

## Joe Hill

Phil Ochs

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 barroom 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"