

Joe Hill

Billy Bragg

Joe Hill come over from Sweden shores
Looking for some work to do
And the Statue of Liberty waved him by
As Joe come a sailing through, Joe Hill
As Joe come a sailing through.

Oh his clothes were coarse and his hopes were high
As he headed for the promised land
And it took a few weeks on the out-of-work streets
Before he began to understand
Before he began to understand

And Joe got hired by a bowery bar
sweeping up the saloon
As his rag would sail over the bar room rail
Sounded like he whistled on a tune
You could almost hear him whistling on a tune
And Joe rolled on from job to job
From the docks to the railroad line
And no matter how hungry the hand that wrote
In his letters he was always doing fine
In his letters he was always doing fine
Oh, the years went by like the sun goin' down

slowly turn the page
And when Joe looked back at the sweat upon his tracks
He had nothing to show but his age
He had nothing to show but his age
So he headed out for the California shore

There things were just as bad
So he joined the industrial workers of the world
'Cause, The union was the only friend he had
'Cause, The union was the only friend he had
Now the strikes were bloody and the strikes were black

as hard as they were long
In the dark of night Joe would stay awake and write
In the morning he would raise them with a song
In the morning he would raise them with a song
And he wrote his words to the tunes of the day

To be passed along the union vine
And the strikes were led and the songs were spread
And Joe Hill was always on the line
Yes Joe Hill was always on the line
Now in Salt Lake City a murder was made

There was hardly a clue to find
Oh, the proof was poor, but the sheriff was sure
Joe was the killer of the crime
That Joe was the killer of the crime
Joe raised his hands but they shot him down
he had nothing but guilt to give
It's a doctor I need and they left him to bleed
He made it 'cause he had the will to live
Yes, He made it 'cause he had the will to live
Then the trial was held in a building of wood
And there the killer would be named
And the days weighed more than the cold copper ore

Cause he feared that he was being framed
Cause he found out that he was being framed
Oh, strange are the ways of western law
Strange are the ways of fate

For the government crawled to the mine owner's call
That the judge was appointed by the state
Yes, The judge was appointed by the state
Oh, Utah justice can be had
But not for a union man

And Joe was warned by summer early morn
That there'd be one less singer in the land
There'd be one less singer in the land
Now William Spry was Governor Spry
And a life was his to hold

On the last appeal, fell a governor's tear
May the lord have mercy on your soul
May the lord have mercy on your soul
Even President Wilson held up the day
But even he would fail

For nobody heard the soul searching words
Of the soul in the Salt Lake City jail
Of the soul in the Salt Lake City jail
For 36 years he lived out his days
And he more than played his part

For his songs that he made, he was carefully paid
With a rifle bullet buried in his heart
With a rifle bullet buried in his heart

Yes, they lined Joe Hill up against the wall

Blindfold over his eyes

It's the life of a rebel that he chose to live

It's the death of a rebel that he died

It's the death of a rebel that he died

Now some say Joe was guilty as charged

And some say he wasn't even there

And I guess nobody will ever know

'Cause the court records all disappeared

'Cause the court records all disappeared

Say wherever you go in this fair land

In every union hall

In the dusty dark these words are marked

In between all the cracks upon the wall

In between all the cracks upon the wall

It's the very last line that Joe Will wrote

When he knew that his days were through

Boys, this is my last and final will

Good luck to all of you

Good luck to all of you