

After the Ball

Words and music by Charles K. Harris; Widely known. **ARTIST:** Early version by Vernon Dalhart; Bradley Kincaid; Fiddlin' John Carson and Blue Sky Boys; **DATE:** 1892; **RECORDING INFO:** Vernon Dalhart; Bradley Kincaid; Fiddlin' John Carson; Blue Sky Boys; John Fahey; **OTHER NAMES:** After the Ball is Over; Life On the Ocean Wave; Over the Ocean Waves; After the Roundup **NOTES:** Tin Pan Alley was established in the 1880s achieving national prominence with the first million selling song hit in American music history- "After the Ball." Eventually selling over five million copies of sheet music, "After the Ball" was the biggest hit in Tin Pan Alley's long history. Typical of most popular 1890s tunes, the song was a tearjerker, a melodramatic evocation of lost love.

13 A lit - tle mai - den climbed an old man's knee. Begged for a sto - ry.
 26 "Do, un - cle, please! Why are you sin - gle? Why live a - lone? Have
 39 you no ba - bies? Have you no home?" I had a sweet - heart, years, years a -
 52 - go; where she is now, pet, you will soon know. List to the sto -
 65 - ry I'll tell it all, I be - lieved her faith - less af - ter the ball,
 77 Af - ter the ball is o - ver, Af - ter the break of morn, Af - ter the dan - cers' lea - ving,
 89 af - ter the stars are gone; Ma - ny a heart is ach - ing. If you could read them all;
 Ma - ny the hopes that have van - ished Af - ter the ball.

Chorus: After the ball is over, After the break of morn,
 After the dancers' leaving, After the stars are gone:
 Manny a heart is aching, If you could read them all
 Many the hopes that have vanished, After the ball.

Bright lights were flashing in the grand ballroom,
 Softly the music playing sweet tunes;
 There came my sweetheart, my love, my own,
 "I wish some water, leave me alone."

When I returned, dear, there stood a man
 Kissing my sweetheart, as lovers can.
 Down fell the glass, pet, broken, that's all
 Just as my heart was, after the ball.

Long years have passed, child, I've never wed
 True to my lost love, thought she is dead.
 She tried to tell me, tried to explain
 I would not listen, pleadings were vain.
 One day a letter came from that man,
 He was her brother the letter ran;
 That's why I'm lonely, no home at all
 I broke her heart, pet, after the ball.