PLYVE KACHA, PHONETICALLY:

1. Hey, plyveh kacha po Tysyni,
plyveh kacha po Tysyni.
Mamkozh moya, ne lai meni,
Mamkozh moya, ne lai meni.

2. Hey, Zalayesh muy zlu hodynu,
zalayesh muy zlu hodynu.
Sam ne znayu, de pohynu,
Sam ne znayu, de pohynu.

3. Hey, Pohynu yav chuzhim krayu,
Pohynu yav chuzhim krayu.
xhtoz muy budeh brateh yamu?
xhtoz muy budeh brateh yamu?

4. Hey, vyberut muy chuzhi lyude,
vyberut muy chuzhi lyude,
see ne zhael ti, mamko, budeh?
see ne zhael ti, mamko, budeh?

5. Hey, yak buzh meni, synku, ne zhayl
yak buzh meni, synku, ne zhayl
Tizh na moyim sertsyu lezhav
Tizh na moyim sertsyu lezhav

"Plyve Kacha" (Lyrics in Ukranian), *as given, with notes*

Hey, plyve kacha po Tysyni, plyv e is like meh
plyve kacha po Tysyni.
Mamko moya, ne lay meni, mankozh lai maineh
Mamko moya, ne lay meni.

Zalayesh my v zlu hodynu, muy zlu
Oy, zalayesh my v zlu hodynu.
Sam ne znayu, de pohynu,
Sam ne znayu, de pohynu.

Pohynu ya v chuzim krayu, yav chuzhim
Pohynu ya v chuzim krayu.
Chto z my bude braty yamu? ch is in the throat chtoz
bude again with the meh
Chto z my bude braty yamu? brateh

Vyberut mi chuzi lyude, muy chuzhi
Oy vyberut mi chuzi lyude,
Cy ne zal ty, mamko, bude? see ne zhael
Oy, cy ne zal ty, mamko, bude?

Oy yak z meni, synku, ne zal? yak buzh menye synku ne zhayl
Yak ze meni, synku, ne zal?
Ty na moyim sercyu lezav, tizh ts are not hard sersyu lezhav
Ty na moyim sercyu lezav.

THE TRANSLATION

Oh, duckling floats on Tisyna*[1]
Duckling floats on Tisyna.
My mother, don't swear me,
My mother, don't swear me.

Oh, if you will swear me at dark hour,
If you will swear me at dark hour.
I don't know where I'll die,
I don't know where I'll die.

Oh, I'll die on foreign lands
I will die on foreign lands.
Who will prepare a grave for me?
Who will prepare a grave for me?

Oh, another people will prepare,
Strangers will prepare.
Won't you regret, mother?
Won't you regret, mother?

Oh, my son, how could I not regret?
My son, how could I not regret?
You were laying on my heart,
You were laying on my heart.

THE CONTEXT

'Plyve Kacha Po Tysyni'.
And it has a special meaning to the BBC's Irena Taranyuk.

"I knew this song for a number of years as something very mournful and sad. I used to have a good cry about it when I felt down," said Taranyuk. "It is a lament. It is about a young soldier, a young recruit going off to fight in foreign wars and him having a dialogue with his mother saying ‘My dear mother, what will happen to me if I die in a foreign land?’ and she tells him ‘Well, my dearest, you will be buried by other people.’ It’s really poignant and sad."

That old folk song is now associated with those who lost their lives during the protests in Maidan, Kiev's Independence Square.

“When dozens of people were killed by snipers in Maidan on the 18th and 20th of February 2014 were buried and mourned in the mass funeral on February 21st, it was this song [that was played]. It acquired a life of its own, this song - a new life for the 21st century,” Taranyuk says.

"Plyve Kacha Po Tysyni" translates as "The duckling swims." For generations of Ukrianians, it has been a song warning of the risks of warfare.