The Band Played Waltzing Matilda

A D A f# A E7 A
When I was a young man, I carried my pack, and I lived the free life of a rover.

D A f# A E7 A
From the Murray's green basin to the dusty outback, I waltzed my matilda all over.

E D E D A
Then in nineteen fifteen my country said, "Son, It's time to stop rambling - there's work to be done."

f# A f# A E7 A
So they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a gun, and they sent me away to the war.

D A D E7
And the band played Waltzing Matilda, as our ship pulled away from the Quay.

D b A D A E7 A
And amid all the tears, flagwaving and cheers, we sailed off for Gallipoli.

When I remember that terrible day when our blood stained the sand and the water.
And how in that hell that they called Suvla Bay we were butchered like lambs at the slaughter.
Johnny Turk, he was ready – oh, he primed himself well. He rained us with bullets, and he showered us with shells.
And in five minutes flat, we were all blown to hell - nearly blew us back home to Australia.
And the band played Waltzing Matilda, as we stopped to bury our slain.
And we buried ours and the Turks buried theirs, and it started all over again.

Those who were living, just tried to survive in that mad world of blood, death and fire.
And for seven long weeks, I kept myself alive, while around me the corpses piled higher.
Then a big Turkish shell, knocked me arse over head, and when I awoke in my hospital bed,
And saw what it had done, I wished I was dead - never knew there were worse things than dying.
For no more I'll go Waltzing Matilda, all around the green bush far and near;
For to hump tent and pegs, a man needs both legs - no more Waltzing Matilda for me.

They collected the wounded, the crippled, the maimed, and they shipped us back home to Australia.
The armless, the legless, the blind, the insane: those proud wounded heroes of Suvla.
And as our ship pulled into Circular Quay I looked at the place where me legs used to be,
And thanked Christ there was no one there waiting for me - to grieve and to mourn and to pity.
And the band played Waltzing Matilda, as they carried us down the gangway.
But nobody cheered; they just stood there and stared - then they turned all their faces away.

And now every April, I sit on my porch, and I watch the parades pass before me.
I see my old comrades - how proudly they march, renewing their dreams of past glories.
I see the old men, all tired, stiff and sore - the weary old heroes of a forgotten war.
And the young people ask, "What are they marching for?" And I ask myself the same question.
And the band plays Waltzing Matilda, and the old men still answer the call.
But year after year, their numbers grow fewer - someday no one will march there at all.

A D A f# D E
Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda, who'll come a'waltzing Matilda with me?

A E f# D
And their ghosts may be heard as they march by the billabong -

A D E A
Who'll come a'waltzing' Matilda with me?