

# Tramp the Dirt Down

Elvis Costello

I saw a newspaper picture from the political campaign  
A woman was kissing a child, who was obviously in pain  
She spills with compassion, as that young child's face  
In her hands she grips  
Can you imagine all that greed and avarice  
Coming down on that child's lips Well I hope I don't die too soon  
I pray the Lord my soul to save  
Yes I'll be a good boy, I'm trying so hard to behave  
Because there's one thing I know, I'd like to live  
Long enough to savor  
That's when they finally put you in the ground  
I'll stand on your grave and tramp the dirt down When England was the whore of the world  
Margaret was her madam  
And the future looked as bright and as clear  
As the black tarmacadam  
Well I hope that she sleeps well at night,  
Isn't haunted by every tiny detail  
When she held that lovely face in her hands  
All she thought of was betrayal And now the cynical ones  
Say that it all ends the same in the long run  
Try telling that to the desperate father  
Who just squeezed the life from his only son  
And how it's only voices in your head  
And dreams you've never dreamt  
Try telling him the subtle difference  
Between justice and contempt Try telling me she isn't angry  
With this pitiful discontent  
When they flaunt it in your face  
As you line up for punishment  
And then expect you to say thank you  
Straighten up, look proud and pleased  
Because you've only got the symptoms,  
You haven't got the whole disease Just like a schoolboy,  
Whose head's like a tin-can  
Filled up with dreams then poured down the drain  
Try telling that to the boys on both sides,  
Being blown to bits or beaten and maimed  
Who takes all the glory and none of the shame Well I hope you live long now,  
I pray the Lord your soul to keep

I think I'll be going before  
We fold our arms and start to weep  
I never thought for a moment  
That human life could be so cheap  
But when they finally put you in the ground  
They'll stand there laughing and tramp the dirt down

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