

Charles Kingsley (1819-75)

13 *The Three Fishers*

Three fishers went sailing away to the West,
 Away to the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
 And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work, and women must weep, 5
 And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
 Though the harbour bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
 And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower, 10
 And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown.
But men must work, and women must weep,
 Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
 And the harbour bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands 15
 In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
 For those who will never come home to the town;
 For men must work, and women must weep,
 And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep; 20
 And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

1851

(From *Poems*. London: Macmillan, 1889)