Cable Street

The Young'uns

On the fourth of October, 1936, I was only a lad of 16
But I stood beside men who were threescore and ten and every age in between
We were dockers, and teachers, busmen, engineers, and boys with no jobs to do
We were women and children, equal in union, Atheists, Christians, and Jews
And we had so much to lose.

For with Hitler in Germany, Franco in Spain, we knew what fascism meant
So when Mosley came tramps in, denouncing the Jews, to the east end of London we went
For Iâ€™d heard much refugees whoâ€™d fled over the seas, Germans, Italians, and Jews
And I knew their despair for what theyâ€™d seen there, and I couldnâ€™t let them be abused
We had so much to lose.

Now, 3,000 fascists, their uniforms black, had set out to march on that day
And 6,000 policemen intended to greet them, by making clear the way
But we were there ready, and nerves they were steady, 100,000 en masse,
And we planted our feet along Cable Street, and we sang, â€˜they shall not pass!â€™
We sang, â€˜they shall not pass!â€™

Then all us young lads, we were sent to the side streets, to stop the police breaking through
And with swift hands we made strong barricades out of anything we could use
And they came to charge us, but they couldnâ€™t budge us, with fists, batons, and hooves
With as good as we got, we withstood the lot, for we would not be moved,
We would not be moved.

And yes, there was violence, and yes, there was blood, and I saw things a lad shouldnâ€™t see
But Iâ€™ll not regret the day I stood, and London stood with me
And when the news spread the day had been won, and Mosley was limping away
There were shouts, there were cheers, there was songs, there was tears, and aye, theyâ€™re borne to this day
And we all swore then, weâ€™d stand up again, for as long as our legs could,
And that when we were gone, our daughters and sons would stand where we stood

Was the first time Iâ€™d heard two tiny words said by every woman and man
Now Iâ€™ll say them still, and I always will: No pasarÃ¡n!

Lyrics Submitted by Bel Newman

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