

## Retrospective

Tom Paxton

Now, when the paint was dry  
And the colours set  
It was painful yet  
To an honest eye  
Here, where the walls were hung  
With the sweat of years  
The familiar fears  
Since the hands were young  
Now, in a battered chair  
With his tea gone cold  
And his hands grown old  
He will sit and stare  
Here, where his life is hung  
With the blood in view  
There's been nothing new  
Since the hands were young  
Schoolboys laugh in the streets below  
Laughter cruel as the long ago  
Fingers point through the bitter years  
And the bitter tears  
Now, when the paint was dry  
And the die was cast  
It was clear at last  
It was all a lie  
Red never left his hand  
And the blue was wrong  
With a green too strong  
Never what he planned  
Now, in a rumpled bed  
With a night to kill  
He'll be painting still  
If he isn't dead  
Now, he can only stare  
As the old dream falls  
At the mocking walls  
And the walls are bare