

Dangerous Spirits

Ray Wylie Hubbard

Dangerous spirits are at large in the hills
cold dark wings is in the air
some have been lost to the shadows within the light
some are beyond the reach of prayer

I myself have stood with the ravens in the rain
a darkness in my heart and a younger face
and with a stolen chestnut mare and a blue navy colt
I was above the law outside the bounds of grace

With a pistol in my hand and no kindness in my eyes
I wore these as a badge high in fashion
but I had to walk away from the powder and the flame
the reason was not fear it was compassion
I let my revolver fall from my hands
and put on the coat of a pilgrim
now there is more to me than between my hat and boots
and the treasures I own no one can steal them

Now I stand in the dirt with the dust on my boots
the road that I choose is less travelled
the flag that I follow is full of holes and torn
and its sacred threads can never be unraveled

And I have met a woman who is in my breath and bones
she's at ease in either calico or leather
she prays to a god who does not hurt or hate
she wears earrings of crystals and feathers

Since I left my revolver in the dirt
I have known peace since that hour
and now I see my life passing before my eyes
as a petal falling from a flower

Ah but there are dangerous spirits are at large in the hills
cold dark wings is in the air
some have been lost to the shadows within the light
some are beyond the reach of prayer