

# 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.