

Story Of Isaac

Leonard Cohen

The door it opened slowly,
my father he came in, was nine years old.
And he stood so tall above me,
his blue eyes they were shining
and his voice was very cold.
He said, "I've had a vision
and you know I'm strong and holy,
I must do what I've been told."
So he started up the mountain,
I was running, he was walking,
and his axe was made of gold.

Well, the trees they got much smaller,
the lake a lady's mirror,
we stopped to drink some wine.
Then he threw the bottle over.
Broke a minute later
and he put his hand on mine.
Thought I saw an eagle
but it might have been a vulture,
I never could decide.
Then my father built an altar,
he looked once behind his shoulder,
he knew I would not hide.

You who build these altars now
to sacrifice these children,
you must not do it anymore.
A scheme is not a vision
and you never have been tempted
by a demon or a god.
You who stand above them now,
your hatchets blunt and bloody,
you were not there before,
when I lay upon a mountain
and my father's hand was trembling
with the beauty of the word.

And if you call me brother now,
forgive me if I inquire,
"Just according to whose plan?"
When it all comes down to dust
I will kill you if I must,
I will help you if I can.
When it all comes down to dust
I will help you if I must,
I will kill you if I can.
And mercy on our uniform,
man of peace or man of war,
the peacock spreads his fan.