Marillion, This Strange Engine

(Hogarth/Kelly/Mosley/Rothery/Trewavas)

There was a boy who came into this world
At the hands of a holy woman in a holy place
He wore a red coat and walked a bulldog
Saw them reflected in the mirror of the lakes
Lived in the shadow of the mountains
With the smells of disinfectant, dusty old leather
And the polished wood of his bed
No more than a baby feeding swans on the river
Holding the hands of his mother
And the wax paper bag of yesterday's bread
And his father on the other side of the world
On the ships railings and some far away tide
With the silent dry tear of home thoughts from abroad
In his far away eyes
In his far away eyes

The smell of the wax on the wooden floor
Mixture of polish and soap
No children to fear or to play with
Rows of empty hooks for the coats
An upright piano and the boys in the choir
Still remind him of just before he was born
Remind him of just before he was breathing
Strange misty visions of God
Turn the cities into families
Into villages of souls
Hovering in the air while they're sleeping
With their houses invisible
Chase the moon between the buildings
Running as fast as I could run
Send to me the ghosts of Christmas
Whispering, "You're the only one"

And ever since I was a boy
I never felt that I belonged
Like everything they did to me
Was an experiment to see
How I would cope with the illusion
In which direction would I jump
Would I do it all the same
As the actors in the game
Or would I spit it back at them
And not get caught up in their rules
And live according to my own
And not be used, not be used
To find the fundamental truths
It was going to take some time
Thirty five summers down the line
The wisdom of each passing year
Seems to serve only to confuse
Seems to serve only to confuse

Daddy came out the navy and took us away
To his dirty grey home town
And he worked down on a coal mine for National Service
So that he could be around
There was a magical purple in the chrome of the exhaust
Of his Triumph motor bike
And a warmth of oil and metal and the thrill of the hard corner
Holding tight

From the horizon
Came home from the Navy to the mine
From the horizon
To buried alive
Took his dream underground
Buried his treasure in his faraway eyes

And one day as the boy lay sleeping in the sunshine
Of a half remembered afternoon
A cloud of bees with no particular aim, and no brain
Found the boy, decided that his time had come
Came down out of the sky
Stung him in the face
Again and again
Blue pain
Screaming like baptism
Intravenous, Jesus!
Like being chosen
Blue pain from something with no brain
I can't explain
It's happening again
It's happening again

Oh Mummy, Daddy, will you sit a while with me
Oh Mummy, Daddy, will you jog my memory
Tell me tall tales of Montego Bay
Table mountain, flying fish, banana spiders, pots of paint
And the sun on the equator
Setting like an ember thrown to deep water
From crimson to black
But coming back
Tomorrow
On the horizon

The blue pain
Fades to a point where it doesn't fade
It stayed
Blue
Stirred his red coat heart to this strange engine
This love

This love
This inconvenient, blind, blood-diamond
This puzzle
I don't understand
That knows no faith
And tries and fails
And tries again
Stares at the sea
The night's dark deep
For one last time
And bleeds
And bleeds
And dies for you
And lies
And is to blame
And is ashamed
And is not the same
And is true
And is true