

## Vienna Teng "Say Uncle"

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Everyone agrees it came too soon  
It was only meant to be an intersection  
You kept fear of death in the back pocket of your jeans  
In the palm of your hand, affection

It came like a sudden gust of wind  
Leaving them bewildered to ask how  
I recall last time we met you said we'd meet again  
The irony is only bitter now

These days everyone cries, "Say uncle"  
They want to touch your spirit lest it die  
For this your sons and widow gather with us at the table  
To form a healing circle for our new demise

These days everyone cries, "Say uncle"  
I retrieve the memories quickly as I can  
Add them to the portrait we all draw in our minds  
Your body gone, we shall keep the man

I close my eyes and hope they do not fade  
These remnants of a voice and of a smile  
Images of landscape cloaked in forest green  
Like your life unfolding mile by mile

A fierce embrace, a word of thanks  
A cheerful whistle and hours in a van  
Somehow these pieces must bring back the man you  
were  
Though the ocean claims your ashes on the sand

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