

# Fairytale of New York

Words & music: Shane MacGowan & Jem Finer  
Performed by The Pogues

**Introduction:**  $\frac{4}{4}$  | G D | A D A7 (hold) |

It was Christmas Eve, babe, in the drunk tank  
An old man said to me "Won't see another one"  
And then he sang a song 'The Rare Old Mountain Dew'  
I turned my face away and dreamed about you

A7 D G  
Got on a lucky one - came in eighteen-to-one  
D A7  
I've got a feeling this year's for me and you  
D G  
So happy Christmas - I love you, baby  
D  $\frac{3}{4}$  | A D (hold) |  
I can see a better time when all our dreams come true

**Interlude:** \* | G D A | \*5/4 time (one bar only)

$\frac{6}{8}$  | D | A | D G | A D |

D A Bm G  
They've got cars big as bars, they've got rivers of gold  
D A  
But the wind goes right through you, it's no place for the old  
D A Bm G  
When you first took my hand on a cold Christmas Eve  
D A D  
You promised me Broadway was waiting for me

D A  
You were handsome, you were pretty – Queen Of New York City  
D G A D  
When the band finished playing they howled out for more  
A  
Sinatra was swinging, all the drunks they were singing  
D G A D  
We kissed on the corner then danced through the night

G D Bm  
**REFRAIN 1:** The boys of the NYPD choir were singing 'Galway Bay'  
D A D\*  
And the bells were ringing out for Christmas Day

**Interlude 2:** | D\* A | Bm G | D | A |  
| D Bm | D G | D | A D |

**D** **A**  
 You're a bum, you're a punk! You're an old slut on junk!  
**D** **G** **A** **D**  
 Lying there almost dead on a drip in that bed!  
**A**  
 You scum-bag, you maggot, you cheap, lousy faggot!  
**D** **G** **A** **D**  
 Happy Christmas, your arse! I pray God it's our last!

**REFRAIN 2:** **G** **D** **Bm**  
 The boys of the NYPD choir were still singing 'Galway Bay'  
**D** **A** **D\***  
 And the bells were ringing out for Christmas Day

**Interlude 3:** | **D\*** | | **G** | | **D** | | | **A** **D** | **A** |  
 I could...

**(A)** **D** **G**  
 I could have been someone - Well, so could anyone  
**D** **A**  
 You took my dreams from me when I first found you  
**D** **G**  
 I kept them with me, babe, I put them with my own  
**D** **G** **A** **D**  
 Can't make it all alone - I've built my dreams around you

**REFRAIN 3:** **G** **D** **Bm**  
 The boys of the NYPD choir are still singing 'Galway Bay'  
**D (tacet)** **A** **D\***  
 And the bells are ringing out for Christmas Day

**Outro:** | **D\*** | | **G** | | **D** | | | **A** | | |  
 ||: **D** | | **G** | | **D** | | | **A** **D** | **A** :|| \*\* [D]\*\*\*

\*\* Repeat last line & fade to end (as per recording)

\*\*\* [Optionally play last line 5x and then end on D chord]

Fairytale of New York was recorded by The Pogues and Kristy McNichol in 1987. The Story of... Fairytale of New York The Pogues is an excellent BBC documentary on the story of the song's origins, its recording, and its legacy. It can be found on YouTube – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUSNzqqLFT0>

# Fairytale of New York

Shane MacGowen  
& Jem Finer

Introduction G D A D A Verses 1 & 2

1. It was Christ - mas  
Eve, — babe, in the drunk tank an old man said to me "Won't see an -  
luck - y one — came in eight - een - to - one, I've got a feel - ing — this year's for  
oth - er one." And then he sang a song 'The Rare Old Mount - ain Dew' I turned my  
me and you. So Hap - py Christ - mas, I love you, ba - - by, I can see a  
face a - way and dreamed a - bout — you. 2. Got on a  
bet - ter time when all our dreams come true.

Interlude 1 D A D G A D

Verse 3 D A Bm G

3. They've got cars big as bars, they've got riv - ers of gold but the  
wind goes right through you, it's no place for the old, When you first took my hand on a  
cold Christ - mas Eve You pro - mised me Broad - way was wait - ing for me.

Verse 4 D A

4. You were hand - some, you were pret - ty - Queen of New York Cit - y, When the

D G A D

band fin - ished play - ing they howled out for more. Sin - a - tra was swing - ing, all the

A D G A D

drunks they were sing - ing, We kissed on the corn - er then danced through the night.

### REFRAIN 1

(Harmony) G D

The boys of the N - Y - P - D choir were sing - ing 'Gal - way

Bm D A

Bay' And the bells were ring - ing out for Christ - mas Day

### Interlude 2

D A Bm G D A

D Bm D G D A D

### Verse 5

D A

5. You're a bum, you're a punk! You're an old slut on junk! Ly - ing

D G A D

there al - most dead on a drip in that bed! You scum - bag, you mag - got, you

A D G A D

cheap lou - sy fag - got! Hap - py Christ - mas, your arse! I pray God it's our last!

### REFRAIN 2

G D

The boys of the N - Y - P - D choir were still sing - ing 'Gal - way

Bm D A D

Bay' And the bells were ring-ing out for Christ-mas Day

### Interlude 3

G D A D A

### Verse 6

D G

6. I coud have been some-one Well, so could an - y - one

D A

You took my dreams from me when I first found you

D G

I kept them with me, babe, I kept them with my own

D G A D

Can't make it all a-lone I've built my dreams a - round you

### REFRAIN 3

G D

The boys of the N - Y - P - D choir are still singing 'Gal - way

Bm D (tacet) A D

Bay' and the bells are ring - ing out for Christ-mas Day

### Outro

G D A

D G D

A D 1-4. A 5. A D

rit.