

**John Brown**  
**Bob Dylan**

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John Brown went off to war to fight on a foreign shore.

G D/f# A

His mama sure was proud of him!

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He stood so straight and tall in his uniform and all.

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His mama s face broke out into a grin.

Oh son, you look so fine, I m glad you re a son of mine,  
You make me proud to know you hold a gun.  
Do what the captain says, lots of medals you will get,  
And we ll put them on the wall when you get home.

That old train pulled out, John s ma began to shout,  
Tellin ev rybody in the neighborhood:

That s my son that s about to go, he s a soldier now, you know.  
She made well sure her neighbors understood.

She got a letter once in a while, her face broke into a smile  
she showed them to the people from next door.  
she bragged about her son with his uniform and gun,  
And these things you called a good old-fashioned war.

Then the letters ceased to come, for a long time they did not come.  
ceased to come for about ten months or more.  
Then a letter finally came saying, Go down and meet the train.  
Your son is coming back from the war.

She smiled and she went right down, she looked up and all around  
But she did not see her soldier son in sight.  
When all the people passed, she saw her son at last,  
When she did she could not believe her eyes.

Oh his face was all shot off and his hand were blown away  
And he wore a metal brace around his waist.  
He whispered kind of slow, in a voice she didn t know,  
While she couldn t even recognize his face!

Oh tell me, my darling son, tell me what they done.  
How is it you come to be this way?  
He tried his best to talk but his mouth could hardly move  
And his mother had to turn her face away.

Don t you remember, Ma, when I went off to war  
You thought it was the best thing I could do?  
I was on the battleground, you were home acting proud.  
You wasn t there standing in my shoes.

Well, and I thought when I was there, Lord, what am I doing here?  
tryin to kill somebody or die tryin .  
But the thing that scared me most when my enemy came close  
I could see that his face looked just like mine.

And I couldn t help but think, through the thunder rolling stink,  
I was just a puppet in a play.  
And through the roar and smoke, this string it finally broke,  
And a cannon ball blew my eyes away.

As he turned away to go, his Mother was acting slow  
seein the metal brace that helped him stand.  
But as he turned to leave, he called his mother close  
And he dropped his medals down into her hand.

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