

# Tom Mooney Walks at Midnight

MICHAEL GOLD

1

THE prison sleeps! A murderer moans. A boy insane  
fingers the bars.  
Down the long corridor flickers a sick yellow star to  
light the dreary acres of steel and death.  
And a guard paces the tower under a powerful moon.  
And yawns!  
They sleep!  
Wife-killer, bankrupt, fool and rogue.  
Children of the poisoned social womb.

2

Does Comintern live?  
Are the workers marching?  
These are the thoughts that ache and burn  
In the heart of a class-war prisoner  
Alone in a cell at midnight.

3

It is the dark hour.  
Tom Mooney paces his cell.  
At midnight battles are lost and won.  
Tom opens his door. Glides through the steel and concrete.  
Unlocks the gate to the world.  
The guard cannot see:  
Tom walks the hills to his world.

4

Two pale miners from the Ruhr lie on a straw bunk in con-  
centration camp.  
"Is it well with you, my comrades?"  
"It is well, Tom Mooney!"  
In Berlin streets our songs are sung by bloody lips.  
Hitler will end!  
In steel mills our teachers stoke the furnaces of a red tomorrow.  
Hitler will perish!  
On every ship our navigators steer the course to freedom.  
Hitler must die!  
Our factory forts are still unconquered!  
Fascism is the last frenzy of a dying ape!  
We have gained the last terrible clarity. All or nothing!  
It is well with us, Tom Mooney!"

5

Tom Mooney walks the world at midnight.  
A sentry raises his blithering bayonet. The moon lights his  
calm young face. It shines on tents and a trampled  
ricefield.  
"Who goes there?"  
"Tom Mooney."  
"Welcome, comrade, to the Red Army of Soviet China!"  
"Comrades, is it well with you?"  
"Well! Our Soviet is a symphony of hope rising from sixty  
million broken hearts of proletarian China.  
We are building the beautiful world of brotherhood, peace, and  
rice.  
One race—one class—one dream: Communism!"  
Cannon boomed from the Dragon Hills,  
The sentry woke the vast army,  
Red flags saluted Tom Mooney in China.

6

Tom roams the Arctic shores. Fishermen greet him: Swedes,  
Lapps, Finns.

They report to Tom Mooney. All is bitter. All is well. The  
ocean has its ebb and flood. Comintern is never still!  
In Africa the drums beat. Voodoo priests make the old mum-  
mery. But in the mining camps Lenin speaks.  
A secretary of the African Laborers' Union is reading a  
pamphlet on imperialism.  
"Comrade Mooney, the African race is a young giant reaching  
for the Marxist key that unlocks all jails."  
The two embrace, and know that all's well.

7

Paris! Belgrade! Barcelona! Hamburg!  
Rome! Athens! Lisbon! Tel-Aviv!  
The planet turns, the moon is a lamp for secret building.  
Among Australian ranches and Hindu mountains Tom finds  
comrades who tell him all is well.  
In Tokio a secret conference of workers, peasants and students  
elect him to their presidium  
And red poets of Japan chant their solemn ballads to Tom.  
Moscow! Kharkov! Tiflis! Baku!  
A brigade of young shock-troopers report:  
"Comrade Mooney, for each year you have suffered in prison  
we have built a hundred monuments: Red factories!  
Member of the Moscow Soviet, it was Lenin who nominated  
you. We elect you year after year.  
The Pacific Ocean does not separate us. It is our leader who is  
locked in San Quentin!"

8

Havana! In a sugar mill stands a Red Guard in ragged overalls.  
He smiles at Comrade Tom and salutes.  
Lima! Bogota! Buenos Aires! All is well!  
The planet turns, the earth bears fruit, Communism marches!  
Battles are lost, but the war is being won!  
Vera Cruz! El Paso! Galveston! It marches!  
Chicago! A proletarian tide sweeps the streets clean of their  
century of capitalist filth and blood!  
New York! In Union Square fifty thousand workers shout the  
great name "Mooney!" in a challenge to the skyscrapers!  
Alabama! In the mysterious pine woods Negro and white share-  
croppers weld their union and greet Tom Mooney!  
The South awakes like a long fallow field! The ice smashes  
up in the farthest north!  
Tom Mooney is inspecting his world!  
San Francisco! His mother:  
"The blood of the proletarian centuries is in you,  
The voice of the famine, the heart of our poor, hungry Ireland.  
It is better to be in jail for the Working Class  
Than in the White House for the capitalists,  
With all my eighty years of sorrow and labor  
I say to you, all shall be well!"

9

Tom Mooney in his cell at midnight—  
It is then battles are lost and won,  
It is then a worker reviews his world,  
Tramps the dangerous roads of birth,  
Finding the far-flung comrade-armies,  
Who tend the flame of Comintern,  
And fight and bleed and will never rest until truly all is well.