

Did It Really Happen Here?

They said it couldn't happen
Don't give in to your fears
But now nobody's laughing
There's far too many tears

As everything unraveled
The options disappeared
They said it couldn't happen
Did it really happen here?

I put it on the record
I need to get this down
For if it happens someday
I might not be around

And as that day approaches
The scene becomes so clear
We'll wring our hands and wonder
How did we let it happen here?
Now we stand around and wonder
Did it really happen here?

1960s Holiday

Days like this just make me wanna pack it in
Find a mountain of my own
Load the Airstream up and roll it round the bend
Half a century ago

Oh I wanna go
Oh I wanna go
Oh I wanna go
This place no longer feels like home

Have we really gone down that far?
Have we really lowered the bar?
It can be jumped over by a washed-up, B-list TV star
Gets to this I need to make a getaway
Let's take a long, extended 1960s holiday

Mom's got dinner on the checkered tablecloth
And all your favorite TV shows
Let's go back to when those hippies changed the world
And a nation found its soul

Don't you wanna go?
Don't you wanna go?
Don't you wanna go?
This place no longer feels like home

Have we really gone down that far?
Have we really lowered the bar?
It can be jumped over by a washed-up, B-list TV star
Gets to this I need to make a getaway
Let's take a long, extended 1960s holiday
Gets to this I need to make a getaway
Let's take a long, extended 1960s holiday

We Have Fed You All for a Thousand Years

**(By “an unknown proletarian” as printed in the IWW’s
Little Red Songbook, 1919 edition)**

We have fed you all for a thousand years
And you hail us still unfed
Though there's never a dollar of all your wealth
But marks the workers' dead
We have yielded our best to give you rest
And you lie on crimson wool
Then if blood be the price of all your wealth
Good God! We have paid it in full!

There is never a mine blown skyward now
But we're buried alive for you
There's never a wreck drifts shoreward now
But we are its ghastly crew
Go reckon our dead by the forges red
And the factories where we spin
If blood be the price of your cursed wealth,
Good God! We have paid it in!

We have fed you all for a thousand years
For that was our doom, you know
From the days when you chained us in your fields
To the strike of a week ago
You have taken our lives, and our babies and wives
And we're told it's your legal share,
But if blood be the price of your lawful wealth
Good God! We have bought it fair!

Nothing Left to Say

Jim is sitting in the corner
They've engaged the parking brake
As I launch into another song
His one finger starts to shake

It's been months since he has spoken
Mostly he just sits and stares
Long ago he was a drummer
But now he doesn't leave this chair

So I smile at him, and I feel for Jim
I can see him slipping away
My greatest fear, one day you'll find me here
With nothing left to say

Several years ago I met him
The music jolted him awake
He'd rap his hands upon the table
So hard I feared that they might break

Now the drummer's hands are quiet
Silenced by the hands of time
But that one finger still remembers
And it's sending me a sign

So I smile at him, and I feel for Jim
I can see him slipping away
My greatest fear, one day you'll find me here
With nothing left to say

So I smile at him, and I feel for Jim
I can see him slipping away
My greatest fear, one day you'll find me here
With nothing left to say

There is Nothing Like a Mother's Love

She forgot my birthday last year, though it was the first time
But then the calls stopped coming here, for weeks at a time

And you ask me if I'm getting used to it
A little more I say
Holding on to the last of the memories as they slip away

There is nothing like a mother's love
There is nothing like a mother's love
If there's just one thing I'm certain of
There is nothing like a mother's love

Now she smiles and she takes my hand and she says hello to me
Then she asks, "Have you met my son?" as she points at the orderly

And you ask me if I'm getting used to it
A little more each day
Holding on to the last of the memories as they slip away

There is nothing like a mother's love
There is nothing like a mother's love
If there's just one thing I'm certain of
There is nothing like a mother's love
There is nothing like a mother's love
If there's just one thing I'm certain of
There is nothing like a mother's love

How Can I Keep from Singing?

(Traditional, Third verse by Doris Plenn)

My life flows on in endless song
Above earth's lamentation
I hear the real, though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation

Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear that music ringing
It sounds an echo in my soul
How can I keep from singing?

What though the tempest loudly roars
I know the truth, it live'th
What though the darkness round me close
Songs in the night it give'th

No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that rock I'm clinging
Since love is lord of Heaven and earth
How can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble, sick with fear
And hear their death-knell ringing
When friends rejoice both far and near
How can I keep from singing?

In prison cell and dungeon vile
Our thoughts to them are winging
When friends by shame are undefiled
How can I keep from singing?
How can I keep from singing?

Oklahoma's Son

In school they made us sing it every morning like the sun
And the words all ran together 'til it ended up as fun
All the images forever captured by an Oklahoma son
That could be the biggest thing a man has ever done

Oh, Woody, you were past it by the time that I was born
And your Huntington's disease had left you frail and mute and torn
Already bound for glory, a million thoughts, a thousand songs
Already passed to legend by the day that I was born

You were Oklahoma's son, but in the end belonged to no one
Signpainter, singer, sailor, soldier, bum
Both a father and a child, a fascist-fighting, union man
Writing songs and poems for everyone

No the Dust Bowl couldn't stop you, nor could the bulls in the railroad yards
You found thousands of your people under bridges and in boxcars
There was opportunity in everything you saw
A chance to turn a witnessing into another song

You were Oklahoma's son, but in the end belonged to no one
Signpainter, singer, sailor, soldier, bum
Both a father and a child, a fascist-fighting union man
Writing songs and poems for everyone

Sure, in later years you staggered drunk, disabled, rambling on
There's so much in your short life and work to cherish and pass on
And though they don't sing all your words in polite company
Still I know this land was truly made for you and me

So every time I sing that song to the old or to the young
Yeah, I sing all the verses like I know you would have done
And I bow my head to greatness, make sure they know who you were
And that's the greatest gift I got from Oklahoma's son
That could be the greatest gift from Oklahoma's son
And that could be the biggest thing a man has ever done

I Don't Know How We Made It Home

Hey Tom, you know I still recall the night we nearly died
Driving home from another gig, both of us so fried
You grabbed the wheel and called my name as I drifted to the side
And saved our families from a life of sorrow

We were young and crazy then, stupid and carefree
At seventeen, yeah, I was sure that nothing could stop me
And by the grace of God or some gentle force unseen
We touched the line but made it to tomorrow

I don't know how we made it home
We were so young, we were so stoned
Was someone watching over us, or did we do it on our own?
I don't know how, but we always made it home

Now every time that I drive back through our old town
I circle 'round the places where some of us fell down
For John and Beth and Wayne are seared forever in my brain
And there they live, forever seventeen

I don't know how we made it home
We were so drunk, we were so stoned
Was someone watching over us, or did we do it on our own?
I don't know how, but we always made it home

Yeah, I was glad I had your back, and you always had mine
And if it ever came to that, could you do it one more time?

So just a word of caution from someone who shouldn't be here
You might think you're invincible, still living without fear
But keep in mind, as you unwind, that danger's always near
And call me if you need safe passage home

I don't know how we made it home
We were so drunk, we were so stoned
Was someone watching over us, or did we do it on our own?
I don't know how, but we always made it home
I don't know how, but we always made it home

This Island Ain't Big Enough

Once again, you fly off down the highway, and I'll sit right here and cry
And every time that it comes to this, I get to wondering why
Why we cannot live together, and why we won't move on apart
And why you always seem contented when you're done breaking my heart

So go on now, you can say I'm crazy
You can tell 'em all I'm blind
But out here I can see so clearly—
And I can see to the other side

Oh, you had big dreams but the big dreams all went bust
This island ain't big enough for the two of us
This island ain't big enough

The lapping of the ocean, the lonely seagull's cry
The kids in constant motion, they all scatter when you come by
Now there's anger in your every word, and a venom in your soul
And you walk so high and mighty, but you hide a great big hole

So go on now, you can say I'm crazy
You can tell 'em I'm unkind
But out here I can see so clearly—
And I can see from the other side,

Oh, you had big dreams but you left them in the dust
This island ain't big enough for the two of us
Oh, you had big dreams but the big dreams all went bust
This island ain't big enough for the two of us
This island ain't big enough....

Every Loser Was Someone Once

Out of breath from going too fast down the staircase, he pauses
Thinking about the first time they climbed those steps together
Long ago it once meant something to live here
Near Prospect Park and the subway cars
That took you under the river

Oh, but everybody was someone once you know
Who were you so long ago?

A drunkard dribbles on his chest near the corner
With last night's booze and the Sunday News
Enveloping him in peaceful sleep
Who's got time to pity him or to wrap a limp fist tight around a dollar bill
That probably will get stolen anyway?

Oh, but every loser was someone once you know
Tell me who you were so long ago?

Addicted boys are hawking crack on the corner
I look around and there's no one there
To show them a better way
They say these people suffer from lack of character
But I say that's not the question here
As I race away, away

Oh, but every loser was someone once you know
Who were you so long ago?
Every loser was someone once you know

Hood River Roll On

(U. Utah Phillips)

The rusty pot bubbles, the bottle goes 'round
Did you hear about Blackie? He flagged the westbound
The young ones drift off to get drunk in their dreams
The old men sip coffee and stare through the steam

Chorus

Hood River, roll on
There's so much to remember
The old times are gone
Hood River, roll on

The fire's knocked down, the balloons are all packed
They're coughin' and flappin' along the steel track
The green kid remembers the old man's advice
He shakes out his bedroll and rolls it up nice

Chorus

The box rumbles up on a black cinder grade
Some tumble inside, the others just wave
'Til scattered by smoke or the crunch of the shack
But no one looks up and no one looks back

Chorus

May your long apple valleys stay green through the fall
And your magic white mountain watch over us all
Lead your old appleknockers in out of the snow
Let your rubber tramps ride where the trains never go

Chorus

Fishing at the End of the World

It began like any other day, I made a list to be done
But suddenly the sky just turned to gray, I was still on number one
And then the sound of the explosions, there was nowhere to run

Now I'm sitting in this cellar, with this guitar in my hands
Will and I were going fishing tonight, someone else had other plans
But you won't find me in this basement, no, no, as the final act's unfurled
Will and I are going fishing tonight, fishing at the end of the world

I look at him, he looks at me, we look outside again
We both see the city dust and debris carried by an angry wind
Will is thinking of his family, mine are oh, so far away

Now I'm sitting in this cellar, with this guitar in my hands
Will and I were going fishing tonight, but someone else had other plans
We might not be here tomorrow, as the final act's unfurled
So Will and I are going fishing tonight, fishing at the end of the world

If you want to come and join us, let's give it one more whirl
We'll be sitting on the dock tonight, sitting at the end of the world
Will and I are going fishing tonight, fishing at the end of the world