Walt Whitman's Niece

Billy Bragg

Last night or the night before that I won't say which night A seaman friend of mine I'll not say which seaman Walked up to a big old building I won't say which building And would have not walked up the stairs Not to say which stairs If there had not been two girls Leaving out the names of those two girlsI recall a door, a big long room I'll not tell which room I remember a deep blue rug But I can't say which rug A girl took down a book of poems Not to say which book of poems And as she read, I lay my head And I can't tell which head Down in her lap, and I can mention which lapMy seaman buddy and girl moved off After a couple of pages and there I was All night long, laying and listening And forgetting the poems And as well as I could recall Or my seaman buddy could recollect My girl had told us that she was a niece Of Walt Whitman, but now which niece And it takes a night and a girl And a book of this kind A long long time to find its way back

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