

## EXAMPLE 1: *Moby Dick*

By Herman Melville

### CHAPTER 1. Loomings

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

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

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

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

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

## EXAMPLE 2: The Syrian Refugee Crisis (UNHCR)

Millions of Syrians have escaped across borders, in what has become the world's largest refugee crisis in decades.

The vast majority of Syrian refugees in the neighbouring countries live in urban areas, with only 1 out of 20 accommodated in a refugee camp. In all neighbouring countries, life is a daily struggle for more than a million Syrian refugees, who have little or no financial resources.

Many lost employment since the COVID-19 pandemic has broken out. In Lebanon, nine out of ten refugees now live in extreme poverty. There are no formal refugee camps and, as a result, Syrians are scattered throughout urban and rural communities and locations, often sharing small basic lodgings with other refugee families in overcrowded conditions.

“They gave us biscuits, cheese, dates, dry meat – all very nice... And they gave us mats, blankets and kitchenware.”

Fayzeh, mother of three at Jordan's Zaatari camp

In Jordan, over 660,000 men, women and children are currently trapped in exile. Approximately 80 per cent of them live outside camps, while 128,000 have found sanctuary in refugee camps such as Za'atari and Azraq.

Many have arrived with limited means to cover even basic needs, and those who could at first rely on savings or support from host families are now increasingly in need of help. In Jordan, about four out of five Syrian refugees (close to 80 percent) were living under the national poverty line even before the pandemic, surviving on about US\$3 a day

Iraq also is a main host country for Syrians, with some 244,000 registered refugees, while in Egypt UNHCR provides protection and assistance to more than 130,000.

But although life in exile can be difficult, for Syrians still at home it is also extremely challenging.

“We felt maybe it’s our turn to die. But we didn’t want to die. So we made up our minds to leave.”

Sahar, 25, Syrian refugee in Lebanon

### EXAMPLE 3: “Song of the Reed Flute” by Rumi

Translated by Kabir Helminski

Listen to the reed and the tale it tells,  
how it sings of separation:

Ever since they cut me from the reed bed,  
my wail has caused men and women to weep.

I want a heart that is torn open with longing  
so that I might share the pain of this love.

Whoever has been parted from his source  
longs to return to that state of union.

At every gathering I play my lament.  
I'm a friend to both happy and sad.

Each befriended me for his own reasons,  
yet none searched out the secrets I contain.

My secret is not different than my lament,  
yet this is not for the senses to perceive.

The body is not hidden from the soul,  
nor is the soul hidden from the body,  
and yet the soul is not for everyone to see.

This flute is played with fire, not with wind,  
and without this fire you would not exist.

It is the fire of love that inspires the flute.  
It is the ferment of love that completes the wine.

The reed is a comfort to all estranged lovers.  
Its music tears our veils away.

Have you ever seen a poison or antidote like the reed?  
Have you seen a more intimate companion and lover?

It sings of the path of blood;  
it relates the passion of Majnun.

Only to the senseless is this sense confided.  
Does the tongue have any patron but the ear?

Our days grow more unseasonable,  
these days which mix with grief and pain. . .

but if the days that remain are few, let them go; it doesn't matter.  
But You, You remain, for nothing is as pure as You are.

All but the fish quickly have their fill of His water,  
and the day is long without His daily bread.

The raw do not understand the state of the ripe,  
and so my words will be brief.

Break your bonds, be free, my child!  
How long will silver and gold enslave you?

If you pour the whole sea into a jug,  
will it hold more than one day's store.

The greedy eye, like the jug, is never filled.  
Until content, the oyster holds no pearl.

Only one who has been undressed by Love  
is free of defect and desire.

## EXAMPLE 4: “The Snake Catcher’s Tale” by Rumi

Translated by Coleman Barks

Listen to this, and hear the mystery inside:  
A snake-catcher went into the mountains to find a snake.

He wanted a friendly pet, and one that would amaze  
audiences, but he was looking for a reptile, something  
that has no knowledge of friendship.

It was winter.  
In the deep snow he saw a frighteningly huge dead snake.  
He was afraid to touch it but he did.  
In fact, he dragged the thing into Baghdad,  
hoping people would pay to see it

This is how foolish  
we’ve become! A human being is a mountain range!  
Snakes are fascinated by us! Yet we sell ourselves  
to look at a dead snake.

We are like beautiful satin  
used to patch burlap. “Come see the dragon I killed,  
and hear the adventures!” That’s what he announced,  
and a large crowd came,

but the dragon was not dead,  
just dormant! He set up his show at a crossroads.  
The ring of gawking rubes got thicker, everybody  
on tiptoe, men and women, noble and peasant, all  
packed together unconscious of their differences.  
It was like the Resurrection!

He began to unwind the thick ropes and remove  
the cloth covering he’d wrapped it so well in.

Some little movement.

The hot Iraqi sun had woken  
the terrible life. The people nearest started screaming.  
Panic! The dragon tore easily and hungrily  
loose, killing many instantly.

The snake-catcher stood there,  
frozen. “What have I brought out of the mountains?” The  
snake  
braced against a post and crushed the man and consumed  
him.

The snake is your animal-soul. When you bring it  
into the hot air of your wanting-energy, warmed  
by that and by the prospect of power and wealth,  
it does massive damage.

Leave it in the snow mountains.  
Don't expect to oppose it with quietness  
and sweetness and wishing.

The nafs don't respond to those,  
and they can't be killed. It takes a Moses to deal  
with such a beast, to lead it back, and make it lie down  
in the snow. But there was no Moses then.  
Hundreds of thousands died.