

San Francisco Mabel Joy

John Denver

His Daddy was a simple man, just a red dirt Georgia farmer
And his Momma spent her young life havin' kids and balin' hay
He had fifteen years and an ache inside to wander
So he hopped a freight in Waycross and wound up in L.A.

Lord, the cold nights had no pity on a Waycross, Georgia farm boy
Most days he went hungry, then the summer came
He met a girl known on the strip as San Francisco's Mabel Joy
Destitutions child born of an L.A. street called "Shame"

Growin' up came quietly in the arms of Mabel Joy
Laughter found their mornings brought meaning to his life
Yes, the night before she left sleep came and left that Waycross, Georgia boy
With dreams of Georgia cotton and a California wife

Sunday morning found him standin' neath the red light at her door
When a right cross sent him reelin', put him face down on the floor
In place of Mabel Joy he found a merchant mad marine
Who growled, "Your Georgia neck is red but sonny, you're still green"

He turned twenty-one in a gray rock fed'ral prison
The old judge had no mercy for a Waycross, Georgia boy
Starin' at those four gray walls in silence he would listen
To that midnight freight he knew would take him back to Mabel Joy

Sunday mornin' found him standin' 'neath the red light at her door
With a bullet in his side, he cried, "Have you seen Mabel Joy?"
Stunned and shaken someone said, "Why, she's not here no more
She left this house four years today, they say she's lookin' for some Gergia farm boy"