

Peter Hammill, A Ritual Mask

A Ritual Mask
upon the wall
furnishes his surroundings
and he thinks that's all.

The Ritual Mask,
its power still strong,
a memento of his travels,
that he got for a song.
He got it for a song.
He got it for a song.

It was the song of the centuries undisturbed,
it was the song of secrets and power words;
it was the song of a culture not grown immune
to the virus of progress,
to the theft of the tune.

The Ritual Mask,
the evil eye
inhabits his apartment,
inhabits his mind
with a song of vengeance,
with a song of a debt repaid,
with a song of justice,
with a song of a hand unstayed,
with a song of a culture as old as the hills...
that sits uneasy on the living-room wall
like a snake about to kill.

The Ritual Mask,
it won't take long
before he finds out the bargain
has turned out dreadfully wrong.

Oh, he got it for a song.