



Take a walk on the wild side (by Lou Reed)

Level: Medium to High. Language: Personality, Colloquial, Sex, Drugs, Narrative Tenses

This is a song about five people who Lou Reed knew in the 1960s: Holly, Candy, Little Joe, Sugar Plum Fairy and Jackie. He met these interesting people in Andy Warhol's studio in New York City. The song describes the crazy lives of these five characters and their adventurous attitude: don't be boring, explore the wild side of life.

Task 1: Match the vocabulary from the song to the definitions.

Vocabulary from the song	Definition (you need to match them)
A. To hitch-hike	(F) To do something illegal for money
B. To pluck	() A type of amphetamine drug
C. To shave	() Your spirit
D. To give head	() To travel in the car of a stranger
E. To give (something) away	() To perform oral sex on a man
F. To hustle	() A crash/an impact
G. To hit the street	() To take off all the hair on your legs/face
H. A soul	() To give something for free (no money)
I. speed	() To take out individual hairs on your face
J. A bash	() To arrive to the street

Task 2: Write the Past Simple form of each of these verbs. Use a dictionary if necessary.

to be	<u>was/were</u>	(in the song 4 times)
to come	_____	(in the song 3 times)
to give	_____	
to go	_____	
to have to	_____	(in the song twice)
to hit	_____	
to hitch-hike	_____	
to lose	_____	
to pluck	_____	
to say	_____	(in the song 8 times)
to shave	_____	
to think	_____	





Task 3: Read the song and try to predict which verb goes in the gap (in the Past Simple). Then listen to the song to see if you were right.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAHRAKQMfzA>

Holly _____ from Miami, F.L.A.
_____ her way across the U.S.A.
_____ her eyebrows on the way
_____ her legs and then he was a she
She says, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
He said, "Hey honey, take a walk on the wild side"

Candy _____ from out on the island
In the backroom she _____ everybody's darlin'
But she never _____ her head
Even when she _____ giving head
She says, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
He said, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"

And the coloured girls go
Doo do doo, doo do doo, doo do doo

Little Joe never once _____ it away
Everybody _____ pay and pay
A hustle here and a hustle there
New York City's the place where they _____
"Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
I _____, "Hey Joe, take a walk on the wild side"

Sugar Plum Fairy _____ and _____ the streets
Looking for soul-food and a place to eat
_____ to the Apollo, you should've seen 'em go go go
They _____, "Hey sugar, take a walk on the wild side"
I _____, "Hey babe, take a walk on the wild side"
Alright, huh

Jackie is just speeding away
_____ she _____ James Dean for a day
Then I guess she _____ crash
Valium would have helped that bash

(repeat "wild side...")

Task 4: Write one or two sentences to describe the brief story of each character (Holly, Candy, Little Joe, Sugar Plum Fairy, Jackie).

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**Answers:****Task 1 -**

Vocabulary from the song	Definition (you need to match them)
A. To hitch-hike	(F) To do something illegal for money
B. To pluck	(I) A type of amphetamine drug
C. To shave	(H) Your spirit
D. To give head	(A) To travel in the car of a stranger
E. To give (something) away	(D) To perform oral sex to a man
F. To hustle	(J) A crash/an impact
G. To hit the street	(C) To take off all the hair on your legs/face
H. A soul	(E) To give something for free (no money)
I. speed	(B) To take out individual hairs on your face
J. A bash	(G) To arrive to the street

Task 2 -

to be	<u>was/were</u>
to come	came
to give	gave
to go	went
to have to	had to
to hit	hit
to hitch-hike	hitch-hiked
to lose	lost
to pluck	plucked
to say	said
to shave	shaved
to think	thought

Task 4 -

Holly hitch-hiked from Florida to New York and while she was travelling, converted herself from a man into a woman (obviously "Holly" is her new name).

Candy seems to be a prostitute or a sex-performer who operates in the "back room" of a bar or a shop. She lives in a crazy world but she's quite a practical, calm person.

Little Joe is a male prostitute (a "rent boy") who always charges money for sex, he never does it for free.

Sugar Plum Fairy arrived in New York looking for inspiration and also for a way to earn money. Now he works as a go-go dancer in the Apollo nightclub.

Jackie takes a lot of speed (an amphetamine). She lives a fast, crazy life - like James Dean. But one day she took too much speed and had an overdose. She needed valium to help her to relax but she didn't have any.

