Last Year's Man

The rain falls down on last year's man,
that's a jew's harp on the table,
that's a crayon in his hand.
And the corners of the blueprint are ruined since they rolled
far past the stems of thumbtacks
that still throw shadows on the wood.
And the skylight is like skin for a drum I'll never mend
and all the rain falls down amen
on the works of last year's man.
I met a lady, she was playing with her soldiers in the dark
oh one by one she had to tell them
that her name was Joan of Arc.
I was in that army, yes I stayed a little while;
I want to thank you, Joan of Arc,
for treating me so well.
And though I wear a uniform I was not born to fight;
all these wounded boys you lie beside,
goodnight, my friends, goodnight.
I came upon a wedding that old families had contrived;
Bethlehem the bridegroom,
Babylon the bride.
Great Babylon was naked, oh she stood there trembling for me,
and Bethlehem inflamed us both
like the shy one at some orgy.
And when we fell together all our flesh was like a veil
that I had to draw aside to see
the serpent eat its tail.
Some women wait for Jesus, and some women wait for Cain
so I hang upon my altar
and I hoist my axe again.
And I take the one who finds me back to where it all began
when Jesus was the honeymoon
and Cain was just the man.
And we read from pleasant Bibles that are bound in blood and skin
that the wilderness is gathering
all its children back again.
The rain falls down on last year's man,
an hour has gone by
and he has not moved his hand.
But everything will happen if he only gives the word;
the lovers will rise up
and the mountains touch the ground.
But the skylight is like skin for a drum I'll never mend
and all the rain falls down amen
on the works of last year's man.