

# Shantyman

*Written ~1986 by Bob Watson (d. 2025)<sup>12</sup> and first appearing on CD A Baker's Score (Joe Stead with Martin Wyndham-Read). "dry bollocks jack" = hydraulic jack*

Now modern ships carry mighty funny gear  
*And away get away you shantyman*  
Ain't seen a halyard in many a year  
*And they got no use for the shantyman*  
Slick new fittings are all the style  
*And away get away you shantyman*  
All very clever but it just ain't right  
*And they got no use for the shantyman*

## Chorus

*Shantyman oh shantyman*  
*Who's got a berth for the shantyman*  
*I'll sing you a song of a world gone wrong*  
*When they got no use for the shantyman*

Levers to jerk and buttons to press  
And real live sailors they need them less  
Pushing on buttons and hauling on levers  
And they got no use for the horny-handed heavers

The cargo is stored in a polythene pack  
Raised and lowered by a dry bollocks jack  
Floating computer dressed like a ship  
Skippered and crewed by a microchip

A sailor's life it once was hard  
Laid out aloft on the tops'l yard  
Now it don't matter if the wind blows high  
You can take Force Ten with your feet still dry

<more>

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<sup>12</sup> <https://youtu.be/E-56WLfG2i8>

Listen at night and you might hear  
A ghostly voice on the quiet air  
Is it a voice from the distant past  
Or just a breeze in the radar mast

Old time ways are forgotten and gone  
*And away get away you shantyman*  
For no-one listens to the shantyman's song  
*And they got no use for the shantyman*  
Things no longer as they used to be  
*And away get away you shantyman*  
It's the knacker's yard for you and me  
*And they got no use for the shantyman*

Chorus †

