Civilians

Joe Henry

The carriage horses stamp and fume
Until all color's gone
They leave the street in black and white
And bring the eventing coming onLovers tug their way out of gloves
Out of shoes, and gray chiffon
The driver pulls his blanket high
And pretends to look beyondOh, pray for you, pray for me
Sing it like a song
Life is sort but by the grace of God
This night is longGirls crowd into bathroom stalls
The boys smoke in their cars
The general, he's in civilian clothes
Standing at the barHe waves at the deaf flower lady
"Come sit by me, sweetheart"
He draws a napkin battle plan
Says, "This is where we start"Oh, pray for you, pray for me
Sing it like a song
Life is sort but by the grace of God
This night is longThere are no more hummingbirds
Like there used to be
They're fat and slow and careless now
They've turned blue and meanAnd the parrots sound like monkeys
Screamin' from the trees
As the decent people
Fumble for their keysWe used to spend the night in town
Down by City Hall
And the water works of Irish Beach
Just below the fallsWe'd walk down to the Park Hotel
Past the Baptist Veteran's Mall
Back then, a man in uniform
Might mean anything at allOh, pray for you, pray for me
Sing it like a song
Life is short but by the grace or cruel
Heart of God, the night is long

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