Birdman
by Ralph McTell

You can kill me if you can
But the last thing you need's another dead man.
Writing with black ink on your page
And I swear that death won't kill my rage.

For it'll take more to hold my tongue
Than your prison and your knives and your clubs and your guns.

I don't want no peace prize
I will not do what you say's wise
I'm a birdman but there's no cage
That's strong enough to hold my rage.

Chorus

Now John Henry told his captain,
That a man ain't nothing but a man
But before I let this machine grind me down
I'll die with my hammer in my hand.

So the birdman told his jailor
A man ain't nothing but a man
But before I let your system grind me down
I'll die with my gun in my hand.

Chorus

Those bells do ring, ding dong ding
And I don't fear no guard.
When freedom come maybe with a gun
Outside in the prison yard.

I'm a birdman, oh watch me fly.
I'm a birdman, death, sweet death,
She can't hold me.