

Johnny Clegg

"Orphans Of The Empire"

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In ships, they came from Europe, across the salt sea
Come for the build and raise a colony
And in the jungle, green, their citadels did gleam
In tribute and homage to the old country
And soon their children grew and promised to be true
Orphans of an empire, their destiny

Hold me close, Africa, fill my soul, Africa
Let me grow old, Africa, let me in
Fill my soul, Africa, don't let me go, Africa
Let me grow old, Africa, and remember me

Imperial gentleman, he built mighty walls
And in the jungle afternoon, he plays polo when he's
bored
He sips a gin and tonic and tells you confidentially
He wishes he understood the [Unverified]
But the shadows, they are lengthening and the sun, it
must set
Bewildered and confused, he scurries home to his bed

Hold me close, Africa, fill my soul, Africa
Let me grow old, Africa, let me in
Fill my soul, Africa, don't let me go, Africa
Let me grow old, Africa, and remember me

He cannot understand the soldiers, all at hand
For with guns you cannot fight a foe that dwells within
But the battle had begun and a soldier he's become
Who can sing his litany?
It's a beggarman's prayer or a string on the wind
Will that be all that lingers on the memory?

And who will remember that African December?
When he knelt before the colors and swore to do or
die?
And he kissed his frightened lover, beneath the
glowing embers
Of that dark, strange heaven, that ancient sky
Now he's gone to dust, just like all good soldiers must
But the mournful mutter of the battlefield still lingers in

the air

So it's farewell sweet Caroline, farewell Elizabeth
Goodbye gentle ladies of the old order
And farewell to your islands carved upon this continent
Some England, some France and some Germany
Soon you will return to that dream across the sea
'Cause here is no more honey left for tea

Hold me close, Africa, fill my soul, Africa
Let me grow old, Africa, let me in
Fill my soul, Africa, don't let me go, Africa
Let me grow old, Africa, and remember me

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