

Guthrie Arlo

"Victor Jara"

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words by Adrian Mitchell, music by Arlo Guthrie

Victor Jara of Chile
Lived like a shooting star
He fought for the people of Chile
With his songs and his guitar
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

Victor Jara was a peasant
He worked from a few years old
He sat upon his father's plow
And watched the earth unfold
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

Now when the neighbors had a wedding
Or one of their children died
His mother sang all night for them
With Victor by her side
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

He grew up to be a fighter
Against the people's wrongs
He listened to their grief and joy
And turned them into songs
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

He sang about the copper miners
And those who worked the land
He sang about the factory workers
And they knew he was their man
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

He campaigned for Allende
Working night and day
He sang "Take hold of your brothers hand
You know the future begins today"
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

Then the generals seized Chile
They arrested Victor then
They caged him in a stadium

With five-thousand frightened men
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

Victor stood in the stadium
His voice was brave and strong
And he sang for his fellow prisoners
Till the guards cut short his song
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

They broke the bones in both his hands
They beat him on the head
They tore him with electric shocks
And then they shot him dead
His hands were gentle, his hands were strong

Repeat first verse

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