

On Morecambe Bay

Christy Moore

Out beyond the street lamps where the calliopes roar
Past the rack and samphire, beyond the shore
I've seen them walking through the tide as rain cuts through the
e spray
Chinese cockle-pickers on the sands of Morecambe Bay

I stood behind them in the corner shop and in the market too
I should have spoken to them, told them everything I knew
Like our mothers told us as we went out to play
Never try and race the tide on the sands of Morecambe Bay

For the tide is The Devil, it will run you out of breath
Race you to the seashore, chase you to your death
The tide is the very Devil and the Devil has its day
On the lonely cockle banks of Morecambe Bay

Saw them sending money orders home, all their hard earned pay
Tales of crossing borders on the road to Morecambe Bay
Sleeping in crowded rooms on cold hard floors
Such dreamless life is not worth dying for

I see them in the distance, laid out in the morning light
23 migrant workers were drowned last night
Their final phonecalls halfway round the world crossed
As between the river estuaries they raced the tide and lost

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In Fujian and Zeeland they mourn their next of kin
Gang masters with snake tattoos call money loans back in
Broked hearted parents watch their children stow away
To the lonely cockle banks of Morecambe Bay

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