

Blind Willie McTell

The Band

Seen the arrow on the door post
Saying, "This land is condemned"
All the way
From New Orleans to Jerusalem

I traveled through East Texas
Where many martyrs fell
And I know one thing, nobody can sing
Them blues like blind Willie McTell

Well, I heard the hoot-owl singing
As they were taking down the tents
The stars above all the barren trees
Were his only audience

Yeah, them charcoal gypsy maidens
Can strut their feathers well
And I know one thing, nobody can sing
Them blues like blind Willie McTell

See them big plantations a-burning
Can't you hear the cracking of the whips?
Smell that sweet magnolia blossom blooming
See the ghosts of the slavery ships

Well, I can hear them tribes a-moanin'
I can hear the undertaker's bell
And I know one thing, nobody can sing
Them blues like blind Willie McTell

There's a woman, she's standing by the river
She is with some fine young handsome man
See he's all dressed just like a squire
He's got bootleg whiskey in his hand

Yeah, there's a chain-gang out on the highway
And I can hear them rebels yell
And I know one thing, nobody can sing
Them blues like blind Willie McTell

God, oh God is in Heaven
And we all want what is His
But the power and greed, the corruptible seed
Seems to be all that there is

Hey, hey, I'm a-gazing out the window
Of the St. James Hotel
And I know one thing, nobody can sing
Them blues like blind Willie McTell
Hey, hey, I know one thing, nobody can sing
Them blues like blind Willie McTell