

The Patriot's Dream

Gordon Lightfoot

The songs of the wars are as old as the hills
They cling like the rust on the cold steel that kills
They tell of the boys who went down to the tracks
In a patriotic manner with the cold steel on their backs

The patriot's dream is as old as the sky
It lives in the lust of a cold callous lie
Let's drink to the men who got caught by the chill
Of the patriotic fever and the cold steel that kills

The train pulled away on that glorious night
The drummer got drunk and the bugler got tight
While the boys in the back sang a song of good cheer
While riding off to glory in the spring of their years

The patriot's dream still lives on today
It makes mothers weep and it makes lovers pray
Let's drink to the men who got caught by the chill
Of the patriotic fever and the cold steel that kills

Well, there was a sad, sad lady
Weeping all night long
She received a sad, sad message
From a voice on the telephone

Her children were all sleeping
As she waited out the dawn
How could she tell those children
That their father was shot down

So she took them to her side that day and she told them one by one
Your father was a good man ten thousand miles from home
He tried to do his duty and it took him straight to hell
He might be in some prison, I hope he's treated well

Well, there was a young girl watching in the early afternoon
When she heard the name of someone who said he'd be home soon
And she wondered how they got him, but the papers did not tell
There would be no sweet reunion, there would be no wedding bells

So she took herself into her room and she turned the bed sheets down
And she cried into the silken folds of her new wedding gown
He tried to do his duty and it took him straight to hell
He might be in some prison, I hope he's treated well

Well, there was an old man sitting in his mansion on the hill
And he thought of his good fortune and the time he'd yet o kill
Well, he called to his wife one day, "Come sit with me awhile"
Then turning toward the sunset, he smiled a wicked smile

"Well I'd like to say, I'm sorry for the sinful deeds I've done
But let me first remind you, I'm a patriotic son"
They tried to do their duty and it took 'em straight to hell
They might be in some prison, I hope they're treated well

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