watches the drama below. Then,
unexpectedly, something distracts him out to sea:

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - SUNSET

An immense white whale plunges through distant waters,
a tall jet of misty air blowing out of his spout!

EXT. TOPMAST - SUNSET

Ishmael gapes seaward. He can't believe his eyes.
He tries to shout out but can only gasp, his words a
stammered hush. He's speechless...

EXT. MIDDECK - SUNSET

Pacing around Starbuck, Ahab raises his fist to the
heavens.

AHAB (cont'd)

Swerve me?! Never! The
path to my purpose is laid
with iron rails -- on which
my very soul is grooved
to run!

(to Starbuck)

And NAUGHT will stop me,
Mister Starbuck!...

Suddenly Ishmael's VOICE BOOMS OUT at the top of his
lungs:

ISHMAEL (O.S.)

Thar she blows!! She blows
to starboard!!

(loud and clear)

The WHITE WHALE!!

A stunned beat. Ahab charges past Starbuck -- bounds
onto the quarterdeck.

The men bolt to the starboard bulwark, hugging the
sides, peering seaward:

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA -SUNSET

Nothing there. Only a flat expanse under the sinking
sun.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - SUNSET

Ahab stares furiously outward, willing him to appear.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - SUNSET

Still nothing. Then suddenly, he breaches...

MOBY DICK! The mighty, feared leviathan himself!
Mangled iron harpoons protrude out from a pale skin
mottled with scars and barnacles.

EXT. QUARTERDECK -SUNSET

Ahab's face starts to convulse!

EXT. MIDDECK - SUNSET

The ship's crew are speechless, all eyes fixed on
the awesome sight of the white whale.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA -SUNSET

MOBY DICK dips down his great white head and begins
slowly to dive for the deep. The last visible sign
of him is his tail.

ISHMAEL (O.S.)

There go flukes!!

The enormous split jib tail rises up, higher and
higher -- then slaps the water defiantly! Then
disappears.

EXT. QUARTERDECK -SUNSET

Ahab's hands grip the bulwark, his knuckles white.
The scar down the side of his head looks swollen
and reddened by the sky's orange glow. His face
tightens like a coil, until he finally EXPLODES...

A BELLOWING HOWL OF UNGODLY RAGE!

FADE OUT.

END PART ONE