

# Elvis Costello, Strict Time

There's a hand on a wire that leads to my mouth  
I can hear you knocking but I'm not coming out  
Don't want to be a puppet or a ventriloquist  
'Cause there's no ventilation on a critical list  
Fingers creeping up my spine are not mine to resist  
Strict time

[Chorus:]

Toughen up, toughen up  
Keep your lip buttoned up  
Strict time

Oh the muscles flex and the fingers curl  
And a cold sweat breaks out on the sweater girl  
Strict time  
Oh he's all hands, don't touch that dial  
The courting cold wars weekend witch trial  
Strict time  
All the boys are straight laced and the girls are frigid  
The talk is two-faced and the rules are rigid 'cause it's strict time  
Strict time

[Chorus]

You talk in hushed tones, I talk in lush tones  
Try to look Italian through the musical Valium  
Strict time  
Thinking of grand larceny  
Smoking the everlasting cigarette of chastity  
Cute assistants staying alive  
More like a hand job than the hand jive  
Strict time

[Chorus]