

# 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  
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