



**I** *THE Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. <sup>14</sup> I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. <sup>15</sup> That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. <sup>16</sup> I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. <sup>17</sup> And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. <sup>18</sup> For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. (Ecclesiastes 1:12-18)*

The below story is one from a selection by James Baldwin for elementary school, but I earnestly believe the reading thereof will not offend the mature mind. It moreover is a true account of the actual event:

### **The White Ship**

King Henry, the Handsome Scholar, had one son, named William, whom he dearly loved. The young man was noble and brave, and every-body hoped that he would someday be the King of England.

One summer Prince William went with his father across the sea to look after their lands in France. They were welcomed with joy by all their people there, and the young prince was so gallant and kind, that he won the love of all who saw him.

But at last the time came for them to go back to England. The king, with his wise men and brave knights, set sail early in the day; but Prince William with his younger friends waited a little while. They had had so joyous a time in France that they were in no great haste to tear themselves away.

Then they went on board of the ship which was waiting to carry them home. It was a beautiful ship with white sails and white masts, and it had been fitted up on purpose for this voyage.

The sea was smooth, the winds were fair, and no one thought of danger. On the ship, every-thing had been arranged to make the trip a pleasant one. There was music and dancing, and everybody was merry and glad.

The sun had gone down before the white-winged vessel was fairly out of the bay. But what of that? The moon was at its full, and it would give light enough; and before the dawn of the morrow, the narrow sea would be crossed. And so the prince, and the young people who were with him, gave themselves up to merriment and feasting and joy.

The earlier hours of the night passed by; and then there was a cry of alarm on deck. A moment after-ward there was a great crash. The ship had struck upon a rock. The water rushed in. She was sinking. Ah, where now were those who had lately been so heart-free and glad?

Every heart was full of fear. No one knew what to do. A small boat was quickly launched, and the prince with a few of his bravest friends leaped into it. They pushed off just as the ship was beginning to settle beneath the waves. Would they be saved?

They had rowed hardly ten yards from the ship, when there was a cry from among those that were left behind.

"Row back!" cried the prince. "It is my little sister. She must be saved!"

The men did not dare to disobey. The boat was again brought along-side of the sinking vessel. The prince stood up, and held out his arms for his sister. At that moment the ship gave a great lurch forward into the waves. One shriek of terror was heard, and then all was still save the sound of the moaning waters.

Ship and boat, prince and princess, and all the gay company that had set sail from France, went down to the bottom together. One man clung to a floating plank, and was saved the next day. He was the only person left alive to tell the sad story.

When King Henry heard of the death of his son his grief was more than he could bear. His heart was broken. He had no more joy in life; and men say that no one ever saw him smile again.

Here is a poem about him that your teacher may read to you, and perhaps, after a while, you may learn it by heart.

### *He Never Smiled Again.*

The bark that held the prince went down,  
The sweeping waves rolled on;  
And what was England's glorious crown  
To him that wept a son?  
He lived, for life may long be borne  
Ere sorrow breaks its chain:  
Why comes not death to those who mourn?  
He never smiled again.

There stood proud forms before his throne,  
The stately and the brave;  
But who could fill the place of one,--  
That one beneath the wave?  
Before him passed the young and fair,  
In pleasure's reckless train;  
But seas dashed o'er his son's bright hair--  
He never smiled again.

He sat where festal bowls went round;  
He heard the minstrel sing;  
He saw the tour-ney's victor crowned  
Amid the knightly ring.  
A murmur of the restless deep  
Was blent with every strain,  
A voice of winds that would not sleep--  
He never smiled again.

Hearts, in that time, closed o'er the trace  
Of vows once fondly poured,  
And strangers took the kins-man's place  
At many a joyous board;  
Graves which true love had bathed with tears  
Were left to heaven's bright rain;  
Fresh hopes were born for other years--  
He never smiled again!

by *Felicia Dorothea Hemans* (1793–1835)