

Elvis Costello "Battered Old Bird"

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The landlady's husband came up to town today
Since he left them both ten years ago to serve the
ministry
The dark down road of his approach in constant rain
was drenched
The tenant's boy said, "How d'ya do?" Then swore in
French

Did you teach this little child these curses on my soul
You should both be shut down in the coal-hole
That's the way to treat a child who cries out in the night
And a woman who teaches wrong from right

Oh, he's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh
He's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh

There's a place where time stands still
If you keep taking these little pink pills, oh

Hush your mouth, you hypocrite
His humor cut her deep
The tight lipped leer of judgment
That had seen her love desert her just like sleep

Filthy words on children's lips
Are better, my dear spouse
Then if I were to speak my mind
About this house

Oh, he's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh
He's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh

There's a place where time stands still
You keep taking these little pink pills, oh

But on the first floor there are two old maids
Each one wishing that the other was afraid
And next door to them is a man so mild

'Til he chopped off the head of a visitor's child

He danced upon the bonfire
Swallowed sleeping pills like dreams
With a bottle of sweet sherry
That everything redeems

Oh, he's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh
He's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh

There's a place where time stands still
If you keep taking these little pink pills, oh

And on the second floor is the Macintosh Man
He's in his overcoats more than out of them
And the typewriter's rattling all through the night
He's burgundy for breakfast tight

He says, "One day I'll throw away
All of my cares
And it is always Christmas in a cupboard
At the top of the stairs"

Oh, he's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh
He's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh

There's a place where time stands still
If you keep taking these little pink pills, oh

Here's a boy if ever there was
Who's going to do big things
Guess that's what they all say
And that's how the trouble begins

I've seen them rise and fall
Been through their big deals and smalls
He'd better have a dream that goes
Beyond four walls

You think he should be sent outside
Playing with the traffic
When pieces of him are already
Scattered in the attic
When pieces of him are already
Scattered in the attic

Oh, he's a battered old bird

And he's living up there, oh
He's a battered old bird
And he's living up there, oh

And there's a place where time stands still
You keep taking these little pink pills, oh, oh, oh

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