

The Industrial Workers of the World
By:Laura B. Payne Emerson

I stood by a city prison,
In the twilight's deepening gloom,
Where men and women languished
In a loathsome, living tomb.
They were singing, and their voices
Seemed to weave a wreath of light
As the words came clear with meaning:
"Workers of the World, Unite!"

Hail, ye brave Industrial Workers,
Vanguard of the coming day
When labor's host shall cease to cringe
And shall dash their chains away.
How the masters dread you, hate you,
Their uncompromising foe,
For they see in you a menace
Threat'ning soon their overthrow.

As it was with Galileo,
And all thinkers of the past,
So with these Industrial Workers,
Tyrant shackles hold them fast;
In the bastilles of the nations,
They are bludgeoned, mugged and starved
While upon their aching bodies
Prints of whips and clubs are carved.

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Yet, with spirits still unbroken
And with hope for future years,
They are calling to their fellows:
"Come, arise and dry your tears;
Wake, ye toilers; get in action;
Break your bonds; exert your might:
You can make this hell a heaven;
Workers of the World, Unite!"

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How the masters dread you, hate you,
Their uncompromising foe,
For they see in you a menace
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Hark, ye masters, lords and rulers
With the cruel iron hand,
Labor built your thrones and altars,
Made the wealth you now command,
And some day it'll wrest it from you,
Break your scaffolds, burn your jails,
Sink your warships, kill your soldiers
To the music of your wails!

We can make this hell a heaven:

"Workers of the World, Unite!"