

Ralph McTell "The Ferryman"

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Oh, the traveller moving on the land, behold I give you,
I give you the travelling man.

And he's very heavy laden with the questions in his
burden.

Lo, and I give you the travelling man.

He has crossed the mountains, he has forded streams.

He has spent a long time surviving on his dreams.

Many times he's tried to lighten up his heavy load.

But his compromises fail him and he ends back on the
road.

Oh the traveller he is weary, the travelling man he is
tired.

For the road is never ending in his fear he has cried
aloud for a saviour

And in vain for a teacher, someone to lighten up the
load

And he's heard the sounds of war in a gentle shower of
rain

And the whisperings of despair that he could not
explain.

The reason for his journey, or the reason it began
Or was there any reason for the travelling man.

At last he reached a river so beautiful and wide
But the current was so strong he could not reach the
other side

And the weary travelling man looked for a ferryman
strong enough to row against the tide,

And the ferryman was old but he moved the boat so
well,

Or did the river move the boat? The traveller could not
tell.

Said the ferryman, "You're weary and the answers that
you seek,

Are in the singing river, listen humbly it will speak."

Oh, the traveller closed his eyes and he listened and
he heard

Only the river murmuring and the beating of his heart.

Then he heard the river laughing, and he heard the
river crying

And in it was the beauty and the sadness of the world

And he heard the sounds of dying, but he heard the
sounds of birth
And slowly his ears heard all the sounds of earth.
The sounds blended together and they became a
whole
And the rhythm was his heartbeat to the music his soul.

And the river had no beginning, as it flowed into the
sea
And the seas filled the clouds and the rains filled the
streams
And as slowly as the sunrise, he opened up his eyes
To find the ferryman had gone, the boat moved gently
on the tide.
And the river flowed within him, and with it he was one
And the seas moved around the earth, and the earth
around the sun.
And the traveller was the river, was the boat and
ferryman,
Was the journey and the song that the singing river
sang.

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