

Borderline

Joni Mitchell

Everybody looks so ill at ease
So distrustful so displeased
Running down the table
I see a borderline
Like a barbed wire fence
Strung tight, strung tense
Prickling with pretense
A borderline

Why are you smirking at your friend?
Is this to be the night when
All well-wishing ends?
All credibility revoked?
Thin skin, thick jokes!
Can we blame it on the smoke
This borderline?

Every bristling shaft of pride
Church or nation
Team or tribe
Every notion we subscribe to
Is just a borderline
Good or bad, we think we know
As if thinking makes things so!
All convictions grow along a borderline

Smug in your jaded expertise
You scathe the wonder world
And you praise barbarity
In this illusionary place--
This scared hard-edged rat race
All liberty is laced with
Borderlines

Every income, every age
Every fashion-plated rage
Every measure, every gauge
Creates a borderline
Every stone thrown through glass
Every mean-streets-kick ass
Every swan caught on the grass
Will draw a borderline

You snipe so steady
You snub so snide--
So ripe and ready
To diminish and deride!
You're so quick to condescend
My opinionated friend
All you deface, all you defend
Is just a borderline
Just a borderline ...
Another borderline ...
Just a borderline