

I Consider Jonah's Whale

Paris Anderson

You must have been lonely,
slowly swimming
in that vast darkness,
waiting
for your divine purpose
to be fulfilled.
Your mouth so large,
and body bulky.
You must have felt awkward
among the swift and sleek.
Other whales
probably shunned you
and wouldn't play with you.
Your life was only misery.

And that vile-tasting man
you ate
and couldn't digest.
Your bowels wouldn't move
for three days and nights.
That cruel man,
doing such evil
to an intelligent
and gentle creature.
He made you sick,
and finally you threw up,
casting him upon the shore.

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Then, you swam back,
into that cold darkness,
your purpose fulfilled.
But later,
you must have wondered,
with indignation,
if the lesson taught
would have been taught
more effectively
if the nasty man
had been born
with your gaping mouth
and had been enticed
to swallow you.