

A Valediction

by John Masefield

*We're bound for blue water where the great winds blow,
It's time to get the tacks aboard, time for us to go;
The crowd's at the capstan and the tune's in the shout,
'A long pull, a strong pull, and warp the hooker out.'*

*The bow-wash is eddying, spreading from the bows,
Aloft and loose the topsails and some one give a rouse;
A salt Atlantic chanty shall be music to the dead,
'A long pull, a strong pull, and the yard to the masthead.'*

*Green and merry run the seas, the wind comes cold,
Salt and strong and pleasant, and worth a mint of gold;
And she's staggering, swooping, as she feels her feet,
'A long pull, a strong pull, and aft the main-sheet.'*

*Shrilly squeal the running sheaves, the weather-gear strains,
Such a clatter of chain-sheets, the devil's in the chains;
Over us the bright stars, under us the drowned,
'A long pull, a strong pull, and we're outward bound.'*

*Yonder, round and ruddy, is the mellow old moon,
The red-funnelled tug has gone, and now, sonny, soon
We'll be clear of the Channel, so watch how you steer,
'Ease her when she pitches, and so-long, my dear.'*

