

The Craneman

Poised like an eagle in his aerie
Harpooned by fate or faith or both
He heard the noontime whistle blowing
Cease your labors - take a rest
 For the work is very hard.

Metallic shipyard's strident noises
Drown out a very human oath.
Goliath hulls were casting shadows
While spread-eagled high above the yard.
Men stretching their wearied muscles
Since they know so deep inside them, that
 The work is very hard.

Cranes lifted ribs to shape and form
Another monster for the ocean.
A ship outfitted to bride the tide.
Floodlights glaring in the night sky, indeed
 The work is very hard.

Old metal lunch pails packed with staples
To revive the human brawn
Were devoured with grateful gruntings
By men whose time was almost gone.
 The work is very hard.

The launching presses ever closer
Scheduled for the outgoing tide.
A champagne christening, easing passage
Down the Clydeside, opening wide.
Patriotic utterings by the local bard, proclaiming to all
 The work is very hard.

All the sweat and toil was over
And Britania ruled the waves,
By sending all my bonnie Clydesmen
All too early to their graves.
 For indeed, the work was very hard.