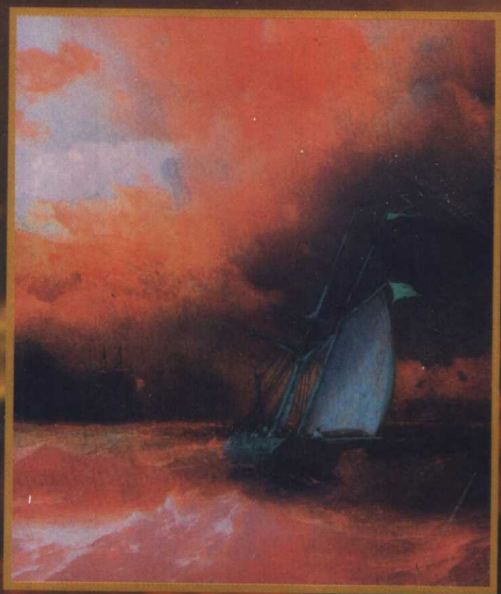




The Whale

白鲸



文化艺术出版社

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白 鯨

江苏工业学院图书馆
藏书章

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注释

文化艺术出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

白鲸:英文/[美]麦尔维尔著;张庆注释.

- 北京:文化艺术出版社,2001.1

(世界名著双语注释)

ISBN 7-5039-1974-4

I. 白… II. ①麦…②张… III. 英语-语言
读物,小说 IV. H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2000)第 82714 号

白 鲸

著 者 [美]麦尔维尔

注 释 张 庆

审 订 叶 乡

出版发行 文化艺术出版社

社 址 北京市丰台区万泉寺甲 1 号 (100073)

印 刷 北京忠信诚胶印厂

开 本 32 开(787×960 毫米)

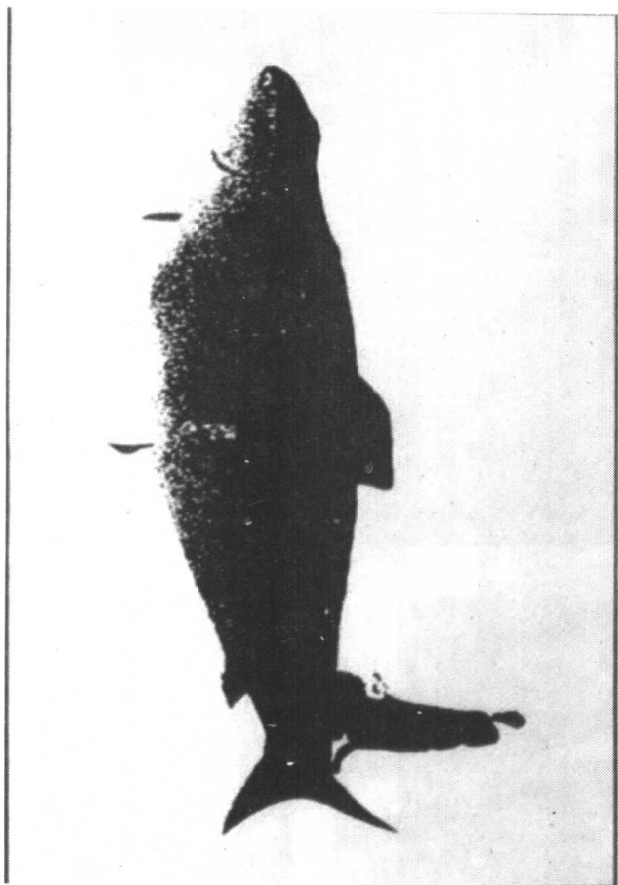
字 数 448,000 印 张 17 625

版 次 2001 年 1 月第 1 版

2001 年 1 月第 1 次印刷

书 号 ISBN 7-5039-1974-4/I·851

定 价 19.00 元



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Chapter 1 Loomings

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no money in my purse①, 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 spleen②, and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth③; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily④ pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear⑤ of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me⑥, 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 sword⑦; 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 Man-hattoes, belted⑧ round by wharves⑨ as Indian isles by coral reefs—commerce surrounds it with her surf. Right and left, the streets take you waterward. Its extreme down-town is the battery⑩, where that noble mole⑪ 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-gazers⑫ 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 sentinels⑬ 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-heads⑭; some looking over the bulwarks of ships from China; some high aloft in the rigging⑮, as if striving to get a still better seaward peep. But these are all landsmen; of week days pent up⑯ in lath and plaster—tied to counters, nailed to benches, clinched to desks. How then is this? Are the green fields gone?

① purse [pɜ:s] *n.*
small bag for money
closed by drawing
strings together. 小
钱袋, 小钱夹

② spleen [splin] *n.*
lowness of spirits 意
气消沉, 抑郁

③ growing grim about the mouth: expressing more pain or disgust 表情变得
更加冷酷、痛苦

④ involuntarily [in'v-
əlɒntərili] *adv.* done
without intention 不
知不觉地

⑤ bring up the rear:
come last in a line 跟
在队伍最后

⑥ hypos get such an
upper hand of me:
抑郁症到了不可收
拾的地步

⑦ throws himself
upon his sword: 引
剑自刎

⑧ belt [belt] *v.* fas-
ten with a belt 用带
系住

⑨ wharves [wɔ:vz]
n. wooden or stone
structure at which
ships are moored for
loading cargo 码头

⑩ battery ['bæteri]
n. big guns 大炮

⑪ mole [məʊl]:
stone wall built in
the sea as a break-
water 防波堤

⑫ water-gazers: 欣
赏海景的人

⑬ sentinel ['sentinal]
n. sentry 守卫

⑭ pier-heads: the
edge of pier 码头边
上

⑮ rigging ['rigɪŋ] *n.*
ropes which support
a ship's mast and
sails 支撑船桅和帆
的绳索

⑯ pent up: repress
抑制

What do they here?

But look! here come more crowds, pacing straight for the water, and seemingly bound① for a dive. Strange! Nothing will content them but the extremest limit of the land; loitering② under the shady lee③ 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 avenues—north, east, south, and west. Yet here they all unite. Tell me, does the magnetic④ virtue of the needles of the compasses of all those ships attract them thither⑤?

Once more. Say, you are in the country; in some high land of lakes. Take almost any path you please, and ten to one⑥ it carries you down in a dale⑦, and leaves you there by a pool in the stream. There is magic in it. Let the most absent-minded⑧ of men be plunged in his deepest reveries⑨—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 athirst⑩ in the great American desert, try this experiment, if your caravan⑪ happen to be supplied with a metaphysical professor. Yes, as every one knows, meditation and water are wedded for ever.

But here is an artist. He desires to paint you the dreamiest, shadiest, quietest, most enchanting⑫ bit of romantic landscape in all the valley of the Saco. What is the chief element he employs? There stand his trees, each with a hollow trunk, as if a hermit and a crucifix⑬ were within; and here sleeps his meadow, and there sleep his cattle; and up from yonder cottage goes a sleepy smoke. Deep into distant woodlands winds a mazy way, reaching to overlapping spurs⑭ of mountains bathed in their hill-side blue. But though the picture lies thus tranced, and though this pine-tree shakes down its sighs like leaves upon this shepherd's⑮ head, yet all were vain, unless the shepherd's eye were fixed upon the magic stream before him. Go visit the Prairies in June, when for scores on scores of miles you wade knee-deep among Tiger-lilies—what is the one charm wanting? —Water—there is not a drop of water there! Were Niagara but a cataract⑯ of sand, would you travel your thousand miles to see it? Why did the poor poet of Tennessee, upon

① bound [baund] *vi.* jump, spring 跳, 跃

② loiter ['lɔɪtə] *v.* go slowly and stop frequently 闲荡

③ lee [li:] *n.* the side away from the wind 背风处

④ magnetic [mæg'n-etik] *adj.* able to attract 有磁性的, 能吸引的

⑤ thither ['ðiðə] *adv.* to that place 向那边, 到彼处

⑥ ten to one: very probably, 十之九八

⑦ dale [deil] *n.* valley 山谷

⑧ absent-minded *adj.* so deep or far away in thought that one is unaware of what one is doing 心不在焉的

⑨ reverie ['revəri] *n.* being lost in dreamy 沉醉于梦幻

⑩ athirst [ə'θɜ:st] *adj.* thirsty 渴的

⑪ caravan ['kærəv-sæn] *n.* company of persons making a journey together 旅行队, 商队

⑫ enchanting [in'tʃ-əntɪŋ] *adj.* charming 迷人的, 诱人的

⑬ crucifix ['krusi-fiks] *n.* model of the cross with the figure of Christ on it 耶稣受难像

⑭ spar ['spɑ:] *n.* ridge extending from a mountain 山的支脉

⑮ shepherd ['ʃepəd] *n.* man who takes care of sheep 牧羊人

⑯ cataract ['kætə-rækt] *n.* large steep waterfall 大而陡的瀑布

suddenly receiving two handfuls of silver, deliberate whether to buy him a coat, which he sadly needed, or invest his money in a pedestrian① trip to Rockaway Beach? Why is almost every robust healthy boy with a robust healthy soul in him, at some time or other crazy to go to sea? Why upon your first voyage as a passenger, did you yourself feel such a mystical vibration②, when first told that you and your ship were now out of sight of land? Why did the old Persians hold the sea holy? Why did the Greeks give it a separate deity③, and own brother of Jove? Surely all this is not without meaning. And still deeper the meaning of that story of Narcissus, who because he could not grasp the tormenting, mild image he saw in the fountain, plunged into it and was drowned. But that same image, we ourselves see in all rivers and oceans. It is the image of the ungraspable phantom④ of life; and this is the key to it all.

Now, when I say that I am in the habit of going to sea whenever I begin to grow hazy⑤ about the eyes, and begin to be over conscious of my lungs, I do not mean to have it inferred that I ever go to sea as a passenger. For to go as a passenger you must needs have a purse, and a purse is but a rag unless you have something in it. Besides, passengers get sea-sick—grow quarrelsome—don't sleep of nights—do not enjoy themselves much, as a general thing;—no, I never go as a passenger; nor, though I am something of a salt, do I ever go to sea as a Commodore⑥, or a Captain, or a Cook. I abandon the glory and distinction of such offices to those who like them. For my part, I abominate all honorable respectable toils, trials, and tribulations of every kind whatsoever⑦. It is quite as much as I can do to take care of myself, without taking care of ships, barques⑧, brigs⑨, schooners⑩, and what not. And as for going as cook,—though I confess there is considerable glory in that, a cook being a sort of officer on ship-board—yet, somehow, I never fancied broiling⑪ fowls;—though once broiled, judiciously buttered⑫, and judgmatically salted and peppered, there is no one who will speak more respectfully, not to say reverentially, of a broiled fowl than I will. It is out of the idolatrous⑬ dotings of the old Egyptians upon broiled ibis and roasted river horse, that you see the mummies of those creatures in their huge bake-houses the pyramids.

① pedestrian [pi'destriən] *adj.* connected with walks 步行的

② vibration [vai'breiʃn] *n.* slight continuous shaky movement 振动, 摇动

③ deity ['diəti] *n.* God 神, 上帝

④ phantom ['fætam] *n.* ghost, something without reality 幽灵, 幻影

⑤ hazy ['heizi] *adj.* uncertain, vague, slightly confused 不确定的, 困惑的

⑥ commodore ['kɒm-ədə:] *n.* senior captain of a shipping line 海军准将, 船上的低级官员

⑦ whatsoever [wɒts-ə'veə] *adv.* whatever, 为 whatever 的强势语

⑧ barque [bɑ:k] *n.* sailing-ship with 3 to 5 masts and sails 三桅式帆船

⑨ brig [brig] *n.* two masted ship with square sails and an extra fore-and-aft sail on the mainmast 一种双桅帆船 (帆为方形, 主桅上另有纵帆)

⑩ schooner ['sku:nə] *n.* kind of sailing-ship with two or more masts and fore-and-aft sails 纵帆式帆船

⑪ broiling [brɔilɪŋ] *adj.* be cooked, direct contact with fire 烧烤的

⑫ butter ['bʌtə] *v.* cook with butter 用奶油烹调

⑬ idolatrous [ai'dɒlə-trəs] *adj.* worshipping of an idol 偶像崇拜的

No, when I go to sea, I go as a simple sailor, right before the mast, plumb down into the fore-castle①, aloft there to the royal mast-head. True, they rather order me about some, and make me jump from spar to spar, like a grasshopper in a May meadow. And at first, this sort of thing is unpleasant enough. It touches one's sense of honor, particularly if you come of an old established family in the land, the Van Rensselaers, or Randolphins, or Hardicanutes. And more than all, if just previous to putting your hand into the tar-pot②, you have been lord-ing③ it as a country schoolmaster, making the tallest boys stand in awe of you. The transition is a keen one, I assure you, from a schoolmaster to a sailor, and requires a strong decoction④ of Seneca and the Stoics to enable you to grin and bear it. But even this wears off in time.

What of it⑤, if some old hunks⑥ of a sea-captain orders me to get a broom and sweep down the decks? What does that indignity amount to, weighed, I mean, in the scales of the New Testament? Do you think the archangel⑦ Gabriel thinks anything the less of me, because I promptly and respectfully obey that old hunks in that particular instance? Who aint⑧ a slave? Tell me that. Well, then, however the old sea-captains may order me about—however they may thump⑨ and punch me about, I have the satisfaction of knowing that it is all right; that everybody else is one way or other served in much the same way—either in a physical or metaphysical point of view, that is; and so the universal thump is passed round, and all hands should rub each other's shoulder-blades⑩, and be content.

Again, I always go to sea as a sailor, because they make a point of paying me for my trouble, whereas they never pay passengers a single penny that I ever heard of. On the contrary, passengers themselves must pay. And there is all the difference in the world between paying and being paid. The act of paying is perhaps the most uncomfortable infliction that the two orchard thieves⑪ entailed upon us. But *being paid*,—what will compare with it? The urbane activity with which a man receives money is really marvellous⑫, considering that we so earnestly believe money to be the root of all earthly ills, and that on no account can a monied man enter heaven. Ah! how cheerfully we consign ourselves to perdition⑬!

① fore-castle *n.* part under the bows where the seaman have their living and sleeping accommodation 船首甲板下之水手艙

② tar-pot *n.* the pot that contains tar 柏油罐子

③ lord [lɔ:d] *v.* rule over like a lord 盛气凌人

④ decoction [di'kɒkʃən] *n.* 道行

⑤ what of it: 那又算得什么

⑥ hunk [hʌŋk] *n.* thick piece 厚块, 这里指大块头的人

⑦ archangel ['ɑ:keɪndʒl] *n.* angel of high rank 天使长, 大天使

⑧ aint [aɪnt] are not, is not 不是

⑨ thump [θʌmp] *v.* strike heavily 重击

⑩ shoulder-blades *n.* either of the flat bone of the upper back, behind and below the neck 间夹骨

⑪ the two orchard thieves: 指亚当和夏娃偷吃伊甸园的果子

⑫ marvellous ['mɑ:vələs] *adj.* astonishing, wonderful 惊奇的, 神妙的

⑬ perdition [pə'dɪʃn] *n.* complete ruin 永死, 万劫不复

Finally, I always go to sea as a sailor, because of the wholesome exercise and pure air of the fore-castle deck. For as in this world, head winds are far more prevalent than winds from astern① (that is, if you never violate the Pythagorean maxim②), so for the most part the Commodore on the quarter-deck gets his atmosphere at second hand from the sailors on the fore-castle. He thinks he breathes it first; but not so. In much the same way do the commonalty③ lead their leaders in many other things, at the same time that the leaders little suspect it. But wherefore it was that after having repeatedly smelt the sea as a merchant sailor, I should now take it into my head to go on a whaling voyage; this the invisible police officer of the Fates, who has the constant surveillance④ of me, and secretly dogs me, and influences me in some unaccountable way—he can better answer than any one else. And, doubtless, my going on this whaling voyage, formed part of the grand programme of Providence⑤ that was drawn up a long time ago. It came in as a sort of brief interlude⑥ and solo⑦ between more extensive performances. I take it that this part of the bill must have run something like this:

“Grand Contested Election for the Presidency of the United States.

“WHALING VOYAGE BY ONE ISHMAEL.”

“BLOODY BATTLE IN AFGHANISTAN.”

Though I cannot tell why it was exactly that those stage managers, the Fates, put me down for this shabby part of a whaling voyage, when others were set down for magnificent parts in high tragedies⑧, and short and easy parts in genteel comedies⑨, and jolly⑩ parts in farces—though I cannot tell why this was exactly; yet, now that I recall all the circumstances, I think I can see a little into the springs and motives which being cunningly presented to me under various disguises, induced me to set about performing the part I did, besides cajoling⑪ me into the delusion that it was a choice resulting from my own unbiased freewill and discriminating judgment.

Chief among these motives was the overwhelming idea of the great whale himself. Such a portentous⑫ and mysterious monster roused all my curiosity. Then the wild and distant seas where

① astern [əs'tɜːn] *adv.* in or at the stem of a ship 在船尾

② Pythagorean maxim: 毕达哥拉斯定理

③ commonalty ['kɒmənəlti] *n.* the common people 平民百姓 (与高阶层人相比)

④ surveillance[sə'veləns] *n.* close watch kept on persons 监视

⑤ Providence ['prɒvɪdəns] *n.* God 上帝

⑥ interlude ['ɪntə'lud] *n.* interval between parts of an opera etc 插曲, 间奏

⑦ solo ['səʊləʊ] *n.* piece of music performed by one person 独奏曲

⑧ tragedy ['trædʒədi] *n.* play of a serious or solemn kind 悲剧

⑨ comedy ['kɒmədi] *n.* play for the theatre, of a light amusing kind 喜剧, 滑稽剧

⑩ jolly [dʒɒli] *adj.* joyful, gay, merry 高兴的, 愉快的

⑪ cajole [kə'dʒəʊl] *v.* deceit, use flattery or deceit to persuade or soothe 以甜言蜜语哄取, 骗取

⑫ portentous [pɔ:'tɛntəs] *adj.* ominous, threatening 不祥的, 危险的

he rolled his island bulk; the undeliverable, nameless perils① of the whale; these, with all the attending marvels of a thousand Patagonian sights and sounds, helped to sway② me to my wish. With other men, perhaps, such things would not have been inducements③; but as for me, I am tormented with an everlasting itch④ for things remote. I love to sail forbidden seas, and land on barbarous⑤ coasts. Not ignoring what is good, I am quick to perceive a horror, and could still be social with it—would they let me—since it is but well to be on friendly terms with all the inmates of the place one lodges in.

By reason of these things, then, the whaling voyage was welcome; the great flood-gates of the wonder-world swung⑥ open, and in the wild conceits that swayed me to my purpose, two and two there floated into my inmost⑦ soul, endless processions of the whale, and, mid most of them all, one grand hooded⑧ phantom, like a snow hill in the air.

Chapter 2 The Carpet-Bag

I stuffed a shirt or two into my old carpet-bag, tucked it under my arm, and started for Cape Horn and the Pacific. Quitting the good city of old Manhatto, I duly⑨ arrived in New Bedford. It was a Saturday night in December. Much was I disappointed upon learning that the little packet for Nantucket had already sailed, and that no way of reaching that place would offer, till the following Monday.

As most young candidates for the pains and penalties of whaling stop at this same New Bedford, thence⑩ to embark on their voyage, it may as well be related that I, for one, had no idea of so doing. For my mind was made up to sail in no other than a Nantucket craft, because there was a fine, boisterous something about everything connected with that famous old island, which amazingly pleased me. Besides though New Bedford has of late been gradually monopolizing⑪ the business of whaling, and though in this matter poor old Nantucket is now much behind her, yet Nantucket was her great original—the Tyre of this Carthage;—the place where the first dead American whale was stranded⑫. Where else but from Nantucket did those aboriginal⑬ whalers, the Red - Men, first sally out in canoes to give

① peril [pə'reɪl] *n.* serious danger 危险

② sway [swei] *v.* control or influence, govern the direction of 控制, 影响

③ inducement [in'dju:smənt] *n.* that which persuade or influence, lead or cause 诱因, 动机

④ itch [itʃ] *v.* restless desire or longing 渴望

⑤ barbarous ['bɑ:bərəs] *adj.* uncivilized, cruel 野蛮的, 未开化的

⑥ swung [swʌŋ] *pp.* of swing, to move backwards and forwards or round and round, from a fixed point 摇动, 旋转

⑦ inmost ['ɪnməʊst] *adj.* most inward, most private or secret 最内部的, 最深处的, 深藏的, 秘藏的

⑧ hooded [hudi:d] *adj.* anything like a hood 兜帽, 头巾状的, 这里指头角峥嵘的

⑨ duly ['dju:li] *adv.* at the right time 适时地

⑩ thence [ðens] from there 从此

⑪ monopolize [mə'nɒpəlaɪz] *vt.* control the whole of, get or keep a monopoly of, so that others cannot share 专卖, 垄断

⑫ strand [strænd] *v.* run aground 搁浅

⑬ aboriginal [æbə'rɪdʒənəl] *adj.* belonging to a region from earliest times 原始的, 土著的