

Bone Of Song

Josh Ritter

Just where it now lies I can no longer say
I found it on a cold and November day
In the roots of a sycamore tree where it had hid so long
In a box made out of myrtle lay the bone of song

The bone of song was a jawbone old and bruised
And worn out in the service of the muse
And along its sides and teeth were written words
I ran my palm along them and I heard

Lucky are you who finds me in the wilderness
I am the only unquiet ghost that does not seek rest
The words on the bone of song were close and small
And though their tongues were dead I found I knew them all

In the hieroglyphs of quills and quatrain lines
Osiris the fall of Troy Auld Lang Syne
Kathleen Mauvorean Magnificat Your Cheatin' Heart
The chords of a covenant king singing for the Ark
Then I saw on a white space that was left
A blessing written older than the rest

It said leave me here I care not for wealth or fame
I'll remember your song but I'll forget your name
The words that I sang blew off like the leaves in the wind
And perched like birds in the branches before landing on the bone again

Then the bone was quiet it said no more to me
So I wrapped it in the ribbons of a sycamore tree
And as night had come I turned around and headed home
With a lightness in my step and a song in my bones
Lucky are you who finds me in the wilderness
I am the only unquiet ghost that does not seek rest