

# When I Was Cruel No. 2

Elvis Costello

I exit through the spotlight glare  
I stepped out into thin air  
Into a perfume so rarefied  
Here comes the bride  
Not quite aside, they snide, she's number four  
There's number three just by the door  
Those in the know, don't even flatter her, they go one better  
She was selling speedboats in a trade show when he met her  
Look at her now  
She's starting to yawn  
She looks like she was born to it  
But it was so much easier  
When I was cruel  
She reaches out her arms to me  
Imploring another melody  
So she can dance her husband out on the floor  
The captains of industry just  
Lie there where they fall  
In eau-de-nil and pale carnation creation  
A satin sash and velvet elevation  
She straightens the tipsy head-dress of her spouse  
While hers recalls a honey house  
There'll be no sorrows left to drown  
Early in the morning in your evening gown  
But it was so much easier  
When I was cruel  
The entrance hall was arranged  
With hostesses and ushers  
Who turned out to be the younger wives  
Nursing schoolgirl crushes  
Parting the waves of those  
Few feint friends  
Fingers once offered are now too  
Heavy to extend  
The ghostly first wife glides up  
On stage, whispering to raucous talkers  
Spilling family secrets out to  
Flunkey's and castrato walkers  
See that girl, watch that scene

Digging the dancing queen  
Two newspaper editors like playground sneaks  
Running a book on which of them is going to last the week  
One of them calls to me and he says, 'I know you  
You gave me this tattoo back in '82?  
You were a spoilt child then with a record to plug  
And I was a shaven headed, seaside thug  
Things haven't really changed that much  
One of us is still getting paid too much  
There are some things I [incomprehensible] report  
The memory of his last retort  
But it was so much easier  
When I was cruel, oh  
Look at me now, she's starting to yawn  
She looks like she was born to it  
Ah, but it was so much easier  
When I was cruel

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