

Something about England

The Clash

They say the immigrants steal the hubcaps of respected gentlemen
They say it would be wine and roses if England were for Englishmen again
I saw a dirty overcoat at the foot of
the pillar of the road
Propped inside was an old man whom time could not erode
The night was snapped by sirens
Those blue lights circled past
The dance-hall called for an ambulance
The bars all closed up fast
My silence gazing at the ceiling while roaming the single room
I thought the old man could help me if he could explain the gloom
You really think it's all new?
You really think about it too?
The old man scoffed as he spoke to me, I'll tell you a thing or two
I missed the fourteen-eighteen war but not the
sorrow afterwards
With my father dead, my mother ran off, my brothers took the pay of hoods
The twenties turned, the north was dead
The hunger strike came marching south
At the garden party not a word was said
The ladies lifted cake to their mouths
The next war began and my ship sailed with battle orders writ in red
In five long years of bullets and shells, we left ten million dead
The few returned to old Piccadilly
We limped around Leicester Square
The world was busy rebuilding itself
The architects could not care
But how could we know, when I was young, all the changes that were to come?
All the photos in the wallets on the battlefield and now the terror of the scientific Sun
There was masters and servants and servants and dogs
They taught you how to touch your cap
Through strikes and famine and war and peace, England never closed this gap
So leave me now the Moon is up
but remember all the tales I tell
The memories that you have dredged up are on letters forwarded from hell
It's a long way to Tipperary
It's a long way to go
Goodbye, Piccadilly
Farewell, Leicester Square
The streets were now deserted
The gangs had trudged off home
The lights clicked out in the bedsits and old England was all alone

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