

## Swiss Cottage Manoeuvres

Al Stewart

On a Christmas cake day one Friday in August  
In a bookshop in Charing Cross Road  
I first set eyes on a girl and at once I did know  
She had eyes like a poet and hair like a rainbow  
Reflecting the lights that did glow  
And the sadness she kept in her eyes  
Struck my senses a blow

And so as by chance at the touch of a glance  
We could find ourselves out in the road  
With no crush of time to defeat us and no place to go  
And I couldn't say how but the coffee bar crowd  
Had appeared through the silence that broke  
And she said "Oh my father's a judge in St Albans you know."  
"Oh well, then perhaps I could help you  
You know that St. Albans is miles away  
And I've got a room in Swiss Cottage in which you could stay"  
She laughed "Oh I couldn't do that, for I've got  
To be up in the morning you see."  
So I rang up to find out the first morning train she could take  
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And so in the gloom of a candlelit room  
With spaghetti, two forks and a plate  
She said "Oh I really would like to be free and escape."  
"Oh well if it's like that  
You don't have to go back  
And you're perfectly welcome to stay"  
"But I've not finished school yet." she said as she got into bed

And so as she slept and the pure morning crept  
Through the windows to take her away  
I thought you can't make people be what you want them to be  
I could see my self nailed to a dormitory tale  
Of a holiday night's escapade  
And just yesterday she had seemed like a woman to me

And so like a child with the sleep in her eyes  
Where the sadness of age had once been  
She left on the train with a "See you again" and a smile  
And I couldn't say what I had won or I lost  
Or even just what I had seen  
But when I'm alone I just think of her once in awhile.