***Moby Dick***

***Chapter 38 – Dusk***

***Summary:***

* This chapter is Starbuck’s soliloquy.
* Starbuck senses that, even though his soul is rebelling against Ahab’s plan for revenge, he’s going to continue supporting and helping Ahab as first mate.
* He hopes that they won’t be able to find the whale in the vast ocean. Maybe then Ahab’s blasphemous vengeance won’t be able to happen.
* When he hears the men partying down below, Starbuck is alarmed and disgusted by the "heathen crew" accompanying him on this voyage (38.2).
* He feels horrified by life and hopes he can fight against the evil things he senses.

***Synopsis:***

“Dusk” is Starbuck’s monologue. Though he fears that all will turn out ill, he feels inextricably bound to Ahab, compelled to help him to “his impious end.” When he hears the revelry coming from the crew’s forecastle, he laments the whole doomed voyage and the “latent horror” in life.

***Critical Study:***

Starbuck leans against the mainmast. This chapter is told from the perspective of Starbuck, who says that his soul is more than matched and is over-manned by a madman. Starbuck thinks that he will see Ahab's impious end, but he feels that he must help him to it. Starbuck nevertheless retains some sense of hope.

Through the shift of perspective during this chapter, Melville develops yet another internal character conflict, this time within Starbuck, whom Melville further establishes as the character most likely to oppose Ahab over his quest against Moby Dick. However, while foreshadowing a conflict between Starbuck and Ahab, Melville also makes the important note that whatever opposition Starbuck voices will be significant, for Starbuck has great reservations about opposing Ahab, whom he both fears and pities.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

[Starbuck](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/moby-dick/characters/starbuck) has his own internal monologue, in which he says to himself that [Ahab](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/moby-dick/characters/ahab) is a madman, that nothing good can come of his obsession with [Moby](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/moby-dick/characters/moby-dick) [Dick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/moby-dick/characters/moby-dick), and that the crew now has come around to Ahab’s cause and is acting mad as well. Starbuck wonders if the crew will be able to calm itself enough to go on watch tonight.

***Analysis Part 1:***

This will not be the first time that Starbuck grumbles to himself about Ahab’s madness. The conflict between the pragmatic, practical Starbuck and the sultan-like, mysterious, fate- and pride-driven Ahab begins to take shape more fully.