

Streets of New York

The Wolfe Tones

I was 18yrs old when
I went down to Dublin with a fistful
Of money and a cartload of dreams
"Take your time" said me father
Stop rushing like hell and remember all is not what it seems to be
For there's fellas that would cut ye for the coat on yer back
or the watch that you got from your mother so take care me old bucko
And mind yourself well and will ya give this wee note to me brother
At the time Uncle Benjy was a policeman in Brooklyn
And me father the youngest, looked after the farm
When a phonecall from America said
'Send the lad over'
And the owl fella said 'Sure wouldn't do any harm' for I've spent me
life working this dirty old ground
For a few pints of porter and the smell of a pound
And sure maybe there's something you'll learn or you'll see
And you can bring it back home make it easy on me
So I landed in Kennedy and a big yellow taxi
Carried me and me bags through the streets and the rain
Well me poor heart was thumpin around with excitement
And I hardly even heard what the driver was sayin
We came in the Shore Parkway to the fultlands of Brooklyn
To me Uncle's apartment on East 53rd
I was feeling so happy I was humming a song and I sang "You're as free
as a bird"
Well to shorten the story what I found out that day was that Benjy got
shot down in an uptown foray and while I was flying my way to New York
Poor Benjy was lying in a cold city morgue.
Well I phoned up the owl fella told him the news
I could tell he could
Hardly stand up in his shoes and he wept as he told me
'Go ahead with the plans
And not to forget be a proud Irish man'
So I went to Nellies beside Fordham road and I started to learn about
lifting the load
But the heaviest thing that I carried that year
Was the bittersweet thought of my hometown so dear
I went home that December 'cause the owl fella died
Had to borrow the money from Phil on the side
And all the bright flowers and brass couldn't hide
The poor wasted face of me father
I sold up the owl farmyard for what it was worth and into my bag stuck
A handful of earth then I boarded a train and I caught me a plane
And I found meself back in the US again
It's been 22yrs since
I've set foot in Dublin
Me kids know to use the correct knife and fork
But I'll never forget the green grass and the rivers
As I keep law and order in the streets of New York.