

## What Child Is This?

Trans-Siberian Orchestra

The old man stood there thinking  
While staring in that old toy shop  
With its carousel still turning round  
In front of a music box clock  
For what good's a clock without a chime  
A useless thing that just keeps time  
Recording moments that come and leave  
But this clock's chimes struck midnight  
Upon a lost christmas eve  
And when the final chime had spoken  
And the twelfth bell had finally rung  
The indecision in the father was broken  
He now knew what had to be done  
So he got into a yellow cab  
And prayed that it might lead  
Through all this snow and streetlight glow  
To a past he might retrieve  
When the taxi dropped him off  
At the boarding house hotel  
It was a rundown building  
With a musty, rundown smell  
And he asked for his son  
From the hotel's night desk clerk  
Who said his son was not there  
He was not back from work  
When the father said that was impossible  
The clerk replied, "i'm not here to debate  
But he works at the hospital, just down the block  
If you want you can sit here and wait  
But he never returns till real late"  
Then the father tried asking another question  
But the clerk went back to watching his tv  
Which was also playing, "how the grinch stole christmas"  
And the father mused, "this movie has no sympathy,  
Well, at least not when it comes down to me"  
Once outside he saw the hospital's entrance  
And went to information by the front door  
Who confirmed that his son had a job there  
And worked up on the seventh floor  
So he took the elevator up to that floor  
Which was marked "maternity"  
And the man knew in his heart that this was a mistake  
For his son working here could not be  
But the nurse on duty reconfirmed that he did  
And since her rounds were about to begin  
If he would like to follow her  
She would gladly take the father to him  
So he followed her to a large dark room  
That to him seemed unusually empty  
Except for several incubators glowing on the right  
Each with a trembling baby  
These infants were all extremely frail  
And obviously in incredible pain  
And this sight cut deep into that father's soul  
And he asked the nurse, please, to explain  
"these children were born to mothers  
Who were addicted to crack cocaine"

And these children are born in complete withdrawal  
For that drug is still deep in their veins  
We can give them no other drugs to ease their withdrawals  
Since they are born premature and quite frail  
And any form of pain killer  
Could easily cause their small hearts to fail"  
"and what does my son do here?"  
The father asked, "he is not a patient, i assume"  
The nurse did not say a single word  
But nodded to the far left corner of the room  
And there the father saw his son  
Who looked like himself when he was a younger man  
Rocking back and forth in a rocking chair  
A trembling infant held in his hands  
And in his arms the child did not cry  
But slept to silent lullabies  
And his son rocked that newborn back and forth  
Until finally, a dream was caught  
But still at his rocking, his son faithfully kept  
Till that poor child's trembling had also, finally, left  
Then the nurse whispered softly  
Into the father's ear  
Something that a blind man could see  
But the father needed to hear  
Whispered to him in this room  
Filled with mankind's misbegotten  
Something that the father had known once  
But somehow had forgotten  
She said, "it is this way with each of us  
We all need to be held, at least twice  
Once upon the day that we are born  
And once more when we leave this life  
Your son has been coming to this place  
Since as long as i've been working here  
He's never missed a single day  
In nearly twenty years  
He always arrives promptly on time  
But a time card he does not keep  
For he never leaves this maternity room  
Until every last child is asleep"  
Then the nurse noticed the father  
Trying to choke back the things he now felt  
So mentioning she had to continue her rounds  
She quietly excused herself  
So he was now alone in the darkness  
Between the past and future caught  
Not knowing what to do  
As his mind flooded with so many thoughts  
Some beauty comes too early  
While its moment never waits  
And some beauty is always there  
But never seen, till it's too late  
Look! there is a moment  
It has just slipped away  
And so we lose our lives  
In such ordinary ways  
Where do we get our dreams from?  
Where do we get our faith?  
Is it something that we are born with  
Or is it something for which we must wait?  
The mist of things we once believed  
The childhood truths for which we grieve  
And in our lives could we have missed

Those that in the dark, the angels kiss  
What child is this  
Who laid to rest  
That i now find here sleeping?  
Do angels keep the dreams we seek  
While our hearts lie bleeding?  
Could this be christ the king  
Whose every breath the angels bring?  
Could this be the face of god, this child, the son i once carried?  
What child is this  
Who is so blessed he changes all tomorrows?  
Replacing tears with reborn years  
In hearts once dark and hollow  
Could this be christ the king  
Whose every breath the angels bring?  
Could this be the face of god, this child, the son i once carried?  
In the dead of the night  
As his life slips away  
As he reads by the light  
Of a star faraway  
Holding on  
Holding off  
Holding out  
Holding in  
Could you be this old  
And have your life just begin?  
Reading by the light of a lost christmas day  
It begins  
Reading by the light of a lost christmas day  
Tell me how many times can this story be told  
After all of these years it should all sound so old  
But it somehow rings true in the back of my mind  
As i search for a dream that words can no longer define  
Reading by the light of a lost christmas day  
And the time  
Reading by the light of a lost christmas day  
And the time and the years  
And the tears and the cost  
And the hopes and the dreams  
Of each child that is lost  
And the whisper of wings  
In the cold winter's air  
As the snow it comes down  
And visions appear everywhere  
Reading by the light of a lost christmas day  
In the air  
Reading by the light of a lost christmas day  
In the dead of the night  
As his life slips away  
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