

28 OCT. 1844 A.D.

TO THE ESTEEMED MISTER JOSEPH COFFIN,

I AM DICTATING THIS LETTER TO MY STALWART ASSISTANT CHARLES, WHO SHALL DELIVER IT TO YOUR LODGINGS WITH THE GOOD WIDOW BRODY. I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE SHIPPING OUT ON THE QUIDDITY THIS ALL SOULS DAY. A PORTENTOUS AND ILL-STARRED DATE TO RAISE SAIL, AS OUR LORD WAS CRUCIFIED ON A FRIDAY, AND THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER SHOULD HONOR THOSE WHO PERISHED AT SEA. BUT THERE IT IS, AND THAT SPEAKS TO THE POINT OF IT.

IT IS MY CUSTOM TO DELIVER A SERMON BEFORE OUR WHALING SHIPS SET SAIL, AND I SHALL MOUNT MY PULPIT THE EVENING OF ALL HALLOWS EVE AT PROMPTLY HALF PAST FOUR.

I DO NOT EXPECT YOUR MASTER JEREMIAH TO BE PRESENT; HE IS A PROUD NEBUCHADNEZZAR OF A MAN, AND SCRIPTURE TELLS US THAT "PRIDE GOETH BEFORE DESTRUCTION, AND AN HAUGHTY SPIRIT BEFORE A FALL." ~~THAT'S PROVERBS 16:18 CHARLIE.~~ NOR WILL MATE PYNCHON BE PRESENT, A PROFESSED FREE THINKER WHO MOCKS THE VERY NOURISHMENT HIS SAILORS CRAVE. AND WHILST MR WHIPPLE IS NO STRANGER TO MY FLOCK, HE ATTENDS FROM FEAR OF THE WOLF, NOT FROM LOVE OF THE SHEPHERD OR TENDERNESS FOR THE LAMB.

YOU SEE MY DRIFT. I HAVE BEEN INFORMED YOU ARE A GODFEARING MAN OF THE QUAKER FAITH. I HAVE KNOWN MANY QUAKERS. I FIND THEM TO BE FINE, UPSTANDING FOLK, AND MY HUMBLE CHAPEL PROFESSES NO DENOMINATION. WE ARE ALL FELLOW SHIPMATES; THE WORLD IS OUR VESSEL, AND GOD IS OUR CAPTAIN. ROMAN CATHOLIC AND QUAKER, CONGREGATIONALIST AND PRESBYTERIAN, CHRISTIANS AND SINNERS ALL.

CONSIDER THIS A PERSONAL INVITATION. ASK ANY GOOD HEARTED SAILOR, AND HE WILL POINT THE WAY TO THE KINGSPOUT MARINERS BETHEL ON FOSTER STREET. EVEN AS THE GOOD LORD HAS SEEN FIT TO TAKE MY SIGHT, I SHALL BE GLADDENED BY YOUR PRESENCE.

GOD WATCH OVER US ALL