

Ebbing of the Tide.

(after "Sir Patrick Spens," Child Ballad 58))

September 17, 2020/3AM

We set out from Bristol Town when the sky was cold and clear
To do the king's own bidding at the worst time of the year

A A A A	DDDD
A G D A	DCGD

Two caskets full of sovereigns two of silk and furs
To warm the royal bedchamber and swell the royal purse

A A G D	DDCG
D A F-G A	GDCD

We'd not been out a half an hour I swear it was not more
When a devil's wind came rising up to fling us unto shore

Grab what you can, boys, hang on for the ride
All you have is what is left in the ebbing of the tide

The right hand is touching clouds the left one clutching mud
Did you ken that you were signing on for the wake of the flood?

Leave that chest of sovereigns let go that emerald skein
They'll be no wearing of the green with the gallants broke in twain

If ever there was honor here it isn't here no more
The king is at his table and we're going down for sure

Grab what you can, boys, hang on for the ride
All you have is what is left in the ebbing of the tide

Topsails flapping in the wind tiller's shot to hell
Where we're bound to, Jackie Tars, no captain's log will tell

That cross upon a chain, my lads, won't do you any good
You've signed your bonny hearts away to water, salt, and blood

Oh it's wrecked one way or t'other way, land or sea or sky
There's none will come to aid you, boys, so bid your mates goodbye

Grab what you can, boys, hang on for the ride
All you have is what is left in the ebbing of the tide

All the boatman has is what's left in the wake of the flood.
—Buddhist saying