

THE WHITE WHALE



Anthony Etherin

**“All my means are sane,
my motive and my object mad.”
--Melville, Moby-Dick**

ONE

Oh, cetology! Oh, Ahab!
But, snow or speed,
damp 'umiaq'--
aim up, raw sloop, too big....

I rage,
bet a mere we wed it,
a saner alias, in acts.

Oh, meet!
See no keel stars die,
render algae, some madness I hide.

Item albino....
Sane, rain, as deeds,
an 'I'.
Arena: "Son, I blame..."
Tied, I hiss, end a memo.

Sea-glared nereids rat,
sleek one
esteem.
Host, can I sail?

Arenas? A tide, we were....

Mate, beg a rig!
I boot.
Pools warp.
Umiaq, aim up!

Mad deeps row on, Stubb.
"Ah, ahoy!"
Go, lot.... Echo.

TWO

By moon, abet it, whale.
Tamed, blue trim, reside in us--
in one mad, to once land....

Pagan, operose harpooner,
Ishmael, Ahab,
grim swathes crew at sea, reside.

As I dam, see a pew.

I, as red as a time, go look:
Bone ties id, so a leg.
Queequeg, also, I destine, book.

"Lo! Go." Met is a dare, a swipe.
Ease amid, as desire eats.
Wares cheat.
"Swim!" Grab a helm,
a shrine.

O, or, phase--rope no gap
and lace onto
a demon, in us.

In desire,
I'm true, bled--
a metal, white tab on Moby....

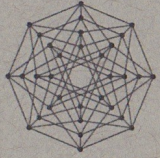
POSTSCRIPT

The two poems presented here are palindromes. The poem on the left is palindromic by letter, while the poem on the right is palindromic by pairs of letters.

These two palindromes are perfect anagrams of each other.

With both its content and the extent of its constraint inspired by Ahab's obsession, *The White Whale* is, to date, the most intricate work of constrained poetry I have composed.

---A.E., March 2017



Penteract Press, March 2017
Penteractpress.com
Penteractpress.wordpress.com

Cover linocut by Clara Daneri

Anthony Etherin is a UK-based writer of experimental poetry and music. His poems have appeared online in The Account and Nagari magazines, among others, and he has had leaflets or chapbooks published by No Press, Spacecraft Press, and The Blasted Tree. Find him on twitter, @Anthony_Etherin, and via anthonyetherin.wordpress.com.