

Rheostatics, Onilley's Strange Dream

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Some sailors never die. They rot at sea.

Hello, my friends.
My name is Onilley McNoan--to me.
I went to war on the Caroline.
Remember from that other song?
Well?
There the author got it wrong.
Survive did I--I did not drown.
I lived on Turtle Isle.

I jumped the Caroline
For she'd been had by Neptune.
Gadungder burped the sea;
Now coral grows inside her hull.

Me and Jim, my lifeboat friend--
Strips of flesh torn from his limbs.
Well, Chicken Jimmy kept me alive.
(Though wasn't much for conversation.)
Life-boat this and life-boat that;
For days and days I fought the waves
And landed on an open beach of gold and blue.

I picked myself up off the sand.
I Hauled my body onto the land
And from the jungle there they stand...
They layered colors on my face and on my arms.
Hornbills squawked; I fed on fruit and wild boar.
I showed them guns and taught them how to sing Lang Syne,
And everyone was happy.

She was the queen with funny teeth.
She tried to hide them underneath
Her dainty hands and nervous lips.
Though I could not tell her so,
She was the one who kept me breathing.
While the wild volcanoes flared.
She told me I was sick with pride--
All pumped up and sentimental.

The sky grew dark with ash,
And powder settled on the water.
Gadungder burped the sea
And funnels spiralled down to take her.
I climbed the highest tree
And from the sky I heard her call.

From this dream--as I awoke--
I could have sworn that Jimmy spoke,
But it was probably just the boat.

Some sailors never die.
I woke up under an ocean sky
With a pile of bones laying at my side.