

All the Old Heroes

Joseph Arthur

Come over old stranger, let go of your dagger
You stagger and then you are saved
To wander in danger, a babe in the manger
Forgetting mistakes that you've made
Eyes like mine blinking
And endlessly drinking
Letting the warlords inside
Falling like mice into fires of ice
In death we find places to hide

All the old heroes are like children to me now
As I come to burn your shame away
Without knowing exactly how

All the old heroes, young babies without mothers
Left to die on apocalyptic streets
And where are these words from who spoke them before?
Coming down like flashes of heat
I'm never frightened, for death I still welcome
Death I have seen you before
I gave you my keys, my windows, my creeds
But soon I will give you much more

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Love is a fix, a suicide wrist
Blood with an unending flow
To purify lands and soak in the sands
Of places that we'll never go
Jesus come calling
We'll be here and falling
Praying for your hand to show
Catch us in mercy, drink us when thirsty
Each of us falling like snow

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Each one a cathedral
The last junkie needle
Stained glass from blood that is old
And in that cathedral, with the angels of nighttime
Pained in a window so cold
They see through your victims your painful musicians
Playing the saddest of songs
But nobody singing, just a ghost without dreaming
A voice that could right all the wrongs

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Goodbye, sweet diamond the sky in the north wind
Is falling on lepers and snakes

Hello, young mercy, both blessed and thirsty
For solutions to so many mistakes
Without your lover, your tired wonder
The south rain threatens to pour
On skulls like crashing in sunlight basking
Ignoring the strongest of calls

You cannot save them without their consent
Your voice of mercy to them I have sent
You spoke through me
You, a good man
Grew up to listen and give me your hand
Your voice of mercy so strong and so true
It comes out in cascades without residue
Of darkness or lies or doubt or untruth
It's pure like the wind, the rain, and the youth

All the old heroes are like children to you now
As you go to burn their shame away
Without knowing exactly how
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As you go to burn their shame away
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