

The Decemberists, The Tain (Parts I, II, III, IV, V)

PART I

crone: here upon this pillow
made of reed and willow
you're a fickle little twister
are you sweet on your sister?
your phallo won't leave you alone.
and granted for their pleasure
possesions laid to measure
she's a salty little pisser
with your cock in her kisser
but now she's a will of her own.

PART II

husband: damn your ankles and eyes wide
from you fingernails to your ponytails too.
king of the insects and the m-5
over charlemagne in a motorcade too.
and baby needs a new prize
baby needs a new and shiny prize.
captain: in this place called heavenly
you were born here.
this place called heavenly
you were born here.
you were born here.
husband: and now all the marchers descend from high
i will dedicate all of my awakenings to this.
and damn all the angles that oppress my sight
i will bleed your heart through a samovar soon.
captain: in this place called heavenly
you were born here.
this place called heavenly
you were born here.
you were born here.

PART III

soldier: they settled dust in your hair
to watch you shake and shout it out.
with our armaments bared
we shed our bags and travel alls.
from the lee of the wall
he comes in the chang and the chariot
and all his eunuchs in thrall
can scarce lift his line and lariat.
here com loose his hounds
to blow me down.
chorus of waifs: blow me down.
soldier: on this stretch of ground
i'll lay me down.
chorus of waifs: lay me down.
soldier: to sleep.
chaplain: and now stricken with pangs
that tear at our backs like thistle down
the mirror's soft silver tain
reflects our last and birthing hour
soldier: here com loose his hounds
to blow me down.
chorus of waifs: blow me down.
soldier: on this stretch of ground
i'll lay me down.
chorus of waifs: lay me down.
soldier: to sleep.

PART IV

evening
widow: o the wind is blowing, it hurts your skin
as you climb up hillside, forest and fen.
your arms full of lullabies, orchids and wine

your memories wrapped within paper and twine.
the room that you lie in is dusty and hard
sleeping soft babies on piles of yards
of gingham, taffeta, cotton and silk
your dry hungry mouths cry for your mother's milk.
when the dawn comes to greet you, you'll rise with clothes on
and advance with the others, singing old songs
of cattle and maidens and withered old queens.
let the music carry you on.
the room that you lie in is dusty and hard
sleeping soft babies on piles of yards
of gingham, taffeta, cotton and silk
your dry hungry mouths cry for your mother's milk.

PART V

woman: darling dear what have you done?
your clothes are torn, your make-up runs.
daughter: i ran through brambles, blooming thistle
i washed my face in the river when you whistled me on.
woman: darling dear, what have you done?
your hands and face are smeared with blood.
daughter: the chaplain came and called me out
to beat and to butcher his mother's sow
woman: but darling dear, they found him dead
this morning on the riverbed.
but hush now darling, don't you cry.
your reward's in the sweet by-and-by.
hush now baby, don't you cry.
your reward's in the sweet by-and-by.
crone: and now we've seen your powers
softly stretch the hours
you're a fickle little twister
are you sweet on your sister?
as now you go wandering home.