

The Band Played Waltzing Matilda

The Pogues

When I was a young man I carried my pack
And I lived the free life of a rover
From the Murrays green basin to the dusty outback
I waltzed my Matilda all over
Then in nineteen fifteen my country said oeSon,
Itoes time to stop rambling cos thereoes work to be doneoe
So they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a gun
And they sent me away to the war

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
As we sailed away from the quay
And amidst all the tears and the shouts and the cheers
We sailed off to Gallipoli

How well I remember that terrible day
When the blood stained the sand and the water
And when in that town that they called Suvla Bay
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter
Johnny Turk he was ready, he primed himself well
He chased us with bullets, he rained us with shells
And in five minutes flat heod blown us all to hell
Nearly blew us right back to Australia

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
As we stopped to bury our slain
And we buried ours and the Turks buried theirs
Then we started all over again

Now those that were living did their best to survive
In a mad world of blood, death and fire,
And, for seven long weeks, I kept myself alive
But the corpses around me piled higher
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over tit
And when I awoke in my hospital bed
I saw what it had done. Christ ! I wished I was dead
Never knew there were worse things than dying

For Ioell go no more waltzing Matilda
All around the green bush far and near
For to hump tent and pegs, a man needs both legs
No more Waltzing Matilda for me

So they collected the cripples, the wounded, the maimed,
And they shipped us back home to Australia
The legless, the armless, the blind, the insane,
Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla
And as our ship pulled into Circular Bay
I looked at the place my legs used to be
And thank Christ there was no one waiting for me
To grieve and to mourn and to pity

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
As they carried us down the gangway
But nobody cheered, they just stood and stared
Then they turned all their faces away

And now every April I sit on my porch
And I watch the parade pass before me
I see my old comrades, how proudly they march,
Renewing old dreams of past glory
I see the old men march slowly, all bent, stiff and sore
The forgotten heroes from a forgotten war
And the young people ask oewhat are they marching for ?oe
And I ask myself the same question

And the band played Waltzing Matilda
And the old men still answer to the call
But year after year their number gets fewer
Some day no one will march there at all

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me