

NAXOS
AudioBooks

Herman Melville
Moby Dick

Read by **Bill Bailey**

**CLASSIC
FICTION**



NA402612D

1	Call me Ishmael	5:58
2	The Spouter Inn	6:20
3	Queequeg	6:52
4	Breakfast among whalers	2:40
5	Nantucket	6:19
6	The Pequod	8:43
7	The Prophet	8:01
8	Knights and Squires	6:16
9	Ahab	6:16
10	The Quarter Deck	10:40
11	Moby Dick	7:45
12	Hark!	2:14
13	The first lowering	6:22
14	The chase	8:14
15	The Spirit-Spout	7:13
16	Squid	7:03
17	Sperm whale	9:09
18	Stubb's Supper	5:03
19	Cutting in	5:38
20	Stubb & Flask kill a Right Whale	7:05
21	The China seas	2:49
22	Piratical Malays	6:06

23	The Grand Armada	6:36
24	A charmed existence	8:57
25	The Castaway	6:10
26	The Tryworks	4:59
27	Wrapped in darkness	8:03
28	Queequeg in his Coffin	7:13
29	The Forge	8:30
30	The Candles	7:06
31	The Needle	8:31
32	The Rachel	7:09
33	Ahab's Soliloquy	10:11
34	The sighting	6:53
35	The Chase: First Day	5:25
36	The power of Moby Dick	5:36
37	The Chase: Second Day	7:11
38	The boiling maelstrom	6:56
39	The Chase:Third Day	5:48
40	Fedallah The Parsee	8:32
41	Swift vengeance	5:12
42	Epilogue	2:21

Total time: 4:43:39

Herman Melville

Moby Dick

At the age of twenty, dissatisfied with his prospects as a school teacher, Herman Melville joined a whaling ship as a harpooner bound for the Pacific whaling grounds. He was away for four years and experienced mutiny, being left ashore on Polynesian islands to live amongst cannibals, as well as service on other vessels. Many of these real-life perilous experiences became the material for his masterpiece **Moby Dick**.

In **Moby Dick** the outcast Ishmael, like Melville himself, enlists on a whaling voyage and finds himself on a ship rapidly dominated by the brooding presence of Ahab who seeks nothing but the destruction of the mythical white whale of the Southern fishing grounds. Through Ishmael's eyes, we watch the wild and reckless crew gradually subdued and finally almost hypnotized by Ahab's towering sense of purpose and implacable revenge.

Herman Melville was born in 1819 in New York into a family of Dutch descent. Debt haunted his parents and as a young man Melville took to sea. After his return,

he wrote a series of successful 'sea romances' based on his experiences in the Pacific. **Moby Dick** was the most ambitious. It was long, digressive and crammed with whaling knowledge and whale-fishery lore but it was not an immediate success.

Moby Dick explored 'the power of Blackness', the darker side of human nature and fate, primarily through the figure of Ahab – a marked man. In an age of optimism, such vistas proved unsettling for readers. Just as the novel form was becoming characterized by psychological realism, naturalism and coherence of plot, Melville produced a book with few concessions to these expectations. It is only in the twentieth century that the book has become acknowledged for its unique qualities. **Moby Dick**, perhaps, anticipates some of the concerns of many modern writers: fragmented plot, a malign or indifferent universe, experimentation with form.

The two major figures are Ishmael and Ahab. Both are outcasts – Ishmael is tired of a petty city life, and Ahab is alienated by his

embittered need for vengeance. Both confront the 'monsters of the deep' in the oceans and in themselves: Ishmael watches and speculates; Ahab acts on his beliefs. These two perspectives provide an ever-shifting focus and an immense richness.

After **Moby Dick**, which did much to undermine his literary reputation at the time, Melville once again broached new ground: he published **Pierre**, a novel exploring incest which effectively ended his career as a writer. For the remainder of his life, this man, who had hunted whales

through many of the dangers described in **Moby Dick**, worked as an inspector for the New York customs and died largely forgotten in 1891. In 1924, **Billy Budd**, a manuscript which was discovered in his desk after his death, was published, and since then Melville's reputation has steadily increased so that he is now widely regarded as one of the giants of American literature.

Notes by Sonia Davenport

Cover picture: *The Chase of the Bow-Headed Whale*, Clifford W. Ashley.
Courtesy of the Mary Evans Picture Library.

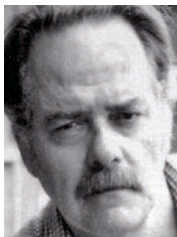
**The music on this recording taken from
the NAXOS and MARCO POLO catalogues**

RESPIGHI SINFONIA DRAMMATICA Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra, Daniel Nazareth	8.220418
BRAHMS HAYDN VARIATIONS BRT Philharmonic Orchestra, Brussels, Alexander Rahbari	8.550278
BRAHMS Tragic Overture BRT Philharmonic Orchestra, Brussels, Alexander Rahbari	8.550281
BALAKIREV KING LEAR OVERTURE ETC. Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Choo Hoey	8.220324
DVOŘÁK IN NATURE'S REALM BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Stephen Gunzenhauser	8.550600

Herman Melville Moby Dick

Read by **Bill Bailey**

The Nantucket whaling ship, the Pequod, spirals the globe in search of Moby Dick, the mythical white whale of the Southern Oceans. Driven on by the obsessive revenge of Captain Ahab, the crew and the outcast Ishmael find themselves caught up in a demonic pursuit which leads inexorably to an apocalyptic climax.



Bill Bailey was born and raised in North Carolina, USA, and moved to the UK more than 20 years ago. He has appeared many times in London's West End and with the National Theatre. UK TV credits include such classic English series as *Poirot*, *Jeeves and Wooster*, *Drop the Dead Donkey*, *Yes Prime Minister*, and as a regular in the BBC 2 series *Tygo Road*. His feature films, both in the UK and Hollywood, include *Superman II*, *Yanks*, *The Omen*, *Ishtar*, *Reds* and *Haunted Honeymoon*.

*"The novel's excitement is stoked by music.
Bill Bailey's reading has a vigorous 'thar she blows' quality."*

THE SCOTSMAN

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Total time
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