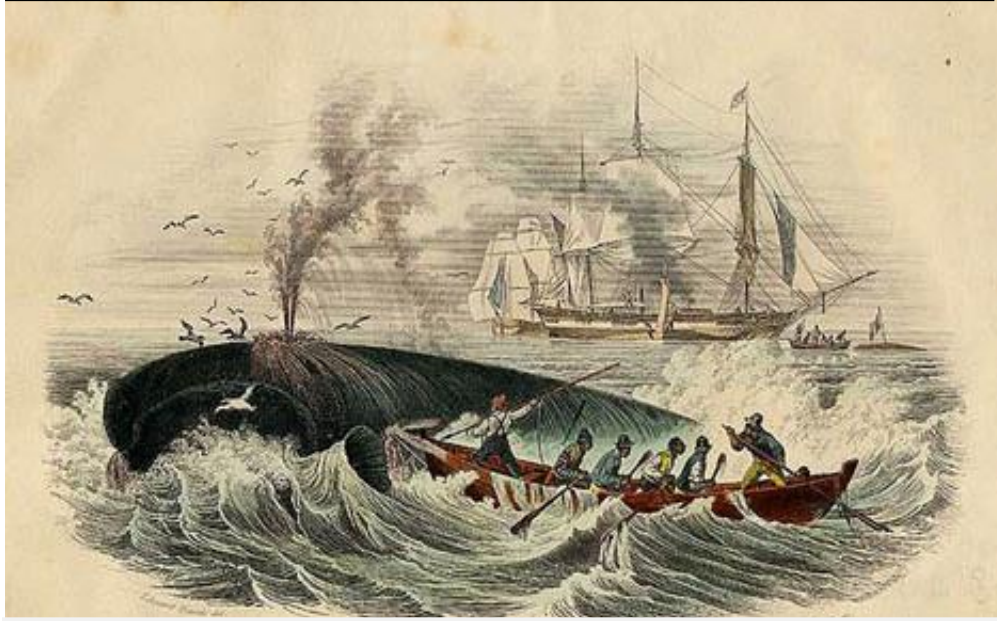


AS THE WORLD WARMS . . .



. . . A WORD ABOUT WHALING

In *Moby Dick*, Melville used the whale line to remind us our animal fate, our dependence on other living things for all our needs. The line is attached to the harpoon on one end, carefully coiled in a large tub at the other end, and in between laced through sailors and oars as to make them “seem as Indian jugglers, with the deadliest snakes sportively festooning their limbs.” The line ties the men to the whale, all caught in the deadly consequences of life. As the harpoon strikes and the whale takes the men off on a Nantucket sleighride, the “least tangle or kink in the coiling would, in running out, infallibly take somebody’s arm, leg, or entire body off.”



Such is the physical dependence, the plunder and heroics, which lies beneath our deceptively mild lives in an advanced technological society. Somewhere, someone is still doing the hard and disagreeable tasks that make our lives so comfortable. Yet our ease is deceptive. What “more to say,” Melville concluded. “All men are enveloped in whale lines. All are born with halters round their necks, but it is only when caught in the swift, sudden turn of death, that mortals realize the silent subtle, ever-present perils of life.”