

“The Scottsboro Boys”
by **Lead Belly (1938)**

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell ya what it all about

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell ya what it all about

I'm gonna talk to Joe Louis
And it all angered me
Don't even try to think about it
Alabama *ree*

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell ya all about

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell ya all about

I'm gonna tell all the colored people
Even the old nigger here
Don't ya ever go to Alabama
And try to live

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Gon' tell ya all about

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell ya all about

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell ya all about

I'm gonna tell all the colored people
Livin' in Harlem *swing*
Don't ya ever go to Alabama
Just try to sing

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Gon' tell ya all about

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell it all about

I'm gonna tell all the colored people
Livin' in Harlem *swing*
Don't ya ever go to Alabama
Just try to sing

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell what it's all about

Go to Alabama and ya better watch out
The landlord'll get ya, gonna jump and shout
Scottsboro Scottsboro Scottsboro boys
Tell what it's all about

My Thoughts and Comments

“The Blinding of Isaac Woodard”
as performed by **Woody Guthrie (1946)**

My name is Isaac Woodard, my tale I'll tell you;
I'm sure it'll sound so terrible you might not think it
true;
I joined up with the Army, they sent me overseas;
Through the battles of New Guinea and in the
Philippines.

On the 13th day of February 1946
They sent me to Atlanta and I got my discharge pin;
I caught the bus for Winnsboro, going to meet my wife,
Then we were coming to New York City to visit my
parents both.

About an hour out of Atlanta, the sun was going down,
We stopped the bus at a drugstore in a little country
town;
I walked up to the driver and I looked him in the eye,
"I'd like to go to the washroom, if you think we got
time."

The driver started cursing, and then he hollered, "No!"
So, then I cussed right back at him, and really got him
told.
He said, "If you will hurry, I guess I'll take the time!"
It was in a few short minutes we was rolling down the
line.

We rolled for thirty minutes, I watched the shacks and
trees,
I thought of my wife in Winnsboro waiting there for me.
In Aiken, South Carolina, the driver he jumped out;
He came back with a policeman to take me off the bus.

"Listen, Mr. Policeman," I started to explain,
"I did not cause no trouble, and I did not raise no cain."
He hit me with his billy, he cursed me up and down,
"Shut up, you black bastard"; and he walked me down
in town.

As we walked along the sidewalk, my right arm he did
twist;
I knew he wanted me to fight back, but I never did
resist;
"Have you your Army discharge?" I told him, yes, I had;
He pasted me with his loaded stick down across my
head.

I grabbed his stick and we had a little run, and had a
little wrastle;
When another cop run up with a gun and jumped into
the battle;
"If you don't drop that sap, black boy, it's me that's
dropping you."
So I figured to drop that loaded sap was the best thing I
could do.

They beat me about the head and face and left a bloody
trail
All down along the sidewalk to the iron door of the jail;
He knocked me down upon the ground and he poked me
in the eyes;
When I woke up next morning, I found my eyes were
blind.

They drug me to the courtroom, and I could not see the
judge;
He fined me fifty dollars for raising all the fuss;
The doctor finally got there but it took him two whole
days;
He handed me some drops and salve and told me to treat
myself.

It's now you've heard my story, there's one thing I can't
see,
How you could treat a human like they have treated me;
I thought I fought on the islands to get rid of their kind;
But I can see the fight lots plainer now that I am blind.

My Thoughts and Comments

“The Death of Emmett Till”
by **Bob Dylan (1962)**

'Twas down in Mississippi not so long ago
When a young boy from Chicago town
stepped through a Southern door
This boy's dreadful tragedy I can still
remember well
The color of his skin was black and his
name was Emmett Till

Some men they dragged him to a barn and
there they beat him up
They said they had a reason, but I can't
remember what
They tortured him and did some things too
evil to repeat
There were screaming sounds inside the
barn, there was laughing sounds
out on the street

Then they rolled his body down a gulf
amidst a bloody red rain
And they threw him in the waters wide to
cease his screaming pain
The reason that they killed him there, and
I'm sure it ain't no lie
Was just for the fun of killin' him and to
watch him slowly die

And then to stop the United States of
yelling for a trial
Two brothers they confessed that they had
killed poor Emmett Till
But on the jury there were men who helped
the brothers commit this
awful crime
And so this trial was a mockery, but nobody
seemed to mind

I saw the morning papers but I could not
bear to see
The smiling brothers walkin' down the
courthouse stairs

For the jury found them innocent and the
brothers they went free
While Emmett's body floats the foam of a
Jim Crow southern sea

If you can't speak out against this kind of
thing, a crime that's so unjust
Your eyes are filled with dead men's dirt,
your mind is filled with dust
Your arms and legs they must be in shackles
and chains, and your blood

it must refuse to flow
For you let this human race fall down so
God-awful low!

This song is just a reminder to remind your
fellow man

That this kind of thing still lives today in
that ghost-robed Ku Klux Klan
But if all of us folks that thinks alike, if we
gave all we could give
We could make this great land of ours a
greater place to live

My Thoughts and Comments