

Get Up Jonah

Bruce Cockburn

I woke up thinking about Turkish drummers
It didn't take long: I don't know much about Turkish drummers
But it made me think of Germany
And the guy who sold me cigarettes
Who'd been in the Afghan secret police
Who made the observation
That it's hard... to live
Then I was reminded of the proprietor of a Vietnamese restaurant in Quebec
Who used to be head of the secret police in Danang
And it occurred to me I was thinking about all this stuff to keep from
thinking about something else
Isn't that just what secret police are all about now?
Somebody stands at a window
Watches the river roll
Trains rumble in the foreground
With the weight of approaching dawn
Flames from the refinery
Rise broken-red and riveting
And the high vault of heaven
Looks far away and cold
There's a howling in the factory yard
There's a pounding in my head
I'm swollen up with unshed tears
Bloated like the dead

Blood and ashes
Time burning
On the skyline dark against the stars
A solitary horseman
Waiting
Lashed to the wheel
Ripping in the storm
Get up, Jonah
It's your time to be born
Get up Jonah
It's your time to be born