

## **Ella Fitzgerald**

# **"The Real American Folk Song"**

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Near Barcelona, the peasant crooned  
The old traditional Spanish tunes  
The Neapolitan street song sighs  
You think of Italian skies

Each nation has a creative vein  
Originating a native strain  
With folk songs plaintive and others gay  
In their own peculiar way

American folk songs, I feel  
Have a much stronger appeal

The real American folksong is a rag, a mental jag  
A rhythmic tonic for the chronic blues  
The critics called it a 'Joke Song'  
But now they've changed their tune and they like it,  
somehow

For it's inoculated with a syncopated sort of meter  
Sweeter than a classic strain, boy you can't remain still  
and quiet  
For it's a riot

The real American folksong is like a fountain of youth  
You taste and it elates you and then invigorates you  
The real American folksong, the masses coaxed on, is  
a rag

The real American folksong is a rag, a mental jag  
A rhythmic tonic for the chronic blues  
The critics called it a 'Joke Song'  
But now they've changed their tune and they like it,  
somehow

For it's inoculated with a syncopated sort of meter  
Sweeter than a classic strain, boy you can't remain still  
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You taste and it elates you and then invigorates you

The real American folksong is a rag

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