

Ridin' Out The Storm

Rodney Crowell

The New York City winter comes in cold gray sheets of steel
The numbness in his hands and feet is all that he can feel
Alcohol and sterno turns a doorway to a bed
And the ghost of who he might have been lives on inside his head

In a canyon made of brownstone on a sidewalk icy black
He wanders nearly barefoot with his righteousness in tact
A man of many mansions in a cardboard box replete
And he lies sleeping with an angel while his heart pretends to beat

Oh, the wind blows down on Lonely Street like an ice pick through the air
'Midst the Sunday times and coffee grinds, and Wino's in Times Square
Five flights up on easy street, you know she's safe and warm
And way down low 'neath a foot of snow he's riding out the storm

I offered him my winter coat, politely he refused
Like an educated man he spoke with words I seldom use
He said, "I don't need pity for these, choices are my own"
He bowed his head just slightly and then quietly moved along

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Well, it's not like he's a victim of the homeless life he stalks
Nor helpless to get back across the fine line that he walks
Riding out the storm means yesterday's already spent
Tomorrow don't mean nothing it won't even make a dent

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