

# Joni Mitchell, Goodbye Pork Pie Hat

(Joni Mitchell/Charles Mingus)

When Charlie speaks of Lester  
You know someone great has gone  
The sweetest swinging music man  
Had a Porkie Pig hat on  
A bright star  
In a dark age  
When the bandstands had a thousand ways  
Of refusing a black man admission  
Black musician  
In those days they put him in an  
Underdog position  
Cellars and chittlins'

When Lester took him a wife  
Arm and arm went black and white  
And some saw red  
And drove them from their hotel bed  
Love is never easy  
It's short of the hope we have for happiness  
Bright and sweet  
Love is never easy street!  
Now we are black and white  
Embracing out in the lunatic New York night  
It's very unlikely we'll be driven out of town  
Or be hung in a tree  
That's unlikely!

Tonight these crowds  
Are happy and loud  
Children are up dancing in the streets  
In the sticky middle of the night  
Summer serenade  
Of taxi horns and fun arcades  
Where right or wrong  
Under neon  
Every feeling goes on!  
For you and me  
The sidewalk is a history book  
And a circus  
Dangerous clowns  
Balancing dreadful and wonderful perceptions  
They have been handed  
Day by day  
Generations on down

We came up from the subway  
On the music midnight makes  
To Charlie's bass and Lester's saxophone  
In taxi horns and brakes  
Now Charlie's down in Mexico  
With the healers  
So the sidewalk leads us with music  
To two little dancers  
Dancing outside a black bar  
There's a sign up on the awning  
It says "Pork Pie Hat Bar"  
And there's black babies dancing...  
Tonight!