

# Joni Mitchell, Slouching Towards Bethlehem

(Based on a poem by W.B. Yeats)

Turning and turning  
Within the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer  
Things fall apart  
The center cannot hold  
And a blood dimmed tide  
Is loosed upon the world

Nothing is sacred  
The ceremony sinks  
Innocence is drowned  
In anarchy  
The best lack conviction  
Given some time to think  
And the worst are full of passion  
Without mercy

Surely some revelation is at hand  
Surely it's the second coming  
And the wrath has finally taken form  
For what is this rough beast  
Its hour come at last  
Slouching towards Bethlehem to be born  
Slouching towards Bethlehem to be born

Hoping and hoping  
As if by my weak faith  
The spirit of this world  
Would heal and rise  
Vast are the shadows  
That straddle and strafe  
And struggle in the darkness  
Troubling my eyes

Shaped like a lion  
It has the head of a man  
With a gaze as blank  
And pitiless as the sun  
And it's moving its slow thighs  
Across the desert sands  
Through dark indignant  
Reeling falcons

Surely some revelation is at hand  
Surely it's the second coming  
And the wrath has finally taken form  
For what is this rough beast  
Its hour come at last  
Slouching towards Bethlehem to be born  
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Raging and raging  
It rises from the deep  
Opening its eyes  
After twenty centuries  
Vexed to a nightmare  
Out of a stony sleep  
By a rocking cradle  
By the Sea of Galilee

Surely some revelation is at hand  
Surely it's the second coming

And the wrath has finally taken form  
For what is this rough beast  
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