

Nick Cave

"As I Sat Sadly By Her Side"

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As I sat sadly by her side
At the window, through the glass
She stroked a kitten in her lap
And we watched the world as it fell past
Softly she spoke these words to me
And with brand new eyes, open wide
We pressed our faces to the glass
As I sat sadly by her side

She said, "Father, mother, sister, brother,
Uncle, aunt, nephew, niece,
Soldier, sailor, physician, labourer,
Actor, scientist, mechanic, priest
Earth and moon and sun and stars
Planets and comets with tails blazing
All are there forever falling
Falling lovely and amazing"

Then she smiled and turned to me
And waited for me to reply
Her hair was falling down her shoulders
As I sat sadly by her side

As I sat sadly by her side
The kitten she did gently pass
Over to me and again we pressed
Our different faces to the glass
"That may be very well", I said
"But watch the one falling in the street
See him gesture to his neighbours
See him trampled beneath their feet
All outward motion connects to nothing
For each is concerned with their immediate need
Witness the man reaching up from the gutter
See the other one stumbling on who can not see"

With trembling hand I turned toward her
And pushed the hair out of her eyes
The kitten jumped back to her lap
As I sat sadly by her side

Then she drew the curtains down

And said, "When will you ever learn
That what happens there beyond the glass
Is simply none of your concern?
God has given you but one heart
You are not a home for the hearts of your brothers

And God does not care for your benevolence
Any more than he cares for the lack of it in others
Nor does he care for you to sit
At windows in judgement of the world He created
While sorrows pile up around you
Ugly, useless and over-inflated"

At which she turned her head away
Great tears leaping from her eyes
I could not wipe the smile from my face
As I sat sadly by her side

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