

“Stars Over Ballarat”

Verse 1

Down in old Ballarat, where the diggers struck the clay,
And the Southern Cross was rising like a promise for the day,
Men from Clare and Tipperary, from Cork and sweet Tralee,
Stood shoulder-to-shoulder dreaming what a land this could be.

Verse 2

There was Peter Lalor, steady with a fire in his eyes,
And Michael Hanrahan beside him, hearing freedom in the cries.
Patrick O'Donnell held the line, John Lynch did the same,
And Timothy Hayes called the roll of every Irish name.

Chorus

Oh, stars over Ballarat, shining cold and bright,
Guide the sons of Erin through the long December night.
Raise the flag of Eureka, let its silver cross proclaim:
We are many, we are equal — and we answer to no chain.

Verse 3

From the diggings came the murmurs, from the tents the whispered plans,
As James McGill, John Manning, and Patrick Curtain joined the bands.
They built the stockade roughly, but their courage made it stand,
For the Irish heart remembers every broken, promised land.

Verse 4

Then the redcoats came at dawn, with the smoke and thunder's roar,
And the blood of independence spilled upon the earth once more.
Yet Lalor rose, wounded, swearing freedom would endure —
For the cause that's born in Ireland has a way of staying pure.

Chorus

Oh, stars over Ballarat, shining cold and bright,
Guide the sons of Erin through the long December night.
Raise the flag of Eureka, let its silver cross proclaim:
We are many, we are equal — and we answer to no chain.

Bridge

From Clare to the diggings, from famine fields to gold,
They carried ancient stories that their fathers' fathers told.
And in the smoke of Eureka, through the sorrow and the flame,
Australia heard the echo of an Irish rebel's name.

Final Chorus

Oh, stars over Ballarat, keep your vigil in the sky,
For the men who dared to question and the men who dared to die.
Raise the flag of Eureka, let its silver cross remain:
We are many, we are equal — and we answer to no chain.

He stands as the famine left him, hollow-faced, weather-worn, yet unbroken. An exile on the diggings, carrying the silence of old fields and the weight of a new rebellion. In the smoke of Eureka, his sorrow became resolve.

“Under the Stockade Sky”

The wind on Bakery Hill
Carried accents from far harbours,
Soft Clare vowels,
The sharper music of Cork and Kerry,
And the long, low grief
Of men who had crossed a world
To outrun hunger's shadow.

Lalor stood there
Not as a hero carved in stone,
But as a young man

With a tremor in his breath,
Feeling history gather
Like storm-clouds behind his ribs.

Hanrahan listened,
Head bowed as if hearing
The old songs of home
Thread themselves
Through the murmurs of the camp.

O'Donnell, Lynch, Hayes —
Their names rose and fell
Like the tide of a distant Atlantic,
Each syllable carrying
A memory of fields left behind,
Of mothers waiting at doorways
That would never see them return.

And when the redcoats came,
The dawn did not break —
It shattered.
Smoke curled upward
Like a question no empire
Could ever answer.

Yet in the silence after,
When the guns had cooled
And the flag lay torn
But not forgotten,
The sky above Ballarat
Held its vigil.

For courage is a quiet thing.
It lingers in the dust,
In the footprints of men
Who believed that dignity
Was worth the risk of dying.

And the Irish names remain —
Not louder than the others,
Only steady,
Like embers that refuse
To go dark.