

## Dubliners

### "Hot Asphalt"

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Good evening, all my jolly lads, I'm glad to find you  
well

If you'll gather all around me, now, the story I will tell  
For I've got a situation and begorrah and begob  
I can whisper all the weekly wage of nineteen bob

'Tis twelve months come October since I left me native  
home

After helping them Killarney boys to bring the harvest  
down

But now I wear the gansey and around me waist a belt  
I'm the gaffer of the squad that makes the hot asphalt

Well, we laid it in a hollows and we laid it in the flat  
And if it doesn't last forever, sure I swear, I'll eat me  
hat

Well, I've wandered up and down the world and sure I  
never felt

Any surface that was equal to the hot asphalt

The other night a copper comes and he says to me,  
McGuire

Would you kindly let me light me pipe down at your  
boiler fire?

And he planks himself right down in front, with hobnails  
up, till late

And says I, me decent man, you'd better go and find  
your bait

He ups and yells, I'm down on you, I'm up to all yer  
pranks

Don't I know you for a traitor from the Tipperary ranks?

Boys, I hit straight from the shoulder and I gave him  
such a belt

That I knocked him into the boiler full of hot asphalt

Well, we laid it in a hollows and we laid it in the flat  
And if it doesn't last forever, sure I swear, I'll eat me  
hat

Well, I've wandered up and down the world and sure I  
never felt

Any surface that was equal to the hot asphalt

We quickly dragged him out again and we threw him in  
the tub  
And with soap and warm water we began to rub and  
scrub  
But devil the thing, it hardened and it turned him hard  
as stone  
And with every other rub, sure you could hear the  
copper groan

I'm thinking, says O'Reilly, that he's lookin' like old Nick  
And burn me if I am not inclined to claim him with me  
pick  
Now, says I, it would be easier to boil him till he melts  
And to stir him nice and easy in the hot asphalt

Well, we laid it in a hollows and we laid it in the flat  
And if it doesn't last forever, sure I swear, I'll eat me  
hat  
Well, I've wandered up and down the world and sure I  
never felt  
Any surface that was equal to the hot asphalt

You may talk about yer sailor lads, ballad singers and  
the rest  
Your shoemakers and your tailors but we please the  
ladies best  
The only ones who know the way their flinty hearts to  
melt  
Are the lads around the boiler making hot asphalt

With rubbing and with scrubbing, sure I caught me  
death of cold  
For scientific purposes, me body it was sold  
In the Kelvin grove museum, me boys, I'm hangin' in  
me pelt  
As a monument to the Irish, making hot asphalt

Well, we laid it in a hollows and we laid it in the flat  
And if it doesn't last forever, sure I swear, I'll eat me  
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Well, I've wandered up and down the world and sure I  
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