

Dubliners, The "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
hat

Well, I've wandered up and down the world and sure I
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