

Forefathers

Dan Fogelberg

They came from Scandinavia, the land of midnight sun
And crossed the North Atlantic when this century was young
They'd heard that in America, every man was free
To live the way he chose to live and be who he could be
Some of them were farmers there and tilled the frozen soil
But all they got was poverty for all their earnest toil
They say one was a sailor, who sailed the wide world round
Made home port, got drunk one night, walked off the pier and drowned
My mother was of Scottish blood, it's there that she was born
They brought her to America in 1924
They left behind the Highlands and the heather covered hills
And came to find America with broad expectant dreams and iron wills
My grand dad worked the steel mills of Central Illinois
His daughter was his jewel, his son was just his boy
For thirty years he worked the mills, and stoked the coke fed fires
And looked toward the day when he had last turned
Sixty-five and could retire
And the sons become the fathers and their daughters will be wives
As the torch is passed from hand to hand
And we struggle through our lives
Though the generations wander, the lineage survives
And all of us, from dust to dust
We all become forefathers by and by
Woman and the man were wed, just after the war
And they settled in this river town and three fine sons she bore
One became a lawyer and one fine pictures drew
One became this lonely soul
Who sits here now and sings this song to you
And the sons become the fathers and their daughters will be wives
As the torch is passed from hand to hand
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