John Brown

Nolan Kennedy

John Brown went off to war to fight on a foreign shore
His mama sure was proud of him
He stood so straight and tall in his uniform and all
His mama's face broke out into a grin"Oh, son, you look so fine, I'm glad you're a son of mine
Make me proud to know you own a gun
Do what the captain says, lot of medals you will get
We'll put them on the wall when you get home"That old train pulled out, John's ma began to shout
Tellin' ev'ryone 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 understoodShe got a letter once in a while, her face broke into a smile
She showed them to the people from next door
They bragged about her son with his uniform and gun
And these things you called a good old fashioned warThen the letters ceased to come, for a long time they did not come
Ceased to come for about ten months or more
Then when 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
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 eyesOh, his face was all shot up 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
And she couldn't even recognize his face"Oh, tell me, my darling son, tell me what they've done
How is it that 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 weren't there standing in my shoesAnd 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 can see that his face looked just like mine"And I couldn't help but think, through the thunder rolling and 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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