

The Coldest Winter in Memory

Al Stewart

The coldest winter in memory was 1709
The sea froze off the coast of France all along the Neptune line
By the lost town of Dunwich the shore was washed away
They say you hear the church bells still as they toll beneath the waves

Come all you earthly princes, wheresoever you may be
From the Sun King in the court of France to the Czar in Muscovy
Take heed of Charles of Sweden, the Lion of the North,
On the cracked earth of summer with his army he goes forth

Guardian angels wherever you may be,
reach down and keep my soul for me

I was there amongst that number, I heard the trumpets strain
I saw the host of banners spread across the Polish plain
Those who stood against us, they soon were swept away
They may have the numbers but it's Charles shall have the day

We cut our way through forests, crossed on frozen streams
They fell away before us like a murmur in a dream
And they burned the land around us as snow was closing in
And the arms of winter took us as we fired against the wind

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reach down and keep my soul for me

Through all the courts of Europe there's a rumor from the East
The kings have come to battle and it's Charles who's known defeat
They'll shake their heads and wonder at how this came to be
But it's nights without a shelter that have made an end for me

Now Charles is fled to Turkey, left his men afar
And they'll be marched through Moscow now as prisoners of the Czar
And had I but known last summer what I know understand
I'd have never set my foot inside this bleak and bitter land

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