

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 Dagoo 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

PART TWO

FADE IN:

ACT 1

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

A boundless seascape, the tiny Pequod far in b.g.
Beyond, the orange sun disappears below the horizon.

In f.g., a huge white mass surfaces with jarring
suddenness -- MOBY DICK, a hundred feet of scarred,
barnacled tonnage! The spout from his forehead
blows out a geyser of mist, clouding our view.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - TOPMAST - DUSK

High on the lookout, Ishmael points excitedly.

ISHMAEL

There she blows again! Hard
to port beam!

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DUSK

Ahab, his blazing eyes fixed on the distant whale,
suddenly reels about with an earth-shaking roar:

AHAB

Clear away the boats!!

STARBUCK

In the night, Captain?!

AHAB

Clear away, I said!

STARBUCK

Ye want us to give him chase
in the NIGHT?!

AHAB

Aye! In the night -- we'll
give chase by night and see
his whiteness better than by
daylight!

Starbuck hesitates. Ahab turns hard to him.

AHAB (cont'd)
Order the men, Starbuck!

STARBUCK
Aye, aye sir...
(to the men)
Prepare to lower away boats!

EXT. MIDDECK - DUSK

Jarred from their astonished stares, the crewmen scramble into action. Ishmael rope-slides to the deck like an expert seaman. Pip runs the length of the ship, shaking his tambourine, yelling excitedly.

Ahab strides toward the main mast and stops in front of the nailed gold coin. He bangs a fist on it.

AHAB
My harpooners...strike and
the gold will be yours!

Tashtego looks up from a loggerhead, feeding out line. He raises his harpoon like an Apache warrior.

TASHTEGO
WOO-HAA-HEE! Aye, Capt'n!
Dat Moby Dick come near Tash
an' he be a dead fish!

Dagoo leaps into a boat, lines wrapped around his shoulders and tied to his two harpoons, one in each hand. He lifts them high, a flash of teeth.

DAGOO
KEE-HA! KEE-HA! He might
see a white man by night --
but not Dagoo! I'll kill
'im for ye, Capt'n, and win
that gold!

Fedallah snickers at him from the spare boat, shaking his head with a self-confident sneer.

Queequeg leaps onto the bulwark with raised harpoon.

QUEEQUEG

Smoke out him pipes me will!
 Make-em straight dat crooked
 jaw!

Ahab tosses a lance at Queequeg, who takes it on the fly with a powerful war cry:

QUEEQUEG (cont'd)
 HALA-LA PAO-LOO! FA-TONGA!

In the bustle, Pip sneaks through the boarding gate and climbs unseen over the side.

All the whalers pile en masse into the lowering boats.

EXT. SHIP'S SIDE - DUSK

Four whaleboat keels hit the water in tandem -- one quick SPLASH-DOWN after another.

Ahab, full of sudden youthful energy, swings over the side on a halyard and rope-climbs down fast toward Fedallah's boat. His hands slip the last few feet -- he falls hard into the boat with a CRUNCH! He tries to stand, but he can't. His peg leg is splintered.

The crew turns to Ahab's SHOUT OF RAGE, ringing out in the dusk. An Arab rower tries to help him. Ahab pushes him away. He picks up pieces of his jaggedly broken peg leg, tosses them into the water. Hobbles his way to the stern, booming to his rowers:

AHAB
 START her, men! Start her
 like thunderclaps! Like
 a thousand grinning devils!

The Arabs row out like demons possessed. Fedallah takes his place at the bow, silent and stealthy.

Ishmael and Starbuck watch Ahab from their boat... unaware of little Pip, climbing over its stern.

He slithers under a box plank and hides behind a loggerhead basket. Starbuck turns around.

STARBUCK
 Crack on! Pull those oars!

Ishmael takes an oar, Bulkington beside him.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

An aerial view over moonlit waters: four whaling boats, lit by pole lanterns. One in the lead, three fanned out behind it.

To the horizon...a formidable white shape glides off into a fog bank.

EXT. STUBB'S BOAT - DUSK

Stubb lights his pipe, as his men row furiously.

STUBB

Go, lads, row like the wind!

He looks toward Ahab's boat: streaking far ahead.

Starbuck's boat glides by. Stubb turns aside.

STUBB (cont'd)

Who'd have thought it, eh?!
At night, to boot! If I had
only one leg, ye wouldn't
catch ME in a boat by night...
unless maybe to stop a leak
with a whalebone toe!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Starbuck turns to Stubb's boat, shaking his head.

STARBUCK

He's possessed, I tell ye!
God has shipwrecked his soul!

The boats plunge into a fog bank, enveloped in a moonlit mist.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Look at this! A fog! Where
did it come from?! An' look
at us -- rowin' blind in the
night, after a whale as white
as this fog! Was it a whale
we saw, or a ghost?!

Rowing before him, Ishmael looks up at the moon:

An opaque eye in the thick mists, its glow surreal.

EXT. FLASK'S BOAT - DUSK

Flask's boat passes beside Starbuck's.

FLASK

It was Moby Dick, all right!
Fog, snow or hail, I don't
care -- I'll fetch that gold
doubloon or die tryin'!

(to rowers)

Pull, damn ye! Show some
muscle!

Dagoo sings a rhythmic AFRICAN CHANT, the oarsmen
echoing him, rowing to his beat.

Ahead of them: Ahab's boat materializes out of
the dense fog, moving steadily forward.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

Ahab stands stiffly by the tiller, using it as both
crutch and guide. He grips a rower's head of hair
to keep his balance, glaring ahead into the white
night as if he could see through the fog. A manic
energy in his furrowed-brow concentration.

AHAB

Roar and pull, ye devils...
I can see fifty seas off! A
hundred seas! It's Moby Dick
out there, I tell ye! Chase!
Crack your backbones, bite
your knives in two!

(clasping forehead)

Dear Lord, I'm going to go
stark staring mad...

(exhorting on)

Close to, ye hairy-hearted
ghouls, get me close to him!

The Arabs HUM as they row, an odd, syncopated SOUND.
Fedallah stands motionless at the bow, harpoon ready.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Starbuck stares ahead at Ahab with deep chagrin. Ishmael rows, his sweaty face glistening under the boat lamps. Behind the basket next to him, Pip crouches in hiding.

The sea becomes strangely still. Starbuck glances around him.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

A deathly quiet, only the SLAP of oars against the water. Beyond...DISTANT GURGLING SOUNDS. Ahab tenses.

AHAB

Hark! Prick ears...listen!

EXT. FLASK'S BOAT - DUSK

FLASK

Hold the oars! Hold still!

The men raise their oars and look out into the luminous night. Dagoo commands the bow, taking a firm grip of his harpoon.

EXT. STUBB'S BOAT - DUSK

Stubb cups an ear, shifting the pipe in his mouth, tuned into every sound around him. His voice hushed:

STUBB

Softly, softly...whoa, babes!
Still now!

The rowers stop rowing and lift up their oars. Tashtego readies himself at the bow.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

The becalmed waters around the boat spin in rivulets. Starbuck's voice cuts the air like a knife:

STARBUCK

Stop!

The rowers lift their oars and freeze.

Ahead in the fog: Ahab's boat drifts soundlessly.

Ishmael listens, unsettled by the stillness around him. He turns nervously to Starbuck.

ISHMAEL

What d'ye make of it, sir--

STARBUCK

Hist! Eyes sharp...

Everyone watches and listens. A long, tense beat...

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

The fog begins to lift...a full view of all four boats. Whalers listen to the eerie quiet.

A calm, empty sea. Then, GURGLINGS all around...

A SCHOOL OF SPERM WHALES breaches -- a full circle around the boats! With a great SIGH, dozens of spouts release jets of watery air!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Starbuck spins his head around -- whales everywhere! Ishmael stares amazed, slack-jawed. Queequeg bolts to the bow with his harpoon.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

Ahab spins around, loses his balance and falls. He rises quickly, glaring beyond the black shapes all around him...then points outside the gentle fleet of whales, his finger like a fixed bayonet.

AHAB

There! THERE!

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

MOBY DICK breaches with a tremendous jump -- three times the size of the other whales! Then swims steadily away.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

Ahab crashes his way toward the bow...

AHAB
Row, you monkeys -- ROW!

He seizes Fedallah's harpoon and rushes forward...

AHAB (cont'd)
Move aside...

He stumbles and falls, keeps going frantically...

AHAB (cont'd)
...LET ME GIVE IT TO HIM!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

A sperm whale suddenly breaches half under the boat with a HARD BUMP, lifting it up! The boat slides off its back, landing upright in the water next to it.

Wasting no time, Queequeg thrusts his harpoon with great power -- WHISH! Deep into the whale's hump!

A giant's GRUNT, followed by a thrashing tail, slapping the water beside them! Instant chaos...

STARBUCK
Stern all, stern all! Quick!

The oarsmen immediately row away from the agonizing whale and its deadly flukes.

STARBUCK (cont'd)
Give him another, Queequeg!

Queequeg aims, throws another harpoon into the mountain of thrashing blubber -- another deadly hit!

The whale's spout gushes spasmodically. The air fills with bloody mist, spraying the whalers red as they row frantically away from the sea beast's death throes.

The whale starts to dive. Harpoon lines spin out of the loggerhead basket -- rolls of line uncoil rapidly, the basket shaking violently!

Unnoticed by the others, frightened Pip scrambles out from beneath the box plank and stumbles into the basket -- his little legs tangled in spinning lines!

Queequeg lets loose a WAR CRY at the fast-receding whale. Ishmael jumps to his feet, straining to get a look...

A QUICK, TINY SCREAM startles him from behind!

Pip suddenly squirts out past him, dragged by a line and yanked overboard -- into the churning water!

ISHMAEL

Man overboard, Mister
Starbuck! Man overboard!

He quickly throws a lifebuoy to the boy. Starbuck sees what's happened, but he's too distracted.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

For God's sake...it's PIP,
sir! He's out there!

The boat suddenly lurches forward -- dragged at great speed by the wounded, diving whale. The running lines around a stanchion start to smoke.

STARBUCK

Wet the line! Wet the line!

Queequeg dumps a bucket of water over the smoking rope. The boat vibrates with the power of the drag. Gripping the tiller, Starbuck quickly scans around him.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

The circle of panicking whales tightens around the three boats, Ahab's moving beyond it. Starbuck's boat is pulled deeper into the fray.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Queequeg snatches up a lance and points urgently at the taut lines.

QUEEQUEG

Me cut-em, sir?! Cut dem lines 'fore we be splintered up by dem whales?!

STARBUCK

NO! Not yet...look!

He points forward.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

An opening between the circling whales, out toward the calm, moonlit sea. The boat flies through the gap.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Ishmael turns and looks far astern:

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

Pip clings to the floating lifebuoy, floundering in the eruption of white water all around him. The boy SCREAMS INAUDIBLY, waving a frantic arm for help.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Ishmael turns to Starbuck in a panic.

ISHMAEL

Sir! What about Pip--

Beside him, Bulkington grips his arm.

BULKINGTON

Sit down, boy. Nothin' we can do.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

Ahab hangs over the prow, harpoon held before him with fixed intensity. Dead ahead:

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

Outward bound, the white whale swims steadily and obliviously...still too far to strike.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

AHAB
ROW! ROW! ROW!!

He glares back at the other boats, but they're too far away to offer any support. He looks forward:

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DUSK

MOBY DICK's giant flukes rise up in the moonlit air, then drop quickly into the calm water...disappearing into the deep blue. He's gone.

Ahab GROWLS with monumental frustration.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

The lines go slack, and the boat suddenly slows. Ishmael jumps up, unable to suppress himself.

ISHMAEL
Mister Starbuck, sir! We
can't just act as if nothing
has happened! We've GOT to
go back for him!

STARBUCK
Sit down! SIT, I tell you,
before ye wind up in the
water too!

ISHMAEL
But he'll drown if we don't
go back!

Starbuck pushes Ishmael back onto the rowers' bench.

STARBUCK
Take back that oar, sailor!
We've got other business to
attend to. We can't just
drop everything and set off

on a salvage mission! SIT!

He turns his attention back to the becalmed water. Ishmael glances helplessly at Bulkington. Queequeg hauls in the lines as fast as he can.

The struck whale surfaces...missing the boat by a few feet. It spins slowly in the water, its massive jaws opening and closing with dwindling energy.

Queequeg and two oarsmen pull together on the slack lines until they're taut with the harpoons imbedded in the whale. They tow the boat toward the dying creature.

As they pull up alongside it, Ahab's boat appears.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

Ahab guides his craft behind Starbuck's boat. He scans the whale with a grave look. Subdued now, but storming inside. In a quiet voice:

AHAB

Did ye not see HIM, Mister Starbuck?

STARBUCK

I did, sir.

Ahab turns a fierce expression on him, but his voice remains low.

AHAB

And why did ye strike THIS whale, if ye could see Moby Dick?

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Starbuck is silent for a beat.

STARBUCK

I'm a whaler, sir.

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

Long, silent eye contact. Ahab abruptly turns away

and waves at his Arab oarsmen. His boat pulls away from Starbuck's. Ahab calls back over his shoulder:

AHAB

Get that blubber on deck tonight, Starbuck, before daylight. We'll be pushin' on in the morning.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

Starbuck glances at Ishmael. He quickly shouts to Ahab's retreating boat.

STARBUCK

What about the boy, sir?!

EXT. AHAB'S BOAT - DUSK

Ahab signals his oarsmen, and the boat slows.

In b.g., Stubb's and Flask's boats row in close to join them, the whalers assessing the new kill.

Ahab turns, his face in shadow like a phantom in the still gloom.

AHAB

What boy?

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DUSK

STARBUCK

Pip, sir. He's lost at sea.

Stubb's boat steers side by side with Starbuck's.

STUBB

Aye, I saw him myself! Miles of sea between him and us by now. We can't afford to lose this fine kill on account of that minstrel's foolishness.

AHAB

Pip, ye say? The tambourine boy? And how did HE come to be in your boat, Mister Starbuck?

STARBUCK

Stowed away, sir, where he
wasn't supposed to be. He's
just a shipkeeper, Captain,
a tender-hearted jolly boy...
and I fear we've lost 'im.

Ishmael waits expectantly, full of worry. Queequeg
too looks concerned and steps forward.

QUEEQUEG

Me go find Pip! Pip be dead,
dat be bad magic!

Across the water, Ahab deliberates for a beat. He
grunts to his Arabs, and they continue to row. His
boat drifts away, as he calls back:

AHAB

Ye have 'til dawn to find
that ungracious little brat,
or whatever the sharks've
left of him, so make haste.

(to his oarsmen)

Give way now, greyhounds!
Dog to it!

Ishmael breathes a sigh of relief. So does Starbuck,
as he turns to Bulkington.

STARBUCK

Organize a search party,
Mister Bulkington. And take
Queequeg and Ishmael.

BULKINGTON

Aye, sir.

In b.g., Flask leans over from his boat and grins at
Queequeg, gesturing at the dead whale.

FLASK

Seems a shame to leave behind
such a noble prize.

Queequeg grunts scoffingly and turns away to the
bow, more interested in the rescue than the whale.

EXT. STUBB'S BOAT - DUSK

Starbuck jumps across from his boat into Stubb's.

STARBUCK

Let's bring this fish in,
Mister Stubb.

Stubb glances at Starbuck's boat, Bulkington now in command. Stubb shakes his head.

STUBB

Ye got a hundred barrels of
sperm oil here -- why would ye
be wastin' yer men's time
lookin' for a cabin boy?

STARBUCK

It's the rightful thing to do.
A child's life is worth more
than a whale's hide.

STUBB

Aye, can't argue with that.

EXT. BULKINGTON'S BOAT - DUSK

Waving the men to their oars, Bulkington gazes out into the darkness.

BULKINGTON

Let's to it, boys!

The oarsmen row. Ishmael wields his oar vigorously, redoubling his efforts.

Receding away in Stubb's boat, Starbuck shouts back:

STARBUCK

I'll bust open a hogshead of
brandy to the man who finds
the boy! Will ye spit fire,
men?!

AYE, AYES all around. They row away from the other boats, Queequeg perched at the bow, scanning the sea like a hawk.

FADE OUT.

ACT 2

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - AFT DECK - NIGHT

A polished harpoon, sharpened on a spinning grindstone, sparks flying. The sparks fill our view, behind them Ahab's hard-set features. Waiting intensely.

The Blacksmith raises the harpoon, presenting its two-flued razor head before the Captain. Ahab nods with approval.

Glimpsed in b.g, a gigantic, severed whale's head is hoisted and swung suspended over the deck by pulley chains straining from yard arms. The deck tilts to one side under its heavy weight.

Tri-works furnaces burn and boiling pots smoke, adding a nightmarish atmosphere to the scene.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - NIGHT

Deep in the heart of moonlit darkness drifts a lone, lamp-lit whale boat.

EXT. BULKINGTON'S BOAT - NIGHT

Glimmering lanterns held high, Bulkington, Ishmael and the men search the calm sea. Queequeg peers intently across the black, ominous waters. Not a sign of life. The men call out sporadically:

CREWMEN

Pip! Pip! Where are ye, boy?!

INT. STARBUCK'S CABIN - NIGHT

Starbuck dozes over an open bible on his bunk, a flickering candle beside him. The room tilts, timbers GROANING and CREAKING.

The candle burns down...a TIME-LAPSE EFFECT, as hours pass in seconds...to a melted, dead stump by the light of dawn.

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAWN

Dawn's early light creeps over an endless horizon.

Pip clings helplessly to the lifebuoy, alone in the vast emptiness. He sings a little DITTY in a trembling voice.

His head jerks around with a moan of despair...

A shark's fin streaks through the water with lethal swiftness, circling around him.

Pip bobs frantically, gasping with terror, wide eyes fixed on the approaching predator.

The shark fin disappears under. Instinctively, Pip dives...

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAWN

Holding his breath, Pip sees the shark closing in with smaller circles, fixed on him with cold, unblinking black eyes. Pip waves his arms and legs furiously in a vain effort to scare off the death mask before him. The circling shark moves in for the kill, its jaws widening...

Pip manages to land a fist directly onto the shark's nose! It flips its tail, darts away...then streaks in again, relentlessly closer...

A massive white wall suddenly fills the deep -- passing within inches of Pip! The shark flees. Pip surfaces...

EXT. CARIBBEAN SEA - DAWN

Pip sucks in air, clutching the lifebuoy. His wide eyes on the titantic white whale, plunging away, leaving swells in his wake. MOBY DICK is gone as quickly as he appears.

An empty sea again, the waves too high for Pip to see far. Then...

Another, bigger shark's fin approaches. Again circling him, again submerging...

Pip takes deep gulps of air, then dives again.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAWN

Pip gapes. A great white shark, three times larger. It circles once, then zeros in. Resigned to death, Pip shuts his eyes and exhales bubbles of air... sinking. The big shark draws closer, closer...

A sharp WHISSHHH -- a harpoon spears through the shark's body! Thrashing in a cloud of blood, the

great white vanishes from sight.

Eyes closed, losing consciousness, Pip sinks down...

A tattooed arm dips down from above -- a hand seizes Pip by the hair and hauls him up toward the light.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - MORNING

Ahab stands by the cabin window, staring morosely at the rising sun.

The Carpenter kneels at his feet, working to fit a new whale-bone peg leg, having a difficult time setting it in its place.

CARPENTER

If the Capt'n pleases...let
me measure it now, sir.

Ahab glares down at his poorly fitted stump, his irritation more of a good-humored bark than bite.

AHAB

Are you a manmaker, Carpenter,
that you'd measure me like a
suit?! Well, carry on...it's
not the first time.

The Carpenter secures the peg leg with a tightening tool.

AHAB (cont')

Accursed fate, that my soul
would have such a craven
mate for a body.

CARPENTER

How does that feel, sir?

AHAB

I canst say. I only feel
what is not there.

CARPENTER

Aye. A dismasted man never
loses the feeling of his
lost spar.

AHAB

Ah, that's better...good!

He bends down and grasps the bone stump with both hands, then grabs the Carpenter's tool to tighten it harder.

CARPENTER

Oh sir, careful, sir! It'll break bones, that will...

AHAB

(laughs bitterly)

No fear! I like a good grip! I like to feel something in this slippery world that I can hold onto!

Ahab straightens up and gazes inwardly.

AHAB (cont'd)

You ever hear of an old Greek named Prometheus?

CARPENTER

No, sir...can't say I ever shipped with the man, sir.

AHAB

Prometheus was he who made men. Made 'em whole with tools, like this...

(indicates tool)

Then he animated them from FIRE! 'Twas he who should have made me...what's made in fire must properly belongs to fire.

The Carpenter finishes and looks up, clearly mystified by him. Ahab looks inspired, spilling out the words:

AHAB (cont'd)

Then I would've been complete!
Fifty feet high in my socks!
My legs would have ROOTS, my
arms three feet to the wrist!
No heart at all...eyes? No!
A skylight atop my head to
light up an acre of brains.
Proud as a Greek god...AYE!
A Greek god...

(looks down)
 And not standing on a broken
 stick of dead bone.

He gazes wretchedly at his stump, back to reality.

AHAB (cont'd)
 Aye...my torn soul and gashed
 body...they bleed into each
 other.

(to himself)
 Aye. The truth shakes me
 falsely.

In b.g. by the cabin doorway, a turbaned figure
 lingers in the shadows. Fedallah.

The Carpenter rises stiffly, bent with arthritis.

AHAB (cont'd)
 I thank ye, Carpenter. Now,
 go back to your fixin's...
 leave Ahab to the gods.

CARPENTER
 Aye, aye, sir.

He shuffles out. Ahab sits deep in his broodings,
 then recognizes the shadowy presence. A gruff,
 impatient tone:

AHAB
 What d'ye want?

Fedallah eases into the lamp light, an inscrutable
 smile of broken teeth. His English is thickly
 accented, his voice gnarled and sibilant:

FEDALLAH
 The dream comes to me again...
 of my master's death.

Ahab doesn't move or react.

AHAB
 MY death? Then I pray ye go
 before me.

Fedallah shrugs, as if the thought were supremely
 indifferent to him.

FEDALLAH

I shall. As your pilot.

AHAB

Well then, me pilot, I pledge
to ye that I will slay Moby
Dick -- and survive it!

Fedallah's voice lowers, full of dark meaning:

FEDALLAH

Only rope can destroy Ahab.

AHAB

(laughs)

The gallows, then? Ha! Well
then...I am immortal!

Fedallah slinks back into the shadows, saying no more. Ahab glares scornfully after him...yet unnerved by him.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

The suspended whale's head, stripped of blubber, is hoisted overboard from the lower mast cranes. Almost a skeleton, it's a ghastly sight.

Starbuck oversees crewmen gathered around the port side, working the chains and pulleys and about to drop it into the sea. A SHOUT from the lookout:

DAGOO (O.S.)

Whaleboat to starboard helm!
They got PIP!

Starbuck and the men rush in unison to the starboard side. WILD CHEERS ring out, as Bulkington's boat rows in fast.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - MORNING

Ahab emerges from his cabin and looks down to see the rescue party climbing aboard. Surprised by the sight of Pip, his harsh face softens, almost a smile.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

Queequeg boards with little Pip in his arms, the boy dazed but alive. Bulkington takes him and hands him to Flask, who gives him to Stubb. The men pass the boy between them like a bucket brigade...to Starbuck, who sits Pip atop an oil barrel.

STARBUCK

We missed ye, lad! Bring 'im
his music!

Pip stares vacantly, disoriented. Stubb turns to Bulkington with a laugh.

STUBB

Well, this is a fine day!
We'd given him up for lost!

BULKINGTON

Thank Ishmael and Queequeg.
They spotted him.

Stubb turns to pound Ishmael's back with a mighty whack.

STUBB

By jimminy! You're a credit
to us all!

Ishmael smiles proudly, as men give him and Queequeg hearty pats. The two trade grins of brotherly kinship. They step over to Pip.

Everyone gathers round the boy, as Tashtego pushes the tambourine into Pip's hands.

TASHTEGO

G'won, Pip! Do us a tune!

Pip focuses glassy eyes on the tambourine, as if he doesn't recognize it. Then...he throws it violently to the deck. Stunned, silent looks all around. Queequeg picks it up with a disturbed frown. Ishmael reaches out to Pip.

ISHMAEL

Pip...what is it, boy?

Pip scans the men's face, as if they were strangers. Ishmael lays a gentle hand on him -- Pip thrashes

out, delirious, pummeling him with his small fists. Then he leaps off the barrel and dashes away. The men watch, horrified.

Pip scurries aimlessly around the deck in a wild panic, slips and falls. Around him, the planks are slick with whale blood and bones. Pip stares at the blood on his hands, then gapes up toward:

The giant, skeletal whale head, hanging over the side above him. Pip gives an ear-shattering SHRIEK!

Bewildered, the men don't know what to do. Queequeg rushes over and quickly releases a pulley chain...

The whale head plummets into the sea, a huge SPLASH!

Pip staggers up and runs to a whaleboat, flailing his arms as he did underwater with the sharks. He climbs into it, as if out of the sea. Crouches inside of it, huddled and BABBLING to himself. Completely insane.

The crew stares at him with befuddled looks, their morale shattered. Queequeg turns grimly to Ishmael.

QUEEQUEG

Dis bad magic. BAD magic.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Witnessing the scene below, Ahab too is affected. But his mind turns elsewhere, as he shouts down:

AHAB

Prepare to set sail, Starbuck!
We've wasted enough time!

STARBUCK

Right away, sir. Up sails,
mates, let's catch a breeze!

Men disperse to their duties, too demoralized to jump to it, slowly climbing the masts. Ahab booms at them:

AHAB

Make speed, ye lackies! Do
ye not know he's out there?!
Thunder away at it! We'll not
be whalers again -- 'til it's

MOBY DICK'S head hangin' from
these yard arms!

Driven by his voice, the crew picks up the pace.

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

Clear skies to the horizon. The full-sailed Pequod speeds across deeper, bluer waters. Her bow dips and plows through powerful swells.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - MASTS - DAY

All sails billow out like canvas balloons, masts swaying in a strong breeze. A breathtaking view.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

By the helm, Starbuck squints toward the horizon and checks his compass. He turns to the wheelman.

STARBUCK

Two points east southeast.
Steady before the breeze.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Starbuck steps down to middeck before a curious sight at the bottom of the main mast:

Ahab stands on the flat seat of a custom-made cradle suspended a few feet off the deck. Stubb and Flask rig pulley lines beside him. Starbuck approaches Ahab.

STARBUCK

If the wind holds up, sir,
we should be around the Cape
in two days hence.

AHAB

Aye, but no later than that.
(indicates cradle)
Now I too will stand lookout.
Is it ready, Mister Stubb?

STUBB

Secure as a mother's arms, sir.

AHAB

Starbuck, take the rope and
raise your captain. I will
commend my life into thy hands.

Looks between them, as if this were a test of loyalty.
Starbuck steps forward, takes the pulley line, then
hauls Ahab's cradle up the mast with strong hands.

AHAB (cont'd)

I'll have first sight of the
white whale. Aye, myself!

As he ascends, he slams a fist against the gold coin.

AHAB (cont'd)

And win back my doubloon!

The cradle rises to the maintop, swinging in the
breeze. Ahab stands like an iron statue, keeping
perfect balance, fiery eyes fixed to the horizon.

All the crew watch his upward progress. Fedallah
smiles to himself with feline cunning. Watching from
their station, Ishmael and Queequeg turn toward Pip:

Still in the whaleboat, Pip MUTTERS incomprehensibly
to himself in some strange, mindless language. Never
again will he smile or dance.

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

The Pequod plunges up and down through rolling swells,
waves crashing against her bow.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - MAINTOP - DAY

Ahab's high cradle swings like a pendulum. He keeps
a determined watch, rigid on his peg leg.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

The crew swabs the deck clean. None of them notice
Pip, who scrambles out of the whaleboat and makes a
beeline for the main mast.

He stares dourly at the shiny gold coin nailed to the
wood. A whispery singsong voice:

PIP

We, ye, they...are all bats!

Ishmael and the others turn, watching perplexedly.
Pip points to the Captain's cabin.

PIP (cont'd)
There! In there! Two bones
stuck in trousers...and one
be not his, but a whale's!

Stubb steps over to observe him, chuckling nervously.

STUBB
I fear we should've left
Pip to his fate, poor boy!

Pip recoils from Stubb and darts up the mast ropes
like a little monkey.

EXT. MAIN MAST - DAY

He perches halfway on the ladder, GIBBERING AWAY in
mad terror. Higher above him, Ahab nods off from
weariness.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Stubb shakes his head up at him. He turns to peer
closely at the doubloon. Starbuck, Flask and
Ishmael join him.

STUBB
Sixteen dollars. HAH! I've
seen doubloons before, nothin'
but round things made of gold.
Not much wonder in 'em. But
whoever kills that white
demon, this round thing
belongs to him!

FLASK
It's ship's bounty to ME,
Stubb -- it'll win me nine
hundred and sixty cigars!

In b.g., Fedallah chortles mischievously at them with
a toothy grin and shakes his head.

STARBUCK

It's the ship's navel, I tell
ye. And everyone's on fire
to unscrew it. But unscrew
a navel and see what happens.

Stubb and Flask look at him, uncomprehending. Ishmael
nods understandingly.

ISHMAEL

Aye. To me it speaks wisely...
but sadly. It's all in one's
perception.

STARBUCK

Perception? How d'ye mean?

ISHMAEL

Different ways of lookin',
sir. I used to teach my
school children about...what
Man sees and what God sees.
But Man sees only one thing,
what he WANTS to see.

EXT. MAINTOP - DAY

Exhausted, Ahab dozes as he stands on his lookout
cradle. Above him on the top lookout, Tashtego
scans the horizon and suddenly cries out:

TASHTEGO

There she blows, Cap'n!! It's
WHITE! The white whale!

Startled, Ahab pops his eyes open and peers out.

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

Far to the horizon, a distant spout amidst rolling
whitecaps. A whale, but too far away to distinguish.

EXT. MAINTOP - DAY

Ahab's face twists into a glower of such hatred that
he's momentarily incapable of speaking. Then...

AHAB

Lower me away! Quick, there!

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Deckhands rush to man the pulley ropes, while others hasten to the bulwarks to sight the whale.

Starbuck and Ishmael gaze up at Ahab, tiring of all this madness.

ISHMAEL

'Tis like the old man and his whale. He sees but a monster of destruction...
 (turns to Starbuck)
 Perhaps in God's eyes, Moby Dick is just another of His creatures, doin' what's natural...

Absorbing this, Starbuck looks between lowering Ahab and the mast coin beside him. Its brilliant gold reflection catches his eye...blinding him.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Just that. Just a whale.
 Starbuck shields his eyes and turns away.

STARBUCK

Damnably coin! It's put here to blind us all!

Ahab lands on the deck before them. He quickly THUNK-CLOPS to the bulwark with feverish energy.

AHAB

Steward! My eyeglass!

Starbuck leans calmly over the side amidst excited sailors, gazing out with an eagle's eye.

STARBUCK

It's not white, Captain, it's grey. Probably a humpback.

Ahab snatches his eyeglass from the Steward and peers out. He can't see well enough and angrily tosses it.

AHAB

It's Moby Dick, I tell ye!
 (shouts up)
 Unfurl the topgallants -- we

need more sail!

Starbuck catches sight of something else and points seaward.

STARBUCK

Lo, sir! Sperm whales, to
the starboard beam!

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

A small pod of spouting sperm heads, a half-mile across the water. A healthy harvest.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Ahab keeps his eyes glued to the bow, refusing to even glance starboard. Starbuck turns to him.

STARBUCK

Shall we lower away, sir?

AHAB

Up all sails, Mister Starbuck!
Drive on!

STARBUCK

There's barrels of gold out
there, sir -- worth far more
than a Spanish coin!

AHAB

Those are my orders!

STARBUCK

But SIR!--

AHAB

SAIL ON, I SAY!

A tense beat, Starbuck rebellious. But he does nothing. He turns to see Fedallah smiling slyly at him, picking his teeth with his long fingernail. Starbuck shouts to the wheel.

STARBUCK

Steady on course, helmsman!
Sail onward...

(to himself)

Nowhere.

EXT. TOPMASTS - DAY

High on the tallest mast, hands unfurl the topgallant sails. One after another, until every sheet is taut with wind.

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

All sails full, the Pequod drives hard to leeward in pursuit of the elusive spout...a speck on the sea.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Stubb and Bulkington lean over the side, harsh spray in their faces, watching seaward:

EXT. SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

The distant, unrecognizable whale dives out of sight.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Ahab ROARS, frustrated again. He paces across the ship at that half-stomping gait, stewing away.

Stubb turns out of the wind and lights his pipe.

STUBB

Well, that's that. He'll not breach for an hour, and miles from here. He's a cunning one, that Moby Dick.

BULKINGTON

If it WAS Moby Dick...

He looks off toward pacing Ahab, with deep knowledge:

BULKINGTON (cont'd)

But he'll make us chase him across the Antarctic, if we let 'im. And when we're good and exhausted, when it's time to turn back, Ahab'll say "Drive on!"

(turns to Stubb)

He's seen Moby Dick...he's

looked again into that cold
eye. He won't let up now.

Ahab stops at the port side to look out, desperate for
a sign. Fedallah edges close beside him. He hisses
aside to him in deepest privacy, nodding toward sea.

FEDALLAH

He IS out there, my master.
Very near now...very near!

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

The Pequod speeds southward through colder waters,
her sails straining against the wind. On the horizon,
drifting ice floes speckle the grey sea.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

The tri-works furnace burns, billowing black smoke.
The Cook pulls out a baked loaf of bread on the blade
end of a harpoon. The Blacksmith dumps in a bucket
of whale oil to fuel the tri-works' blaze.

Bundled in winter coats and scarves, Stubb, Flask and
others huddle close to the warmth of its open hearth.
Ishmael paces nearby to ward off the cold.

Starbuck steps over to watch the Blacksmith dip his
bucket into an open oil cask.

STARBUCK

Burning the cargo, are we now?
Wasting our profits?

FLASK

What good is our damned profits
if we freeze to death?!

Starbuck nods resignedly and kneels down to warm
himself beside Bulkington and Pip. The men glance
sullenly toward their lone captain on the bow.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab stands fixed on the bow in his thin black coat,
inured to the subzero chill, eyes riveted to the
horizon as if trying to will the whale to appear.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Ishmael paces beside the bulwark and gazes down at the water:

EXT. SHIP'S SIDE - DAY

Small chunks of ice float past in the currents.

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

An antarctic desolation of sea and ice. The Pequod's course is slowed by massive bergs and broken floes the size of islands. Beyond lie endless fields of ice.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Halyard ropes are frozen, riddled with icicles. Crewmen move stiffly about, slipping on the sleet-covered deck. Ishmael and Queequeg gape out in wonder at the high peaks of passing bergs.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab stares wearily forward, his face frostbitten, his energy sapped by the cold. Starbuck approaches him, hugging his coat, chilled to the bone. Weary irony in his voice:

STARBUCK

Captain. Might I be so bold to suggest that we turn north now. Back on course, sir, toward the Cape.

Ahab offers no reply, eyes fixed forward.

STARBUCK

There are no whales in these waters, sir.

AHAB

He's there, Mister Starbuck. He dares me to follow.

He peers over the masses of ice with forced confidence.

AHAB

I've sailed over Greenland waters worst than this. We can force through this ice.

STARBUCK

Aye, but not THIS time of year.
The ice is too thick for such
a gamble -- it can break this
ship up into matchwood!

AHAB

We will drive on.

STARBUCK

But Moby Dick's trackings are
due EAST, sir -- you told me
yourself! Around the Cape!

Ahab's will almost weakens, but he won't give in.

AHAB

He's taunting us, man, don't ye
see that? He's taunting us!

EXT. SHIP'S SIDE - DAY

Huge ice chunks collide against the bow hull.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Starbuck and Stubb stare over the side with worrisome
frowns.

STARBUCK

Pack ice.

STUBB

Aye, a bad sign. Shouldn't we
turn about?

STARBUCK

(a bitter smirk)

Captain's orders.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

At the helm, shivering Dough-Boy steers through the
obstacle course of icebergs. He glances anxiously at
his captain at the railing.

Ahab gazes across the expanse, a lifeless figure, his
eyes fixed on the frozen wasteland.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Starbuck and Stubb stare grimly forward: dead ahead, the passage between ice floes narrows into a twisty water lane through solid sheets of whiteness.

EXT. SHIP'S SIDE - DAY

An ice floe's edge SCRAPES dangerously against the hull.

INT. FORECASTLE - DAY

Hull timbers CREAK under a terrible pressure. Frozen faces listen to the SCRAPING SOUNDS outside, Ishmael and Queequeg crouched together in thick blankets.

ISHMAEL

That old man's going to kill
us all!

QUEEQUEG

He de devil.

The Carpenter and the Cook look over from their bunks.

CARPENTER

I wouldn't judge 'im too harshly.
How'd ye feel if YOU had a stick
of whalebone for a bedfellow?

The Cook glances over the old, bent man with a scoff.

COOK

Wouldn't do YOU much good, now
would it?

The Carpenter glares back at him.

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

A forward view of the Pequod: the sharp points of two giant ice floes close in rapidly, blocking her path! Men run to the bow bulwarks in alarm.

A rear view of her stern: massive chunks of pack ice drift in behind, the ship now trapped from both sides!

INT. FORECASTLE - DAY

The cabin shakes from a terrible CRUNCH of ice! Ishmael

cowers in fear. Everyone bolts up and dashes deckside.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Dismayed by the impact, Ahab shouts to his helmsman.

AHAB

Hard to port!

Dough-Boy spins the wheel hard. The deck shudders violently -- the SOUNDS of GNASHING, GRINDING ICE!

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

The Pequod slows to an agonizing halt -- wedged into the joined points of the ice floes! Ice edges grip her bow hull like a slowly closing vise.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Starbuck and Stubb rush to the side and look down. Ahab THUNK-CLOPS furiously forward and stares out in despair, crewmen behind him.

AHAB

Crack my heart, I've lost him!

STARBUCK

Lost HIM?! Dammit, we're losing our SHIP!

He leaps down to middeck, shouting orders.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Quick, men, lower the sheets!
Dump the anchors! Carpenter,
fetch timber! You harpooners,
come below deck!

INT. SHIP'S CORRIDOR - DAY

Starbuck and others clamor downstairs. Walls around them GROAN from the weight of wedged ice.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab stands fast at the frozen bow, oblivious to the commotion, staring at the white vastness around him.

AHAB

Oh my insufferable foe...thy
whiteness blinds me! My feud
is undone...

He shuts his eyes from the white expanse.

INT. BOW HOLD - DAY

A bulkhead GROANS and CREAKS from the crushing pressure outside. Starbuck, Bulkington and the harpooners lift a heavy mast timber to shore up the bow walls, its length spanning the full width of the hold. The old Carpenter carries in another huge timber on his back, crouched over like Christ bearing the cross.

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

The Pequod sits silent and immobile between the floes, marooned in a prairie of ice. Just beyond the wedge lies a gap of open sea. So close, so unreachable.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DAY

Ahab moves to an open window and gazes out defeatedly at the frozen expanse outside, an icy breeze in his face. Tears well up in his eyes. Then, an angry outcry...

AHAB

Why must I endure these
torments?! If I had but ONE
MOMENT, flank to flank with
that demon whale, I'd face a
thousand-fold perils!

(clenches a fist)

Damn yer white hide, where
ARE ye?! Show yourself!
Show me a sign!

He listens to the antarctic silence. No sound but the WHISTLING WIND against his face.

He turns and slumps down in a chair before his table of cluttered maps, staring futilely at them.

AHAB

So be it...

He sweeps them off the table in a fury. Then realizes with a sudden inward horror:

AHAB (cont'd)
 Plague my soul...I AM Jonah
 now! The God-fugitive!

He buries his face in his hands. Sobs uncontrollably.

The cabin door creeps open...the shadowy figure of Fedallah towers before him. In b.g., a commotion of men running through the corridor.

Ahab looks up, as Fedallah takes a musket hanging from a wall and slowly approaches with an inscrutable smile. Ahab hardens, noting the weapon with irony.

AHAB
 What prophecy is this, then?
 A mutiny or a speedy death?

Fedallah's silent smile broadens to a grin.

AHAB
 That bad, aye? What savagery
 have I wrought...so consumed
 with the hot fire of my purpose
 that I've murdered my own men!

Fedallah draws very close and removes a pouch hanging from the musket. He opens Ahab's palm and trickles a handful of black powder into it. Gunpowder.

FEDALLAH
 All is not lost, my master.

Ahab puzzles over the powder in his hand. Then, a knowing smile spreads across his face.

INT. BOW HOLD - DAY

Starbuck, Bulkington and the harpooners brace the ends of a timber under their shoulders, pushing and grunting with herculean strength, leaking water streaming over them.

STARBUCK
 Push, damn ye! Harder!!

A new leak gushes into Dagoo's face. He lets go in panic.

DAGOO
 Ain't no good! We all gonna

drown!! I ain't gon' die...

He turns to escape the hold -- Bulkington seizes him and wields a huge Bowie knife against his throat.

BULKINGTON

Get back here, ye black bastard!

Dagoo struggles against him, grappling his knife hand.

DAGOO

Leggo o' me, white dog!

Locked together, might against might...the Bowie knife poised between them. The stronger of the two, Dagoo slowly turns the blade toward Bulkington's throat.

A SHOT RINGS OUT -- a bullet splinters the bulkhead, inches from their face! The two freeze. Ahab looms from the corridor behind them, the smoking musket in hand.

AHAB

Is it a fight ye want, lads?!
Then the fight is out there!

INT. CARGO HOLD

A key turns in a door lock -- the door swings open to reveal barrels of gunpowder. Hands quickly grab them.

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - ICE FLOES - DAY

A burning fuse inches toward powder barrels dug into the fissure between the ice floes...KABLOOM! A quick fireball! Ice chunks rain down! The smoke clears to reveal a narrow gap...just wide enough for the Pequod to pass through.

EXT. BOW DECK

The crew BELLOWS OUT A MASS CHEER! Ahab storms through their midst, addressing all with tornado brows.

AHAB

MOBY DICK, my hearties! Have
ye too soon forgotten?! Then

let me raise the ante...

He turns and gestures to the gold coin on the mast.

AHAB

Upon the day that white whale
be killed, THIRTY times this
sum shall be divided among ye!
A piece o' gold for EACH AND
EVERY one of ye! Now what
d'ye say to that?!

Starbuck and the crew stare at him, dumbfounded.

AHAB

I do not order ye! Ye shall
WILL IT SO! If Moby Dick
will not come to us -- then
we will come to him! DEATH
to Moby Dick!

The crew echoes him passionately, shouting as one:

CREWMEN

MOBY DICK!!

EXT. ICE FLOES - DAY

Crewmen are fanned out on each side of the narrow
waterway -- towing the ship by ropes fastened to her
bow. They pull on lines attached to canvas belts
around their waists, struggling on foot across the
white ice with all their strength and their hearts,
SINGING in rhythm to every straining tug.

CREWMEN

Ho! The fair wind!
Ho-he-ho! Cheerily, men!

Everyone pulls with dogged passion. Slaves to their
captain's will. In b.g., the tall-masted Pequod
inches ponderously along.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab watches the approach of the widening gap onto the
open sea, Starbuck behind him. Ahab towers tall in the
frozen gloom, proud as Lucifer, victorious. He gazes
yonder.

AHAB

The masterless, untamed sea,
Mister Starbuck. Behold its
tranquil skin...but beneath
it pants a tiger heart. This
velvet paw but conceals a
remorseless fang. But we'll
not yield to it, shall we?

Starbuck gazes hard at Ahab's back.

STARBUCK

No, Captain. I shall not
yield to it.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DAY

Deserted, quiet. The door creeps open. Pip ventures in, HUMMING some mad melody. Wandering through Ahab's forbidden domain, he comes upon a large carved box and opens it: scrimshaw chess pieces, an ivory chess board.

Pip runs his hands over exquisitely carved whale pieces. He spills the contents onto the floor. Kneeling down, he carefully selects the black king and places it on the board. Looks around the cabin, searching for something.

He jumps up and snatches up a whale-tooth paperweight. Pip plops back on the floor and places the tooth on the board...the white whale...directly in front of the black king. He leans back and seriously studies the board, HUMMING AWAY. Then jumps up and browses around...

Two spare whale-bone peg legs protrude from an open sea chest. Pip touches them with a strange reverence.

An arctic breeze wafts in from the window and knocks Ahab's top hat off a clothes rack full of black coats. The hat rolls along the floor...stopping before Pip.

EXT. ICE FLOES - DAY

The Pequod passes through onto open waters. Men on the floes drop their ropes and give her a ROUSING CHEER!

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab nods triumphantly at them, aside to Starbuck:

AHAB

We may master this ocean yet!

EXT. SOUTHERN OCEAN - DAY

The freed Pequod hugs the wind, forging at full knots.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - DAY

Sailors tumble aloft to man the sails. Starbuck takes over the helm. Stubb mans the rigging with Ishmael and Queequeg. Ahab hurries toward his cabin, shouting orders all around.

AHAB

Look to the binnacle! Square
the yards up there!

He stops dead in his tracks, staring forward. The others stare in his direction, their eyes widening.

Framed in the cabin doorway is a tall figure in a black coat and top hat, standing on two white peg legs. It's Pip -- dressed in Ahab's clothes, weaving with precarious balance on whale-bone stilts!

Ahab stares at Pip's disguise. Clearly amused.

AHAB

By God, it's my reflection...
in everything but the eyes!
Who are ye, mister?

PIP

Bell-boy, sir! Ship's crier!
Ding dong ding! Pip! Sir!

Stubb steps forward to reach out and grab the boy.

STUBB

Quiet, ye crazy loon! Away
from the Captain's quarters--

AHAB

(stops him)

Shhh! Hands off His Holiness!

The greater idiot ever scolds
the lesser!

He takes Pip in hand. Truly smiles for the first
time.

AHAB (cont'd)
Oh, frozen heavens, look down
upon this luckless child!
Here, come with me, Pip...

He ushers him back into his cabin, Pip wobbling along.

AHAB (cont'd)
My cabin shall be your home
from now on -- for as long as
Ahab lives. You're tied to me
with cords of heartstrings, my
lad, you've touched my center!
Come along, Pip...

He ushers him gently inside. Starbuck trades confused
looks with Stubb -- who bursts out laughing.

STUBB
Blood and thunder! Well,
there go two crazy ones now!
One crazy with strength, the
other crazy with weakness!
A "greater idiot," am I,
eh? Than Pip?! HA!

Ishmael and Queequeg exchange bewildered looks.

FADE OUT.

ACT 4

EXT. CAPE HOPE SEAS - DAY

The Pequod plunges through heavier seas. A gusty,
sunlit day, but the waters here are forever stormy.

Approaching in b.g., tall sails. A whaling ship.

LOOKOUT (O.S.)
Sail ho!

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - BOW DECK - DAY

Wind blistering his face at the bow, Ahab searches the horizon with piercing curiosity.

AHAB

Where away?!

LOOKOUT (O.S.)

Three points on the larboard bow, sir! She's bringin' down her breeze to us!

Ahab turns forward to port and sees her:

EXT. CAPE HORN SEAS - DAY

The Rachel, a veteran ship like the Pequod, making for us under full sail.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Starbuck and Stubb peer out from the port bulwarks, expectancy on their faces.

STUBB

Well, now! That's a cheerin' sight!

Bulkington stares out, an intense look on his face, as if the nearing ship were a means of escape.

EXT. CAPE HORN SEAS - DAY

An airborne view: the Rachel is almost abreast of the Pequod, maneuvering to cut the wind from her sails.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

The crew watches from the port rails, the Rachel in full view as the two ships heave side by side on the rough seas.

The Rachel's sailors SHOUT GREETINGS, but our crew just stares back. Frozen in place, waiting for Ahab.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab balances himself atop the bow gunwale and stands

tall above his crew, looking down on the Rachel's deck. Starbuck approaches, Stubb and Ishmael in tow.

STARBUCK

Shall we reef the sails for
boarding, sir?

AHAB

No time, Mister Starbuck.

Starbuck gives him a look, expecting that.

Across the patch of rolling waters, the CAPTAIN of the Rachel yells through a megaphone:

RACHEL CAPTAIN

Have ye seen a whale boat
adrift, Captain?!

Ahab's face tightens, taken back by that. He clings to a stay, cups his hand to his mouth and shouts:

AHAB

Have ye seen the White Whale?!

RACHEL CAPTAIN

(distractedly)

Aye, we have...this morning...

Ahab reacts with renewed excitement, beside himself.

AHAB

Where was he, Captain?! Not
dead, was he? Not...killed!?

RACHEL CAPTAIN

What does that matter?!

As beside himself as Ahab, the Captain shouts out with misery in his voice:

RACHEL CAPTAIN (cont'd)

My boy, sir! I lost a whale
boat -- my own SON is on that
boat! For God's sake, I beg
of ye...help me find 'im!

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Ahab's crew react, eyes turned on their Captain.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab shakes his head, a desperate man.

AHAB

Don't! No, don't ask me to,
Captain...

The Rachel's Captain shouts louder, just as desperate.

RACHEL CAPTAIN

I know you, Ahab -- we have
shipped together! Let me
charter your ship, sir, just
for one day! I will gladly
pay for it and pay handsomely!
You must...you must and you
shall do this for me, Ahab!

Starbuck, Stubb and Ishmael listen to his pleadings,
Stubb overwhelmed.

STUBB

By heavens, we must help the
man! To hell with Ahab and
his damned whale!

Starbuck reacts to Stubb's unusual display of emotion.

STARBUCK

The boy's drowned, Stubb.
You know it as well as I do.

ISHMAEL

Drowned? How d'ye know that,
Mister Starbuck?

He looks between him and Stubb, both nodding sadly.

Ahab, clearly pained by the Rachel Captain's loss,
fights off any show of feeling and stands stiffly.

AHAB

The whale, Captain! Where
was he when ye last clapped
eyes on him?!

RACHEL CAPTAIN

Captain Ahab! I will not go

'til I hear ye say AYE to me!
 I know ye have a child of
 your own, safe in Nantucket!
 You know I'd do for you and
 your son what I'm askin' ye
 to do for mine! Yes, yes,
 I can see that you relent!...

Ahab's face almost weakens, but he stands like an
 anvil. The Rachel Captain shouts on determinedly:

RACHEL CAPTAIN (cont'd)

I see it! You're relenting,
 Ahab!

(to his crew)

Run, men! Stand by to square
 in the yards!

(across to Ahab)

We're all going to look for
 that whale boat, sir, and
 find my boy!

Ahab shakes his head, roaring into the wind:

AHAB

NAY! Touch not a rope-yarn!
 Not a block nor a stay!

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Shocked reactions from all around him.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

AHAB (cont'd)

I will not do it, Captain
 Gardiner! Even as we speak,
 I am losing time and I'll
 not lose any more!

(turns quickly)

Mister Starbuck! Prepare
 to turn windward!

Stubb and Ishmael stare at him in utter disbelief.
 Unsurprised, Starbuck just glares at him, refusing
 to budge. Ignoring him, Ahab bellows at his crew:

AHAB (cont'd)

Man the yards, we're sailing
 on! ON THE DOUBLE!

Fearful of his wrath, the deckhands rush to their duties. Starbuck stands there fixed, hatred in his eyes. Ahab shouts across the water:

AHAB (cont'd)
 Goodbye, Captain Gardiner!
 Goodbye and may God help ye,
 man! May I forgive myself,
 but now I MUST GO!

RACHEL CAPTAIN
 (a voice of doom)
 GOD will not forgive you for
 this, Ahab! He will not
 forgive you!!

Across the waters, the Rachel starts to recede, as we steer off. The distant Captain stands fast, his figure dwindling away.

Ishmael stares out at the sight, dread in his eyes.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Ahab sweeps across toward the quarterdeck...

AHAB
 Helmsman! Steady on an
 easterly course--

Queequeg suddenly blocks his way, harpoon in hand. A tower of defiance.

QUEEQUEG
 Queequeg sail no more!

AHAB
 To your station, harpooner!

QUEEQUEG
 Cap'n be BAD MAGIC!

AHAB
 Obey me!--

Queequeg SLAMS his harpoon down -- its sharp point into the deck between Ahab's feet! Ahab edges back.

QUEEQUEG

Queequeg harpoon NO MORE!

With that, he struts to the foot of the main mast, plops down on the deck and sits erect and unmoving. Gazing dead ahead. Rooted to the spot.

Ahab is near exploding. He thinks twice, glancing around at the men. Faces stare at him. Deciding to ignore Queequeg, he marches away to his cabin.

Starbuck, no longer able to contain himself, starts after Ahab.

STARBUCK

Captain!

Ahab presses on, refusing to hear him.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Captain Ahab, sir!

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DAY

Ahab storms in, starts to shut the door -- Starbuck blocks it open. Ahab reacts with angry surprise.

AHAB

Let go that door, Mister Starbuck!

STARBUCK

Permission to speak with ye--

AHAB

Permission denied!

STARBUCK

I WILL speak, sir!

AHAB

Return to your duties, man!
On your toes--

Starbuck forces his way into the cabin. Ahab backs away, outraged. Starbuck closes the door behind him.

In b.g., little Pip sits on Ahab's bunk, bundled up in the Captain's robe, toying with chess pieces,

BABBLING to himself. Oblivious to them.

In sudden fury, Ahab seizes a musket hanging on a wall. He points it at Starbuck, who stands defiant.

AHAB

Ye insubordinate bastard!
Back to deck -- or by God I'll
deliver ye straight into hell!

STARBUCK

I AM in hell, sir!

Ahab eases his grip, taken back by that. Starbuck faces him with calm fortitude, a voice of reason:

STARBUCK

Capt'n, we've sailed thousands
of miles to stock oil. We're
breakin' a solemn oath chasing
this...mirage of a whale!
What will the OWNERS say if
we return with an empty hold?

AHAB

Owners?! What cares Ahab?!
Let those miserly OWNERS stand
on Nantucket beach and outyell
the typhoons, for all I care!
They're not my conscience --
MY conscience is in this
ship's keel!

(threatens musket)

Now get back on deck!

Starbuck stands fast, unconcerned by the pointed weapon.

STARBUCK

Your conscience, Capt'n, is
drawin' water. In the end
it'll sink ye down -- and
drag US down in your wake!

AHAB

Damnation! AGAIN you dare
to question me--

STARBUCK

In Jesus' name, think of your
 MEN! No more of this madness!
 The angels mob ye with warnings,
 sir -- do ye not SEE them?!

Ahab cocks the musket threateningly, ready to use it.

AHAB

Out! Get back to the deck!

STARBUCK

Nay, sir, not yet!

(with forced calm)

I only ask that we try to
 be reasonable men...

AHAB

Then listen to me, Mister
 Starbuck. There is one God
 that is lord over the earth,
 and one Captain who's lord
 over the Pequod! GET BACK
 TO YOUR POST!

Starbuck sees the burning fire in Ahab's eyes and
 realizes there is no way to reason with this man.

STARBUCK

As you wish, Captain. You
 needn't beware of Starbuck...

(eyes burning back)

But let Ahab beware of AHAB!
 Beware of YOURSELF, old man!

Stunned by his words, Ahab's rage dissipates. He
 lowers the musket, regarding him curiously.

AHAB

You face me like a brave man,
 shipmate. Yet you obey me.

Resigned to it, Starbuck turns and opens the door.

AHAB (cont'd)

You're too good of a man,
 Starbuck.

Starbuck turns back. A calm but fierce expression.

STARBUCK

I wish I were not.

He quickly exits.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Queequeg sits at the foot of the mast, hunched over a tiny fire of wood shavings on the deck. He CHANTS a Polynesian ritual, praying to his Yojo.

Ishmael hunkers down before him, terribly concerned.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg! What's got into
ye, man! If ye don't work,
you'll get a floggin' for
sure! Queequeg -- speak
to me!

Queequeg chants away, withdrawn into himself. Dagoo leans over him and shakes his head.

DAGOO

He's got de voodoo in 'im.

Tashtego appears and kneels down with a handful of wood shavings. He drops them beside Queequeg. Queequeg feeds the shaving into the fire without a word. Just his low, rhythmic, rumbling chant.

ISHMAEL

Tashtego, what do ye think
ails him?!

TASHTEGO

His spirit is ill. It be
his time to die.

He looks at Queequeg with deep understanding. Sings a low-voiced INDIAN PRAYER, as if to guide him along.

ISHMAEL

Time to die?! What manner
of nonsense is that?!

He shakes Queequeg hard, desperate to bring him around.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

Queequeg! Enough of this!

No response. Ishmael rises up, exasperated and afraid. He turns to Dago, shaking his head.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)
Such madness! First the old man, then Pip, now Queequeg... are we all goin' mad?!

DAGOO
It's Ahab, I tell ye. He's put de voodoo in alla us!

Starbuck strides angrily across the middeck from the cabin. He stops to behold Queequeg's burning ritual.

STARBUCK
What the devil is this?

ISHMAEL
My friend's not well, sir.

STARBUCK
Queequeg, put out that flame!
You'll set the whole ship on fire!

Queequeg suddenly looks up, as if foreseeing a vision.

QUEEQUEG
Ship on fire...aye! Whole big ship! Ship all BURNS!...
(resigned to it)
An' Queequeg go him island in sky.

Ishmael kneels down, gazing at him, trying to understand. Queequeg clutches his arm in a vice-like grip.

QUEEQUEG (cont'd)
Quick...fetch carpenter!

DAGOO
I'll fetch 'im for ye, mate.

He hurries off. Ishmael leans close to Queequeg.

ISHMAEL

Why d'ye need the carpenter?

QUEEQUEG

Need him build canoe...like
dem canoes place 'em inside
when dem Nantucket whalem
dead! Dark wood...like dem
war-wood canoes on me island!

STARBUCK

What on earth is he saying?

ISHMAEL

He's talking about a coffin.

QUEEQUEG

To lie him in and take him
go island in sky! Not in me
foc'sle hammock, sabe?

Ishmael nods, saddened. He translates to Starbuck,
as Dago appears with the Carpenter.

ISHMAEL

He's asking us not to bury
him in his hammock, but to
set him afloat in a canoe...

(rises up)

A coffin. He's spoken to
me about this before...it's
how warriors are buried in
his homeland.

Starbuck shakes his head in bafflement.

The Carpenter shuffles forward.

CARPENTER

Aye, so? What's he want?

ISHMAEL

A coffin that floats. Can
ye manage that?

The Carpenter shrugs. Without a second thought, he
produces a string and measures Queequeg's tattooed
body, length and breadth. Then he shuffles away.

During this, Queequeg mutters a final prayer to his
Yojo...then promptly tosses it on the fire.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg! That's your god!

QUEEQUEG

No more. Don't matter wedder
 be Fiji god or Nantucket god,
 no more god on dis ship...
 (deep whisper)
 No more god.

He withdraws back into his chanting, impervious now to Ishmael, lost in a world beyond communication.

Ishmael looks plaintively between Starbuck, Dagoo and Tashtego. Their grim expressions offer no solace.

The Yojo burns. An ominous chill to the scene.

FADE OUT.

ACT 5

EXT. CAPE HOPE SEAS - BEFORE DAWN

The dusk before sunrise. The Pequod rests on choppy, windswept seas. In b.g., the dark silhouette of a mountainous mass of land. The South African coast.

INT. FORECASTLE - BEFORE DAWN

Darkened, oil lamps swinging. Men sleep in their bunks. A lone shadow creeps past and upstairs.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - BEFORE DAWN

Pip sleeps in Ahab's bunk, twitching from terrible dreams. The Captain sleeps fitfully in an armchair by the bunk. He too has nightmares, his sweat-sheened head tossing from side to side, his fists clenched.

One of his hands momentarily opens, torn by his fingernails...his palm bloody.

EXT. MIDDECK - BEFORE DAWN

Strong winds buffet the deck. Queequeg sits rigidly

under the mast in the same spot, as if in a frozen coma. A squall whips away the ashes before him.

Ishmael sleeps close by his friend, huddled in a blanket. MUFFLED FOOTSTEPS stirs him awake. Not moving, he watches a shadow streak across the deck.

A small dinghy drops overboard, SPLASHES down, its tow line strung to the deck above.

A figure leans over the landward railing, feeding out rope. Bulkington, his back turned to us. He starts to climb over -- a hand clamps on his shoulder.

Starbuck behind him. Bulkington stiffens defensively.

STARBUCK

Clutch my soul! Have ye gone mad too, Bulkington?

BULKINGTON

I got a young bride waitin' for me, sir. It's not my fate to die with that man.

He nods toward the captain's cabin. Starbuck seems to understand...then slowly reaches into a coat pocket.

Bulkington tenses. The Bowie knife materializes in his hand.

BULKINGTON

I always liked ye, Starbuck, but don't try to stop me.

Starbuck stops, hand in his coat. A long, tense beat between them. Then...he withdraws a letter.

STARBUCK

It's for my missus. If ye make it to Nantucket, I'd be grateful if ye'd pass it on.

Bulkington nods and takes the letter. A moment of communion between two reasonable men. They look at the silhouetted African vista against the dusky sky.

BULKINGTON

Why don't ye give it to her

yourself? There's room in
the boat.

Starbuck smiles and shakes his head. Bulkington leaps over and starts to climb down the ship's side. He takes his knife and cuts the tow line. Then stabs it down into the bulwark top.

BULKINGTON (cont'd)

You'll need that more than
me. May God go with ye, mate!

With that, he descends into his boat. Starbuck steps up to the bulwark to watch him:

EXT. CAPE HORN SEAS - BEFORE DAWN

Bulkington rows fast toward the rocky shore, the dinghy a dark form on the choppy, treacherous waters.

EXT. MIDDECK - BEFORE DAWN

Starbuck gazes longingly after him. His eyes sweep along the expanse of land beyond, then turns back on Bulkington:

EXT. CAPE HORN SEAS - BEFORE DAWN

In the distance, the dinghy rides the crest of a steep wave then dips down, propelled too quickly toward the shore rocks! The boat smashes against the rocks -- its timbers shatter out from a powerful, crashing wave! Bulkington is gone.

EXT. MIDDECK - BEFORE DAWN

Starbuck looks on in abject horror. He shuts his eyes from the doomed sight, slamming a fist against the bulwark top with angry despair. He lowers his head in grief and opens his eyes. His grim gaze falls on:

The big Bowie knife, protruding from the top.

EXT. CAPE HOPE SEAS - DAY

The Pequod approaches the blustery Cape of Good Hope, her bow dipping in the swells.

The horizon before her is black with thunderheads. A storm dead ahead.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DAY

Chess pieces are scattered around Pip, who lies on the floor. He plays a game of battle between the black king and the white whale's tooth, crashing them against each other with animated sounds.

PIP

Crish, crash, damn yer eyes!
Die, ye white fiend! Splash!
Beware the tail, splat! Ahh!

Ahab pores over his sea charts, exhausted for lack of sleep. The overhead lamps swings, the cabin sways. Distracted by Pip, Ahab half-smiles at the boy.

The door cracks open, and Starbuck peers in.

STARBUCK

Sorry to disturb ye, sir.

Ahab goes back to his maps without reply, his usual severe manner. Starbuck steps in and stands by the door, acting polite to hide his contempt.

STARBUCK (cont'd)

The oil barrels are leaking,
sir. The cask wood's rotten.

AHAB

So? Tar them up.

STARBUCK

It would be more prudent to
ship into the next port and
replace the lot of 'em.

AHAB

Mister Starbuck, we'll not
stray from our course. Is
that understood?

STARBUCK

We're losin' our profit, sir.
Would ye wish to strip the
men of all hopes of cash?

AHAB

(an ironic tone)

Cash...aye, a hard matter that.
Hard it is that to fire others,

the match must be wasted.
 (dismissing him)
 Tar up the barrels.

STARBUCK
 That won't be good enough--

AHAB
 Mind your words, Starbuck!
 Those are my orders.

Hard looks between them. Seething under the surface,
 Starbuck starts to speak again...

AHAB (cont'd)
 That is all!

Starbuck turns away, eying him with pity and hatred.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

The deck pitches and rolls on the brewing seas. Men
 climb spider-like across the yards, trying to control
 the wind-beaten sails. Stubb shouts up at them:

STUBB
 Furl those t'gallant sails!
 And close reef them topsails,
 fore and aft!

Starbuck marches over to them, shouting over the wind.

STARBUCK
 A word with you, Stubb! You
 too, Flask!

FLASK
 What, now?!

STARBUCK
 Now!

The three hurry away. Under SHRIEKING wind, a SOUND
 from below deck: the BANGING of the Carpenter's hammer.

At the foot of the main mast, Queequeg is still frozen
 in the same position. Chanting prayers, oblivious to
 the blasting wind and tossing deck.

Kneeling beside him, Ishmael prods a cup of steaming

chowder at him.

ISHMAEL

For Christ's sake, Queequeg,
ye got to eat! Come on now,
just a few sips, then ye can
go back to your prayers...

Queequeg keeps chanting at a steady rhythm, as if
Ishmael doesn't exist. Ishmael gives up in despair.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)

My poor savage...my pagan
friend who'd gladly die for
me...don't ye understand?!
I don't want ye to die!

The Carpenter appears, hauling a coffin up on deck.
He loses his balance from the pitch of the ship,
falling under the coffin's heavy weight.

Ishmael hastens over to help him. Crewmen ignore
the struggling pair, turning superstitious faces away
to avoid looking at the coffin. Dragging it across
to the mast, the two slide it before Queequeg.

Suddenly aware of the coffin, Queequeg snaps back
to reality. He leans forward to examine it.

The Carpenter opens the lid and gives him a look.

CARPENTER

Got to do a fittin'.

Queequeg nods, understanding. He takes his harpoon
and rises unsteadily on cramped legs. Then steps
into the coffin and lies down like a model corpse,
resting the harpoon on his chest.

Ishmael watches, deeply chagrined by it all.

The Carpenter nods, satisfied. Queequeg rises and
steps out. He squats back down against the mast
and continues chanting. Completely tuned out again.

INT. BARREL HOLD - DAY

The dark bowels of the ship. Oil barrels are piled
high against the hull. The three mates stand in an

inch of leaking oil covering the floor, balancing themselves to the ship's liltng sway.

Starbuck illuminates the sinister hold with a lamp, Stubb and Flask staring at him.

STUBB

How d'ye mean, "usurpation"?

STARBUCK

A captain cannot use a ship for ill-gotten gains, other than for the purposes of her owners. It's in the code of merchant seamen.

FLASK

We're not merchantmen, we're whalers.

Starbuck gestures down at the oil-flooded floor, charged with angry energy.

STARBUCK

Are ye that blind to what's happenin' here? All that we toiled for is bein' wasted -- and HE'LL not lift a finger to save it! He doesn't CARE!

Disturbed by him, Stubb starts to lights his pipe with a cinder. Flask leans forward urgently.

FLASK

Careful there, Stubb! The whole damn ship could go up.

Eying the oil leak, Stubb cautiously puts the pipe away.

STUBB

What're ye proposin', mate?

STARBUCK

We have the legal right to refuse all further obedience. We can even wrest command of this ship.

Stubb trades disconcerting looks with Flask.

STUBB

That's dangerous talk...I
can't abide by it. If the
Capt'n says to tar up the
barrels, let's tar 'em up.

STARBUCK

Open your eyes, man! We're
not whalers any more, we're
just sheep followin' a
madman! Wanderin' from
all mortal reason!

STUBB

Aye, that might be true...
but Ahab's still capt'n. And
a fearless one at that!

FLASK

Aye, a mighty capt'n! The
king of the seas, the lord of
leviathans -- we can't go up
against that!

Starbuck turns away, frustrated, trying to collect
his wits to get through to them.

STARBUCK

Listen to me well, mates:
a fearless man is far more
dangerous than a coward.
No storms nor whales can
match the terrors menacing
us from the brow of an angry
man! We MUST NOT let Ahab's
fatal pride drag this ship
down to doom with him!

STUBB

But MUTINY, sir! That's an
idea born of an undigested
stomach. That's a killin'
ground you're standing on!

FLASK

Aye! I'll have no part of it!

He turns and climbs out of the hold. Starbuck looks
at Stubb with unyielding eyes. Stubb shakes his head.

STUBB

This is a sharkish business
we're in, Starbuck. Are ye
shark enough for THIS?

STARBUCK

I can no longer stand by to
the willful murder of this
good crew. I cannot obey my
God by obeying HIM! Do ye
understand me, Stubb?

STUBB

I do, mate. But I ain't a
religious man, nor a brave
one. Ye stand alone.

EXT. CAPE HOPE SEAS - DUSK

Dark thunderclouds blot out the sunset. The Pequod
drives on between mountainous waves that seem to
engulf it. Dead ahead...a black, roiling tempest.

EXT. MIDDECK - DUSK

Powerful winds pound the deck. Stubb shouts at
sailors on the rigging.

STUBB

Back the mainyard and break
out the mainhold! A sea
storm's comin' to greet us!

He stares at Starbuck, who paces the aft deck and
glances repeatedly at the Captain's cabin. Stubb
frowns, sensing his moral dilemma.

Ishmael pulls hard on a halyard, turning to glimpse
his friend: Queequeg still sits in the same place,
swaying to the ship's rise and fall. The coffin
slides around him.

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DUSK

Pip sleeps on the floor amidst a flotsam of chess
pieces, curled up peacefully at Ahab's feet like a
napping pup.

Dozing in his armchair, Ahab resembles more a weary
old pensioner than a raging tyrant. The cabin sways

around him, STORM WINDS HOWLING in b.g. Ahab opens his tired eyes and peers down at Pip.

AHAB

Poor, gentle, mad Pip...

He opens a locket and gazes at a miniature portrait of his young wife and baby son in better times. His warm gaze turns dark and bitter. He shuts away the locket from sight and mind. Stormy again.

AHAB (cont'd)

Oh, were I the wind! I'd
blow no more on this wicked,
wolfish world! Where lies
that final harbor, where we
unmoor no more?...

He clutches his forehead, wracked by a strange agony.

AHAB (cont'd)

God, stave my brain -- how
he GORES me! Accursed whale,
begone from my head, or I'll
clear the world of thee!

(looks madly around)

If I could only sleep...but
Ahab never sleeps, he only
feel, feels, feels! Aye,
that's tingling enough for
mortal man!

He focuses on the twisted sheets of his bunk, tormented.

AHAB (cont'd)

My grave-dug berth, my tomb.
Ahab and anguish, together
in one hammock. Dear God...
I must sleep...

He rests back in the chair and dozes off again.

A long beat. A shadow creeps into the cabin. We follow the padded footfalls of wet boots across the floor...up to a pair of trousers...then the Bowie knife in Starbuck's hand.

Starbuck looms over dozing Ahab in the armchair. The swinging lamp casts surreal, dancing shadows. Slowly raising the glistening blade, Starbuck inches toward the Captain...then stops, staring down at Pip,

sleeping docilely at his feet.

Starbuck lowers the knife. He can't do it. Ahab stirs. Starbuck buries the knife away in his belt. Ahab's groggy eyes blink open, focusing on the figure before him.

AHAB

What...what is it?

A ferocious GALE RISES above deck, matching the storm on Starbuck's face.

STARBUCK

A storm, Captain.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

A typhoon rages! Huge waves sledge-hammer the deck! Men rush about the washed deck in the blasting winds and torrential rain, lashing down everything in sight.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

At the helm Stubb struggles to keep the wheel steady, fighting for balance, singing at the top of his lungs:

STUBB

Oh, jolly is the gale, and a
joker is the whale! Such a
sporty, jokey, hokey-pokey
lad is the ocean, oh!

Starbuck climbs up the quarterdeck steps toward him.

STARBUCK

Avast, mate! Let the storm
do the singin'! Be a braver
man and hold your tongue!

Stubb laughs -- a gigantic wave washes over them! He shakes the sea water from his eyes.

STUBB

I told ye I weren't a brave
man, Starbuck! I'm a coward,
if truth be known...and I'll
sing to keep up my spirits!
No way to stop me, sir, but
to cut my throat!

STARBUCK

Well, jump overboard and
sing away, if you must!

Ahab appears on deck, face illuminated by a blinding
flash of lightning. A deafening THUNDER CLAP!

Starbuck and Stubb regard him warily. Stubb grips the
wheel harder, trying to control it.

STUBB

Bad work, Mister Starbuck!
Bad work! The sea's havin'
its way! We can't fight it!
Nobody can! Not even HIM!

Starbuck helps him with the wheel, looking up: torn
sails flap violently, men nearly thrown off the rigging.

STARBUCK

We'll go no further in this
squall! We must turn round!

He struggles his way toward the Captain.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Queequeg sits glued to the foot of the mast, chanting,
undaunted by the tempest. Sea water washes over him.
Ishmael staggers over, holding on for dear life.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg! Get below!
(tugging at him)
Come on, mate -- you'll be
washed overboard!

Queequeg will not budge. Another powerful wave slams
Ishmael against the mast!

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Ahab clings to a rail, unbending in the wind, his eyes
fixed outward to the boiling sea. Starbuck hurries
desperately over.

STARBUCK

Captain, sir! We could turn
this gail into a fair wind if
we TURN ABOUT -- let it drive
us toward home! Leeward,
sir, and homeward!

AHAB

Don't lecture me, Starbuck,
I know these seas as I know
myself! Never think this
voyage over -- before Moby
Dick is in my grasp!

A wave crashes over them -- Starbuck collides against
the deckhouse! Ahab holds fast, rooted to the rail.

Starbuck grapples his way back toward him.

STARBUCK

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AHAB!
WE MUST TURN ABOUT!

AHAB

You heard my orders! WE
DRIVE ON!

ISHMAEL (O.S.)

Starbuck!! Help us!!

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Ishmael clings to the mast, gripping Queequeg, trying
to keep him from washing away. Queequeg sits there,
making no move to save himself from the onslaught.

Starbuck rushes over and grabs a handhold by the mast.

STARBUCK

Get 'im below!

ISHMAEL

He won't move, sir!

Grabbing a rope, Starbuck hoists Queequeg up.

STARBUCK

Let's raise 'im up...against
the mast!

The two struggle to lift the limp giant to a standing position, flat against the mast. Starbuck lashes him to it, wrapping the rope around his chest and waist.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Ahab stands rigid, defiant against the storm. A vision catches his eye, far out to sea:

EXT. CAPE HOPE SEAS - NIGHT

A large white form materializes over the crests of giant waves. Indistinguishable, it could be a huge whitecap...or it could be a white whale.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Ahab glowers at it with murderous eyes. To him, it is Moby Dick. He spins around toward the crew below, pointing outward.

AHAB

He's THERE, men! He's riding
the storm with us!

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Holding on, the men turn seaward. They see nothing. Starbuck shouts up from the mast:

STARBUCK

Captain -- leave that whale
to his ghostly wanderings!
We must save our ship!!

A lightning bolt strikes a life raft at the stern with a violent CRACK -- the raft flies overboard and falls burning into the sea!

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Ahab turns back and fixes on the image at sea:

EXT. CAPE HOPE SEAS - NIGHT

Visible now in the flashes of lightning, like a blurry mirage, MOBY DICK plunges through swells and whitecaps. Following the same course as the ship.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Convinced of what he sees, Ahab gestures over the heaving rail like a messiah.

AHAB

Behold, shipmates! Believe
your own eyes -- he's THERE!

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

The men stagger to reach the bulwark. All stare out into the black maelstrom, straining their eyes.

EXT. CAPE HOPE SEAS - NIGHT

Thousands of whitecaps over dark, raging waters. But no sign of a whale.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Ahab points and exhorts the men below, spurring them on.

AHAB

THERE! D'ye see him?! Look
at him! See his white brow,
his magnitude, his malignity!
Most monstrous, mountainous
sea mastodon, against whom we
will declare everlasting war!

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Flask, caught up in Ahab's delusion, points excitedly.

FLASK

There!! I see him, Capt'n!

EXT. CAPE HORN SEAS - NIGHT

Over whitecaps, the same blurry mirage -- MOBY DICK!
Swimming parallel to the ship, drawing closer.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Stubb spots him too and nods enthusiastically, echoed quickly by the rest of the crew.

STUBB/CREW

Aye! I see him too! There
he blows! Clear as day!

FLASK

By flukes! Is he a ghost?!

AHAB

Nay! He's as real as DEATH!

Behind them, Starbuck sees nothing. He edges beside Ishmael who clings to the mast with dazed Queequeg. Straining to see, Ishmael turns to Starbuck.

ISHMAEL

Where is he, sir?! I don't
see him!

STARBUCK

Of course ye don't! The old
man's blastin' all reason
straight out of their heads!

Another tidal wave plows over them with piledriver force -- Starbuck and Ishmael topple over each other! Queequeg stands secure, like Ulysses bound to the mast, chanting dazedly. Starbuck rises determinedly and bounds up the quarterdeck steps.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Starbuck takes the wheel from Stubb and turns it full circle with all his might. The deck lurches to port. Ahab wheels around in rage.

AHAB

Avast! Away from there!!

He seizes the wheel from Starbuck, demented with fury.

AHAB (cont'd)

Touch not that wheel, or I'll
strike ye into eternity!!

He wrenches Starbuck away and spins the wheel back -- the ship careens to starboard with whiplash force!

Men are thrown across the middeck. Flattened against the deckhouse, Starbuck shouts at Ahab.

STARBUCK

We must turn about or we'll
PERISH!

AHAB

Nay, I say! We'll DRIVE ON!

STARBUCK

WE'LL LOSE THIS SHIP!!

Undaunted and driven, Ahab helms the ship back into the storm. Starbuck dashes back down to middeck.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

A titantic wave sweeps across the deck, submerging everyone! A screaming deckhand washes overboard!

Ishmael clamps himself to the mast, holding Queequeg close -- the two momentarily underwater. Drenched crewmen cling to shrouds, battling for ground against wind and sea. Their eyes stare up toward:

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

Ahab at the wheel, riding the storm, wind beating his face, whipping back his hair, a man obsessed. Suddenly... a phosphorescent glow reflects off his face.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

Struggling with a halyard, Starbuck and Ishmael glance up at a bizarre phenomenon:

A green, ghoulish flash skips along the top rigging, sparking out veins of electrical discharge!

ISHMAEL

What is it?!...

STARBUCK

St. Elmo's fire!...

The other men don't see it, their eyes glued on Ahab...

EXT. QUARTERDECK - NIGHT

His body and the wheel all aglow in the otherworldly

green light -- flashing veins sparking down the stern mast onto the high deck! A ghostly, mystical sight. Then, just as suddenly...

The storm abates, as if in the eye of a hurricane. The deck keeps pitching, wind still HOWLING, rain flying aft...but the assault of waves recedes.

EXT. MIDDECK - NIGHT

All the men stand frozen, staring up at glowing Ahab, dominating the ship -- as if it is he who has quelled the storm. Then they gape higher up, aghast:

The St. Elmo's fire spreads across the tops of the masts, filtering down over sails and rigging! Its green hue transforms -- into a blinding whiteness!

STUBB

God have mercy on us all!!

The crew staggers back in fear. Dagoo reflexively seizes his harpoon to protect himself. Tashtego falls to his knees, praying for his life. Even Fedallah and his Arabs fall back in terrified awe. Ahab THUNK-CLOPS down to middeck with a triumphant air.

AHAB

Aye! Aye, shipmates! Mark it well! The white flame but lights the way to the WHITE WHALE!

He snatches the harpoon away from Dagoo and holds it up into the static stratosphere just above his head...

A blinding flash! A ring of St. Elmo's fire engulfs the harpoon head -- shining a white, sparkling beacon!

The men GASP in unison, trembling before him. Starbuck, the lone disbeliever, gazes hard at Ahab's grand performance. Ishmael gapes.

ISHMAEL

Jesus Christ in heaven! What is he doing?!

STARBUCK

Oh, he knows exactly what he's doing!

Ahab laughs defiantly, scans the awestruck faces of his crew then stares deep into the crackling light.

AHAB

Leap! Leap up and lick the
sky! I leap with you, burn
with you -- I command the
very HEAVENS!

A forked light deflects off the harpoon tip, casting a laser beam off at a high angle. Ahab turns the harpoon, reflecting the light down -- towards the main mast. The magical beam burns down the length of the mast, hitting the gold doubloon. The coin shines brilliantly, sparks flickering out like white sun rays!

Controlled by Ahab's harpoon, the beam travels down onto Queequeg's face. Ishmael and Starbuck recoil back. The harpooner's eyes brighten, as if he sees an angel.

Starbuck can stand no more. He dashes over.

STARBUCK

No, Ahab! Don't do this!
Enough witchcraft, old man,
God will turn against you!
T'is an ill voyage, ill
begun and ill done! Stop
this blasphemy, Captain --
STOP IT NOW!!

He seizes his arm to stop him. Ahab hurls him away with inhuman strength. He booms at the crew, his wide eyes translucent with maniacal fervor.

AHAB

All your oaths, shipmates, are
AS BINDING AS MINE! Make no
mistake! Heart, body and soul,
lungs and life, Ahab is BOUND!

He lifts the glowing harpoon higher above his head -- its glow intensifies, lighting up his whole body!

QUEEQUEG

Cap'n!! Cap'n!!

Ishmael turns in shock. Queequeg struggles at the ropes, suddenly and fully conscious, his lucid eyes

focused on Ahab. Ishmael quickly unties him.

Queequeg staggers to Ahab, as if he's just seen God.

QUEEQUEG (cont'd)
Queequeg sabeel!...Queequeg see!

He falls to Ahab's feet, clutches them worshippingly.

QUEEQUEG (cont'd)
Me Cap'n...me Cap'n...me GOD!

Stubb and Flask, their faces aglow in Ahab's white light, kneel before him on the pitching, windy deck. Dagoos drop to his knees beside Tashtego. Fedallah and the Arabs genuflect, prostrate before the master.

Removed from it all, Ishmael puzzles over this mad scene. He watches Starbuck: angry but stricken, fighting all the temptations of the devil.

Ahab extends a fatherly hand to Starbuck, yearning for his soul as well.

AHAB
Ye see, Starbuck? My pulse
makes these very planks beat!
(to his men)
Look, shipmates! Raise your
heads! Look here as I blow
out your last fear! ALL OF
IT! GONE!!

He blows on the flaming white beacon of his harpoon -- the light is extinguished!

Above, a blinding lightning flash! A deafening THUNDER CRACK!

Then darkness...as the winds rise and the storm returns full fury. A primordial flooding from both sea and sky.

FADE OUT.

ACT 6

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAWN

The storm has passed. Thin, layered clouds blend with a dazzling, bright-colored sunrise. The Pequod

sails toward the sun on calm seas, leaving the Cape far behind.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - DECK/MASTS - DAWN

A deathly quiet reigns over the deck, like a ghost ship. Broken spars and scattered rigging from the storm lie about, unattended to. The ship seems at first glance deserted, but there are seamen about...

Dough-Boy, aloft in the lookout. Dagoo and Tashtego squat on the bow gunwale, harpoons in hand, eyes fixed on the horizon with warrior-like intensity.

Stubb cons the ship on the wheeldeck, puffing his pipe. Flask at the helm. Both gaze steadily seaward with fanatical concentration.

Fedallah and his crew straddle yard arms, staring uniformly out to sea. Zealous sentinels, watching and waiting.

Not a sound from anyone. No talking, no laughter, not even from Stubb. All are focused on whatever is out there. All with one singular purpose.

INT. BARREL HOLD - DAWN

By flickering lamplight, a chaos of scattered casks broken by the storm. Cracked barrels bleed oil... six inches over the flooded floor now.

Holding the lamp, Starbuck stares appalled at the damage. A total loss.

INT. FORECASTLE - MORNING

The rest of the crew sleeps in exhaustion.

Queequeg and Ishmael sit at a mess table over breakfast. His normal self, Queequeg shovels away an immense pile of food on his plate, consuming it with gusto. He's starving. Ishmael studies him with ironic awe.

ISHMAEL

I just don't fathom ye. You said you were goin' to die!

QUEEQUEG

Only man go dead WANTS to
go dead. No bad magic kill
man NOT want to go dead!
Only big things...big fire,
big water, big whale dat don't
THINK! Only dat kill man not
want to go dead! Sabee?

Queequeg smiles charismatically and stuff his mouth.
Ishmael sighs, watching his feeding frenzy.

ISHMAEL

I think I'll draft my will.
You can be my witness.

QUEEQUEG

Aye! Queequeg much happy to!

Ishmael ponders to himself, clearly distressed.

INT. STARBUCK'S CABIN - DAWN

Starbuck sits hunched over the edge of his bunk
and leafs through his bible, brooding distractedly.
Ishmael appears in the doorway, looking troubled.

ISHMAEL

Don't mean to bother ye, sir.

Starbuck looks up, agitated. Then nods patiently.

STARBUCK

What is it, Ishmael?

ISHMAEL

I don't know, sir, I just...
I feel such dread. What's
gotten over this crew? They
all seem to have lost their
wits, like they cannot think.

Starbuck shuts the bible and runs his hand through
his hair, more troubled than Ishmael.

STARBUCK

They don't see his madness,
Ishmael...they can't. HE
won't give 'em a chance to
think! Only to feel. And

they feel they must obey him.
 (a resigned nod)
 Oh, I'll obey him as well...
 but I'll hate him for it!

ISHMAEL
 Perhaps I must obey him too.

STARBUCK
 Don't. Don't give in. At
 least not in your heart!

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - MORNING

Dressed and ready for battle, Ahab puts on his top hat.
 He turns to leave -- Pip scurries over and wraps his
 arms around his leg. Frightened, a strangled whisper:

PIP
 Master, master...don't go!

Ahab turns, unusually patient and affectionate.

AHAB
 No, lad. Ye mustn't follow
 Ahab. Not now...not ever!
 (losing patience)
 Ye have the wrong effect on
 me, son...like a cure to a
 malady I must keep as my own.
 Now do as I say and stay here.
 I'll have them serve ye -- as
 though you were Captain!

PIP
 No, please! Use me as yer leg!
 Lemme be a part of you!

AHAB
 Don't speak to me so, Pip...
 don't! My purpose will keel
 up in me, and I tell ye...
 it CANNOT BE!

Pip cries out. Ahab is torn by his voice, angry now.

AHAB (cont'd)
 Weep and I'll murder ye, boy!
 For Ahab too is mad!

Pip sobs uncontrollably, refusing to let go. Ahab

relents and squats down to comfort him. The boy hugs him tight, tears flowing. Ahab sighs, agonizing.

AHAB (cont'd)

Oh, you're true, aren't ye,
Pip! As the circumference to
its center...

He pulls back gently, gazing into his little face.

AHAB (cont'd)

Listen to me. If ye stay here,
you'll hear my ivory foot on
the deck. Then you'll know
that I'm there.

Pip lets go and looks at him with sad, tearful eyes.

AHAB (cont'd)

Ye stay put now and be my
commander. My Captain Pip!

Pip snuffles, nods and puffs his chest out proudly.

PIP

Aye, aye -- Capt'n Pip!

Moved by him, Ahab pats his head and leaves.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

White seabirds soar over the ship, their HIGH-PITCHED
SQUAWKS unsettling the men on deck. Albatrosses.

Crewmen clear away broken spars and rigging, repair
sails and scrub the deck. No sound of voices, except...

CARPENTER (O.S.)

I don't like it!

The Carpenter is tarring the inside of the coffin,
sealing the seams with pitch. Stubb stands over
him, listening to his irate grumblings.

CARPENTER (cont'd)

I make a coffin for Queequeg
but now HE don't want it --
and now YOU want me to turn
it into a LIFE BUOY! It's...

it's just plain undignified!

STUBB

Well, there's nothin' else for
it. We lost the old one, we
need a new one. So stop yer
complainin' -- just rig it!

The Carpenter snorts peevishly. Nearby, the Cook turns
with a mock command.

COOK

Hammer it good, ye old scamp!
We don't want a leaky coffin!

CARPENTER

(scowling back)

I'll hammer yer lips together
if ye don't shut up!

Stubb laughs at the two of them, his old self again.

STUBB (cont'd)

Just make a good job of it!
If the ship sinks, there'll
be thirty lively men fightin'
for one coffin -- and that's a
sight I don't want to miss!

The deckhands around them LAUGH, the mood on deck
brightening, until...

Familiar PEG LEG FOOTSTEPS cause a sudden hush. A
charged air of anticipation, as everyone glues their
eyes on...

EXT. QUARTERDECK - MORNING

Ahab emerges into the light, carrying a quadrant.
He squints into the sun and scans the men below.
Noticing the Carpenter working on the coffin, he
hobbles to the bannister and leans down.

AHAB

What is this, old man?

CARPENTER

A life buoy, Capt'n. Mister

Stubb's orders.

AHAB

You're the legmaker, are ye not?

CARPENTER

Yessir, so I am.

AHAB

Are ye also the undertaker?

CARPENTER

Aye, sir! 'Twas a coffin before, sir, but now they got me turnin' it into a buoy!

AHAB

A BUOY?! Ye might be a jack of all trades, shipmate, but you're as unprincipled as the gods!

CARPENTER

I do what I do, sir!

AHAB

Look at ye, you old gray-headed woodpecker -- turnin' the dreaded symbol of grim death into an instrument of help and hope! Hah! A life buoy of a coffin!

CARPENTER

Faith, sir...

AHAB

(sharply)

Faith?...what faith?

CARPENTER

Why, faith...just sort of an exclamation like, sir.

Ahab glares over the remodeled coffin, dismissing him with an irritable wave.

AHAB

Get that thing below where

it belongs! Let me not see
it again!

He hobbles to the center of the quarterdeck and raises the quadrant, pointing it toward the sun. Starbuck watches him evenly.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

The rest of the crew observe Ahab in silence, their faces a mix of reverence and dread. Fedallah alights down from his mast watch and squats low, studying Ahab with sinister intensity.

EXT. QUARTERDECK - MORNING

Ahab takes measurements with the quadrant. He stops and frowns up at the burning sun, speaking to it:

AHAB

Oh, high and mighty pilot...
ye can tell me where I am,
but can ye tell me where I
shall be...where HE is at
this very moment?

Pip steps anxiously from the cabin, decked out in Ahab's oversized robe. A long-absent sight to the crew. Their eyes follow him with strange curiosity.

Pip bolts across the deck and crouches at Ahab's feet, fearful of the men, the ship, the sea all around. He stays close to Ahab for protection.

Ignoring the boy, Ahab lowers his gaze and scans the vast expanse.

AHAB (cont'd)

Where is Moby Dick?!
(up at the sun)
Ye can see him, can't ye?!
My eyes look at the very eye
that even now beholds HIM!

Ahab glares down at the quadrant in his hand. A growing disgust spreads across his face...

AHAB (cont'd)

Foolish toy! A baby's play
thing for commodores! What
can ye do but tell me the

poor, pitiful point where YOU
 happen to be now, but not one
 jot more than that! Ye can't
 tell me where one drop of
 water will be tomorrow -- or
 where be that WHITE WHALE!

Pip recoils from Ahab's feet, sliding away from him.

AHAB (cont'd)

You're IMPOTENT -- and with
 your impotence you insult
 the very SUN!

He suddenly raises the quadrant and SMASHES it down
 on the deck, shattering it into useless pieces!

AHAB (cont'd)

Curse you, ye vain, paltry
 thing! Thus I spit on ye!
 I'll no longer guide my
 earthly way by ye!

He crushes the broken pieces under his peg leg with
 fury, then THUNK-CLOPS away.

Pip kneels over the quadrant pieces, studying them
 for meaning like a gypsy reading tea leaves.

From all around, dumb reactions. Then the men go
 about their business, as if nothing had happened.

Narrowing his eyes on Ahab, Starbuck rests a hand
 over the buckhorn handle of the Bowie knife in his
 belt. Touching it to muster false courage.

EXT. MIDDECK - MORNING

Swabbing the deck with Ishmael, Queequeg smokes his
 tomahawk pipe. He offers it to Ishmael, who takes a
 deep pull and hands it back. Smiles between them.

A distant, eerie SOUND distracts them: unearthly
 WAILS and MOANS from out at sea, like the human
 cries of lost souls. Ishmael squints seaward.

ISHMAEL

What could it be, Queequeg?
 Whales?

Queequeg shakes his head, just as puzzled as he.

ISHMAEL (cont'd)
 Sounds like the voices of
 drowned men.

Others on deck hear it too, all eyes focusing out.
 Looks of nervous forboding.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

The Pequod slashes through rolling swells, flying
 all sails and heading true before the wind.

She passes an islet of sea-washed rocks...populated
 by a colony of seals. Sunning on the rocks, they
 WAIL that eerie, human-like CRY. As the Pequod
 sails by, the seals flee into the water.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - MIDDECK - DAY

Crewmen watch the seals from the side, chuckling
 among themselves.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

A distance apart on the port bow, Starbuck and
 the Captain view the seals. Ahab turns to give
 Starbuck a half-smile. Starbuck doesn't smile
 back, turning his eyes to the horizon.

Ahab sidles over beside him, both looking out.
 He breathes deep, sucking in the sea air.

AHAB
 T'is a mild, mild wind, is
 it not, Mister Starbuck?
 And a mild-lookin' sky!

He turns away to scan the blue heavens. Hard,
 nervous eyes fixed on his back, Starbuck slowly
 reaches for the Bowie knife in his belt.

AHAB (cont'd)
 On such a mild day as this,
 I struck my first whale...

The knife inches out of Starbuck's belt, exposing its long, sharp blade. Ahab's back is still turned.

AHAB (cont'd)

A boy harpooner of eighteen!
Forty years ago! Forty years
of whalin', of privation and
peril and storms! Aye...and
in all those years I have not
spent more than three ashore!

The knife is almost out. Fighting his conscience, Starbuck wills himself to do it...

AHAB (cont'd)

Forty years of desolation
and solitude...whole oceans
away from that young wife I
wedded and gave a son.

The knife freezes in Starbuck's grasp, as he listens.

AHAB (cont'd)

Did I say WIFE? Rather a
WIDOW with her own husband
alive, poor girl! Her and
that sad, neglected spit of
a boy...my dear, sweet child.

Starbuck eases the knife back into his belt, too swayed by decency and compassion. Ahab turns to him.

AHAB (cont'd)

Aye, Starbuck, I widowed 'em
both! With all the madness,
frenzy, boilin' blood and
smokin' brow that for a
thousand lowerings I have
chased my prey...more a
demon than a man!

Starbuck studies Ahab's face, trying to understand him more than hate him. Ahab's brow tightens.

AHAB (cont'd)

How richer or better am I
now for all that effort?
(his head reels)
I feel deadly faint...oh

GOD, heal my cracked heart!
I feel so old...

He leans against Starbuck for support, drawing close to him. Starbuck braces him steady.

AHAB (cont'd)
Come close to me, Starbuck...
let me look into a human eye.
It's better than to gaze into
sea or sky...or God Himself...

Their eyes lock. Ahab's gazes deeply into Starbuck's.

AHAB (cont'd)
I see my wife and my son in
those eyes, Starbuck. I see
home in them...faraway home!

Genuinely moved by him, Starbuck holds him close.

STARBUCK
My Captain! In these eyes
are MY wife, MY children --
and I fear I'll never see
them again!

He tightens his grip on him, begging earnestly:

STARBUCK (cont'd)
Let's sail away from these
wretched waters! Leave right
now, sir! Let me alter the
course -- head us back to
old Nantucket again!

Ahab pulls away, dark and stormy again. Frustrated beyond reason, Starbuck prays to the sky with clenched fists.

STARBUCK (cont'd)
Great God in heaven -- SHOW
yourself to this man!

Impulsively, he yanks out the knife from his belt.

STARBUCK (cont'd)
Or give ME the strength to do
your bidding!

He turns toward Ahab, his teeth clenched, the blade

pointed to strike.

Ahab looks at the knife and regards him deeply, torn with new conflicting emotions. He stares grimly to sea, as if suddenly realizing his folly.

AHAB

What have I done? What cruel
master commands me?!

Starbuck stares at him, frozen in step, the knife poised.

AHAB (cont'd)

What IS this unearthly thing,
pushing me to do what in my own
heart I would not dare?!

A look of dark revelation, his eyes fixed on the far horizon, gazing inward. Almost a whisper:

AHAB (cont'd)

Is Ahab...no longer Ahab?

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Dead ahead of the Pequod, bubbles rise on the sea's surface...from deep below. They increase, until water erupts with the release of air from some great spout!

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

The tense tableau between Ahab and Starbuck is suddenly broken by a bellowing cry above:

DOUGH-BOY (O.S.)

THAR SHE BLOWS!!

EXT. TOP MAST - DAY

High on lookout, Dough-Boy shakes with violent glee.

DOUGH-BOY (cont'd)

She blows! She blows! Dead
to the bow, Capt'n! It's
HIM -- the WHITE WHALE!

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Men tumble madly against the bulwarks and leap onto gunwales, gaping out.

EXT. BOW DECK - DAY

Ahab and Starbuck stare dead ahead over the bow, their eyes wide. Starbuck's knife lowers in his hand.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

A half-mile out, MOBY DICK breaches directly in the Pequod's path -- his whole, gigantic body leaps high out of the water! SPLASHING DOWN with the might of a seaquake! Waves shoot up!

A tremendous blast of spout water explodes, filling the air! Mist fills our view.

FADE OUT.

ACT 7

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

MOBY DICK's massive shape plows through the swells in f.g., parallel to the dwarfed Pequod a hundred yards away in b.g. A half-dozen broken harpoons stick out of his white, mottled hump. A jet of liquid air gushes from his great spout.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - DAY

Whalers' faces gape seaward. Starbuck, Stubb, Flask, Ishmael, Queequeg, Tashtego, Dagoo, Fedallah. With anticipation or dread, this is the moment they've all been waiting for.

Ahab stands rigid, focused and still -- until murderous rage explodes full force from his face.

AHAB
LOWER THE BOATS!

A frenzy of activity! Crewmen rush to the divets to man the lowering chains.

Starbuck stands there a beat, powerless, his weapon impotent in his hand. He puts it away and shouts up:

STARBUCK

In stunsails! Down the
topgallants!

Chaos on deck! Shouts and whistles, the BANGING of wood blocks, RINGING of chainlinks, BEATING of boots running over the plankings.

Fedallah stops by the gold coin on the mast, SLAPS it greedily with a fist, dashes on. Others follow suit, slapping the coin as they run by.

Queequeg, Tash and Dago snatch up their harpoons in quick order.

Whalers pile into the swinging boats like pirates on the attack -- some leaping from the deck. They man the oars and rope lines.

Ahab storms out his cabin door, his two polished harpoons in each hand. Pip runs frantically behind him, trips on the oversized length of his robe. He screams hysterically after Ahab:

PIP

Master, master...come back!
The sharks! The sharks!

Impervious to him, Ahab shouts to the Blacksmith:

AHAB

Light up those try-works,
blacksmith! We'll have tons
of blubber to burn tonight!

The Blacksmith turns to fuel the huge furnaces.

Over the side, whaleboats drop -- SLAPPING DOWN on the water in quick succession. Fedallah's boat is the first to set off, rowing with amazing speed.

Ahab climbs over and reacts to Fedallah's flight. He waves his harpoons after him, out of his mind with rage.

AHAB

Fedallah!! Come back, ye
 heathenish traitor! Damn
 your soul!
 (shouts down)
 Starbuck! Hold fast there!

He climbs down a rope by the strength of one arm
 and lands into Starbuck's boat. Starbuck doesn't
 have time to react. Ahab plows forward to the bow
 on a nimble peg leg, pushing Queequeg aside.

AHAB (cont'd)
 Row, ye blisterin' fools!
 Pull with all your hearts!

Ishmael and the oarsmen row energetically, the
 boat streaking out with Stubb's and Flask's boats.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Viewed from high above, the four tiny boats
 converge on the whale like ants to a mole hill.
 Fedallah's boat far in the lead.

White, SHRIEKING seabirds materialize in the sky,
 circling chaotically around boats and whale.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

A mad race to get there first. Rowers work with
 mindless concentration, muscle and rhythm in sync,
 racing full speed ahead of Stubb's and Flask's boats.

Ahab exhorts them from the bow, leaning fiercely
 forward, looking like Moses on a Red Sea.

AHAB
 Pull, pull, ye murderous
 rogues, dash on! BEACH me
 on his white back! Do
 that for me!

EXT. FEDALLAH'S BOAT - DAY

Silent, powerful strokes. Fedallah at the prow,
 harpoon ready. Dead ahead...MOBY DICK, swimming at
 a free, unhurried pace. A magnificent sight.

The rowers turn oars to flank him, drawing closer.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

The white leviathan looms tall, as Fedallah's small boat streaks alongside his fins. MOBY DICK's enormous tail SMACKS the water as if in challenge, tossing up waves!

EXT. FEDALLAH'S BOAT - DAY

The boat rocks on the waves. Steady and swift on the prow, Fedallah launches his harpoon with superhuman strength -- into the massive white midsection!

A VOLCANIC REACTION! Giant flukes beat the water, a chaos of waves and foam! The spout exhales angrily, as MOBY DICK charges away full speed!

The harpoon line goes taut -- the boat lurches forward! Fedallah grips the line with a spirited cackle, Arabs hanging on for a rollercoaster ride.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Towing Fedallah's boat, MOBY DICK lifts his huge tail and sounds, seawater cascading from majestic flukes like a waterfall. Down he goes!

EXT. FEDALLAH'S BOAT - DAY

The harpoon line suddenly goes slack. Reacting curiously, Fedallah searches the waters. No sign of his prey.

A tense, shuddery beat. In b.g., the other three boats close in around him.

Fedallah glances up at the rapacious flights of SHRIEKING birds above him. Then looks forward... with sudden horror!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

From his viewpoint, MOBY DICK breaches with a surge of colossal energy -- charging forward, directly toward us, his monstrous head splitting the water! A terrifying image! His giant, crooked jaws open to reveal huge, jagged teeth!

EXT. FEDALLAH'S BOAT - DAY

Fedallah, paralyzed with awe. His Arabs leap up in terror and scramble for the sides...

Bearing down relentlessly, MOBY DICK's immense head lurches up with gaping jaws -- takes the whole boat into his mouth and SNAPS Fedallah and the boat in two with crushing force!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

With pieces of wrecked boat and human bodies still in his jaws, MOBY DICK dives back into the deep!

Stillness over the sea. Only the SCREAMS of birds.

EXT. STUBB'S/FLASK'S BOATS - DAY

Their boats rocking in the wake of destruction, Stubb and Flask stare awestruck, speechless. The men look on in wondrous fear.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

Starbuck is dumbstruck, like the rest. Ishmael shuts his eyes, foreseeing his doom. Queequeg gazes stoically, accepting his.

Stunned for a beat, Ahab mutters a seaward growl:

AHAB

Gone! So ye've gone before
me, Fedallah -- but no ROPE
can smite me now! I'll slay
that demon yet!

As if in reply, a DEEP RUMBLE of bubbles rises in the water before them. MOBY DICK breaches mightily with a powerful geyser -- only twenty yards away!

He glides past, his spray raining over the boat.

STARBUCK

God in heaven!!

He and the others recoil in humbled terror. Ahab leans forward and shouts with demonic triumph:

AHAB

Breach your last to the sun,
Moby Dick! Your hour...
(brandishes harpoons)
and THESE are at hand!

STARBUCK

Captain, it's not too late to
stop this madness! Let's
turn back--

AHAB

BE SILENT!

STARBUCK

I cannot! I'm under orders to
obey you, not to DIE for ye!

AHAB

But I AM under orders! I'm
the Fates' lieutenant! Pull
on, men, burst in upon him!
PULL! PULL!

Queequeg pulls hard, Ishmael and the frightened oarsmen pulling to his beat.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

The chase is on again, building momentum. Starbuck's boat closes in on the mountainous whale, Stubb's and Flask's boats right behind them.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

The boat pulls close alongside, within twenty feet of MOBY DICK.

AHAB

Steady, men, steady...

Hanging over the prow, his harpoon ready, Ahab is

close enough to strike. He sees the small eye in MOBY DICK's titanic head and glowers fiercely at it.

AHAB (cont'd)
Accursed fish! May black
vomit wrench thee...

He raises the harpoon to strike, a mighty roar:

AHAB (cont'd)
From hell's heart I STAB at
thee!

A powerful thrust -- the harpoon strikes the side of the head, joining other ancient spears! MOBY DICK turns, barely flinching, his dark eye facing Ahab. Ahab raises and aims his second harpoon...

AHAB (cont'd)
For hate's sake I spit my
last BREATH at thee!!

Another thrust! The harpoon hits directly above the eye! MOBY DICK lunges forward, dragging the boat full throttle! Men tumble over each other. Ahab holds onto the tight harpoon lines, refusing to let go -- he's wrenched overboard!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Dragged hard through the water, pelted by waves but holding on, Ahab pulls himself along the lines toward the speeding leviathan!

EXT. WHALE BODY - DAY

With a ghastly grin, Ahab hoists himself up onto the white mountainside and climbs up higher, using stuck harpoons as rungs...toward the whale's hump!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

As the boat plows behind him, the rowers watch in open-jawed amazement. Starbuck stares, inspired by the heroic, horrific scene before him.

EXT. WHALE BODY - DAY

Ahab rides the whale, clinging on, his foot and peg leg supported by impaled harpoons! In the

rushing chaos, their lines flail around Ahab's legs and begin to entangle themselves around his thighs, up to his waist...

Ahab yanks out an ancient lance -- stabs its sharp point downward into MOBY DICK, again and again, laughing and shouting with hateful exhilaration!

MOBY DICK submerges -- taking Ahab down with him!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

Starbuck leaps forward to the bow and leans out, screaming in despair...

STARBUCK

My Captain!!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

From Starbuck's viewpoint: MOBY DICK resurfaces, still dragging the boat.

Fastened to the whale, dead Ahab sprawls upright across his hump with a ravaged face -- wrapped up in coils and coils of harpoon rope! His glazed eyes wide open in fossilized fury, staring directly at us!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

Starbuck's direful face fixes on Ahab.

STARBUCK

My Captain...my Captain...

He suddenly turns with a savage heart, transformed, exhorting the others with Ahab's own mighty rage:

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Come on, men! Let's not
let him die in vain! Let's
gash that whale's heart --
let's SPILL HIS GORE!!

Seizing hold of the taut line, he pulls furiously to drag the boat closer to their prey. Shouts back:

STARBUCK (cont'd)

Damn yer eyes, pull! PULL!

Queequeg grips a line and pulls with him. Caught up in Starbuck's fever, the others take the lines.

Only Ishmael hangs back, too petrified to move.

EXT. STUBB'S BOAT - DAY

Witnessing the scene, Stubb angrily tosses his pipe into the sea and seizes Tashtego's harpoon, brave as fearless fire, shouting at his oarsmen:

STUBB

Thunder away at him, lads,
PULL! I'll strike at 'im
myself and send him to a
FIERY HELL!

EXT. FLASK'S BOAT - DAY

Flask echoes Stubb, inflamed with passion.

FLASK

Pull, dammit, pull! DEATH
to Moby Dick!!

Dagoo leaps onto the prow with raised harpoon and a BOOMING WAR CRY.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Stubb's and Flask's boats advance rapidly toward MOBY DICK -- the giant whale heading their way, dragging Starbuck's boat behind him.

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

Starbuck and his men pull fiercely on the lines, battling the racing tide, drawing closer and closer to the whale's stern...twenty feet away!

Queequeg leaps to the bow. Fighting for balance, he raises and aims his harpoon...

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

MOBY DICK suddenly accelerates, dragging the boat faster! Then raises his mammoth head high -- and dives straight down!

EXT. STARBUCK'S BOAT - DAY

The boat lurches up over a wave -- Queequeg tumbles off the bow with his harpoon, Ishmael spills out the stern! Airborn for a split second, the boat plunges downward!

Starbuck SCREAMS before a wall of water rushing up at him -- the last image he sees!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Starbuck's boat plummets down into the deep with a violent SPLASH -- disappears! It's over in seconds.

EXT. STUBB'S BOAT - DAY

Stubb hasn't time to react, as he looks down over the bow:

Underwater, a massive white head breaches up toward us from the depths with terrifying swiftness!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

MOBY DICK shoots straight up out of the water like an explosion -- lifting Stubb's boat high, rupturing it! The boat splinters into pieces, scattering wood and men far and wide!

Plunging back down with a huge SPLASH, the whale wields its great tail over Flask's boat...

EXT. FLASK'S BOAT - DAY

Raised up, giant flukes CRASH DOWN atop the men's heads with sledgehammer power -- crushing them, their SCREAMS cut short! The tail smashes the boat to smithereens!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Nothing is left of Stubb, Flask, their men or their boats but flotsam and floating bodies.

MOBY DICK turns away from the carnage and plows his ominous way toward the ship itself.

Ishmael flounders in the choppy waters, trying to keep his head afloat. He sees someone and swims desperately toward him...

Queequeg drifts, clinging weakly to a floating oar. The end of his harpoon juts oddly from the water. Ishmael holds onto the oar, gasping, spitting water.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg! Hang on, mate!
You'll be all right!...

Then he sees the blood in the water: Queequeg's harpoon has impaled one side of his waist from the fall. Queequeg focuses weakly on his friend's face...a glimmer of a smile. Then he lets go and sinks.

ISHMAEL

Queequeg!!

Desperate to save him, Ishmael dives...

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Queequeg sinks fast, surrendering to the depths. Ishmael grips his arm to pull him up, Queequeg's great weight pulling him down. Queequeg yanks Ishmael's hand free, forcing him to save himself. He disappears into the deep.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Ishmael surfaces, sucking in air. He clutches the puny oar. And CRIES OUT in spiritual agony!

Far across the waters, MOBY DICK charges toward the Pequod with renewed fury...then submerges.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - MIDDECK - DAY

Among the stunned shipboard crewmen, the Cook looks out over the faraway wreckage but sees no sign of the whale. He turns to the main mast.

The Spanish gold coin is still there, nailed to the mast. Eying it greedily, the Cook glances around...then takes a kitchen knife and works at the coin to pry it loose.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

From an aerial view: the drifting Pequod. A half league out...an immense, white underwater mass forges steadily toward the ship.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

At the mast, the Cook unloosens the gold coin. He senses someone behind him and turns to see...

The grinning Carpenter's face -- WHACK! His hammer knocks the Cook out cold. A gleeful grin.

CARPENTER

THAT'LL shut you up!

Taking his place, the Carpenter easily pries off the coin and holds it up with a thieving smile. He gazes at its golden glow, as...

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

MOBY DICK's white head surfaces and barrels through the water with a great thrust of his tail! Swimming faster and faster toward the ship, an engine of destruction...

The whale COLLIDES head on into the Pequod with the impact of a cannonball!

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

Quick devastation across the deck! The Carpenter topples back against the mast. Rigging falls around him, killing deckhands!

INT. LOWER HOLD - DAY

Tons of seawater pour through the splintered hull!

INT. CAPTAIN'S CABIN - DAY

Terrified Pip dashes through the cabin and leaps into Ahab's chest of peg legs. He shuts the lid over himself to hide.

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - DAY

MOBY DICK'S giant tail sweeps across the deck, his flukes toppling the pots on the lit furnaces! Spilled whale oil ignites -- flames spread over the planking, setting the deck on fire!

Burning oil pours down an open bow hatch into the barrel hold...

INT. BARREL HOLD - DAY

Flames light up the oil-flooded floor, licking all around the oil casks...KABLOOM!

EXT. PEQUOD (AT SEA) - DAY

An explosive fireball consumes the entire bow!

The middeck tilts askew. Fires sweep aft and rage through the whole ship!

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Ishmael thrashes in the water, clinging helplessly to the oar. In b.g., the distant Pequod burns and sinks, flames and smoke roiling skyward.

EXT. MIDDECK - DAY

The ship goes down. Through the flames of the low-tilting deck, the dead Carpenter hangs from toppled rigging, flat against the mast...his arms spread out like a crucifixion. In his open hand,

the Spanish gold coin.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

Ishmael struggles in the water, the lone survivor. In b.g., the Pequod's burning bow sinks from sight. Ishmael looks toward the horizon...but the ship is gone. Nothing but black smoke and a empty sea.

Ishmael can't hold on much longer. His grip on the oar weakens...

Out of the floating wreckage, Queequeg's coffin pops up into view. Ishmael swims toward it and hangs on for blessed life.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

The blue wilderness of the deep. A pale corpse sinks down into our view...Ahab, coiled in ropes, dislodged harpoons floating around him. His dead eyes open in cold, frozen rage...as he descends to his watery grave.

In b.g., the great white whale streaks by.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - SUNSET

A fiery sunset. Alone amidst an endless seascape, Ishmael lies in the floating coffin. Exhausted and parched, but alive.

ISHMAEL (V.O.)

Saved by my friend's coffin,
I drifted on a soft, calm sea
for two days and a night...

On the dimming horizon, the faraway sails of a ship drift into view.

ISHMAEL (V.O.)

(cont'd)

On the evening of the second day, a whaling ship found me at last. It was the Rachel, still searching for her lost son. Instead, she found another orphan.

EXT. INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

The unbounded sea. A thousand leagues of blue.

On the calm, peaceful waters, a swell of bubbles...

MOBY DICK breaches -- leaping skyward out of the sea in a triumphant arc! The majestic white whale dives back down, his great flukes our last image.

Then he's gone.

FADE OUT.

THE END