

We Are the Champions

LANGUAGE LEVEL
ADVANCED

Track

6

Speaker:
Justin Ratcliffe
(Standard British accent)



Glossary

- 1 **loudspeakers** - altoparlanti.
- 2 **late lead singer** - cantante solista, ora scomparso.
- 3 **the fans could latch on to** - di cui i fan potessero sentirsi partecipi.
- 4 **to be overcome** - essere superate.
- 5 **to achieve** - ottenere.
- 6 **commitments** - impegni.
- 7 **I've paid my dues** - ho pagato ciò che dovevo.
- 8 **I've pulled through** - ce l'ho fatta.
- 9 **chorus** - ritornello.
- 10 **chant** - coro.
- 11 **aimed** - indirizzata, rivolta.
- 12 **togetherness** - spirito di comunanza.
- 13 **challenge** - sfida.
- 14 **bowing** - inchinandosi.
- 15 **my curtain calls** - la mia chiamata alla ribalta.
- 16 **pleasure cruise** - crociera di piacere.
- 17 **struggle** - lotta.

The F.A. Cup Final isn't the only important soccer match this month. There's also the Champions League Final, which will take place in Moscow on May 21st. The victorious team will be considered the best in Europe and, as they receive the trophy, the famous Queen song, "We Are The Champions," will be played over the loudspeakers¹. This is appropriate. As Queen's late lead singer², Freddie Mercury, declared in a 1978 interview: "I was thinking about football when I wrote it. I wanted a participation song, something that the fans could latch on to³."

The song opens with a description of the difficulties that have to be overcome⁴ to achieve⁵ success. The singer has honoured all his commitments⁶ many times ("**I've paid my dues**⁷"), and has suffered, like an innocent man in prison, for things he hasn't done ("**done my sentence... committed no crime**"). Although he has made a few bad mistakes and has been the victim of aggressive actions ("**sand kicked in my face**"), he has survived ("**I've pulled through**⁸"). The chorus⁹ is the instantly recognisable triumphant chant¹⁰ of "**We are the champions.**" In a recent magazine interview, Queen guitarist Brian May remembered the song being "aimed¹¹ at an audience that wanted to feel a togetherness¹² and a power and an optimism. Freddie knew people would sing it." The chorus promises the champions' fight will not end until the challenge¹³ is



Un inno buono per tutte le occasioni in cui c'è da celebrare, energetico, vitale, entusiasmante. Analizziamo il grande successo dei **Queen** e dell'indimenticabile **Freddie Mercury**.

over, and that they have no respect for those without the same determination ("**no time for losers**").

In the second verse we see the singer concluding his performance, bowing¹⁴ and returning to the stage ("**my curtain calls**¹⁵") and thanking those who have supported him on the road to "**fame and fortune and everything that goes with it.**" He repeats that it hasn't been easy, saying it was "**no bed of roses, no pleasure cruise**¹⁶", but continues to see his life as a struggle with the world watching ("**a challenge before the whole human race**") and does not intend to lose.

The song was recorded for the 1977 album *News Of The World* and immediately became a concert favourite. It would also be the last song Freddie Mercury ever performed with Queen. This was at the Knebworth Festival on August 9th, 1986. Mercury died in 1991, at the age of 45.

To appreciate this article fully, we suggest you type "We Are The Champions lyrics" into an Internet search engine, and refer to them as you read. This recording features 15 seconds of the song "We Are the Champions" written by Freddie Mercury in 1977 and recorded by Queen the same year.

English Through Music...

Fergal Kavanagh, the author of this article, runs the website www.tuneintoenglish.com. The Students' Area features activities for learning English through pop music.

