

## Chapter 1

# A New Friend

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago, finding myself without money, I decided to embark on a whaling ship. I had already worked as a merchant seaman, but hunting whales filled me with curiosity.

I wanted to set sail from Nantucket, the island from where the first native whaling boats sailed, and thus I went to the port of New Bedford. I arrived at night and the last boat to Nantucket had already gone, and so I started to look for lodgings.

I went into a hostel which looked cheap. Inside there were some young sailors. The innkeeper told me that it was full, but said I might share a bed with a harpooner. This was better than walking the streets all night, and I accepted.

It was already midnight and the harpooner had not yet appeared. The innkeeper told me he might not come at all. I was a long time getting to sleep, and then suddenly, I was awakened by the sound of footsteps. It was him!

The harpooner came in with a candle in his hand. I was startled to see his face was dark in colour and tattooed. He was bald but had a tuft of hair on his forehead. He undressed and I saw that his whole body was covered in tattoos.

He took out a little black statue and began to recite a prayer. Then he took out a



tomahawk which was also a pipe, and began to smoke.

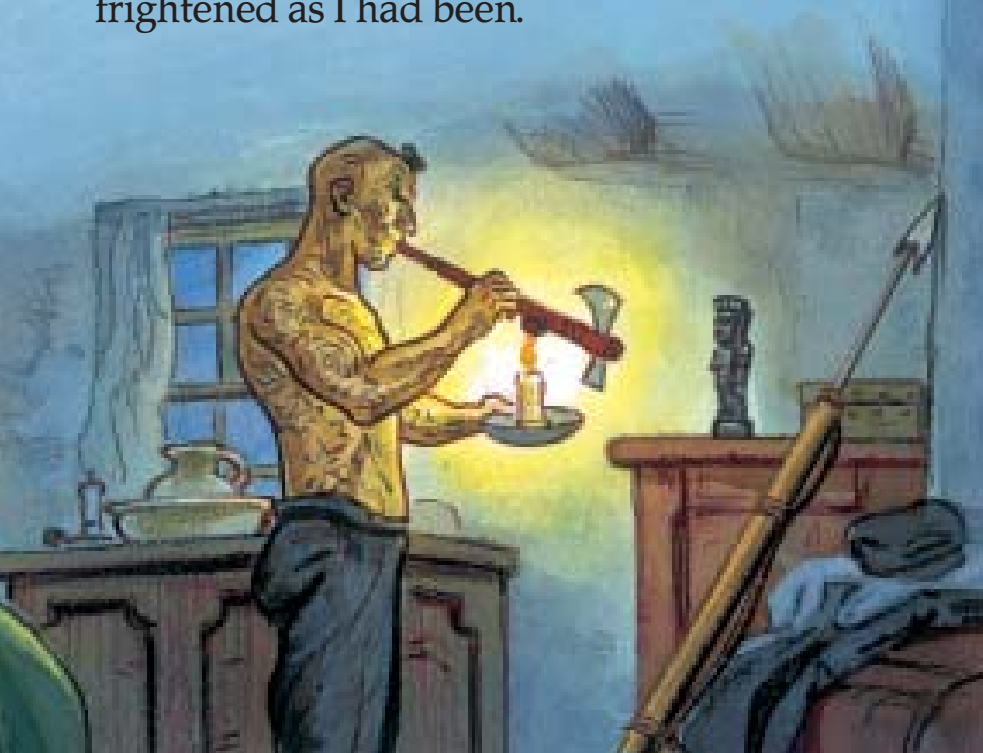
He got into the bed with it, and I yelled out. „Who devil you? If you not speak, I kill you“, he threatened to me.

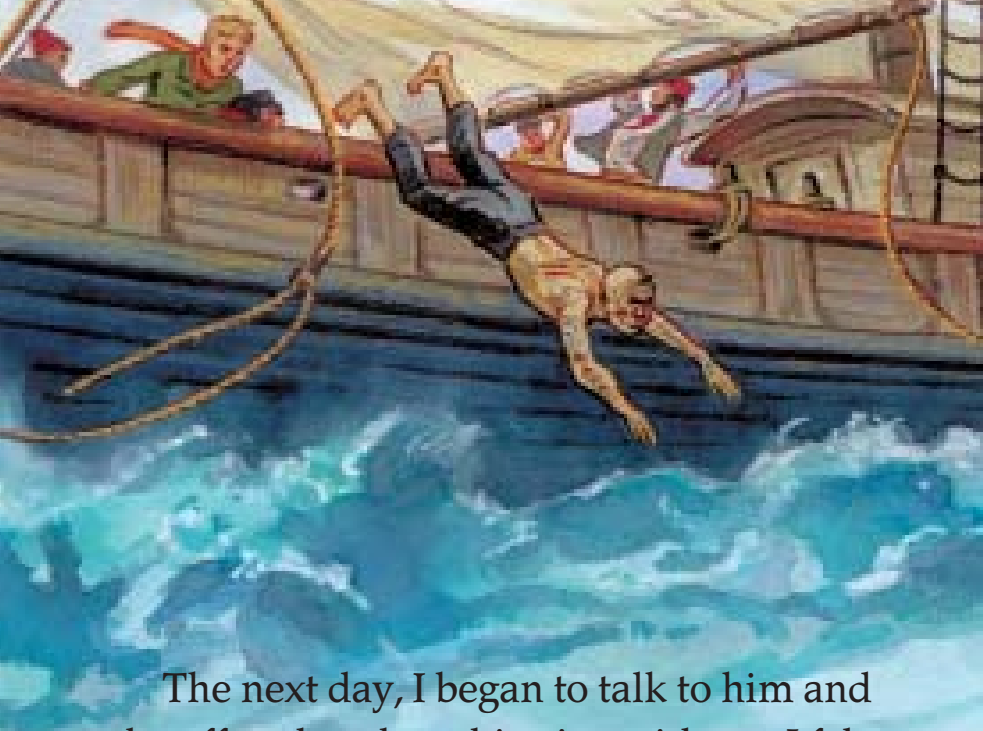
„Innkeeper, help!“ I shouted in alarm.

Fortunately the innkeeper came and explained that we were to share the bed.

„Queequeg won't do anything to you,“ he said.

The native was then quite friendly. This made me understand that he had been as frightened as I had been.





The next day, I began to talk to him and he offered to share his pipe with me. I felt that, although we came from a different culture, we could understand each other, and we became friends. He even wanted to go on the same whaling ship with me so we could stay together.

During the crossing to Nantucket, some of the passengers laughed at my friend for being a native. Queequeg grabbed one of them and threw him in the air. The ferry captain reprimanded him:



„What are you doing? Did you want to kill him?“

„Kill? Him small fish. I only kill whales,“ Queequeg replied.

At that moment a strong gust of wind removed one of the masts and it struck the passenger who had been laughing and knocked him into the sea. Before anyone could do anything, Queequeg jumped into the water and saved him. Everybody was surprised at his bravery.