Tape From California

Phil Ochs

Who's that coming down the road
A sailor from the sea
He looks a lot like me
I'd know him anywhere, had to stareFeathers at his fingertips
A halo 'round his spine
He must have lost his mind
He should be put away, right awayIn the corner of the night
He handed me his water pipe
His eyes were searching
Deep inside my head, here's what he saidSorry, I can't stop and talk now
I'm in kind of a hurry anyhow
But I'll send you a tape from CaliforniaNew York City has exploded
And it's crashed upon my head
I dove beneath the bed
Fighting, biting nails, turning paleThe landlord's at my window
And the burglar's at my door
I can't take it anymore
I guess I'll have to fly, it's worth a trySomeone's banging on the wall
But there's no party to recall
The singer of the shadows of his soul
So he's been toldSorry, I can't stop and talk now
I'm in kind of a hurry anyhow
But I'll send you a tape from CaliforniaFrom the mirror of my mantle to the velvet on my bed
Trapped upon a stolen stage, a Barrymore at best
My rhymes are all repeating, my ballads growing blind
Words have turned to water, the women turned to wineThe draft board is debating
If they'd like to take my life
I'd sooner take a wife
And have raise a child or two, wouldn't you?Peace has turned to poison
And the flag has blown a fuse
Even courage is confused
And now all the brave are in the graveCentury is bending
Have a very happy ending
To the victor go the ashes of the spoil
Seeds in the soilSorry, I can't stop and talk now
I'm in kind of a hurry anyhow
But I'll send you a tape from CaliforniaThe flower-power fuller brush man
Is farming out his friends
I stabbed him with my stem

And then I tapped his toes with my roseHe crawled around inside himself
Now he's crawling after me
Dropping acid in my tea
He wants to save his soul, rock and rollOne of us must understand
It's not the drug that makes the man
Then a poster of a movie star walked by
He must have been highSorry, I can't stop and talk now
I'm in kind of a hurry anyhow
But I'll send you a tape from CaliforniaHalf the world is crazy and the other half is scared
Madonnas do the minuet for the naked millionaires
The anarchists are rising while we're racing for the moon
It doesn't take a seer to see that the scene is coming soonSo who's that coming down the road
A sailor from the sea
He looks a lot like me
I'd know him anywhere, had to stareA fire around his fingertips
A song around his spine
He must have found his mind
He should be put away, anywaySurrounded by the slaughter
Now I'm boarding at the border
When the echoes of my ecstasy appear
Wish I was hereSorry, I can't stop and talk now
I'm in kind of a hurry anyhow
But I'll send you a tape from California

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