

**CLASSICS TO GO**



# **LYRICAL BALLADS**

**WITH A FEW OTHER POEMS  
BY COLERIDGE AND WORDSWORTH**

**WILLIAM WORDSWORTH  
AND SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE**

# **Lyrical Ballads**

**With a Few Other Poems**

**By Coleridge and Wordsworth**

**William Wordsworth**

**And Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

# **THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER, IN SEVEN PARTS.**

## **ARGUMENT.**

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by Storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancient Marinere came back to his own Country.

### **I.**

It is an ancient Marinere,  
And he stoppeth one of three:  
"By thy long grey beard and thy glittering eye  
"Now wherefore stoppest me?

"The Bridegroom's doors are open'd wide  
"And I am next of kin;  
"The Guests are met, the Feast is set,—  
"May'st hear the merry din.—

But still he holds the wedding-guest—  
There was a Ship, quoth he—  
"Nay, if thou'st got a laughsome tale,  
"Marinere! come with me."

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
Quoth he, there was a Ship—

"Now get thee hence, thou grey-beard Loon!  
"Or my Staff shall make thee skip."

He holds him with his glittering eye—  
The wedding guest stood still  
And listens like a three year's child;  
The Marinere hath his will.

The wedding-guest sate on a stone,  
He cannot chuse but hear:  
And thus spake on that ancye[n]t man,  
The bright-eyed Marinere.

The Ship was cheer'd, the Harbour clear'd—  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the Kirk, below the Hill,  
Below the Light-house 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 pac'd into the Hall,  
Red as a rose is she;  
Nodding their heads before her goes  
The merry Minstralsy.

The wedding-guest he beat his breast,  
Yet he cannot chuse but hear:  
And thus spake on that ancye[n]t Man,

The bright-eyed Marinere.

Listen, Stranger! Storm and Wind,  
A Wind and Tempest strong!  
For days and weeks it play'd us freaks—  
Like Chaff we drove along.

Listen, Stranger! Mist and Snow,  
And it grew wond'rous cauld:  
And Ice mast-high came floating by  
As green as Emerald.

And thro' the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen;  
Ne shapes of men ne beasts we ken—  
The Ice was all between.

The Ice was here, the Ice was there,  
The Ice was all around:  
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd—  
Like noises of a swound.

At length did cross an Albatross,  
Thorough the Fog it came;  
And an it were a Christian Soul,  
We hail'd it in God's name.

The Mariners gave it biscuit-worms,  
And round and round it flew:  
The Ice did split with a Thunder-fit;  
The Helmsman steer'd us thro'.

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

In mist or cloud on mast or shroud  
It perch'd for vespers nine,  
Whiles all the night thro' fog-smoke white  
Glimmer'd the white moon-shine.

"God save thee, ancyent Marinere!  
"From the fiends that plague thee thus—  
"Why look'st thou so?"—with my cross bow  
I shot the Albatross.

## II.

The Sun came up upon the right,  
Out of the Sea came he;  
And broad as a weft upon the left  
Went down into the Sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,  
But no sweet Bird did follow  
Ne any day for food or play  
Came to the Marinere's hollo!

And I had done an hellish thing  
And it would work 'em woe:  
For all averr'd, I had kill'd the Bird  
That made the Breeze to blow.

Ne dim ne red, like God's own head,  
The glorious Sun uprist:  
Then all averr'd, I had kill'd the Bird  
That brought the fog and mist.  
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay  
That bring the fog and mist.

The breezes blew, the white foam flew,

The furrow follow'd free:  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent Sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the Sails dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the Sea.

All in a hot and copper sky  
The bloody sun at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, ne breath ne motion,  
As idle as a painted Ship  
Upon a painted Ocean.

Water, water, every where  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, every where,  
Ne any drop to drink.

The very deeps did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy Sea.

About, about, in reel and rout  
The Death-fires danc'd at night;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green and blue and white.

And some in dreams assured were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so:

Nine fathom deep he had follow'd us  
From the Land of Mist and Snow.

And every tongue thro' utter drouth  
Was wither'd at the root;  
We could not speak no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.

Ah wel-a-day! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young;  
Instead of the Cross the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.

### III.

I saw a something in the Sky  
No bigger than my fist;  
At first it seem'd a little speck  
And then it seem'd a mist:  
It mov'd and mov'd, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!  
And still it ner'd and ner'd;  
And, an it dodg'd a water-sprite,  
It plung'd and tack'd and veer'd.

With throat unslack'd, with black lips bak'd  
Ne could we laugh, ne wail:  
Then while thro' drouth all dumb they stood  
I bit my arm and suck'd the blood  
And cry'd, A sail! a sail!

With throat unslack'd, with black lips bak'd  
Agape they hear'd me call:  
Gramercy! they for joy did grin



And all at once their breath drew in  
As they were drinking all.

She doth not tack from side to side—  
Hither to work us weal  
Withouten wind, withouten tide  
She steddies with upright keel.

The western wave was all a flame,  
The day was well nigh done!  
Almost upon the western wave  
Rested the broad bright Sun;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And strait the Sun was fleck'd with bars  
(Heaven's mother send us grace)  
As if thro' a dungeon grate he peer'd  
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
How fast she neres and neres!  
Are those *her* Sails that glance in the Sun  
Like restless gossameres?

Are these *her* naked ribs, which fleck'd  
The sun that did behind them peer?  
And are these two all, all the crew,  
That woman and her fleshless Pheere?

*His* bones were black with many a crack,  
All black and bare, I ween;  
Jet-black and bare, save where with rust  
Of mouldy damp and charnel crust  
They're patch'd with purple and green.

*Her* lips are red, *her* looks are free,  
    *Her* locks are yellow as gold:  
Her skin is as white as leprosy,  
And she is far liker Death than he;  
    Her flesh makes the still air cold.

The naked Hulk alongside came  
    And the Twain were playing dice;  
"The Game is done! I've won, I've won!"  
    Quoth she, and whistled thrice.

A gust of wind sterte up behind  
    And whistled thro' his bones;  
Thro' the holes of his eyes and the hole of his mouth  
    Half-whistles and half-groans.

With never a whisper in the Sea  
    Off darts the Spectre-ship;  
While clombe above the Eastern bar  
The horned Moon, with one bright Star  
    Almost atween the tips.

One after one by the horned Moon  
    (Listen, O Stranger! to me)  
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang  
    And curs'd me with his ee.

Four times fifty living men,  
    With never a sigh or groan,  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump  
    They dropp'd down one by one.

Their souls did from their bodies fly,—  
    They fled to bliss or woe;  
And every soul it pass'd me by,  
    Like the whiz of my Cross-bow.

## IV.

"I fear thee, ancyent Marinere!  
"I fear thy skinny hand;  
"And thou art long and lank and brown  
"As is the ribb'd Sea-sand.

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye  
"And thy skinny hand so brown"—  
Fear not, fear not, thou wedding guest!  
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all all alone  
Alone on the wide wide Sea;  
And Christ would take no pity on  
My soul in agony.

The many men so beautiful,  
And they all dead did lie!  
And a million million slimy things  
Liv'd on—and so did I.

I look'd upon the rotting Sea,  
And drew my eyes away;  
I look'd upon the eldritch deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

I look'd to Heaven, and try'd to pray;  
But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
A wicked whisper came and made  
My heart as dry as dust.

I clos'd my lids and kept them close,  
Till the balls like pulses beat;  
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky