Albatross

Judy Collins

The lady comes to the gate dressed in lavender and leather
Looking North to the sea she finds the weather fine
She hears the steeple bells ringing through the orchard
All the way from town
She watches seagulls fly
Silver on the ocean stitching through the waves
The edges of the sky

Many people wander up the hills
From all around you
Making up your memories and thinking they have found you
They cover you with veils of wonder as if you were a bride
Young men holding violets are curious to know if you have cried
And tell you why
And ask you why
Any way you answer

Lace around the collars of the blouses of the ladies
Flowers from a Spanish friend of the family
The embroid'ry of your life holds you in
And keeps you out but you survive
Imprisoned in your bones
Behind the isinglass windows of your eyes

And in the night the iron wheels rolling through the rain
Down the hills through the long grass to the sea
And in the dark the hard bells ringing with pain
Come away alone

Even now by the gate with you long hair blowing
And the colors of the day that lie along your arms
You must barter your life to make sure you are living
And the crowd that has come
You give them the colors
And the bells and wind and the dream

Will there never be a prince who rides along the sea and the mountains
Scattering the sand and foam into amethyst fountains
Riding up the hills from the beach in the long summer grass
Holding the sun in his hands and shattering the isinglass?

Day and night and day again and people come and go away forever
While the shining summer sea dances in the glass of your mirror
While you search the waves for love and your visions for a sign
The knot of tears around your throat is crystallizing into your design

And in the night the iron wheels rolling through the rain
Down the hills through the long grass to the sea
And in the dark the hard bells ringing with pain
Come away alone
Come away alone... with me.

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