

New Street People

Loudon Wainwright III

Trapped in skyscraper, office space
Take your break, escape in haste
I'd walk a mile for that great taste
Of my brand I thee sing

Standing there in pairs and threes
Chattering teeth and trembling knees
We French inhale and then we sneeze
And suddenly it's Spring

We're the new street people
We're the ones you see
Standing outside smoking
Where the air is free

So far you've had just two today
Baby, you've come a long, long way
Down forty flights what can I say
Just to get that hit

We stand around, the helpless ones
With the homeless, the winos, the bums
Reteach us how to suck our thumbs
Show us how to quit

Ostracized in restaurants
Aeroplanes and public haunts
Deprived of our most precious wants
That is to say, the weed

We see the billboards and we long
To live there, that's where we belong

Where looking cool is never wrong
It's normal to need

We're the new street people
We're the ones you see
Standing outside smoking
Where the air is free

Ten thousand toxic natural shocks
Filter, flavor, flip-top box
Thank God when it's five o'clock
That's when we go home

Behind closed doors every night
Matches flare and lighters light
There we exercise the right
To be left alone

Rooms fill up with acrid haze
We fill up our favorite ash trays
It's just like the good old bad days
We only err in here

But tomorrow we'll be back outside

Along the street where we can't hide
Stripped of dignity and pride
Sucking cigs in fear

We're the new street people
We're the ones you see
Standing outside smoking
Where the air is free