

The Northwest Passage

The Longest Johns

Westward from the Davis Strait
'Tis there 'twas said to lie
The sea route to the Orient
For which so many died
Seeking gold and glory
Leaving weathered, broken bones
And a long-forgotten lonely cairn of stones

Ah, for just one time
I would take the Northwest Passage
To find the hand of Franklin
Reaching for the Beaufort Sea
Tracing one warm line
Through a land so wild and savage
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea

Three centuries thereafter
I take passage overland
In the footsteps of brave Kelso
Where his "sea of flowers" began
Watching cities rise before me
Then behind me sink again
This tardiest explorer
Driving hard across the plain

Ah, for just one time
I would take the Northwest Passage
To find the hand of Franklin
Reaching for the Beaufort Sea
Tracing one warm line
Through a land so wild and savage
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea

And through the night, behind the wheel
The mileage clicking west
I think upon Mackenzie
David Thompson and the rest
Who cracked the mountain ramparts
And did show a path for me
To race the roaring Fraser to the sea

Ah, for just one time
I would take the Northwest Passage
To find the hand of Franklin
Reaching for the Beaufort Sea
Tracing one warm line
Through a land so wild and savage
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea

How then am I so different
From the first men through this way?
Like them, I left a settled life
I threw it all away
To seek a Northwest Passage
At the call of many men
To find there but the road back home again

Ah, for just one time
I would take the Northwest Passage
To find the hand of Franklin
Reaching for the Beaufort Sea
Tracing one warm line
Through a land so wild and savage
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea

And make a Northwest Passage to the sea
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea