

# Borderline

Joni Mitchell

Everybody looks so ill at ease  
So distrustful so displeased  
Running down the table  
I see a borderline  
Like a barbed wire fence  
Strung tight, strung tense  
Prickling with pretense  
A borderline

Why are you smirking at your friend?  
Is this to be the night when  
All well-wishing ends?  
All credibility revoked?  
Thin skin, thick jokes!  
Can we blame it on the smoke  
This borderline?

Every bristling shaft of pride  
Church or nation  
Team or tribe  
Every notion we subscribe to  
Is just a borderline  
Good or bad, we think we know  
As if thinking makes things so!  
All convictions grow along a borderline

Smug in your jaded expertise  
You scathe the wonder world  
And you praise barbarity  
In this illusionary place--  
This scared hard-edged rat race  
All liberty is laced with  
Borderlines

Every income, every age  
Every fashion-plated rage  
Every measure, every gauge  
Creates a borderline  
Every stone thrown through glass  
Every mean-streets-kick ass  
Every swan caught on the grass  
Will draw a borderline

You snipe so steady  
You snub so snide--  
So ripe and ready  
To diminish and deride!  
You're so quick to condescend  
My opinionated friend  
All you deface, all you defend  
Is just a borderline  
Just a borderline ...  
Another borderline ...  
Just a borderline