

Rome

Dan Bern

We pulled into Rome
With blood in our eyes
After days of travelin'
Months of lies
Taking our various
Turns at the wheel
Taking booze
And pot and cigarettes
Anything not to feel
No one had slept
No one had eaten
Our bodies were bad
Our spirits were beaten
Together we dragged
All of us down
As we staggered through Rome
Blaming the town
Blaming the students
For worship of others
Blaming the cops
And blaming their brothers
And never quite looking
Ourselves in the heart
And minute by minute
Growing further apart

Julia, Julia
Where have you gone?
Why have you vanished
Off of my lawn?
Julia, Julia
Where is your truck?
Where have you driven
With all of my luck?

But even old bull fighters
Their grave stones in sight
Must search 'till they unearth
One last bull to fight
And so it was with us
So near to the end
One last story to tell
One last hill to defend
One glance to avoid
One guitar to strum
One untruth to be told
One last song to be sung
And you, the most brilliant
Most driven, most keen
Jewel of a bastard
I ever have seen
And you and your turn
A good bitch of the Nile
So real to the end
Nothing left to defile
And me in the middle
Along for the ride

The unwilling distraction
From familiocide
And knowing our weaknesses
No one refrained
From picking
And prodding
'Till nothing remained

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And now in this kitchen
Miles from home
Miles from anything
Miles from Rome
Rome was a bust
Rome was a scream
Rome was the final
Rapid eye movement
To this dream
We scattered like leaves
Like pieces of dust
Warriors watching
Their swords and shields rust
And now as we descend
To couches and clocks
To closets and appointments
Let us drink to the rocks
Let us drink to the sand
To the winds which have blowed us
Let us drink to the rivers
Let us drink to the road

And if you travel this far
From either conscience or greed
Have one piece of advice
That I think you should heed
If ever your travels
Take you this far from home
Consult your map carefully
Stear clear of Rome

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