

The Pogues, Drunken Boat

(James Fearnley)

The wind was whipping shingle through the windows in the town
A hail of stones across the roof, the slates came raining down
A blade of light upon the spit came sweeping through the roar
With me head inise a barrel and me leg screwed in the floor

Mother pack me bags because I'm off to foreign parts
Don't ask me where I'm going 'cause I'm sure it's off the charts
I'll pin your likeness on the wall right buy my sleeping head
I'll send you cards and letters so you'll know that I'm not dead

By this time in a week I should be far away from home
Trailing fingers through the phospor or asleep in flowers of foam
From Macao to Acapulco from Havana to Seville
We'll see monoliths and bridges and the Christ up on the hill

An aria with the Russians at the piano in the bar
With icefloes through the window we raised glasses to the Czar
We squared off on a dockside with a coupled hundred Finns
And we dallied in the 'dilly and we stoaked ourselves in gin

Now the only deck I'd want to walk
Are the stalks of corn beneath my feet
And the only sea I want to sail
Is the darkned pond in the scented dusk
Where a kid crouced full of sadness
Lets his boat go drifting out
Into the evening sun

We sailed through constellations and were ruttet by the storm
I crumpled under cudgel blows and finally came ashore
I spent the next two years or more just staring at the wall
We went to sea to see the world and what d'you think we saw?

If we turned the table upside down and sailed around the bed
Clamped knives between our teeth and tied bandannas round our heads
With the wainscot our horizon and the ceiling as the sky
You'd not expect that anyone would go and fucking die

At nights we passed the bottle round and drank to our lost friends
We lay alone upon our bunks and prayed that this would end
A wall of moving shadows with rows of swinging keys
We dreamed that whole Leviathans lay rotting in the weeds

Ther's a sound that comes from miles away if you lean your head to hear
A ship's bell rings on board a wreck where the air is still and clear
And up in heaven that means another angel's got his wings
But all below it signifies is a ship's gone in the drink