

SHELLBACK

Sailors become shellbacks
When they cross the equatorial line
Since earliest childhood
I've been accumulating mine
Emotion rarely touches me
Deep down inside
I'm shielded from all feeling
My shell grows deep and wide

Fifteen years of brutal vision
Burned into my head
When my shell completely closes off
My spirit will be dead.
In the slave camps (God was silent)
In the tiger cages (God was silent)
At ground zero (God was silent)
For one beaten woman (God was silent)

I walk through canyons of
Fallen Angels and
Crystal cities of
Lonesome strangers and
I ask the questions but
God is silent, for me.