

Decemberists, The

"A Cautionary Song"

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there's a place your mother goes when everybody else
is soundly sleeping
through the lights of beacon street
and if you listen you can hear her weeping, she's
weeping,
cause the gentlemen are calling and the snow is softly
falling on her petticoats
and she's standing in the harbor and she's waiting for
the sailors in the jolly boat
see how they approach

with dirty hands and trousers torn they grapple 'til
she's safe within their keeping
a gag is placed between her lips to keep her sorry
tongue from any speaking, or screaming
and they row her out to packets where the sailor's sorry
racket calls for maidenhead
and she's scarce above the gunwales when her clothes
fall to a bundle and she's laid in bed on the upper deck

and so she goes from ship to ship, her ankles clasped,
her arms so rudely pinioned
'til at last she's satisfied the lot of the marina's teeming
minions and their opinions

and they tell her not to say a thing to cousin, kindred,
kith or kin or she'll end up dead
and they throw her dirty dollars and return her to the
habor where she goes to bed
and this is how your fed

so be kind to your mother
though she may seem an awful bother
and the next time she tries to feed you collard greens
remember what she does when you're asleep

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