**The Ballad of Just Desserts**

waves broke over the bow

smashing men against the rails

waves as big to us as if we were mere surfers

on a blue Hawaiian sea

the captain’s voice cut through the watery din

we couldn’t quite tell what he was saying

but we were well-rehearsed,

played our parts with care and control

the harpoon was readied

i took my station on the platform

and sighted down the barrel

nothing there yet

i turned to see the captain

join me on the small deck

he wouldn’t have missed this

for the world, or even for Newfoundland

without warning

the huge bulk hove into view

“Great gouts of snot!” yelled the captain,

“ready the harpoon!”

my hands were ready

as the target slid into my sights

i pressed the trigger

the harpoon flew true to its mark

the captain’s eyes were wide

for this, he had waited half a lifetime

searching, hunting

abandoning all in his obsession

the wind struck us again

more fiercely than ever

first she rolled left, then right

then righted, and we drew breath

the line was retracted

drawing the great bulk towards us

the yawning mouth of the sea door

opened to swallow it

the prey struggled

seemed to sense its approaching doom

pulled tight the line

and finally snapped it

the captain was berserk with rage

“Flounders of hell,” he shouted

“After it!”

we made steam and pursued

but it was not to be

the object of his desire

disappeared from sight

the captain’s rage was awesome to behold

later we were sunk by a bunch of hippies in a concrete-hulled boat

write your own epic if you don’t like it.