Byline

Elvis Costello

I read by line by line Some words of yours, some words of mine Some sentiments are best forgot Some letters read then folded shut

The profile on a postage stamp I traced it by my reading lamp Remembered when I'd sit in wait Then marked our parting from that date

I read by line by line by line That old sarcastic Valentine That you denied you'd sent to me Then took it back

It's a thought that we shared, a careless phrase A curse or a joke, some words of praise But I didn't write Did you wonder why?
It was the easiest way to say "Goodbye"

You'll see my photo beside the article
"That's just some guy I used to know
I was never his
He was always mine
But I wrote him off by line by line"
By line by line by line by line by line
By line by line