Diesel and Shale

Diesel and Shale
(Cyril Tawney)

On the fifth of November back in fifty-three
The big man at Dolphin sure he sent for me:
'I brought you here, boy, 'cause I want you to know
We've booked you a berth in the water below,
With the diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
We've booked you a berth with the diesel and shale.'

Well, when I protested: 'I'm no volunteer',
He said: 'We ain't had one in many a year,
But that's a wee secret between you and me;
There's many a pressed man down under the sea,
With the diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
Down under the sea with the diesel and shale.'

'Oh doctor, dear doctor, I don't think I'm well.'
'Well, never mind, sonny, we'll very soon tell.
Try holding your breath while I count up to three.
There, that proves that you're fit to go down in (under) the sea,'
With the diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
To go down in the sea with the diesel and shale.'

I went to the storeroom to gather me rig
They gave me a sweater ten sizes too big,
I crawled down the boat like an old polar bear,
And I says to meself: 'There's a smell in the air,
And it's diesel and shale, diesel and shale ,
There's smell in the air and it's diesel and shale.'

A push on the klaxon and a ring on the gongs,
And then I was down where no mortal belongs,
Where the air's going bad and the bread's getting stale,
And they mix you a nightcap of diesel and shale,
Diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
They mix you a nightcap of diesel and shale.

Keep walking, keep walking, you foolish young man,
You know that I never would give you my hand.
Your hair is too thin and your face is too pale,
Cause you spend too much time with your diesel and shale,
Diesel and shale, diesel and shale,

You spend too much time with your diesel and shale.

We circled the Med. for a summer or two,
Where the sun is so warm and the water so blue.
Well, that's what they tell me, but I wouldn't know,
'Cause the view ain't so good when you're stuck down below,
With the diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
When you're stuck down below with THe diesel and shale.

Then the big man at Dolphin he told me at last:
'lt's time you went back to a ship with a mast.'
I feel like a Jonah a-leaving the whale
Cause l'm saying goodbye to the diesel and shale,
The diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
I'm saying goodbye to the diesel and shale.

Oh Crabby, dear Crabby, I bid you adieu,
And Synagogue Dick and THe Black Mamba too.
l'll do all me travelling by road and by rail,
And you know what to do with your diesel and shale,
Diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
You know what to do with your diesel and shale.

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Note: verses above from Oxford Book of Sea Songs. Tom Lewis sings
the following additional:

Oh Susie, Oh Susie, Oh won't you be mine?
Submariner's wives have a hell of a time
You'll live like a duchess with cash on the nail
If you don't mind the smell of the diesel and shale
Diesel and shale, diesel and shale,
If you don't mind the smell of the diesel and shale.

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