

Honest Lullaby

Joan Baez

Early early in the game
I taught myself to sing and play
And use a little trickery
On kids who never favored me
Those were years of crinoline slips
And cotton skirts and swinging hips
And dangerously painted lips
And stars of stage and screen
Pedal pushers, ankle socks
Padded bras and campus jocks
Who hid their vernal equinox
In pairs of faded jeans
And slept at home resentfully
Coveting their dreams

And often have I wondered
How the years and I survived
I had a mother who sang to me
An honest lullaby

Yellow, brown, and black and white
Our Father bless us all tonight
I bowed my head at the football games
And closed the prayer in Jesus' name
Lusting after football heroes
tough Pachuco, little Neroes
Forfeiting my A's for zeroes
Futures unforeseen
Spending all my energy
In keeping my virginity
And living in a fantasy
In love with Jimmy Dean
If you will be my king, Jimmy, Jimmy,
I will be your queen

And often have I wondered
How the years and I survived
I had a mother who sang to me
An honest lullaby

I travelled all around the world
And knew more than the other girls
Of foreign languages and schools
Paris, Rome and Istanbul
But those things never worked for me
The town was much too small you see
And people have a way of being
Even smaller yet
But all the same though life is hard
And no one promised me a garden
Of roses, so I did okay
I took what I could get
And did the things that I might do
For those less fortunate

And often have I wondered
How the years and I survived

I had a mother who sang to me
An honest lullaby

Now look at you, you must be growing
A quarter of an inch a day
You've already lived near half the years
You'll be when you go away
With your teddy bears and alligators
Enterprise communicators
All the tiny aviators head into the sky
And while the others play with you
I hope to find a way with you
And sometimes spend a day with you
I'll catch you as you fly
Or if I'm worth a mother's salt
I'll wave as you go by

And if you should ever wonder
How the years and you'll survive
Honey, you've got a mother who sings to you
Dances on the strings for you
Opens her heart and brings to you
An honest lullaby