

T70

Samuel Taylor  
Coleridge

## The ship hath been suddenly becalmed

**D**own dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea!

- 5 All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

- Day after day, day after day,  
10 We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

*[And the Albatross begins to be avenged.]*

- Water, water, every where,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
15 Water, water, every where,  
Nor any drop to drink.

- The very deep did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
20 Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green, and blue and white.

*[A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.]*

- 25 And some in dreams assuréd were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;  
Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
From the land of mist and snow.

30 And every tongue, through utter drought,  
Was withered at the root;  
We could not speak, no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.

*[The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.]*

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young!  
35 Instead of the cross, the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.