

## **Linton Kwesi Johnson** **"Story"**

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wance upon a time  
jus like inna nursery rime  
before piggy tun swine  
mi did wear  
mi fear  
pan mi face  
like a shiel  
like a mawsk  
an evrybody tink mi cool an deadly

nottn yu coulda seh  
woulda mek mi tek it awf  
an if yu get mi nervos  
ah voulda jus lawf it awf  
an evrybody tink mi cool an deadly

but not soh long ago  
ins like inna pitcha show  
whey di hero get a blow  
mi spirit get vex  
an mi get soh resless  
dat mi get careless  
an goh bare mi mawgah chess

mi newah indah tink seh  
dat it mek outa glaas  
dat di whole wide worl coulda si  
rite dung to di vien inna mi awt  
ow dem twis-up  
ow dem tie-up  
ow dem tite-up  
o mi awt  
ow it cut-up  
ow it craw-up  
ow it scar-up

( it is a aad awt fi mawstah yu noe  
dis smilin an skinin yu teet  
wen yu awt sweel-up soh till yu feel it a goh bus  
wen yu cyaan fine di rime fi fit di beat  
wen yu cyan fine di ansah fi di puzzle complete)

soh mi tek awf mi mawsk  
an staat fi wear daak glaas  
but eery so awftin  
mi haffi tek it awf  
an evry nowanden  
mi fine mi laas  
oonu evah  
si mi trial  
si mi crawsiz ?

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With LKJ, it's a lot of work to decipher the lyrics. Here's  
the best I can make out so far.

Once upon a time

just like in a nursery rhyme  
before piggy turn swine  
me did wear  
for my fear  
on my face  
like a shield  
like a mask  
an everybody think me cool and deadly

Nothing you could have said  
would have make me take it off  
and if you get me nervous  
I woulda just laughed it off  
an everybody think me cool and deadly

But not so long ago  
just like in a picture show  
where the hero gets a blow  
me spirit gets vexed  
an me get so restless  
that me get careless  
and go bare me mawgah(?) chest

Me never even think  
that things are make outta glass  
that the whole wide world coulda see  
right down to the feeling in my heart  
how them twist-up  
how them tie-up  
how them tight-up  
oh my heart  
how it cut-up  
how it crawl-up  
how it scar-up

It's a hard act to master you know  
this smiling and skinning your teeth  
when your heart swell up so till you feel it gonna bust  
when you can't find the rhyme to fit the beat  
when you can't find the answer for the puzzle  
complete.

So (?) me take off me mask  
and start for wear dark glass  
but every so often  
me have to take it off  
and every now and then  
me find me last  
onnu(?) ever  
see me trial  
see me crosses?

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