

The Flat Baritone

The Gourds

Form a ring and wind and twine
Round the ol' grape vine
Heavy on the wire from the house
Salt the cow and kill the calf
Meet her lonesome with a once and a half
Gent's on the east and ladies on the south

The solemn boy carries his silver damage
Sold but for, the number and the image

His eyes have saddened making wine from the stems
Empty ears longing for the wood and the skins
Paper yellowed from the salt and the failure

When he sings he slurs
And uses the meat of his thigh
T-hold the book he wrote when he was lame
So wrapped up in his flat baritone
No castrato could woo him in from the rain

For he never raised his voice when his britches
Was spillin¹ over with that honey truck richness

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Empty ears longing for the wood and the skins
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Well the stylus hit the patches
As he spit on the splashes
And sought out the scratches in the vinyl
'Neath a needle topped with nickels
To keep the tunes a-goin'
Cracklin', croonin' and crowin'

Multi-colored, hard-boiled and hidden
In the corners, with the dogs rusty remnants
His eyes have saddened making wine from the stems
Empty ears longing for the wood and the skins

Paper yellowed from the salt and the failure