

# Last Great American Whale

Lou Reed

They say he didn't have an enemy  
His was a greatness to behold  
He was the last surviving progeny  
The last one on this side of the world

He measured a half mile from tip to tail  
Silver and black with powerful fins  
They say he could split a mountain in two  
That's how we got the Grand Canyon

Last great American whale  
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Some say they saw him at the Great Lakes  
Some say they saw him off of Florida  
My mother said she saw him in Chinatown  
But you can't always trust your mother

Off the Carolinas the sun shines brightly in the day  
The lighthouse glows ghostly there at night  
The chief of a local tribe had killed a racist mayor's son  
And he'd been on death row since 1958

The mayor's kid was a rowdy pig  
Spit on Indians and lots worse  
The old chief buried a hatchet in his head  
Life compared to death for him seemed worse

The tribal brothers gathered in the lighthouse to sing  
And tried to conjure up a storm or rain  
The harbor parted, the great whale sprang full up  
And caused a huge tidal wave

The wave crushed the jail and freed the chief  
The tribe let out a roar  
The whites were drowned, the browns and reds set free  
But sadly one thing more

Some local yokel member of the NRA  
Kept a bazooka in his living room  
And thinking he had the chief in his sights  
Blew the whale's brains out with a lead harpoon

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Well Americans don't care for much of anything  
Land and water the least  
And animal life is low on the totem pole  
With human life not worth more than infected yeast

Americans don't care too much for beauty  
They'll shit in a river, dump battery acid in a stream

They'll watch dead rats wash up on the beach  
And complain if they can't swim

They say things are done for the majority  
Don't believe half of what you see and none of what you hear  
It's like what my painter friend Donald said to me,  
"Stick a fork in their ass and turn them over, they're done"