The Dockyard Gate

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Come all you married seamen bold, a few lines to you I'll write,
Just to let you know how the game do go when you are out of sight;
Just to let you know how the lads on shore go sporting with your wives
While you are on the rolling seas and venturing your sweet lives.

It's now our ship is outward bound and ready for to sail,
May the heavens above protect my love with a sweet and pleasant gale
And keep him clear all from the shore and never more return
Until his pockets are well lined, and then he's welcome home.

A last farewell she takes of him and she begins to cry,
A-taking out her handkerchief to wipe her weeping eyes.
"My husband's gone to sea", she cries, "how hard it is my case,
But still on shore there's plenty more: another will take his place."

Then she goes unto her fancy man, these words to him did say:
"My husband he is gone to sea; tomorrow is half-pay dat,
And you must wait at the dockyard gate until that I come out,
For that very day we'll sweat his half-pay and drink both ale and stout."

That day they spent in sweet content till the half-pay was no more
Then, "Never mind, my dear", she cries,'he's working hard for more,
Perhaps he's at the masthead, a-dying with the cold,
Or perhap@ he's at his watch on deck; our joys he can't behold."

And now our ship she's homeward bound, brought up in Plymouth Sound,
She hears the gun; "My husband's come, to him I must go down"
She goes unto her neighbor's house, "One thing of you I crave,
Lend me your gown for mine's in pawn. It's the only one I have."

Then she goes down unto the Sound and tries for to get in
She so loudly for her husband calls, and rund and kisses him;
Saying,"How happy we shall be, my dear, no you are safe on shore
You shall sit at home with mw, my love, and go to sea no more."

From Oxford Book of Sea Songs, Palmer

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