

John Was Hardly More Than A Bewildered Observer At His Own Trial, ...

Fairport Convention

"Lee," the sergeant said to me, "acting on my discretion
It is my solemn duty to arrest you on suspicion"
They put me in a carriage, I was driven many miles
They locked me in a prison cell to await my trial
John 'Babbacombe' Lee
John 'Babbacombe' Lee

The man who'd defend me was ill and couldn't come
His brother came to lend me help and I knew I was undone
"Do just what you want with me, I don't have a choice
You'd do as well without me as I'm not allowed to use my voice"
The judge sits high and mighty and he asks me who I am
The robes he wears impress me but he looks a kindly man
"To all who've come to see me, for those that'd prove me guilty
May the joker hear your call and show you all more mercy"
John 'Babbacombe' Lee
John 'Babbacombe' Lee
John 'Babbacombe' Lee
John 'Babbacombe' Lee

The trial was quickly over and my head was full of pain
I was slowly going crazy with the same story over again
I was tired and aching, I was standing half asleep
All I wanted was to take the weight from off my feet
John 'Babbacombe' Lee
John 'Babbacombe' Lee

The jury filed in slowly while we waited their command
"Courage, John, you're helpless and you are in heaven's hand"
John Lee's not scared of dying, there's a smile in all you'll find
Cradled in a deep sleep with a perfect peace of mind
I cannot blame the jury, on the evidence they heard
It seemed that I was guilty, hanged by too many words
I smiled in front of people so I told them what it meant
I trust the Lord in heaven and he knows I'm innocent
John 'Babbacombe' Lee
John 'Babbacombe' Lee

...

There's a tiny little window and the sun comes shining through
Dancing with the dust that's in my cell
There's a sparrow sitting on the sill and he stays for a minute or two
But he's frightened by the ringing of the bell
There's a bed that I must lie on when at night I take my rest
And a chair for me to sit on through the day
The men who wait beside me always know what's best
For a man who doesn't have too much to say

Throw a laugh into the corner, blow a tear against the wall
Learn a game to play, improve the mind
Confess your sins, you sinners, see how the seconds fall
Leave all earthly cares and woes behind
And when my short affair with life is ended and I'm gone
Will you tell the world the story of John Lee?
All you see is nothing and yet everything lives on
I was born to pay the hangman's fee