

Blood Metaphor



Captain Ahab has been dismembered by the great white whale Moby Dick, and a desire for vengeance eventually begins to consume him. This passage uses an important metaphor to express complex interrelationships between the physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects of being human.

It is not probable that this monomania in him took its instant rise at the precise time of his bodily dismemberment. Then, in darting at the monster, knife in hand, he had but given loose to a sudden, passionate, corporal animosity; and when he received the stroke that tore him, he probably but felt the agonizing bodily laceration, but nothing more. Yet, when by this collision forced to turn towards home, and for long months of days and weeks, Ahab and anguish lay stretched together in one hammock, rounding in mid-winter that dreary, howling Patagonian Cape; then it was, that **his torn body and gashed soul bled into one another; and so interfusing, made him mad.**

Moby Dick (1851) by Herman Melville (1819-1891)

