

## Tattoo

Janis Ian

Her new name was tattooed to her wrist  
It was longer than the old one  
Sealed in the silence with a fist  
This night will be a cold one  
Centuries live in her eyes  
Destiny laughs over jack-booted thighs  
"Work makes us free" says the sign  
Nothing leaves here alive  
Tattoo  
She steps out of line to the left,  
and her father to the right  
One sides a cold, clean death  
The other is an endless night  
Gold from a grandmother's tooth  
Mountains of jewelry and toys  
piled in the corners, mailed across the borders  
Presents for the girls and boys  
Presents for the girls and boys  
Tattoo  
It gets darker every night  
Spread-eagled out among the stars, she says  
Somewhere in this tunnel lives a light  
Still my beating heart  
I have never known a man  
What man will want me now?  
Am I still alive, somehow?  
If I can survive, somehow  
Tattooed  
Soldiers from the other side  
liberated them at dawn  
Gave her water, gave her life  
She still had all her clothes on  
She lived until she died  
Empty as the autumn leaves that fly  
Surgeons took the mark  
but they could not take it far  
It was written on her heart  
Written on her empty heart  
Tattooed