

Bob Dylan, Blind Willie McTell

Seen the arrow on the doorpost
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 no one can sing the blues
Like Blind Willie McTell
Well, I heard the hoot owl singing
As they were taking down the tents
The stars above the barren trees
Were his only audience
Them charcoal gypsy maidens
Can strut their feathers well
But nobody can sing the blues
Like Blind Willie McTell
See them big plantations burning
Hear the cracking of the whips
Smell that sweet magnolia blooming
(And) see the ghosts of slavery ships
I can hear them tribes a-moaning
(I can) hear the undertaker's bell
(Yeah), nobody can sing the blues
Like Blind Willie McTell
There's a woman by the river
With some fine young handsome man
He's dressed up like a squire
Bootlegged whiskey in his hand
There's a chain gang on the highway
I can hear them rebels yell
And I know no one can sing the blues
Like Blind Willie McTell
Well, God is in heaven
And we all want what's his
But power and greed and corruptible seed
Seem to be all that there is
I'm gazing out the window
Of the St. James Hotel
And I know no one can sing the blues
Like Blind Willie McTell