

The Cruise of the Dove

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Ye men of renown who are a-swearing
For some noble deeds your lordships have done
Come listen to me and hear things full as daring
Which we brother spouters think nothing but fun

It was a fine ship with prime captain and crew
Surpassed by none and equaled by few
With courage undaunted by oars and by sail
So nimble we chased the spermacety whale

The name of our ship I suppose you'd like to know
The name of our captain and owners also
She was called the Dove you will see in my song
And nothing I tell you I swear it is wrong

Our captain's name is Butler a man fine and bold
Our owners named Hazzard and Worth I hear told
On the Coast of Peru we were destined to cruise
But if we'd stopped there it would not have been much use.

Then away to the westward in hopes for to find
Some work for all hands being that way inclined
Then away to the northward to Japan likewise
Where the whales both the irons and lances defies

There she breathes there she blows was the cry heard one day
The captain looked up and hailed out where away
Right ahead and abeam on each hand them we spy
Like logs around us so sweetly they lie.

The captain went up and he soon gave the word
Being his orders by all should be heard
So back the main yard and stop the ship's way
Do swing out your boats boys and lower away

Now our boats being lowered there arose a contest
Among the boats crews to see which should do best
Spring on says the headsman don't let them pass by
When up starts a whale and lay on is the cry

Stand up was the next word that I heard him say

Into her she's got it lay on the other way
I have got a good iron just over her fin
So work sharp my boys and pull on her again

Now we worked for our lives while each tar done his best
We brought the school to and had work for the rest
And while that our whales were bleeding and dying
The shipkeepers so anxious were to windward ever plying.

Now our whales are turned up and we prepared for our toil
We will soon get on board with the blubber to boil
When it's boiled out and stowed down in the hold
We'll drink greasy luck to the whalers so bold

Our ship she is full and home we are bound
We fill up our glasses and drink all around
We fill up our glasses and so merry we will be
And drink a good health to the liberty tree

Now in New York harbor our good ship lies moored
With a hold full of oil and all hands well on board
Being paid by our owners we leave captain and mate
We're bound for the park boys to blow us out straight

From Songs the Whalemen Sang, Huntington
Collected from the journal of the Minerva, 1845