

We Are All Cowards Now

Elvis Costello

Time has taught us
That they're sending out their sons
To take away our guns and our daughters
We are all cowards now

Rivers rising
Darkness fell upon
People blotting out the sun
Disguising how
We are all cowards now

At least the Emperor Nero had an ear for music
But that's history
Caligula said "God's speed, my steed"
But that's his story

They're coming for our Peacemakers
Our Winchesters and Colts
The rattle of our Gatling Guns
Our best cowboy revolts and threats and insults
We are all cowards now

The emptiness of arms
The openness of thighs
The pornography of bullets
The promises and prizes can't disguise
We are all cowards now

They're draping stones with colours
And a roll of stolen names
Except those we never cared about

And those we need to blame
We'll extinguish that flame, just the same
We are all cowards now

Arms are empty
The pornography of plenty
Count commands from one to ten
Number sins from ten to twenty

There's an illusion we believe in
There is honour in their need
Pretty confetti, chemical debt
And a necessity to bleed

My fears too fleet to scupper
My prayers too thin to scream
On my lover's back a zipper
On her limb a straightened seam

So, close the windows tightly
Lower lamps and shades
On the screen, silent rehearsals
For tomorrow's parades
For tomorrow's parades
For tomorrow's parades

We are all cowards now