

I Must Go Away

'I must go away, now that I'm a man.
But to be a hero is not my plan.
I've a road to follow with a troubled mind,
And a aching heart for those left behind.
For to be a slave in my native land
Is the greatest shame I could understand
And if I must die for to be set free,
There's a glory ride I'll have from tyranny.'

'I can hardly bear for to say goodbye,
Or to see the tears in my mother's eyes,
How she tried to smile when she should have cried,
But I've seen the sadness her smiles can't hide.
And my father looks like a broken man,
From the wasted years he's spent to work the land.
How the words and music from the young man flowed,
Now his fiddle's hanging with a broken bow.'

CHORUS: SUNG AFTER VERSES 2 & 4.

So let the music play, let the old men pray.
Let the flags fly high and let the widows' cry.
Let the mothers' weep, let the young men sleep.
Let the vultures' fly and let the world roll by.

The dawn came creeping as his father slept.
And he stole away while his mother wept.
But she watched him leaving, without a word,
And she said goodbye 'though he never heard.
'We need you son' the sergeant said.
And in sixteen hours the youth was dead.
He never knew if he'd found the truth.
And he never felt the joys of youth.

But the years have passed and the world has turned,
And the fire of freedom no longer burns,
And the hearts of men have lost their pride,
And the country's yearning for a love denied.
By Flanders fields the flowers grow,
And the shining crosses stand row on row.
And the dreams of youth have died there too,
And are swept away like the morning dew.

A song for futility! The futility of war. The futility of peace in the face aggression! The futility of the Irish fighting for Britain in her Continental wars and being used as cannon fodder. Above all, the meaningless futility of pride, which makes history but which, if it rules us, leads to a sacrificial altar.