

## Joan Baez "Gulf Winds"

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It's only when the high winds blow that I wish my hair  
was long  
Sailing through the autumn leaves singin' an ancient  
song  
Or falling in love in the streets at night at the edge of a  
local square  
It's only that I'm here tonight thinkin' I was there

There's high winds on the pier tonight, my soul departs  
from me  
Striding like Thalia's Ghost south on the murky sea  
And into midnight's tapestry she fades, ragged and  
wild  
Searching down her ancestry in the costume of a  
Persian child

So Gulf winds bring me flying fish, that shine in the  
crescent moon  
Show me the horizon where the dawn will break anew  
And cool me here on this lonely pier, where the heron  
are flying low  
Echo the songs my father knew in the towns of Mexico

When I was young my eyes were wise, my father was  
good to me  
Instead of having a flock of sons he had two other girls  
and me  
And if we'd used our Spanish names, here's the way  
they'd run  
Thalia, Margarita and Juanita, I'm the middle one

The screen door kept the Demons in as we moved from  
town to town  
It's hard to be a princess in the States when your skin is  
brown  
And Mama smoothed my worried brow, as I leaned on  
the kitchen door  
"Why do you carry the weight", she said  
"Of the world and maybe more"

Gulf winds bring me flying fish, that shine in the  
crescent moon

Show me the horizon where the dawn will break anew  
And cool me here on this lonely pier, where the heron  
are flying low  
Echo the songs my fathers knew in the towns of Mexico

My grandfathers were ministers and it came on down  
the line  
My Father preached in his parents' church  
When he was ten years and nine  
And Mama dressed in parishioners' clothes and didn't  
believe in Hell  
Her daddy fought the DAR, if he'd lived, I'd have known  
him well

They said, "Go find a Sunday School", we must have  
tried them all  
I never stole from the silver plate, my sisters had more  
gall  
One preacher said, "Sing out loud and clear, it's the  
only life you've got  
And the next one said, "Be good on earth  
You've another life at the feet of God"

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crescent moon  
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And cool me here on this lonely pier, where the heron  
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Echo the songs my fathers knew in the towns of Mexico

My father turned down many a job just to give us  
something real  
It's hard to be a scientist in the States when you've got  
ideals  
And Mama kept the budget book, and she kept the  
garden too  
Bought fish from the man on Thursdays, fed all of us  
and strangers too

But time will pass and so, alas, will most of what we  
know  
Though tonight my memory's eye is clear as the story's  
being told  
And I'll play ball with the underdog and sit with the  
child who's wrong  
Be still when the earth is silent and sing when my  
strength is gone

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crescent moon  
Show me the horizon where the dawn will break anew

And cool me here on this lonely pier, where the heron  
are flying low  
Echo the songs my father knew in the towns of Mexico

Now Father's going to India, sometime in the fall  
They tried to stay together but you just can't do it all  
I'll think about him if he goes, there's a little gray in his  
hair  
Though not much 'cause he's Mexican, they don't age,  
they just prepare

And if he goes to India, I'll miss him most of all  
He'll see me in the mudlarks' face, hear me in the  
beggar's call  
And Mama will stay home, I guess, and worry if she did  
wrong  
And I'll say a prayer for both of them and sing them  
both my song

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