

So Far From the Clyde

Mark Knopfler

They had a last supper
the day of the Beaching
She's a dead ship sailing
- skeleton crew
The galley is empty
the stove pots are cooling
with what's left of the stew Her time is approaching
The captain moves over
The hangman steps in
to do what he's paid for
With the wind down the tide
she goes proud ahead steaming
and he drives her hard into the shore
so far from the Clyde
together we'd ride
we did ride As if to a wave
from her bows to her rudder
bravely she rises
to meet with the land
Under their feet
they all feel her keel shatter
A shallow sea washes their hands Later the captain
shakes hands with the hangman
and climbs slowly down
to the oily wet ground
Goes bowed to the car
that has come here to take him
to the graveyard and back to the town
so far from the Clyde
together we'd ride
we did ride They pull out her cables
and hack off her hatches
Too poor to be wasteful
with pity or time
They swarm on her carcass
with torches and axes
Like a whale on the bloody shoreline Stripped of her pillars
her stays and her stantions
When there's only her bones
on the wet, poison land
steel ropes will drag her with winches and engines
'til there's only a stain on the sand So far from the Clyde

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