Song Of Being A Child

Van Morrison

When the child was a child
It walked with arms hanging
Wanted the stream to be a river and the river a torrent
And this puddle, the sea
When the child was a child
It didn't know it was a child
Everything for it was filled with life and all life was one
Saw the horizon without trying to reach it
Couldn't rush itself and think on command
Was often terribly bored and couldn't wait
Passed up greeting the moments
And prayed only with its lips
When the child was a child
It didn't have an opinion about a thing, had no habits
Often sat crossed legged, took off running
Had a cow lick in its hair and didn't put on a face when photographed
When the child was a child
It was the time of the following questions
Why am I me and why not you
Why am I here and why not there
Why did time begin and where does space end
Isn't what I see and hear and smell
Just the appearance of the world in front of the world
Isn't life under the sun just a dream
Does evil actually exist in people
Who really are evil, why can't it be that I who am
Wasn't before I was and that sometime I, the I, I am
No longer will be the I, I am
When the child was a child
It gagged on spinach, on peas, on rice pudding
And on steamed cauliflower
And now eats all of it and not just because it has to
When the child was a child
It woke up once in a strange bed
And now time and time again
Many people seem beautiful to it
And now not so many and now only if it's lucky
It had a precise picture of paradise
And now can only vaguely conceive of it at best

It couldn't imagine nothingness
And today shudders in the face of it
Go for the ball, which today rolls between its legs
With its I'm here it came
Into the house which now is empty
When the child was a child, it played with enthusiasm
And now only with such former concentration
Where its work is concerned
When the game, task, activity, subject happens to be its work
When the child was a child
It was enough to live on apples and bread and it's still that way
When the child was a child berries fell
Only like berries into its hand and still do
The fresh walnuts made its tongue raw and still do
Atop each mountain it craved
Yet a higher mountain and in each city it craved
Yet a bigger city and still does
Reach for the cherries in the treetop
As elated as it still is today
Was shy in front of strangers and still is
It waited for the first snow and still waits that way
When the child was a child
It waited restlessly each day for the return of the loved one
And still waits that way, when the child was a child
It hurled a stick like a lance into a tree
And it's still quivering there today
The child, the child was a child
Was a child, was a child, was a child, was a child, child, child, child
When the child, when the child, when the child
When the child, when the child, the child, child, child, child, child
And on and on and on and on
And on and on and on and on
And on and on and on and on
And onward with a sense of wonder
Upon the highest hill, upon the highest hill
When the child was a child, are you there, shss, shss
Up on a highest hill when the child was a child
Was a child, was a child
Was a child, was a child
Was a child, was a child
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