

## (Good Afternoon)

But while the clustering crew discussed  
In whispers what they'd heard,  
A loud swelled with a wonder emphasis  
Another, and a third!

"Now, scuttle me!" the skipper quoth;  
"I'll know whence came that sound.  
Jock, down with the helm and bring her to:  
We'll see what can be found."

While yet he spake, with creeping flesh,  
They heard a gruesome yell;  
And over the bow they saw what seemed  
A very fiend from hell.

A fishing dory, waterlogged,  
They dimly could descry,  
And manned by a figure bolt erect,  
With frenzy in his eye.

He waved his arms, he cursed and prayed;  
He gnashed his glittering teeth;  
Nor ghastlier face of a strangled corpse  
Was seen on a gibbet heath.

He gazed and pointed out to sea,  
Then, shuddering, shrieked with fear,  
And gibbered, and grinned, and groaned, and moaned,  
But shed no soothing tear.

Yet what he saw was hid to them  
In such uncertain light;  
But, goblin or ghost, or monster grim,  
He'd gone stark mad with fright.

"A rope—heave him a rope, my lads!"  
It fell within his reach.  
He climbed like a cat the vessel's side,  
And whooped an owlish screech.

Nor voice nor hand could stay his flight:  
When once he'd gained the shrouds,  
He scurried aloft till hid from view  
Among the misty clouds.

And there he perched like a wild baboon,  
And there they heard him groan.  
Now, surely the man's possessed, my lads,  
The devil hath seized his own!"

No startled seaman dared reply  
Her mute spectator stirred,  
For deep in the fog to seaward  
An awful sound was heard