

Peter Hammill, Silver

You lay your plans, I take them as they come,
I understand: we dance to different drums.
It's not in any schoolbook,
you're here to teach a lesson to us all...
we play by different rule-books.
What you say, what you do,
they're such different things, which is true?
Now the telephone rings, Mephistopheles calling...
Forty pieces for each lie you've told
I hope your linings as they all unfold are silver.

Once we were friends in our idealist days,
still, let's pretend, it's funny in a way
that now our friendship's token
you like to say I owe you everything
some debts remain unspoken.
Double talk, double standards,
you speak with two tongues, truth's abandoned,
all life has become one-way traffic to lucre.
You take your meetings on the cloth of gold,
just down the river from the lives you've sold for silver.

The silver crossed your palm,
oh, can you see the future?
I hope you'll know when you sold your soul.
Argente, argent.

All the things you've done will carry their own taint
and a day will come when you chorus the complaint
that your friends don't do you fairly;
the back you turned, the shoulders that you shrugged
now fit the blame quite squarely.
What you want, what you need,
your emotional greed all-consuming
but no hearts will bleed and the coffers are empty.
Yes, in the end you'd give it all away,
but on the sockets of your eyes they lay the silver.