

Thousands Are Sailing

The Pogues

The island it is silent now
But the ghosts still haunt the waves
And the torch lights up a famished man
Who fortune could not save

Did you work upon the railroads?
Did you rid the streets of crime?
Were your dollars from the white house?
Were they from the five and dime?

Did the old songs taunt or cheer you
And did they still make you cry?
Did you count the months and years
Or did your teardrops quickly dry?

"Ah, no", says he, "'twas not to be
On a coffin ship I came here
And I never even got so far
That they could change my name"

Thousands are sailing
Across the western ocean to a land of opportunity
That some of them will never see
Fortune prevailing across the western ocean
Their bellies full, their spirits free
They'll break the chains of poverty and they'll dance

In Manhattan's desert twilight
In the death of afternoon
We stepped hand in hand on Broadway
Like the first man on the moon

And "The Blackbird" broke the silence
As you whistled it so sweet
And in Brendan Behan's footsteps
I danced up and down the street

Then we said goodnight to Broadway
Giving it our best regards
Tipped our hats to Mister Cohan
Dear old Times Square's favorite bard

Then we raised a glass to JFK
And a dozen more besides
When I got back to my empty room
I suppose I must have cried

Thousands are sailing again
Across the ocean where the hand of opportunity
Draws tickets in a lottery, postcards we're mailing
Of sky-blue skies and oceans from rooms the daylight
Never sees where lights don't glow on Christmas trees
But we dance to the music and we dance

Thousands are sailing
Across the western ocean where the hand of opportunity
Draws tickets in a lottery, where e'er we go

We celebrate the land that makes us refugees
From fear of Priests with empty plates
From guilt and weeping effigies and we dance