

WELFARE WEDNESDAY

Stephen Fearing 1986 © Mummy Dust/ Fearing and Loathing Music

On welfare Wednesday
Money flows to the scavengers below
Just enough to keep you moving
Pulled down by the current's filthy undertow
And like fish out of the water
Our pockets stuffed with bills
We walk the length of the afternoon
With too much need to fill
The miles I've put behind me
Find me standing in the rain
With welfare Wednesday again

On welfare Wednesday
I'll cash my cheque behind the bar
With a month's rent in my belly
The blackbirds in my past can seem so far away
And I know it's just my money
Baits the bartender's smile
But I no longer feel the rats behind my eyes
On the faces all around me
The story reads the same
Welfare Wednesday again

Down under the viaduct with the smell of fog and gasoline
And the echoes of the last bus rolling empty overhead
Dreams are only relative to where you make your bed

Albert and Louise
Are out there screaming on the boulevard
He beats her and he breaks her
Until her body's torn and raw
Then he carries her inside
Like a bag of empty clothes
Where rape is hidden by the window blinds
And if the cops arrive
You can read it in their eyes
Welfare

Loneliness is emptiness
Is black streets howling in the rain
Is the thought that cut the wrist
And what made the hooker scream in pain
Is the cycle of futility
Is an endless rusty chain

And tomorrow
When daylight drags me hungry from my bed
With nothing in my pockets
The seagulls at the docks are likely better fed
So I'll go down to the food bank
And all my friends are there,
Standing in a long and broken line
All the days drag on
Like an apathetic marathon
'Till welfare Wednesday.