

Morrison Van

"For Mr. Thomas"

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copyright 1980, 1981 Robin Williamson
From faded newsprint used to wrap a fish
Inscrutably the muse selects your face
While I sit drinking namelessly in a nameless bar
Five thousand miles and thirty years away

With all the usual ceremonial you were crowned one
night
King of the field where doctors nail the cows
To make of the cock's quill the right of language
And the pricking heart a sword against the hours

Let smirking scholars writhe in their favoured bondage
To hold you plaintiff to the charge of art
Exhibit A: he falls on legendary lines
Singing mother I want a bullet in the heart

The judge in me sucks eggs and jerks the sacred meat
For the boy in me still dreams in Milk Wood town
Like two provincial bastards playing the galleries
I hold your photo to the mirror upside down

As bacon wafts through hungry streets, your ghost
pervades
Just like an old ex-boxer aged twenty two
Staged up like Falstaff or the wild Welsh Rimbaud
You'd laugh to see these monochromes they make of
you

Ah Mr. Thomas let us ramble through the midnight fair
Let us throw old bottles at the ferris wheel
Let us paint library on the library let us raid the
moonlight
Let us steal away whatever we are supposed to steal

While the border guards check cards with their poker
faces
Never mind who is winning but the stakes are rare
If this jack of thorns they let us hold outbids the joker
Let us sneak higher till the frost clings in our hair

Let us watch while the days grow daily more mundane
That rough god go striding with his shears
Hack wide the bellies of the swollen mountains
And rip molten heroes forth to their furious tears

Notes from Art Siegel:

Van released this as a B-side in the early 80's. A different version, though obviously from the same session, appears on The Philosopher's Stone. Some of the verses are different in the different versions. Van does make some minor changes in the lyrics, such as drinking famously in an Irish bar in the first verse and having the rough god go riding (rather than striding) in another. Also, mother I want a bullet in the heart becomes mother I don't want a pain here in my heart. Overall, he stays true to Robin Williamson's original words, and adds the choruses, but he doesn't sing the verse about the border guards in either version.

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