

Jack Erdie

"Every Broken Street"

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Every broken street in my old town
Holds a memory of friends
Standin' up to fight, or fallin' down
Comin' round to make amends
We huddled under bridges
As the prisoners of rain
Rode out to the boroughs
In an empty old coal train
Silent in the night
Each to his own feeble dreams of far away
All for play.

Down the wood trail to the river shore
Through the cans and the broken glass
Sharin' cigarettes and macho lore
Chuggin' booze and a-cuttin' class
I felt the sleepy fetters
Of complacency set in.
Man settles into notions
Like a wolf into a den
Squanders the unknown
For the crumbs of shelter and camaraderie
Not so, me.

If I never said, Farewell, old friends
If I never did explain
If I simply disappeared and then
Never was I seen again
I felt no lack of love for you.
I did it out of need.
To perish there among you,
Or be separately freed
For I knew too well
How those broken streets seduce the indiscreet
Lord, how they cheat!

Farewell, love heal your hell.
So long, hope make you strong.

