

## “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”

## Lyrics by Iron Maiden

Hear *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*  
See his eye as he stops one of three  
Mesmerises one of the wedding guest  
Stay here & listen to the nightmares of  
the sea.

And the music plays on as the bride  
passes by. Caught by his spell & the  
mariner tells his tale.

Driven south to the land of the snow &  
ice, To a place where nobody's been.  
Through the snow fog flies an albatross  
Hailed in God's name, hoping good luck it  
brings.

And the ship sails on, back to the north  
Through the fog & ice & the albatross  
follows on.

The mariner kills the bird of good omen  
His shipmates cry against what he's done  
But when the fog clears, they justify him  
And make themselves a part of the crime.

Sailing on & on & North across the sea  
Sailing on & on & North 'til all is calm.

The Albatross begins with its vengeance  
A terrible curse on a thirst has begun  
His shipmates blame bad luck on the  
mariner.  
About his neck the dead bird is hung.

And the curse goes on & on at sea  
And the thirst goes on & on for them &  
me.

*“Day after day, day after day, we struck  
nor breath nor motion, As idle as a  
painted ship upon a painted ocean.*

*Water, water everywhere, all the boards  
did shrink. Water, water everywhere,  
nor any drop to drink.”*

There calls the Mariner,  
There comes a ship over the line  
But how can she sail with no wind  
In her sails & no tide?

See . . . onward she comes  
Onward she nears, out of the sun  
See...she has no crew  
She has no life, wait, but there's two.

Death & she Life-in-Death  
They throw their dice for the crew  
She wins the Mariner & he belongs to her  
now.

Then...crew one by one,  
They drop down dead, two hundred men,  
She...she, Life-in-Death, she lets him live,  
Her chosen one.

*“...One after one by the star dogged  
moon, too quick for groan or sigh, each  
turned his face with a ghastly pang and  
cursed me with his eye.*

*Four times fifty men (and I hear nor sigh  
nor groan), with heavy thump, a lifeless  
lump, they dropped down one by one...”*

The curse it lives on in their eyes.  
The mariner he wished he'd die  
Along with the sea creatures but they live  
on, so did he.

And by the light of the moon,  
He prays for their beauty not doom.  
With heart he blesses them, God's  
creatures all of them too.

Then the spell starts to break,  
The albatross falls from his neck.  
Sinks down like lead into the sea.  
Then down it falls comes the rain.

Hear the groans of the long dead  
seamen, See them stir & they start to  
rise. Bodies lifted by good spirits.  
None of them speak & they're lifeless in  
their eyes.

And revenge is still sought, penance  
starts again, Cast into a trance & the  
nightmare carries on.

Now the curse is finally lifted,  
And the Mariner sights his home.  
Spirits go from the long dead bodies.  
Form their own light & the Mariner's left  
alone.

And then a boat came sailing towards  
him. It was a joy he could not believe:  
The pilot's boat, his son & the hermit.  
Penance of life will fall onto Him.

And the ship sinks like lead into the sea.  
And the hermit shrives the Mariner of  
his sins.

The Mariner's bound to tell of his story,  
To tell his tale wherever he goes.  
To teach God's word by his own example,  
That we must love all things that God  
made.

And the wedding guest's a sad & wiser  
man. And the tale goes on and on and  
on and on...