

WILD KATE by Karen Hartman

<https://www.playscripts.com/play/2343>

Inspired by Melville's Moby Dick and the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill into the Gulf of Mexico, Wild Kate takes place on a high school semester at sea. During a storm, after the mad captain Kate has changed the boat's course into the Gulf, timid participant Piper speaks.

PIPER

The nature of Moby Dick. By Piper, for credit in language arts.

What they tell you the book is about, it's *not* about. This is the only way a book so massively colossal could ever be considered boring by my peers.

(The boat hits a wave and rocks. All steady themselves)

I Wikied it too, last year in AP English Lit. Because my teacher said it was a story of revenge, and gave all these essay topics about Ahab and the whale. Yet Ahab doesn't show up until more than a hundred pages in, and then more or less just yells, "Hast seen the white whale?" and goes back into his forecandle or whatever. Then there's a monstrous bloody climax. Which rocks.

But I think this is a story of witnessing. Making sense out of violence, not apologizing, just asking for real:

Where are we in the food chain?

What is the meaning of a culture fueled by dirty oil, obtained by barbaric means?

If corpses power our civilization, are we civilized?

I had the chance to think about this at the feet of a person asking the big asks. Captain Kate squints into the sun, and *moves us out*.

Kate says Herman Melville never had an education. He was orphaned at twelve and went to work, got a job on a whaling vessel.

Check this. It's the narrator Ishmael but it might as well be Herm Melville himself:

(Reads)

“And as for me, if, by any possibility, there be any as yet undiscovered prime thing in me; if hereafter I shall do anything that, upon the whole, a man might rather have done than to have left undone; if, at my death, my executors, or more properly my creditors, find any precious manuscript in my desk, then here I prospectively ascribe all the honor and the glory to whaling; for a whale-ship was my Yale College and my Harvard.”

Really gives a person perspective about college applications.

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You are welcome to perform this monologue for free! It would mean a lot to me if you would [buy this play](#), and it's a good idea for your performance too.

You may CUT but you may not CHANGE the words. Please introduce the monologue with title of play and author's name (this is a monologue from Leah's Train by Karen Hartman).

Feel free to send a video link to yourself performing the monologue through the Contact page, and let me know if I may share! Thanks and be well, KH

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