

George & Ira Gershwin

"The Back Bay Polka"

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1

Give up the fond embrace,
Pass up that pretty face;
You're of the human race --
But not in Boston.

Think as your neighbors think,
Make lemonade your drink;
You'll be the Missing Link --
If you don't wear spats in Boston.

Books that are out of key
We quickly bury;
You will find liberty
In Mr. Webster's dictionary.

New York or Philadelph'
Won't put you on the shelf
If you would be yourself --
But you can't be yourself in Boston.

2

Don't speak the naked truth --
What's naked is uncouth;
It may go in Duluth --
But not in Boston.

Keep up the cultured pose
By looking down your nose;
Keep up the status quos --
Or they'll keep you out of Boston.

At natural history
We are colossal;
That is because, you see,
At first hand we study the fossil.

Strangers are all dismissed --
(Not that we're prejudiced)
You simply don't exist --
If you haven't been born in Boston.

3

Somewhere the fairer sex
Has curves that are convex,
and girls don't all wear "specs" --
But not in Boston.

One day it's much too hot,
Then cold as you-know-what;
In all the world there's not
Weather anywhere like Boston.

You're of the bourgeoisie,
And no one bothers --
Not if your fam'ly tree
Doesn't date from the Pilgrim
Fathers.

Therefore, when all is said,
Life is so limit-ed,
You find, unless you're dead,
You never get ahead in Boston.
You never get ahead,
Unless you're dead --
You never get ahead in Boston.

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