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This Old Road

By Dan Oakes

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Kris Kristofferson is in a typically thoughtful mood on his latest album.

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By now, Kris Kristofferson officially qualifies as craggy in appearance, and to describe the sound of *This Old Road* similarly, with its determinedly sparse, lo-fi sound, would not be too wide of the mark.

The 70-year-old, surely the world's only country musician Rhodes scholar, is in a typically thoughtful mood, and his famously sandpaper-like voice is perfect for growling lines such as *Wild American's* "When they burn your brother down in the name of Freedom, I don't care if it's left or right. It's wrong."

The subject of American imperialism and the invasion of Iraq is tackled again in *In the News*, where Kristofferson declares "Anyone not marching to their tune they call it treason, everyone says god is on his side", while *This Old Road* is a sweet, rueful meditation on the passing of time.

Key track: *Pilgrim's Progress*, with its dextrous picking and quasi-religious reflections on evolution and revolution.