

The storm

The sea a-round us bost(?) and blustering list ye lands men
all to me mess mates here and brother seamen
sing the dangers of the sea

The image shows a handwritten musical score on three staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody with similar note values and includes a slur over the final two notes. The third staff concludes the piece with a double bar line. The handwriting is clear and legible.

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By comparing the broadside version of this song to the orally transmitted version we have a fine example of how a progression of singers can take a song that was incidentally popularised by G. A. Stevens in 1754 and iron out the flowery phrases leaving a straightforward story without losing any of the action.

Boreas is a classical god of the north wind and is depicted as a bearded deity in the northern latitudes on old charts with wind coming from pursed lips.

The sea around us boist and blustering
List ye landsmen all to me
Messmate here and brother seamen
Sing the dangers of the sea

Mark the boatswain bravely bawling
By your top sails and haulyards stand
Down top gallants quick be hawling
Down your sternsails hand by hand

Whilst over our ship white waves are blustering
We for wives and children moan
Alas from thence there's no returning
Alas from thence there's no retreat

Still the leak is gaining on us
Both chain pumps are choked below
Heaven here have mercy upon us
For only that can save us now

Repeat verse three

Over the lea and this the land boys
Let your guns overboard be thrown
To the pumps come every hand boys
See our mizzen mast is gone

The leak we found it can't pour water
We are eighteen feet or five or more
Up and rig your jury fore mast
She's right she's right she's right for sure

Now once more on joys we are thinking
Since kind heaven has saved our lives
Fill the can let us be drinking
To our sweethearts and our wives

Fill it up about ships wheeling
Fill it up a five brimmer fill
Since the tempest now is over
We will drown it all in wine

THE STORM

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Cease rude Boreas blustering railer
List ye landsman all to me
Messmates hear a brother sailor
Sing the dangers of the sea
From bounding billows first in motion
When the distant whirlwinds rise
To the tempest troubled ocean
Where the seas contend the skys

Hark! the boatswain hoarsely bawling
By topsail sheet and haulyard stand
Down top gallant quick be hauling
Down your stay sails hand boys hand
Now it freshens set the braces
Quick the top sail sheets let go
Luff boys luff don't make wry faces
Up your top sails nimbly clear

Now all you on down beds sporting
Fondly locked in beauty's arms
Fresh enjoyments wanton courting
Free from all but love's alarms
Round ~~my~~ roars the tempest louder
Think what fears our minds enthralls
Harder yet it blows still harder
Now again the boatswain calls

The top sail yards point to the wind boys
See all clear to reef each cause
Let the fore sheet go don't mind boys
Tho the weather should be worse
Fore and aft the spritsail yard get
Reef the mizzen see all clear
Hand up each preventer brace set
Man the foreyards cheer lads cheer

Now the dreadful thunders roaring
Peal on peal contending clash
On our heads fierce rain drops pouring
In our eyes blue lightnings flash
All above us one black sky
Different heads at once surround us
Hark! what means that dreadful cry

The foremast gone crys ev'ry tongue out
O'er the lea twelve feet above deck
A leak beneath the chest tree sprung out
Call all hands to clear the wreck
Quick the landyards cut to pieces
Come my hearts be stout and bold
Plumb the well the leak increases
Four feet waters in the hold

While o'er the ship wild waves are beating
We for wives and children mourn
Alas from hence there's no retreating
Alas from them there's no return
Still the leak is gaining on us
Both chain pumps are choked below
Hev'n have mercy here upon us
For only he can save us now

Over the lea beam is the land boys
Let the guns o'er board be thrown
To the pump come every hand boys
See our mizzen mast is gone
The leak we've found it cannot pour fast
We've lightened her a foot or more
Up the rig a jury foremast
She rights she rights boys near off shore

Now once more on joys we're thinking
Since kind fortune spared our lives
Come the can boys let's be thinking
To our sweethearts and our wives
Fill it up about ship wheel it
Close to the lips a brimmer join
Where's the tempest now! who feels it
None our dangers drow'd in wine