

## **Bruce Cockburn**

# **"Birmingham Shadows"**

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Birmingham

Just behind the mountain

Sparse streelamps glow in hot half-moon haze

Shadows shorten into little black pools that elongate  
behind

We walk, talk some, laugh some

Worked hard, now wired, and hanging out

I'm curious what you might be all about

Curious, too, what that dark-shape in the hard shining  
cruiser might do

And you have no idea what you're getting

Out of of your own curiosity and tense energy

Tattoo on chest like the key to the puzzle of your  
pumping heart

Wearing your shadows all over your sleeve

Wearing the role of young upstart

Chorus:

Birmingham shadows fall

You show a little, I let something show too

It's now or not at all

Out on the road, it's always instant get-to-know-you

Under velvet trees, towering like the sides of a well

Before the empty two office blocks

Which we're admonished not to enter

Policeman studies us, finds us confusing

More amusing than threat

Moves on, bemused

Pavement spirals down ahead like the fossil of a giant  
shell

Along the kingdom's midnight marches

I wear my shadows where they're harder to see

But they follow me everywhere

I guess that should tell me that I'm travelling toward  
light

I guess something you sang made me remember that

I guess I'm saying thanks for that

Chorus:

Birmingham shadows fall

You show a little, I let something show too

It's now or not at all

Out on the road, it's always instant get-to-know-you

(Instrumental Break)

Got a head full of horrors and a heart full of night  
At home in the darkness, but hungry for dawn  
I only remember scenes, never the stories I live  
The good things about that is, it's easy to forgive  
Can't make assumptions about any of this  
We're nomads following our own songlines  
Who knows what could strike before we meet again?  
But if I fall down and die  
Without saying goodbye  
I give you this: you'll have lost a friend

Chorus:

Birmingham shadows fall  
You show a little, I let something show too  
It's now or not at all  
Out on the road, it's always instant get-to-know-you

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