

# 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