

🔴 ***Ballad of Lizzie Williams***

©Linda Allen 1982

My name is Lizzie Williams, and my life it has been hard
I've spent much of my sixty years preachin' the word of God
I've preached in Detroit City, my church has been the street
And poverty's the devil, and government's the thief

When I was but twenty-four, I did commit a crime
I loved a man named Washington, and for him I did lie
He committed robbery and when they tracked him down
I told them he had been with me, and Lord, I'd say it now

The trial came so quickly, the jury took its place
But the breath it froze inside me when I saw the judge's face
The white men in the jury box were lookin' hard at me
"Two hundred-eighteen years," he said, "before you can go free"

To the Alabama Prison Farm I went to serve my years
And if I told you what passed there, 'twould fill your eyes with tears
And so I fled that cruel place before nine years were passed
And went up North to Michigan where I was free at last

My life it has been quiet for twenty-seven years
And God has helped me overcome the loneliness and fears
One day my sister Annie and I did disagree
She betrayed my secret past, now prison walls I see

And so I am in prison, I sit here, and I wait
And Governor Bill Milliken, he must decide my fate
But if he sends me back there, may God reward him well
May he, too, learn just what it's like to spend your time in hell.

My name is Lizzie Williams, and my life it has been hard.