

Elvis Costello, How To Be Dumb

I was hell-bent on destroying my powers of concentration
While you were living like a saint
And all the time the very one you trusted was washing off
somebody else's paint
Now you've got yourself a brand new occupation
Every fleeting thought is a pearl
And beautiful people stampede to the doorway
of the funniest fucker in the world

They're here to help you
Satisfy your desire
There's a bright future for all you professional liars

[Chorus:]
Now you know how to be dumb
Are you ready to take your place in the modern museum of mistakes?
Don't you know how to be dumb?
Like a building thrown up overnight in one of those reverse earthquakes

They emptied out all the asylums, they emptied out all the gaols
The "New Bruise" was the name of a dance craze
By "Jesus Cross and the Cruel Nails";
Followed up by "Torturing Little Beaver";
With their contraption of barbed wire
Between the fear and the fever lies all the rejection they require
They'll be howling by midnight, they'll be drooling by dawn
Skulls shrunk down to the size of their brains
Heads shaven and shorn

[Chorus]

Trapped in the House of the Perpetual Sucker
Where bitterness always ends so pitifully
You always had to dress up your envy in some half-remembered
philosophy

Now you're masquerading as pale powdered genius
Whose ever bad intention has been purged
You could've walked out any time you wanted but face it you
didn't have the courage
I guess that makes you a full time hypocrite or some kind of
twisted dilettante
Funny though people don't usually get so ugly till they think
they know what they want
Scratch your own head stupid
Count up to three
Roll over on your back
Repeat after me

Don't you know how to be dumb?
Are you ready to take your place in the modern museum of mistakes?
Don't you know how to be dumb?
Like a building thrown up overnight in one of those reverse earthquakes