

Wings of a Gull

Oh if I had the wings of a gull, me boys
I would spread 'em and fly home
I would leave old Greenland's icy ground
For the right whale here is none
The weather's rough and the winds do blow
There's little comfort here
And I'd sooner be snug in a Deptford pub
A'drinkin' of strong beer

Oh a man must be mad or he's wanting money bad
To venture catching whales
For he may be drowned when a fish turns around
Or his head smashed in with its tail
Though the work seems grand to a a young green hand
And his heart is high when he goes
In a very short burst he'd as soon as hear a curse
As the cry of "there she blows"

All hands on deck now for God's sake
Move briskly if you can
And he stumbles on deck, so dizzy and so sick
For his life he don't give a damn
High overhead the great flukes spread
And the mate gives the whale the iron
And soon the blood in a purple flood
From its spout all comes a'flyin'

These trials we bear for nigh on four years
'Till our flying jib points to home
We're supposed for our toil to get a bonus on the oil
And an equal share of the bone
We go to the agent to settle for the trip
And it's there we have cause to repent
For we've slaved away four years of our lives
And we've earned about three pounds ten

traditional
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