

The Man Who Wrote Danny Boy

Joe Jackson

It happened one night
At three in the morning
The devil appeared in my studio room
And he said I'm your pal
And I'll make you a deal
Blow away your struggle
And take your soul for a toy

After rubbing my eyes
I looked all around me
At the half-finished drivel I'd worked on for days
And I told him my dream
Was to live for all time
In some perfect refrain
Like the man who wrote Danny Boy

And I said if you're real, then I'll ask you a question
While most of us turn into ashes or dust
Just you and that other guy go on forever
But who writes the history
And who do I trust?

He gave me a wink
And he said it was funny
How mortals would pour all their blood, sweat and tears
Onto tape, onto paper
Or into the air
To be lost and forgotten
Outside of his kind employ

Then I thought I could hear a great sound in the distance
Of whiskey-soaked singing
And laughter and cheers
And they're saying, that song could bring tears to a glass eye
So pass me the papers, I'll sign them in blood

And the smell of the brimstone was turned into greasepaint
And the roar of the crowd like the furies of hell
And I hear the applause and I hear the bells ringing
And the sound of a woman's voice from the next room saying

Come to me now
Come lay down beside me
Whatever you're doing you're too going to see
You can't hold onto shadows, no more than to years
So be glad for the pleasures
We're young enough to enjoy

So maybe I'm drunk
Or maybe a liar
Or maybe we're all living inside a dream
You can say what you like
When I'm gone, then you'll see
I'll be down in the dark
Down underground
With Shakespeare and Bach
And the man who wrote Danny Boy