

ROCKET MAN

Charles Rothschild was his name, he wanted to manage Turner and Kirwan of Wexford (my first band), his opening gesture was to have us record this song. Larry Kirwan and I weren't interested in covers, and thought it was a bad way to begin the relationship. But everyone in the Village said that Charlie was working with Dylan, and that we should listen to him, we didn't. I did like the song though and kept it. The fact that it's still a great song shows its power. Wikipedia says that it was written and recorded by Pearls Before Swine, before the Elton John song, and that Bernie Taupin got the idea from it. I'd like to think that David Bowie would've liked this. David, of course, did cast his very long shadow over this album. I can't help but think of him with great fondness, and when Gerry pulled out his Bowie guitar, and started playing this song with me, I felt like my life had come a full circle. From the early days hearing the magical Ziggy Stardust with its purple sound, to the very end.

In the middle there, around the album Let's Dance, David brought a great gift to me from out of the blue. Turner and Kirwan of Wexford were trying desperately to get a gig in this snobby, popular club in uptown Manhattan. The guy who booked it told us several times to get lost. Then one day he relented and gave us a Tuesday, the worst day in the week. When we arrived, we found out that he had left, and that a new snobby manager had inherited us, and not happily. When we were setting up, the whole place seemed to regret having us, who the hell were we? During the gig, one of our fans shouted out "Suffragette City," Larry Kirwan quipped back "David is not here tonight." We had about one hundred and fifty people there, it held a thousand, they all giggled at his reply. We used to sing that song from Ziggy Stardust at pub gigs. After the show, the very snotty manager approached us with two brandies and said, "Well, David WAS here tonight, and he bought you these two brandies. Apparently Bowie hired someone to make a list of groups to see when he was in Manhattan, and we were on the list! At the time he was red hot, there couldn't have been a greater compliment, I think he knew it.

My father was a rocket man
He often went to Jupiter, to Mercury, to Venus, or to Mars
My mother and I
Would watch the sky
And wonder if a fallen star
Was a ship becoming ashes
With a rocket man inside

My mother and I never went out
Unless the sky was cloudy
Or the sun was blotted out
To escape the pain
She only went out
When it rained

My father was a rocket man He loved the world beyond the world The sky beyond the sky On
my mother's face, lonely as the world in space I could read her silent cry But if my father fell into
a star We mustn't look upon that star again

Tears are often jewel-like My mother's went unnoticed by my father For his jewels were the
stars In my father's eyes I knew he had to find In the sanctity of distance Something brighter in
the stars One day they told us The sun had fled And taken him inside

My mother and I never went out Unless the sky was cloudy Or the sun was blotted out To
escape the pain She only went out When it rained