

—FREDERICK DEBELL BENNETT'S WHALING VOYAGE ROUND THE GLOBE, 1840.

October 13. "There she blows," was sung out from the mast-head.

"Where away?" demanded the captain.

"Three points off the lee bow, sir."

"Raise up your wheel. Steady!"

"Steady, sir."

"Mast-head ahoy! Do you see that whale now?"

"Ay ay, sir! A shoal of Sperm Whales! There she blows! There she breaches!"

"Sing out! sing out every time!"

"Ay Ay, sir! There she blows! there—there—thar she blows -bowes -bo-o-os!"

"How far off?"

"Two miles and a half."

"Thunder and lightning! so near! Call all hands."

—J. ROSS BROWNE'S ETCHINGS OF A WHALING CRUIZE. 1846.

"The Whale-ship Globe, on board of which vessel occurred the horrid transactions we are about to relate, belonged to the island of Nantucket."

—"NARRATIVE OF THE GLOBE," BY LAY AND HUSSEY SURVIVORS. A.D. 1828.

Being once pursued by a whale which he had wounded, he parried the assault for some time with a lance; but the furious monster at length rushed on the boat; himself and comrades only being preserved by leaping into the water when they saw the onset was inevitable."

—MISSIONARY JOURNAL OF TYERMAN AND BENNETT.

"Nantucket itself," said Mr. Webster, "is a very striking and peculiar portion of the National interest. There is a population of eight or nine thousand persons living here in the sea, adding largely every year to the National wealth by the boldest and most persevering industry."

—REPORT OF DANIEL WEBSTER'S SPEECH IN THE U. S. SENATE, ON THE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF A BREAKWATER AT NANTUCKET. 1828.

"The whale fell directly over him, and probably killed him in a moment."

—"THE WHALE AND HIS CAPTORS, OR THE WHALEMAN'S ADVENTURES AND THE WHALE'S BIOGRAPHY, GATHERED ON THE HOMEWARD CRUISE OF THE COMMODORE PREBLE."

BY REV. HENRY T. CHEEVER.

"If you make the least damn bit of noise," replied Samuel, "I will send you to hell."

—LIFE OF SAMUEL COMSTOCK (THE MUTINEER), BY HIS BROTHER, WILLIAM COMSTOCK. ANOTHER VERSION OF THE

WHALE-SHIP GLOBE NARRATIVE.

“The voyages of the Dutch and English to the Northern Ocean, in order, if possible, to discover a passage through it to India, though they failed of their main object, laid-open the haunts of the whale.”

—MCCULLOCH’S COMMERCIAL DICTIONARY.

“These things are reciprocal; the ball rebounds, only to bound forward again; for now in laying open the haunts of the whale, the whalers seem to have indirectly hit upon new clues to that same mystic North-West Passage.”

—FROM “SOMETHING” UNPUBLISHED.

“It is impossible to meet a whale-ship on the ocean without being struck by her near appearance. The vessel under short sail, with look-outs at the mast-heads, eagerly scanning the wide expanse around them, has a totally different air from those engaged in regular voyage.”

—CURRENTS AND WHALING. U. S. EX. EX.

“Pedestrians in the vicinity of London and elsewhere may recollect having seen large curved bones set upright in the earth, either to form arches over gateways, or entrances to alcoves, and they may perhaps have been told that these were the ribs of whales.”

—TALES OF A WHALE VOYAGER TO THE ARCTIC OCEAN.

“It was not till the boats returned from the pursuit of these whales, that the whites saw their ship in bloody possession of the savages enrolled among the crew.”

—NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF THE TAKING AND RETAKING OF THE WHALE-SHIP HOBOMACK.

“It is generally well known that out of the crews of Whaling vessels (American) few ever return in the ships on board of which they departed.”

—CRUISE IN A WHALE BOAT.

“Suddenly a mighty mass emerged from the water, and shot up perpendicularly into the air. It was the whale.”

—MIRIAM COFFIN OR THE WHALE FISHERMAN.

“The Whale is harpooned to be sure; but bethink you, how you would manage a powerful unbroken colt, with the mere appliance of a rope tied to the root of his tail.”

—A CHAPTER ON WHALING IN RIBS AND TRUCKS.

“On one occasion I saw two of these monsters (whales) probably male and female, slowly swimming, one after the other, within less than a stone’s throw of the shore” (Terra Del Fuego), “over which the beech tree extended its branches.”

—DARWIN’S VOYAGE OF A NATURALIST.

“‘Stern all!’ exclaimed the mate, as upon turning his head, he saw the distended jaws of a large Sperm Whale close to the head of the boat, threatening it with instant destruction;—‘Stern all, for your lives!’”

—WHARTON THE WHALE KILLER.

“So be cheery, my lads, let your hearts never fail,  
While the bold harpooneer is striking the whale!”  
—NANTUCKET SONG.

“Oh, the rare old Whale, mid storm and gale  
In his ocean home will be  
A giant in might, where might is right,  
And King of the boundless sea.”  
—WHALE SONG.

# Chapter 1

## Loomings

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off—then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. This is my substitute for pistol and ball. With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship. There is nothing surprising in this. If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings towards the ocean with me.

There now is your insular city of the Manhattoes, belted round by wharves as Indian isles by coral reefs—commerce surrounds it with her surf. Right and left, the streets take you waterward. Its extreme downtown is the battery, where that noble mole is washed by waves, and cooled by breezes, which a few hours previous were out of sight of land. Look at the crowds of water-gazers there.

Circumambulate the city of a dreamy Sabbath afternoon. Go from Corlears Hook to Coenties Slip, and from thence, by Whitehall, northward. What do you see?—Posted like silent sentinels all around the town, stand thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries. Some leaning against the spiles; some seated upon the pier-heads; some looking over the bulwarks glasses! of ships from China; some high aloft in the rigging, as if striving to get a still better seaward peep. But these are all landsmen; of week days pent up in lath and plaster— tied to counters, nailed to benches, clinched to desks. How then is this? Are the green fields gone? What do they here?

But look! here come more crowds, pacing straight for the water, and seemingly bound for a dive. Strange! Nothing will content them but the extremest limit of the land; loitering under the shady lee of yonder warehouses will not suffice. No. They must get just as nigh the water as they possibly can without falling in. And there they stand— miles of them—leagues. Inlanders all, they come from lanes and alleys, streets and avenues,— north, east, south, and west. Yet here they all unite. Tell me, does the magnetic virtue of the needles of the compasses of all those ships attract them thither?

Once more. Say you are in the country; in some high land of lakes. Take almost any path you please, and ten to one it carries you down in a dale, and leaves you there by a pool in the stream. There is magic in it. Let the most absent-minded of men be plunged in his deepest reveries—stand that man on his legs, set his feet a-going, and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be in all that region. Should you ever be athirst in the great American desert, try this experiment, if your caravan happen to be supplied with a metaphysical professor. Yes, as every one knows, meditation and water are wedded for ever.

But here is an artist. He desires to paint you the dreamiest, shadiest, quietest, most enchanting bit of romantic landscape in all the valley of the Saco. What is the chief element he employs? There stand his trees, each with a hollow trunk, as if a hermit and a crucifix were within; and here sleeps his meadow, and there sleep his cattle; and up from yonder cottage goes a sleepy smoke. Deep into distant woodlands winds a mazy way, reaching to overlapping spurs of mountains bathed in their hill-side blue. But though the picture lies thus tranced, and though this pine-tree shakes down its sighs like leaves upon this shepherd's head, yet all were vain, unless the shepherd's eye were fixed upon the magic stream before him. Go visit the Prairies in June, when for scores on scores of miles you wade knee-deep among Tiger-lilies—what is the one charm wanting?—Water - there is not a drop of water there! Were Niagara but a cataract of sand, would you travel your thousand miles to see it? Why did the poor poet of Tennessee, upon suddenly receiving two handfuls of silver, deliberate whether to buy him a coat, which he sadly needed, or invest his money in a pedestrian trip to Rockaway Beach? Why is almost every robust healthy boy with a robust healthy soul in him, at some time or other crazy to go to sea? Why upon your first voyage as a passenger, did you yourself feel such a mystical vibration, when first told that you and your ship were now out of sight of land? Why did the old Persians hold the sea holy? Why did the Greeks give it a separate deity, and own brother of Jove? Surely all this is not without meaning. And still deeper the meaning of that story of Narcissus, who because he could not grasp the tormenting, mild image he saw in the fountain, plunged into it and was drowned. But that same image, we ourselves see in all rivers and oceans. It is the image of the ungraspable phantom of life; and this is the key to it all.

Now, when I say that I am in the habit of going to sea whenever I begin to grow hazy about the eyes, and begin to be over conscious of my lungs, I do not mean to have it inferred that I ever go to sea as a passenger. For to go as a passenger you must needs have a purse, and a purse is but a rag unless you have something in it. Besides, passengers get sea-sick—grow quarrelsome—don't sleep of nights—do not enjoy themselves much, as a general thing;—no, I never go as a passenger; nor, though I am something of a salt, do I ever go to sea as a Commodore, or a Captain, or a Cook. I abandon the glory and distinction of such offices to those who like them. For my part, I abominate all honorable respectable toils, trials, and tribulations of every kind whatsoever. It is quite as much as I can do to take care of myself, without taking care of ships, barques, brigs, schooners, and what not. And as for going as cook,—though I confess there is considerable glory in that, a cook being a sort of officer on ship-board