

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner
By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,
 And he stoppeth one of three.
 'By thy long grey beard and glittering
 eye,
 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened
 wide,
 And I am next of kin;
 The guests are met, the feast is set:
 May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 'There was a ship,' quoth he.
 'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard
 loon!
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering
 eye—
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
 And listens like a three years' child:
 The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
 He cannot choose but hear;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour
 cleared,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left,
 Out of the sea came he!
 And he shone bright, and on the right
 Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,

Till over the mast at noon—'
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his
 breast,
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
 Red as a rose is she;
 Nodding their heads before her goes
 The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his
 breast,
 Yet he cannot choose but hear;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

And now the STORM-BLAST came,
 and he
 Was tyrannous and strong:
 He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
 And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping
 prow,
 As who pursued with yell and blow
 Still treads the shadow of his foe,
 And forward bends his head,
 The ship drove fast, loud roared the
 blast,
 And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and
 snow,
 And it grew wondrous cold:
 And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
 As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy
 clifts
 Did send a dismal sheen:

Nor shapes of men nor beasts we
ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared
and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And a good south wind sprung up
behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-
smoke white,
Glimmered the white Moon-shine.'

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee
thus!—
Why look'st thou so?'—With my
cross-bow
I shot the ALBATROSS.
