

# 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