

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 'There was a ship,' quoth he.
 'Hold off! unhand me, greybeard loon!
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
 And listens like a three years' child:
 The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
 He cannot choose but hear;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour clear
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the light-house top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

The Sun came up upon the left,
 Out of the sea came he!
 And he shone bright, and on the right
 Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
 Till over the mast at noon—
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
 For he heard the loud bassoon.