

# All the Old Heroes

Joseph Arthur

Come over old stranger, let go of your dagger  
You stagger and then you are saved  
To wander in danger, a babe in the manger  
Forgetting mistakes that you've made  
Eyes like mine blinking  
And endlessly drinking  
Letting the warlords inside  
Falling like mice into fires of ice  
In death we find places to hide

All the old heroes are like children to me now  
As I come to burn your shame away  
Without knowing exactly how

All the old heroes, young babies without mothers  
Left to die on apocalyptic streets  
And where are these words from who spoke them before?  
Coming down like flashes of heat  
I'm never frightened, for death I still welcome  
Death I have seen you before  
I gave you my keys, my windows, my creeds  
But soon I will give you much more

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As I come to burn your shame away  
Without knowing exactly how

Love is a fix, a suicide wrist  
Blood with an unending flow  
To purify lands and soak in the sands  
Of places that we'll never go  
Jesus come calling  
We'll be here and falling  
Praying for your hand to show  
Catch us in mercy, drink us when thirsty  
Each of us falling like snow

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Without knowing exactly how

Each one a cathedral  
The last junkie needle  
Stained glass from blood that is old  
And in that cathedral, with the angels of nighttime  
Pained in a window so cold  
They see through your victims your painful musicians  
Playing the saddest of songs  
But nobody singing, just a ghost without dreaming  
A voice that could right all the wrongs

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Goodbye, sweet diamond the sky in the north wind  
Is falling on lepers and snakes

Hello, young mercy, both blessed and thirsty  
For solutions to so many mistakes  
Without your lover, your tired wonder  
The south rain threatens to pour  
On skulls like crashing in sunlight basking  
Ignoring the strongest of calls

You cannot save them without their consent  
Your voice of mercy to them I have sent  
You spoke through me  
You, a good man  
Grew up to listen and give me your hand  
Your voice of mercy so strong and so true  
It comes out in cascades without residue  
Of darkness or lies or doubt or untruth  
It's pure like the wind, the rain, and the youth

All the old heroes are like children to you now  
As you go to burn their shame away  
Without knowing exactly how  
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