1913 Massacre

Elliot Jack

Take a trip with me in 1913
To Calumet, Michigan, in the copper country
I'll take you to a place called Italian Hall
And the miners are having their big Christmas BallI'll take you in a door and up a high stairs
Singing and dancing is heard everywhere
I'll let you shake hands with the people you see
And watch the kids dance round that big Christmas treeThere's talking and laughing and songs in the air
And the spirit of Christmas is there everywhere
Before you know it, you're friends with us all
And you're dancing around and around in the hallYou ask about work and you ask about pay
They'll tell you that they make less than a dollar a day
Working the copper claims, risking their lives
So it's fun to spend Christmas with children and wivesHey, little girl sits down by the Christmas tree lights
To play the piano, so you gotta keep quiet
To hear all this fun you would not realize
That the copper boss thug men are milling outsideThe copper boss thugs stuck their heads in the door
One of them yelled and he screamed, "There's a fire"
A lady, she hollered, "There's no such a thing
Keep on with your party, there's no such a thing"A few people rushed and it's only a few
"It's just the thugs and the scabs fooling you"
A man grabbed his daughter and he carried her down
But the thugs held the door and he could not get outAnd then others followed, a hundred or more
But most everybody remained on the floor
The gun thugs they laughed at their murderous joke
And the children were smothered on the stairs by the doorSuch a terrible sight I never did see
We carried our children back up to their tree
The scabs outside still laughed at their spree
And the children that died there were seventy threeThe piano played a slow funeral tune
And the town was lit up by a cold Christmas moon
The parents they cried and the miners they moaned
"See what your greed for money has done"

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