

The Liberty Of Norton Folgate

Madness

This is the story of the Liberty of Norton Folgate
Old Jack Norris, the musical shrimp and the cadging ramble

A little bit of this, would you like a bit of that?
But in weather like this, you should wear a coat, a nice warm hat

A needle and thread, the hand stitches of time
The cattling Lavinski versus Jackie Burke
Bobbing and weaving an invisible line

So step for step and both light on our feet
We'll travel many a long, dim, silent street

Would you like a bit of this or a little bit of that, missus?
A little bit of what you like does you no harm, you know that

The perpetual steady echo of the passing beat
A continual dark river of people
In their transience and in its permanence

But when the streetlamp fills the gutter with gold
So many priceless items bought and sold

So step for step and both light on our feet
We'll travel many a long, dim, silent street together

Once 'round Arnold Circus, up through Petticoat Lane
Past The Well of Shadows and once back round again

Arm in arm with an abstracted air
To where the people stared at the upstairs windows
Because we are living like kings and these days will last forever

'Cause sailors from Africa, China and the Archipelago of Malay
Jump ship ragged and penniless into Shadwell's Tiger Bay
The Welsh and Irish Wagtails, mothers of midnight
The music hall carousal is spilling out into bonfire light

Sending half crazed shadows, giants dancing up the brick wall
Of Mr. Truman's beer factory waving bottles ten feet tall

Whether one calls it Spitalfields, Whitechapel
Tower Hamlets or Bangle Town
We're all dancing in the moonlight
We're all on borrowed ground

Oh, I'm just walking down to, I'm just floating down through
Won't you come with me to the Liberty of Norton Folgate?

But wait, what's that?
Dan Leno and a Limehouse Golem

Purposefully walking nowhere
Oh, I'm happy just floating about, have a banana
On a Sunday afternoon
The stall holders all call and shout to no-one in particular

Avoiding people you know
You're just basking in your own company
The Technicolor worlds going by
But you're the lead in your own movie

'Cause in the Liberty of Norton Folgate walking wild and free
In your second hand coat, happy just to float
In this little taste of liberty
A part of everything you see

They're coming left or right
Trying to flog you stuff you don't need or want
And a smiling chap takes your hand
And drags you in his uncle's restaurant

There's a Chinese man trying hard to flog you moody DVDs
You know you've seen the film
It's black and white, it's got no sound
And a man's head pops up and down right across you wide screen TV

Only a fiver
Alright two for eight quid

'Cause in the Liberty of Norton Folgate walking wild and free
In your second hand coat, happy just to float
In this little piece of liberty
You're a part of everything you see

'Cause it's steady old fellows, pickpockets
Dandies, extortioners and night wanderers
The feeble, the ghastly
Upon whom death had placed a very sure hand

Some in shreds and patches
Reeling inarticulate full of noisy and inordinate vivacity
Which jars discordantly upon the ear
And it gives an aching sensation to both pair of eyeballs

In the beginning I'd the fear of the immigrant
In the beginning was the fear of the immigrant
He's made his way down to the dark riverside

In the beginning was the fear of the immigrant
In the beginning was the fear of the immigrant
He made his home there by the dark riverside

He made his home there down by the riverside
They made their homes there down by the riverside
The city sprang from the dark river Thames

They made their home there down by the riverside
They made their homes there down by the riverside
The city sprang up from the dark mud of the Thames
I say it again

'Cause in the Liberty of Norton Folgate walking wild and free
And in your second hand coat, happy just to float
In this little taste of liberty
'Cause you're a part of everything you see
Yes, you're a part of everything you see

With a little bit of this and a little bit of that
A little bit of what you like does you no harm and you know that