

Humpback Whale

Richard Shindell

Fifty six I sailed aboard
A ship called Byron One
She's carried trawler men on deck
And a harpoon whaling gun Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale A tractor for a whale winch
And the ship's an all fair mile
Twin diesels turn the screws around
She'll whale in a fine old style Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale Keep a sharp look-out my lads
The whale he's on the run
And we'll drive him into Byron Bay
And we'll shoot him with our gun Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale The harpoon and the line fly through
Very deep into the whale
She split the timbers of the ship
With a flurry of her tail Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale The rugging struts are snapped in two
We reel beneath the blow
The gunner fires a killer shot
And that humpback's sent below Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale Make the tail fast to the bows
We got no more time for bed
For four and twenty hours each day
We kept that factory fed Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale The friends and men upon the land
Some had been Jackaroos
They skin the blubber from the whales

Like they were skinning kangaroos Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale A hundred whales and then fifty more
Through the factory we did send
And then the orders came - knock off me lads
Your season's at an end Oh you trawlermen, come on
Forget your snapper and your prawn
For it's out of Ballina we'll sail
Fishing for the humpback whale Back in to Ballina we steered
Tied up and stowed the gear
All hands headed for the pub
And we filled ourselves with beer

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