

# The River in Reverse

Elvis Costello

How long does a promise last?  
How long can a lie be told?  
What would I take in exchange for my soul?  
Would I notice when it was sold?

Wake me up  
Wake me up  
Wake me up with a slap or a kiss  
There must be something better than this  
'Cos I don't see how it can get much worse  
What do we have to do to send  
The river in reverse

Every man a crawling kingsnake  
Every girl a half a heartbreak  
Every woman sold into shame  
To any son without a name

Are your arms too weak to lift?  
Another shovel on the graveyard shift  
Here comes the flood if you catch my drift  
Where the things that they promised are not a gift

If man falls through the mirror of a lake  
They fish him out quick and they call him a fake  
Give him all the temptations he can take  
Tie him up high 'til his bones break

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I thought I heard somebody laugh  
Look out your window  
They're chasing shadows in the dark  
They're counting widows

I felt a sliver of glass  
Saw a cross in splinters  
I felt the truce of spring  
Dig me out of the trench of winter

So count your blessings when they ask permission  
To govern with money and superstition  
They tell you it's all for your own protection  
'Til you fear your own reflection  
But the times are passing from illumination  
Like bodies falling from a constellation  
An uncivil war divides the nation  
So erase the tape on that final ape running down creation  
Running down creation

Wake me up

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Wake me up with a slap or a kiss  
There must be something better than this  
Wake me up  
Wake me up with a slap or a kiss  
There must be something better than this