

to move and the sailors are tortured by heat, thirst and steeplessness, while the only moving things in the hideous scene are the slimy creatures on the slimy sea and the death-fires which dance at night. The immediate results of crew are portrayed in the image of a universe dying of thirst and haunted by menacing phantoms.

The Mariner becomes conscious of his guilt and his isolation. He realises the consequences of his action to see the phantomship which decides his doom:

193 The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,  
194 Who thickens man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-in-Death dice for the ship's crew; Death wins all the crew except the Mariner who is won by Life-in-Death. Other sailors, therefore, die but the Mariner suffers worse misery

and misfortune for he cannot die and must lead life-in-death. The condition of the Mariner is similar to that of the wastelander who was neither living nor dead. The Mariner is left alone and robbed of familiar ties. He is cut off not merely from human intercourse but from the consoling friendship of nature which mocks him with majestic detachment. He tries to pray but a wicked whisper makes his heart as dry as dust. Similarly, in Graham Green's 'The Heart' of the Matter Scobie's soul is not at rest because he is always conscious of his sin and unable to expiate it. He tries to pray but the 'Hail Mary' evades his memory. One may recall Mr Kurtz's dying vision of his earthly existence in Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'. He cries twice: "The horror

the horror!" Macbeth also sees 'Horrible sight! Isolated from god and his creations, he suffers a kind of spiritual death. The Mariner's regeneration begins when he blesses the water snakes unaware and his heart is in harmony with the universal law of love. It is only then that the supernatural forces work for his redemption through this angelic infancy;

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And I blessed them unaware:

286

Sure my kind saint took pity on me,

287

And I blessed them unaware.

The use of possessive 'my' shows the Mariner's great attachment to the saint and spiritual birth in him. The Mariner's growing awareness of this guilt is indicated by the repetition of 'unaware'. The effect is to make his act of blessing utterly innocent and spontaneous.

It comes straight from the heart.  
It is, in fact, his better self  
or good angel hitherto subdued.  
Blessing is as mysterious in  
its origin as his act of  
shooting the Albatross. The theology  
says that it is an 'act of  
grace', apparently independent  
of the conscious human will,  
yet in accord with the divine.  
In 'The Shaking of the Foundations'  
Paul Tillich says that sin is  
separation or death whereas  
grace is "the reunion of life  
with life, the reconciliation of  
the self with itself; grace is  
the acceptance of that which  
is rejected . . ." Coleridge also  
writes: "He blesseth them in his  
heart, the spell begins to break."  
The Albatross drops from the  
Mariners' recognition of the kinship  
with natural creatures."