

A Dog's Life

Words by Cicely Fox-Smith

Oh, a sailor's life is a dog's life, an' that's the truth, says Bill.
A sailor's life is a dog's life, look at it 'ow you will;
You break your back wi' workin', for 'alf a coolie's pay,
A sailor's life's a dog's life, look at it 'ow you may.
A sailor's life's a dog's life, look at it 'ow you may.

There's mates to kick an' 'aze you, an' you dursen't 'it 'em back,
There's cold to freeze your innards, an' there's 'eat as burns you black;
There's junk as tough as green 'eart, an' weevils in yer bread,
An' fistin' frozen canvas, 'till you're wishin' you wuz dead.
An' fistin' frozen canvas, 'till you're wishin' you wuz dead.

But you bet I'm goin' to quit it, next time I jump ashore;
As soon as I strike 'Frisco, you won't see me no more;
I'll set a course sou' westward, to an island as I know,
Where we laid once loadin' copra – might be twenty year ago.
Where we laid once loadin' copra – might be twenty year ago.

I'll lay out on the beach there, where the sun is good an' 'ot,
An' I won't need no more trousis, when I've wore out them I've got;
With a gunny round my middle, an' a soul to call my own,
I wouldn't change my fortune, for the king's upon his throne.
I wouldn't change my fortune, for the king's upon his throne.

But when we'd finished loadin', an' sailin' day came round,
With the pilot boat alongside, an' the mud 'ook off the ground,
An' the tow-boat cast the 'awser off, an' left us with a cheer,
Why, there'd be Bill a-growlin', as he'd done for twenty year.
Aye, there'd be Bill a-growlin', as he'd done for twenty year.

Oh, a sailor's life is a dog's life, an' that's a fact my son;
'Is pay's no more'n a coolie's, an' 'is work is never done;
But you bet I'm goin' to quit it, fust chance as comes my way,
For a sailor's life's a dog's life, look at it 'ow you may.
A sailor's life's a dog's life, look at it 'ow you may.