

## **Once a mariner**

Once a mariner hauled his boat  
Onto the golden sand  
Turned his back on the reckless sea  
With a wave of his hand.

Found a woman to be his wife  
Pretty as she could be  
Bought some land and built her a house  
With its back to the sea.

Looked after her as good men should  
As good as he could be  
Lay with no one but her at night  
With his back to the sea.

But every day he heard the wail  
Of wind-beleaguered waves  
And every night he heard the sigh  
Of sailors in their graves.

And every night the moon-dark waves  
Lapped at his land-locked bed  
And every day the seagulls came  
Screaming to wake the dead.

Once a mariner hauled his boat  
Back to the faithless sea  
Leaving his wife at home in bed  
Lonely as she could be.

*Neil Rathmell*