

The Ballad of Gunga Din

Jim Croce

You may talk of gin and beer
When you're stationed way out here
An' you're sent to penny fights an' Aldershot it
But when it comes to slaughter
You will do your work for water
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.

Now in Inja's sunny clime
Where I used to spend my time
Servin' her Majesty the Queen
Of all the black faced crew
The finest man I knew
Was regimental bhisti, Gunga Din

The uniform he wore
Was nothin' much before
An' rather less than half of that behind
But a piece of twisty rag
An' a goatskin water bag
Was all the field equipment he could find

When a sweatin' troop train lay
In a sidin' through the day
Where the heat would make you bloomin' eyebrows crawl
We shouted, "Harry by"
Till our throats were bricky-dry
Then wopped him 'cause he couldn't serve us all.

He would dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done
An' never seemed to know the use of fear
If we charged a broke or cut
You could bet your bloomin' nut
He'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.

With his mussick on his back
He would skip to our attack
An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire"
An' for all his dirty hide
He was white, clear white inside
When he went to tend the wounded under fire.

It was Din, Din, Din
With the bullets kickin' dust spots on the green
And when the cartridges ran out
You could hear the front files shout
Send ammunition mules, and Gunga Din!

I shan't forget the night
When I fell behind the fight
With a bullet where my belt plate should a' been
I was chokin' mad with thirst
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din

He lifted up my head
An' he plugged me where I bled

An' he gave me half a pint of water green
It was crawlin' and it stunk
But of all the drinks I've drunk
I'm most grateful to the one from Gunga Din

He carried me away
To where a dooli lay
An' a bullet came and drilled the beggar clean
He carried me inside
An' just before he died
I hope you liked your drink said Gunga Din.

So I'll meet him later on
In the place where he as gone
Where it's always double drill and no canteen
He'll be squattin' on the coals
Givin' drinks to poor damned souls
I'll catch a swig in hell from Gunga Din

It was Din, Din, Din
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din
Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you
By the livin' God that made you
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din