

Homer , *the slut*

Information Line Special



Christmas 1995

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This 'zine is just my way of letting you know what I have been up to since **Homer**, *the slut* went to sleep. Its concerns are solely with the live Dylan experience in the time since. Actually, the main part of the 'zine starts from what will be nearly two years ago by the time you get this. To be more specific, in February 1994 when **Homer the slut** issue 11 should've been out had it not been decided to end the whole thing with a double issue that Easter. From there it is one long personal reminiscence, a rambling journey through my last two years with particular reference to the live Dylan experience - interspersed with some articles by a few **Homer** stalwarts. Prior to setting out on this trip, and I hope you'll wanna ramble with me, there's an introduction answering all of those who've asked me: *So what do you get up to these days?*

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COMING STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

So what have I been up to? Enjoying a life of luxury after giving up the absurd workload of writing, producing and distributing *Homer, the slut*? No chance! *Homer* himself still causes a deal of hassle with tax returns, reprinting back issues; plus I've been writing for *On The Tracks* and *Series of Dreams* as well as reading and contributing to the Dylan newsgroup on the Internet. Of course, this is all fun, as is one of the other obsessions in my life - fitba'. (Or soccer as countries we exported it to call it.) With the live coverage and chat shows coming close to filling every hour of every evening there's not much time for anything else. (What do you mean 'you don't have to watch it all', course you do - even when multiple T.V.s and videos are required¹.) Then there's all the games you have to go and see too. Sigh, such pressure. Still, since anyone who follows it knows, most football matches are far from gripping throughout, so your average *Homer* evening finds him returning from work and then:

- ◆ switching on the tape-to-tape audio machine,
- ◆ starting to download Dylan, football and personal mail from the Internet,
- ◆ turning on the T.V. to read football news on Teletext,
- ◆ downloading e-mail from work,
- ◆ greeting Pia on her arrival home from work,
- ◆ watching the round-up of last night's football on Sky,
- ◆ answering e-mail while watching live football on one of the Satellite channels while simultaneously taping another for later viewing at which point all the other e-mail can be dealt with.

Oh, and somewhere in there I listened to the two answer machines and updated the *Homer* line. And eaten. And taped Star Trek for my niece (oh, OK, for me too!) Set the videos up for some overnight dubbing. What do I do then? Well, in the words of the great Jackson Browne song:

*And when the morning light comes streaming in
I'll get up and do it again*

Most of the above - albeit on a smaller scale - also took place when *Homer, the slut* was going strong; the big difference now is that my job has changed from allowing me time to work on the 'zine during the day to having to work evenings and weekends in addition to the daily servitude this absurd society demands.

The tough thing is that on top of all the above I have to find time to listen to Dylan - far less all the other music I like. I have to admit I get behind sometimes! Unlike the football, Dylan demands uninterrupted attention, something that is in short supply. I do not manage to listen to much non-Dylan music nowadays, following only the work of my long term favourites. Somehow, though, I keep up with all the Dylan concert tapes and videos, Even as I type this, *Ring Them Bells* from Dublin '95 booms around the flat, reminding me of all the treasures that continue to pour out from the man.

1995 has been a spectacularly good year, don't you think? Ah, but I am running ahead of myself, I must finish this introduction before we get to the live stuff. Where was I, oh yes, telling you what I get up to these days, where all the time goes, how busy and precious each waking moment has become.

So for all of you who still ask if I was correct in stopping *Homer, the slut*, I could say "Yes" due to all the time and work pressures listed above. But that would only be partly true.

There were many offers of help when I announced that I intended to stop producing *Homer, the slut*. Volunteers for sub-editor posts, for distributors and so forth. The workload could've been reduced to me just being the editor. (I could even cut down a little on the football!) If truth be told, I'd long decided that

¹ Sunday afternoons can be so complex sometimes four live games all overlap at one point.

the magazine had become too important to me. I was reacting to events in the Dylan world with the 'zine in mind rather than just me appreciating Dylan. I was becoming agitated about always making the warmline first with the news. I was too proprietorial and defensive about the whole thing to enjoy it anymore. I should have known better, I'd been involved in another fandom scene at the other end of my lost decade, the same thing had happened there - I'd seen people so wrapped up in their fandom world that the object of the interest in the first place becomes almost secondary to it. I was actually irritated that *Good As I Been To You* was released at such an awkward time for **Homer**, *the slut* that I had to delay sending out an issue.

This all came home to roost with a vengeance when John Bauldie, albeit in what he may have considered a jokey manner, ridiculed and lied about issue 7 of **Homer**, *the slut* as a bafflingly inappropriate preface to his talk on the liner notes of *The Bootleg Series Volumes I-III* at a Dylan convention. I knew then and there that this was not a scene I wanted any more of. It was my failing as much as anything - because it hurt, because I wasn't able to just ignore it as I should have. Or perhaps failing is the wrong word, it is just the way I am; Dylan's performances are the important thing, Dylan fandom should only be a fun adjunct to that. The minute it isn't fun is the time to change your attachment to it. At the time this was a general feeling rather than a specific decision - I had no choice for another year anyway as everyone had just re-subscribed for issues 8, 9 and 10 (which, for various reasons, turned out to be the most satisfying issues for me.)

The next summer I met Dylan in Camden and it could hardly have been made clearer to me that it was time to concentrate on the man himself and the other things that give me pleasure in life rather than allow myself to become all worked up about the ego-centric world of fandom and fanzines.

So that is the present and the past - how about the future?

Well, enough of you seem to like the **Homer** line even in these days of the information superhighway, and, in the light of that, I am more than happy to keep it going.² John Baldwin has taken over the task of completing the reprinting of the back issues of **Homer**, *the slut* and, one day fairly soon, I will start up a **Homer** page on the World Wide Web. I'll keep writing for *On The Tracks* until they've had enough of me and I still plan to collect some of the material from **Homer** (both published and some of the great articles that were going to be in Issue 12 & 13) into a book format. So as you can see I haven't stopped pottering around in the land of the Dylan fan after all, I have loosened my connections rather than severed them.

However most of the above is just vague plans; I give no timescales as my job's demands are too unpredictable. (Or, rather, worryingly predictable!)

I wish you all a very Merry Xmas and a spectacularly happy New Year when it comes. Thanks for your support and friendship. For those who write to say they miss **Homer**, *the slut*, well, despite all my moaning at the time, none of you miss him as much as I do.

² I do think, however, that the Internet has far outstripped any telephone information line; International boundaries don't exist, all information can be stored, retrieved, any concert-goer can report immediately world-wide. So I do see telephone information lines as having a limited life-span, but while there are still some of you out there 'phoning - lets enjoy it!

JAPAN FEBRUARY 1994

So let me take you down goes I'm going to...February 1994. Jon Casper very kindly undertook to leave the set-lists from Japan on my work voice-mail system. This he most diligently did - and, apart from the opening show when he and Carol had a nightmare touring experience - I'm proud to say that the set-lists were updated as they happened. Or, as someone pointed out, due to the weird effects of the time difference I had one set-list on "before" the concert had started!

Do you remember February '94? Remember the sheer excitement that he'd opened with *Jokerman*? How fickle we are at times, later I can clearly recall groups of us being desperate for him to open with anything other than *Jokerman*. Now (first week in October '95) we feel the same about *Crash on the Levee (Down In The Flood)*.

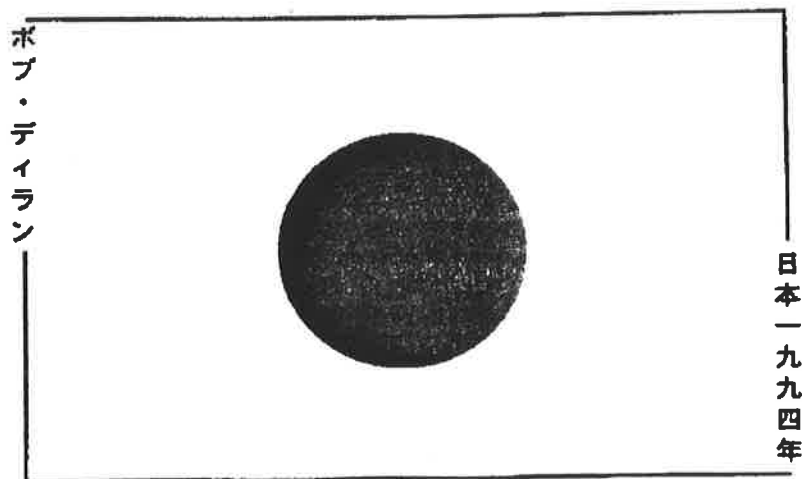
Perhaps even more surprising and exhilarating was the second song on the opening three nights - *If You See Her, Say Hello*, nearly sixteen years after it had last been played. I remember excitedly starting the set list on the Homer line:

"Dylan opened with *Jokerman* then played *If You See Her, Say Hello...*"

My voice must have betrayed a change in register for the *All Along The Watchtower, Just Like A Woman, Tangled Up In Blue* that followed!

But it is neither *Jokerman* nor *If You See Her, Say Hello* that is going to be highlighted here. Rather, courtesy of the pen of Robert Forryan, it is an older song, a very early Dylan song indeed, sung in a setting that was apt in a manner so horifically gruesome that one shudders to think of it.

BOB DYLAN



JAPAN 1994

LET ME ASK YOU ONE QUESTION

It's always the tape that you don't expect that gets you. Whoever said that "half the pleasure of any event is in the anticipation" must have been a collector who had come to realise that expectations are so often disappointed. In my earlier obsessive days I would often read, in *Isis* or *The Telegraph*, some writer tellin' me and so many others: "you just gotta get this tape". It was probably some recently unearthed moonstone of a performance from 10, 15 or 20 years ago, and it would always be described in such a way as to create a fever in the reader's mind (or at least in this reader's mind) - fever which could only be cooled by the tape's acquisition. And so often the tapes so described were wonderful - of course they were (how could they not be? This is Dylan for God's sake), but the period of anxious anticipation, from the reading of the article to the time when the padded envelope containing the promised masterpiece dropped through my letterbox, was often too intense. The result of all this intensity and expectation could only be to reduce the gem-like qualities of the performance to something that sounded, if not like fibreglass, at least neither more nor less than another one among hundreds of excellent Dylan tapes. Is there anything in this world so devaluing as a eulogy, I wonder?

The conclusion to be drawn, then, is that there is no kinder act that one Dylan fan can perform for another than to send him/her a wonderful, but unsolicited, tape. It is just that unexpected tape that stuns, that claws at your innards, that knocks you sideways and recreates those emotions that you felt that very first time you really heard Dylan. Such an act of kindness has been something I have known several times, thanks mainly to Andrew Muir. It was just such an act of his that spawned this article. This was the arrival, in April 1994, of a tape of the Hiroshima show of 16 February of that year. It wasn't the whole tape that I responded to, good though it is, but the first track that I heard. This was not the opening song, *Jokerman*, but the song that Andrew had contrived that I hear first. So remarkable did he consider the performance of this song to be, he had wound the tape to the exact point that would ensure that this was the song I first heard. Nothing could have been better designed to induce a positive response in this listener. Had he written a long letter extolling the merits of this one performance of this particular song I could only have been disappointed. By doing it this way, and by not telling me that this is what he had done, Andrew virtually guaranteed that he achieved the desired effect. Within seconds of rolling that tape, I was stoned on Dylan; out of my mind on just one song. The song, and the inspiration for me to be writing now, was *Masters Of War* - according to *The Telegraph* the first acoustic version of *Masters* since 1963. Since Hiroshima, of course, *Masters Of War* has become a regular choice in Dylan's acoustic sets and featured strongly during the 1995 European Tour; but at the time this acoustic performance was a revelation.

The really odd thing is, that if you'd asked me in say, March 1994 which Dylan song I was least likely to write about, it could well have been *Masters Of War*. Until then it had been a long time since the song had really moved or shaken me. Oh, it had shaken me all right in 1964 when I first bought *Freewheelin'*, but down the years my interest had been engaged by several hundred other songs and, besides, I'd long lost interest in either politics or the political dimension to Dylan's work. So it was a considerable shock for me to find myself hearing the song anew, to be recognising in the performance something of that which I had instantly recognised some thirty years earlier. It was, if anything, even more of a shock to find that Dylan's voice sounded to me (in April 1994) so very much like the voice that I hear when I play old live tapes circa 1963.

And so I had to write this essay to explore, if I can, what *Masters Of War* now means to me as a result of the Japanese experience and, maybe, some non-political aspects of its situation within the Dylan canon. In doing this, I am, of course, going to be hamstrung by the very dichotomy described at the outset. If I succeed, it is likely that your expectations of the Hiroshima 1994 version of this song will be raised to exactly that pitch which can only guarantee that you will be disappointed. Such are the frustrations of the obsessive - and the anguish of mental masturbation.

Anguish? There is certainly anguish for a middle-aged man in the realisation that it has been fully 30 years since I first heard this song. 1964...

"'Twas in another lifetime, one of toil and blood
When blackness was a virtue and the road was full of mud.
I came in from the wilderness,
a creature void of form.
'Come in', HE said,
'I'll give you shelter from the storm."

He gave me shelter then. He gives me shelter now. It is impossible to do justice to Dylan or to *Masters Of War* without remembering the changing times in which it was first delivered. There is a famous quotation from Virginia Woolf : "On or about December 1910 human nature changed.... all human relations shifted - those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature". For my generation the world turned upside down in 1963. What was it Philip Larkin said - "sex began in 1963" was it? Whatever Larkin said, a cultural revolution certainly seemed to begin in or around 1963 - and Dylan was, briefly, at the eye of the storm.

I have said that this piece is going to try to explore what the song, in its various musical representations, means to me personally. This is a personal and subjective essay. Ask me what I am really trying to achieve and I am hard put to it to answer your one question - all I can be sure of is this: the transient experience of listening to this Hiroshima '94 tape made me want to write about this song. There is nothing more to it than that. This is certainly not a critical exposition complete with mandatory sub-text - it's just vulgar to think so! It will however be more than just a hymn of praise. I will look at what others have written about the song, will touch upon its religious aspects, and will take a short chronological trip through the song as exhibited in live performance over the years. More than that I can promise nothing.

As Daniel J Gonczy ("*The Folk Music of the 1960's: it's rise and fall*" reprinted in *The Dylan Companion*) reminds us "the connection between folk music and what would become the anti-war ferment was demonstrated nowhere better than in Dylan's *Freewheelin'* album of 1963". Dylan was, then, first and foremost a writer/performer of topical songs. He was soon perceived as a leader of the anti-war, civil rights movement, but it may be nearer to the truth to say that he was reflecting the times rather than changing them. That said, he nonetheless helped shape the consciousness of a generation, myself included.

So, we have 1910 and 1963. This next quote could apply to either: "there was a great overturning, questioning, revaluating, of everything in England. Old institutions, old beliefs, old values came in question. Men moved easily from one critical group to another..." Sounds like the sixties, doesn't it? In fact, it is Christopher Hill writing about the period from 1645 to 1653 in his book on the English Revolution, *The World Turned Upside Down*. It was, he says, "a period of glorious flux and intellectual excitement" and he quotes the contemporary voice of Gerrard Winstanley: "the old world... is running up like parchment in the fire". What a wonderful phrase - like parchment in the fire. Who does that remind you of?

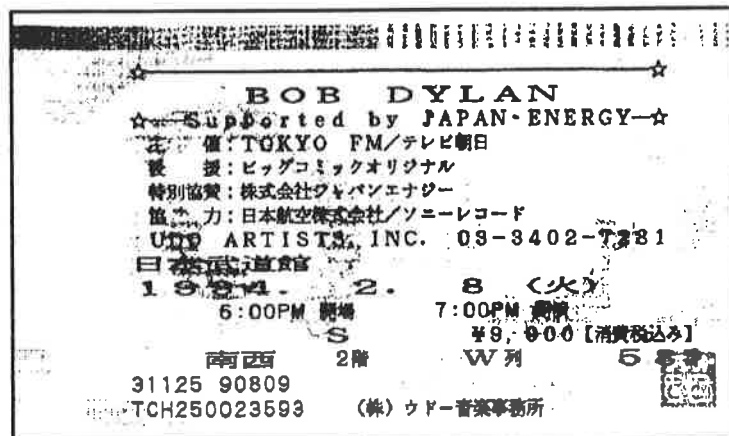
I've long been conscious of similarities between the 1640's and the 1960's but it's only latterly that I've come to see the obvious factor that links Dylan with that earlier revolution : an odious witches' brew of radical politics generously laced with injudicious dashes of texts from the Bible. The Bible was the handbook and manual of the Parliamentary revolutionaries in 17th Century England. It was also more than a source of metaphor for Dylan in writing his 1960's material - it was a reference book.

And *Masters Of War* is a stunning example of this conjunction of the political with the religious. "Like Judas of old you lie and deceive". I'm not laying claim to any great insightfulness here. At the time I did not notice it at all - I was hooked solely by the political aspects of his work. That and the wonderful love songs. And I was as surprised as the next person in 1979. Though I really oughtn't to have been - given all that went before, but hindsight is a generous teacher; she shows us so much.

But the reality is that the Bible and God were always present. In 1965 Dylan was saying: "Folk music is the only music where it isn't simple. It's weird man, full of legend, myth, Bible and ghosts". And these four ingredients have always been a part of what Dylan brings to his creativity. Even in 1962 says Jim Miller ("*Bob Dylan*" - reprinted in *The Dylan Companion*) "what jumped out at the time and stands out today are several songs about death". Miller refers to Dylan's performance of *In My Time of Dying*: "his voice is raw, histrionic, utterly unnatural and perfectly unsettling. He actually sounds like he's just about to meet Jesus in the middle of the air so that he can 'die easy'." In 1966 Dylan told Robert Shelton: "I have a death thing....the only thing that people really have in common is that they are going to die."

As I've said, listening in 1964, *Masters Of War* was, for me, a masterpiece. It has gained complexity with the years - a complexity born in time. Like beautiful women and good wines, it benefits from maturity.

By 1968 it had not matured sufficiently to convince Jon Landau ("John Wesley Harding"): "It is, of course, a song of deep hatred and it illustrates Dylan's polarizing and dualistic tendencies. The Masters



are on one side and he is on the other. Neither his own righteousness nor their wickedness is ever questioned." This stance was to be repeated with the conversion to Christianity, necessarily evangelical, in 1979. Again Dylan was convinced of his own righteousness (and rightness) and of others' inevitable damnation. But this time many of us found ourselves unable to go along with his "finger-pointin'" songs; because this time the finger was pointed at us. It seems that Dylan's need for some sort of certainty ("Ya either got faith or ya got unbelief and there ain't no neutral ground") leads him to adopt uncomfortable stances in the process of ensuring that he does not sit easily on the fence. He has always fought the sin of lifelessness. As for myself, I am a Laodicean, of whom it is written in Revelation 3:15,16 "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth". Well, I'm not totally lukewarm. I'm hot for Dylan. And for the woman I love. And for Leicester City F.C. But not necessarily in that order ... But I do worry sometimes about what the Bible says about me.

Landau continues: "what is jarring here is not Dylan's political judgements - they are unobjectionable by themselves - but the unreality of Dylan's response to this situation. He is creating an abstraction, a stereotype, upon which he can justify his hatred the overstatement and the overkill of the imagery and narrative of the song strain the credibility of even those fully in agreement with the political implications of the song. The entire conception suffers from its one-dimensionality. Yet it was a dimension that Dylan could put his finger on very well indeed. His vocal style, his droning guitar, the charisma of his performance, elevated the song to a very high level of kitsch. There is a 'Touchability' and a monomania that give the work great power, not unlike the power of a demagogue. Yet it never goes beyond the boundaries of Dylan creating a myth and becoming its prophet".

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So in 1994 at Hiroshima and, say, at the Grammy Awards (20 February 1991) was Dylan acting out the role of prophet in his performances of this song - a role so often allotted him but one which, it is alleged, he rejects? It is, obviously, not one of his most critically-acclaimed songs, and yet it was well-fitted to the mood of the two evenings in question. I will return to those years, but let us continue to see what others have said about the song.

Wilfrid Mellers ("*A Darker Shade Of Pale*") writes: "The words ... are plain, apart from the 'pale afternoon' on which, in the last stanza, the funeral of the mass-murderers takes place". The afternoon, says Mellers, "is anthropomorphically pale: it is drained of our blood". But the Jesus in this song "belies his nature in that even he would never forgive what the war-lords do". Dylan has been criticised elsewhere for this assertion of Jesus as avenger and judge. And by the 1980's Mellers claims that the song "emerges as a venomously hymnic anti-hymn".

Me? I'm not sure - Laodicean to the end. It is possible to read the Bible either way, I believe. Jesus as both judge and redeemer. The unanswerable question relates, I think, to who is judged and who is redeemed. And I'm not sure that it is possible to bring mere human logic to bear on that issue.

For me, *Masters Of War* has come to have greater significance for what it says about death and God than for its politics. Michael Gray ("*Song and Dance Man*") likens the phrase 'Casket on a pale afternoon' to T.S.Eliot. Which I can understand, but my own resonances are with Pasternak who opens *Dr Zhivago* with a scene at the funeral of Zhivago's mother; "On they went, singing 'Eternal Memory', and whenever they stopped the gusts of wind seemed to carry on their singing". I don't know why. I can't explain it. But *Masters Of War* and *Zhivago* are irrevocably linked in my imagination.

"The only thing that people really have in common is that they are going to die" - and therefore funerals are the supreme archetypal events in the human consciousness. The place where all humanity meets. One funeral is every funeral surely? "For I have known them all already, known them all - have known the evenings, mornings, (pale) afternoons". And maybe the single overwhelming image from *Masters Of War* is of the funeral. As it is in *Saving Grace*: "By this time I'd have thought that I would be sleeping in a pine box for all eternity".

But to have a funeral you need a death.

"And I hope that you die"

This is addressed of course, to those Masters of War not just in this song, but those we've met elsewhere -

"Big-time negotiators....
Masters of the bluff and masters of the proposition"

"Well, the rifleman's stalking the sick and the lame"

"You look into the fiery furnace, see the
rich man without any name"

"Man thinks 'cause he rules the earth
 He can do with it as he please
 And if things don't change soon, he will.
 Oh, man has invented his doom,
 First stop was touching the moon"

And who is going to take away his license to kill? The same themes, 20 years after *Masters Of War*, re-emerged on *Infidels*. And just as the space race grew out of the cold war, so is pacifism inextricably linked to environmentalism. It has to be. He's hell bent on destruction, we're afraid and confused.

"And your death will come soon"

Of course, what he means is that he hopes they will die soon, but this almost sounds like a prophecy - a prophecy which maybe was fulfilled (within months of the writing of this song) in Dallas, Texas in 1963. And thousands did follow that casket. But the death of one master does not result in the annihilation of the whole tribe. How could it? One master follows another - in the U.S.A. and elsewhere. Sadly, by 1993 Dylan is assisting in the inauguration of the latest Utopian monk who sometimes must have to stand naked. And he can stand over their graves forever, but he'll never be sure that they're dead. Such masters are forever old - or, at least, forever undead.

"Even Jesus would never
 Forgive what you do.

Let me ask you one question
 Is your money that good
 Will it buy you forgiveness
 Do you think that it could?"

This is where we left Wilfrid Mellers, I believe. Would Jesus forgive them? According to *Saving Grace* "The wicked know no peace .

Precious Angel asks:

"Can they imagine the darkness that will fall from on high
 When men will beg God to kill them and they won't be able to die?"

Or :

"You're the lamp of my soul, girl, and you touch the night
 But there's violence in the eyes, girl, so let us not be enticed
 On the way out of Egypt, through Ethiopia,
 TO THE JUDGEMENT HALL OF CHRIST"

Or in *I and I* :

"Took a stranger to teach me, to look into
 Justice's beautiful face
 And to see an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"

The whole question of whether Christ would/should/will forgive the Masters of War is a more complex one than a mind such as mine can hope to answer. I do wonder, though whether it is not possible that "the key is Judas". Was Judas forgiven for his betrayal in the garden? Without the betrayal there would have been no crucifixion. No crucifixion - no resurrection - no saviour - no *Saving Grace*. So Judas was an instrument of God's will - was he? If so, it seems wrong that he should be condemned for all eternity. "Good intentions can be evil", so maybe the reverse is also true? But maybe my argument is merely the "harmonious tongue" of Satan speaking - an utterly false premise. But there is some sort of inherent logic, surely? And if Judas could be forgiven, why not the bomb-makers, presidents and generals.

Matthew 24:6 -

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled. For all these things **MUST COME TO PASS** but the end is not yet."

If these things are needful for the fulfilling of prophecy, does any blame attach itself to those who are instrumental in bringing about the foretold destruction?

And if I accept the necessity of Judas, I must be getting Pretty close to Calvinism. And then I hear lines from a version of *Jokerman* which run:

"Preacherman talking about the deaf and the dumb
and a world to come that's already been pre-determined"

Which reminds me of another connection between Dylan and the 17th Century revolution - the Calvinist view (see *Saving Grace*) that men are saved by the Grace of God, not by their own words or deeds. Cromwell on his death bed enquired as to "whether Grace once enjoyed could be lost: and to have died happy when assured that it could not, "For I know that once I was in Grace" he said" (Christopher Hill - "*Puritanism and Evolution*")

日) 音楽 舞台 映画

全米八都市を巡るボブ・ディラン。写真の八半分の米日公演は、日本ではほとんど無名の四人のバック・ミュージシャンをバックにして行われた。アコースティック・ギターの弾き語りによるアルバムを得意とし、続けて発表しているディランだが、彼は一年半ほど前から、このメンバーによるライブを断片的に続けている。

八日の日本公演のステージ

音楽 舞台 映画

ボブ・ディラン

奔放に過去打ち砕く



デビューでは、一九八〇年代初期の「ニュー・カマー」をオーストリア・ナントに、アコースティック・ギターとドラムス、ベースの三人で演奏した。その二十年間、その音楽活動の大半は、その時代の代表曲が全編で十五曲演奏された。前半は、後半はロック・スタイル、中盤の四曲がドラムス、ベース、アコースティック・ギターとドラムス、ベースの四人で演奏した。そのうち半分の曲は、その公演でも必ず演奏される。残りの半分は、その日の気分によって演奏される。四曲の曲は、その日の気分によって演奏された。前半は、後半はロック・スタイル、中盤の四曲がドラムス、ベース、アコースティック・ギターとドラムス、ベースの四人で演奏した。そのうち半分の曲は、その公演でも必ず演奏される。残りの半分は、その日の気分によって演奏される。

は、その日の気分によって演奏される。四曲の曲は、その日の気分によって演奏された。前半は、後半はロック・スタイル、中盤の四曲がドラムス、ベース、アコースティック・ギターとドラムス、ベースの四人で演奏した。そのうち半分の曲は、その公演でも必ず演奏される。残りの半分は、その日の気分によって演奏される。

した。どの曲でもディランの曲をきくと、エディンバラになれた気分など、バンドは自発的な演奏を聞かされた。しかも彼は発表した当時のメロディを極端なまでに簡潔に歌い、かつその名曲の前奏を打ち砕くようにも演奏した。コンサートでの気構にして大胆な解釈と演奏からは、自分の曲の偉大さをたれよりも認め、それらをどう料理して歌おうか、その真意はまったく異なることとはないともいいたげな、シンガー・ソング・ライターの第一入者としてのボブ・ディランの自負と傲然さがはみ出された。(中川 五郎)

Enough of metaphysics or theology or whatever...

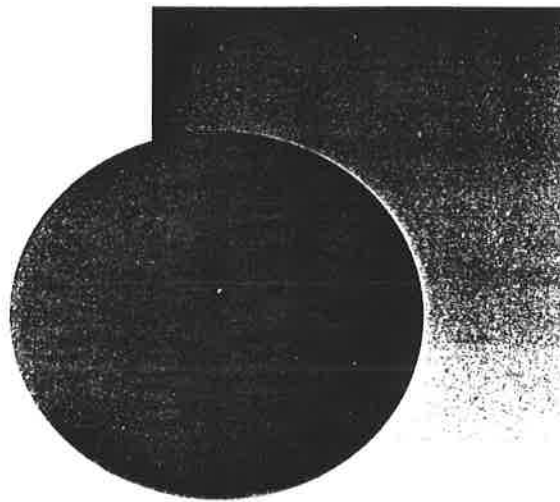
Let's get back to the song. *Masters Of War* vanished for a long time. I think I'm right in saying (and plenty of people will correct me if I'm wrong) that after 1964 it remained unsung until resurrected on the 1978 tour. Discussing this tour, Paul Williams says ("*Performing Artist*") : "Most of Dylan's topical 'protest' songs of the early '60s dated quickly or else became so universal they lost their political edge. Bringing back *Masters Of War*, a song too bitterly true to go out of date and too outspoken to be made into any kind of pablum, was a good idea (and a courageous one, given the supposed 'naivete' of the song's sentiments) for obvious reasons the keeper has to be from Nuremburg, July 1st. Dylan tells the crowd, over the fierce rhythms of the song's opening chords, "it gives me great pleasure to sing (this song) in this place".

For a song that has often been stigmatised as "lies that life is black and white" - as overly simplistic and attitudinal, it often seems to have been deliberately selected by Dylan for a particular purpose at a particular time and place. And for a song which many long-time fans may have lost interest in, it obviously still means a deal to Dylan himself. It is possible to identify several pertinent performances of this prophet's song.

Mainichi Newspaper Feb 16th 1994

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In looking at such occurrences, it is crucial to remember the transience of performance - the sense in which each performance, despite the ubiquity of tape, is unrepeatable: cannot be gone through twice by the performer. At least, not by this performer and only shallowly by the repetitive tape enthusiast. But though I have several valued 1978 recordings of the song, Nuremberg is not among them.

Masters re-appeared in 1981, born again, claims Heylin "a la 1978". Perhaps more interestingly, by 1984, we are getting a few changed lines. John Lindley ("*Highway 84 Revisited*" - *The Telegraph*) writes that the second night at Verona "there was a *Masters Of War* that strutted with a venom that had dissipated to a cold, slick anger by the time Dylan played it for the twenty-seventh time at Slane".

I don't have the second night. I do have the first night - the one described as little more than an on-stage rehearsal. The new verse (deliberately or otherwise?) sounds to me like this:

"How much do I know to talk out of turn
A world-war can be won,
but will nobody learn?
How much do I know?
'bout as much as you do
When I say that I'm scared
for the deeds that you do."

What I'm not sure about (though I don't think we should take this performance too seriously) is whether he's scared for himself or scared for them. Either would fit.

Nuremberg was a good place to sing *Masters*. So was Berlin (1984). By 7 July 1986 it had reached Washington. - "a hot, hot day, and 50,000 people are out there watching" writes Paul Williams. *Masters Of War* "serves as a kind of release : a wonderful performance, fabulous groove, nothing specifically transcendent about it, just Dylan: Dylan and the band totally tuned into performing together this song's supposed to be angry but today what it sounds like is a straight-out expression of joy."

And on 13 October 1990? On 13 October 1990 Dylan played West Point. I'll repeat that. I'll repeat it because back in 1964 it would not have been possible for me to ever believe, the day would come when I would write these four words : DYLAN PLAYED WEST POINT. Oh, the incongruity of it. Sell-out of all sell-outs. The greatest deconstruction ever. Or that's what it would have been if we had not long ago given up the notion of Dylan as prophet. Or have we? Should we?

I've listened to that tape many times, hoping to hear that accusing voice; hoping to hear the prophet condemning the Masters of War - confronting Satan at the very Gates of Hell. And, sure enough, fourth song up, every time I listen, here it comes: *Masters Of War*. A loud, pounding, throbbing, urgent version that typifies the band at that stage of The Never-Ending Tour. 1989/90 is still my favourite period post-1984. G.E. Smith at his best, giving us concentrated fire and occasionally, contemptuous ice; but always delivering spare interpretations - none of the meaningless, long drawn-out guitar doodling endings which have been the bane of my listening life 1992-1994. But where, among all this tumultuous, clanging, driving sound is the voice of the prophet? It's not there. Is it? Do you hear it?

What I hear is this, I hear the voice of a man colluding with his audience. I'm so sorry. I do realise this is complete heresy and so I guess I must be wrong. Pardon, Monsieur, am I hearing you right? Oh, God I hope I'm wrong. But what I hear is Dylan singing cynically. He sounds as if he's deliberately distancing himself from that prophetic-protest of an earlier time. He presents the song as a middle-aged man who is laughing ironically at the foolish optimism of his youth. He no longer rails at injustice. It's as if he's admitting to the militarised youth of 1990 that they have a more realistic perception of truth than their 1963 forebears. He sings as if he no longer believes in what he is singing. He sings as a post-modern prophet - without belief, without intensity, without faith.

Having said all that (and if YOU haven't lost patience with me) there are two saving graces in this performance for me. One is the wonderful phrasing of the line: "flows out of their bodies and is buried

in the mud"; where the word "mud" is held and elongated and ends with a dying shudder reminiscent of 1975. It sounds as if, just maybe, Dylan is, after all, recoiling at the horror of it. Whether it is the horror of war or the horror of appearing at West Point I cannot tell.

The second is that within a few months Dylan was using this song with a purpose, and in the process re-lit the flame of my dreams - my dreams that the prophet still lives somewhere within this ageing frame that houses my hero. Who knows? Wherever the truth lies, I hear the Grammy Awards performance of 20 February 1991 as one of the most committed ever. At the time this coast-to-coast TV show was less than well-received. The editorial in *Look Back* magazine, (No. 27) had this to say: "It's getting harder and harder, not to be embarrassed in front of the non-cognoscenti. The Feb 20th Grammy Awards debacle was enough to clinch it for any Live-Aid survivors. Sure, it was ballsy to do *Masters Of War* even though the vast majority of American viewers probably support the Allied interventions in the Persian Gulf. If so, why mumble the lyrics into a sound system that must have been set up by the same guys who serviced the Dead-Dylan concerts?" (Actually I find this last reference puzzling. My tapes of the 1987 Dead shows are refreshingly clear sound-wise).

In fact, the esteemed editor's question is answered in the same issue by David Hinckley: "Okay, it didn't sound like *Masters Of War*, but Dylan is like that. He rearranges, So step back and consider what he did on the Grammy show. He sang *Masters Of War*, a straight-ahead anti-war statement on a night when most folks were just sending best wishes to the troops. Then he offered the simple folk wisdom that we can't blame anybody else for what we're doing. It's our behaviour and we have to fix it.

A pretty powerful message, right? It also makes sense. And yeah, maybe it was lost on some folks because his behaviour and demeanour were so bizarre and if it all comes out weird, what's wrong with that? Music can use it, in an age when most of what passes for weirdness is planned and choreographed like a Vanilla Ice video.

Thanks, David. And Amen to that.

And so, back to Hiroshima, 16 February 1994; one-time playground of the Masters of the proposition that nuclear war can be justified. The scene of the most elemental and apocalyptic event in the history of man. THE most appropriate setting for this song, of all songs, to be performed. An opportunity to re-learn critical lessons which, if not learned, will leave the cat truly in the well: "Goodnight my love, may the Lord have mercy on us all".

And how it was performed! If ever the prophet spake it was then acoustically.

A gentle, haunting, melodic instrumentation; not at all angry, this time, and a voice from which the years have dropped away. This is the voice of a young man. This is not the gnarled old blues man's voice, but the voice, and the spirit, of the sixties. It sounds as if for one night, and for one song, Dylan (like Robert Johnson) has done a deal with the Devil. "Let me have my youth back for this song in this place - let me be inspired." A pact with the Devil - or maybe a prayer to the Lord. Whatever, it is a transcendent moment: or 5 transcendent minutes. And in fact, it is sung like a prayer or a hymn - a requiem performed quietly so as not to disturb the thousands of souls annihilated in that place nearly half-a-century earlier. It is all so apt. So right. The Jewish-American Prophet reaching across the borderline again : the least crossable borderline in the world. Thank you, Bob. Thank you, Andrew.

Reality intrudes the song is incomplete ... it is also a diatribe against the mothers and fathers throughout the land. Another round in the generational conflict.

"You might say that I'm young
You might say I'm unlearned.

You hide in your mansions
While the young people's blood
Flows out of their bodies
And is buried in the mud."

The would-be free struggling to escape the clutches of the unfree, of those who vote the Masters of War into their desks of power. Masters who are inseparable from Ma and Pa on *Maggies Farm*. The cruelty is the same. The National Guard stands around their doors. The desks they hide behind are in office blocks where many slave while the Masters just sing. And me? I just get bored with this eternal circle of wars and rumours of wars - Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Bosnia, Rwanda.

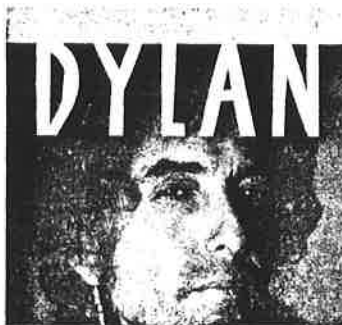
And as my lady and I look out tonight from Desolation Row, I realise

"that there is not
one thing anyplace
anywhere that makes any
sense. there are only tears
an' there is only sorrow
there are no problems"

Nothing really matters much. It's doom alone that counts

BOB DYLAN

果てしなき旅



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“静かなる衝撃”を与え、アメリカン・ルーツ・ミュージック
の極北を今も歩き続ける彼らの評伝が待望の邦訳。ディラン
& バンド・ファンのみならず、ロック・ファン必読の一冊！

DIGNITY

ISSUE 1

NOVEMBER 1995

DIGNITY IS HERE, NOW.

EDITOR - Jeff Guberman

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ON THROUGH 1994: US, JAPAN, US, EUROPE, US.

This Far East leg ends in controversy: No tapes from a 1994 show! Is this possible? Is Hong Kong, of all places, suddenly a DAT free zone? Is it possible we can only partially reconstruct the Kuala Lumpur setlist from a newspaper report? I ponder these mysteries as Dylan begins another US leg with song numbers 1,3 and 5 still firmly fixed. I update the Homer Line with set-lists from the US while listening to tapes from Japan. CDs from Japan seem to be flooding out - is the market for concert CDs insatiable? It sure seems so. As the US tour progresses *Senor* unexpectedly appears as the second song and remains there throughout. This initially causes a bit of a stir but ultimately gives an unchanging four out of five opening songs; once you add the unchanging *It Ain't Me Babe* and *Maggie's Farm* the Homer Line starts to sound the same day after day. The punters are getting restless. I can *feel* the discontent breathing out of the answering machine. What can I do? It is up to Bob to change the lists! (I am typing this on October 12, 1995 - the situation is identical. Demanding lot, aren't we?)

There is a brief - and it is time to get excited yet again, folks - interlude as Dylan goes back to the Far East to perform in The Great Music Experience. Satellite T.V. (and later BBC 2 with an encore from another night) show Dylan performing brilliantly in front of an orchestra. An astonishing *A Hard Rain's A Gonna Fall* and a very atmospheric *Ring Them Bells* certainly whetted the appetite for the upcoming European tour.

For this, the Homer Line is well supplied with first hand accounts, though I only see two shows - at Balingen and Cologne. No *Ring Them Bells* or orchestra here. Balingen was a bit of pain, bloody festivals nearly always are. There were a couple of personal memories that will live with me a long time. Not surprisingly to those who've travelled with him these involve the iniquitous Joe McShame.

Firstly, being interviewed by a German TV crew before some ridiculous group (Simple Minds?) went on. The cameras were attracted by my Homer, *the slut 10* sweatshirt. I gave them the obligatory tirade about how much Dylan was worth in comparison to the rest of the bill in response to one of their 'but you are here to see everybody?' stock questions. I doubt that it was ever shown, though, as McShame then misinterpreted the interviewer's question of:

And where have you come from

as

"Where were you born?" (Presumably thinking the German meant the colloquial "an whaur ur you from yourself, Jimmy?")

Therefore, when I answered, "London" as opposed to "Perth Road, Cowdenbeath, Kingdom of Fife, Scotland" he went ballistic and chased the TV crew away.

The second, personal, memory was of our first meeting with now firm friends Chris, Stephan and Daniel. In a last minute Internet arrangement, I'd taken Stephan up on his very generous offer of accommodation and transport from Balingen - via his home - to Cologne. McShame was, shall we say, a trifle sceptical of this plan; not surprisingly for one who hates plans that he hasn't complete control over, hasn't worried over, changed on a near as possible day-to-day basis and, most importantly of all agreed so far in advance of the event no-one else can remember them at all. So, he was saying: "It'll never work" for the 527th time, followed by his 114th "They'll never find us here" when, within a couple of minutes of the end of Dylan's set, Chris pops up in front of us, closely followed by Stephan and Daniel.

So a friendship was begun and a tour followed with McShame more under control than normal. Two days more or less sober made him more manageable, if no more pleasant, company. In a fit of image retrieval he managed to get blitzed in a few hours in Cologne on the way home. After swearing at every bar and cafe that didn't accept Visa (in other words everyone we visited as these clearly weren't credit card taking establishments); he completely lost the place in the airport. Forgetting that to what a normal Glaswegian is a wee morning swallie is enough to knock him senseless, his handful of lagers have sent him wild. John, Tim and I watched in bewilderment as he verbally and physically assaulted a frail 90-odd year woman who had heinously driven her luggage carrier over the edge of his bag. I tried to intervene, she tried to explain that she was virtually blind and was sorry....but there was no stopping the indignant Joe.

What of Bob? You ask, having your own McShame memories and not wishing to be reminded of them. Well, Cologne seemed a big improvement on Balingen; helped by it being a Dylan-only crowd and having *The Man In Me* rather than *Lay Lady Lay* as the second song. Also, there was a great atmosphere. I've never seen Clinton Heylin so happy after a show, but perhaps that had more to do with Germany being knocked out of the World Cup than with Dylan's show!

Try as I might I have more visual than auditory memories of those two shows. I could go and put on the tapes just now, but I am worried that Balingen will be as bad as I remember and Cologne will seem poor from a '95 perspective. I liked it at the time and would rather leave it at that.

So the never-ending tour continued to wind its way through July, and, after a short break, it was back to States in August. A brief set of dates that encompassed the little matter of WOODSTOCK II and Dylan's controversial decision to play there.³

October, and he's back on the road. Still 1,3,5, *It Ain't Me Babe* and *Maggie's Farm* hold sway, but you've got to admire the stamina of the man! Another curious feature of Internet Dylan spotting is the virtual 'Mexican Wave' that happens all across this electronic telegraph. Wherever Dylan is playing the contributors are really happy, once he's left they start moaning about the set-lists or whatever.....meanwhile another chorus of voices is raised in praise further down the road. Stephan phones in with ecstatic praise of the Boston shows as Pia and I pack to fly out to New York for the Roseland shows. Not such a bad life this, following Dylan is it? Pia, I can't hear your answer, whaddya say? Pia?

My last little trick for the Homer Line comes to a long awaited fruition at this point - Lambchop agrees to deputize when I am away. As I knew he would be, he's a stunning success. I join half the people I meet in New York phoning my own line just to check his latest Grateful Dead related pleasantries.

As is our holiday in New York: The sights, the smells, the sheer electricity of the place, the endless Dylan connotations. I felt like I'd finally found a place where I could feel at home, nobody hung around unless it was for the sake of it, all the grey drabness of London seemed as far away as it thankfully was. Best of all, it never closed. As for Dylan's shows, aye, there's the rub.

³ Controversy aside it provided us fans with a magnificent video of Bob in action, suddenly good quality live videos are appearing: Nara City, Woodstock, Unplugged, Hall Of Fame, but there's always a "but" with Dylan material - and oh for The Supper Clubs to have been released too.

NEW YORK - OCTOBER 1994

Saturday Oct. 15th

There was so much fog in London that it was doubtful we'd leave that morning. The Chicago flight due to leave half-an-hour before us was cancelled. However, after a 40 minute delay we were on our way. Good seats, but no computer allowed! Damn I'd just got into Doom as well. Further proof, if such be needed, of Dylan's prophetic powers is evident in his 1975 song *Shelter From The Storm*: Nothing really matters much, it's doom alone that counts.

The film was *When A Man Loves A Woman*. I thought it was good though, given it's subject matter, one couldn't claim to have "enjoyed" it. Kleenexes at the ready. Then we hit a lot of turbulence with the disastrous result that they stopped bringing coffee round as it was impossible not to spill it.

It was exciting as we got nearer to New York, out of the window I saw Manhattan in the distance - just at the edge of visibility. My first glimpse was of a brown, shadowy eruption on large lumps on the horizon -these gradually became clearer as we neared until they resolved into the famous skyline (still very distant.) I liked that first, almost mythic glimpse, the plane then banked so that as we approached the view was on the far side to us. Ah well...

We got through customs pretty quickly, I liked the guy's accent as he called Pia "Ma'am" and we were soon on a bus taking us to Grand Central Station. Soon we reached the Queensboro' Bridge taking us across to Manhattan. The buildings loomed on either side. It really is spectacular, it is not just that they are so goddam big but that there are so many of them all so close together. Then we were going past 7th Avenue and later drove up 5th Avenue & were suddenly at the very imposing Grand Central Station from where we got our first yellow taxi to the flat. (The taxi driving is everything it is reputed to be; a trifle on the aggressive side!) This ride afforded us a mini-tour of south-central Manhattan. It looked "absolutely fabulous".

It must've been about 2pm we got to the flat (7pm UK time) and, after talking to the owner for a while, we were getting a bit tired! After she left we looked around the flat and then had a short nap, particularly short in my case as I'd discovered one of the books was the Edie Sedgwick biography & I wanted to read the Dylan related bits. I also wanted to investigate the 76-channel TV. (Just after finding a picture of Dylan in the book I saw him on TV in an advert for pay-per-view Woodstock '94. I took these as good signs!) After Pia got up we went to wander around the Village. There were loads of record shops! In the 3rd of these I found some Dylan bootlegs. Objective one achieved we went to eat and then walk around the Village.

Sunday Oct. 16th

After breakfast we finished our walk around the Village and then walked toward the Centre. The architecture was really fascinating, all kinds of styles cheek-by-jowl.

We must've heeded the warnings not to look like tourists very well as someone from New Joisey came up to us to ask for directions! After we'd walked enough we took a taxi to the Metropolitan Museum. It was, you know, a really big museum/art Gallery. All those Cezanne's, Van Gogh's etc. Just like the posters, just like Natural History Museum in London. I'm not keen on museums, I remembered! We stuck to the 20th Century painting greats & the early Mexican civilisations. (There was some great stuff in the latter - it always moves me so much more than the former.) Anyway you'd need several lifetimes to explore the museum & we went out & round to Central Park - as you do in New York on a Sunday.

It is an extraordinary place to be in the middle of the city. It is so large that even though the entire world seems well represented there's plenty of space for all. I was pleased to see some real football being played - though mostly by tourists in the Park, there were some US kids on their way to/from organized games. We were there for quite a long time and, upon leaving, walked past yards & yards of book & LP street sales. (I noticed *Blood On The Tracks*, just to keep the Dylan omens going.) All the time, of course, excepting when you are in the Park, you are surrounded by these monolithic buildings. Soon you don't find them unusual at all.

Back in Greenwich Village I get hold of some papers to see if Dylan is previewed at all. All I find are a couple of small pieces - including one in *The Village Voice*. I'd also been relieved when Pia spotted UK papers on sale nearby as I would need to get the Sunday papers for the football news.

There is something very much missing in this account - and it is missing because it is not an event to record but something much more indefinable. It is a kind of feeling, a feeling of excitement that the city generates all the time, a feeling that it is good to be here. There is both a vitality and a comfort and a friendliness despite the aggressive non-stop, loud nature of things. This place is fun.

Monday Oct. 17th

I have breakfast while reading the football in the UK Sunday papers. I cannot resist 'phoning to hear what Lambchop is saying on my Dylan line.

We are heading for the Statue of Liberty today and the ferry out to the island the view of M'Hattan is spectacular but, and this I find very odd, it is no longer awe inspiring. It has already become familiar.

I feel pretty moved as we approach the island and the statue. I'd watched a long programme on the history of it before we left &, of course, its symbolic status can hardly be over stressed. However my impatient nature could not abide the queues to get to the crown. (To say nothing of my vertigo) It would've taken at least three hours. As it was we were over an hour in a queue just to get to the lower stages & right behind us were two horrendously offensive and loud young American males whose ignorance of all things was matched in scale only by what they told each other they'd done to various females. For an hour. They didn't shut up for a second. I hate queues at any time. I'd only do this for Dylan - who, unbeknownst to me was to appear at Madison Square Gardens in a few hours to join the Gratefully Dead for *Rainy Day Women nos. 12 & 35*.

Anyway the statue is impressive, particularly when you look up from the level just beneath her feet & she towers skywards. The best views of her are from the ferries, though, and you can let your imagination drift to the immigrants who approached with such hope and relief. On the other hand the view of Manhattan from the Statue could scarcely be bettered.

Tuesday Oct. 18th

First Dylan day, I'm too excited by that to plan anything. We go to Macy's store (largest in the world, they claim). we are after something specific. It doesn't work out. Pia does some shopping, I sit in the bar & write part of my new article for *On The Tracks*. We are right beside Madison Sq. Gardens the day after Dylan appeared. (I still don't know this.) We watch some Deadheads & the roadies & go to a bar beside the gardens because it looks really authentically downtown New York bar. The neighbourhood to one side of MSG is one of the most opulent shopping strips ever and to the other pretty poor and decrepit. The bar is brilliant, it is like being in a movie. Glasses slid toward you etc. We mess around the area for quite some time and go to New York's Main Post Office to get lots of stamps with Blues singers on them. (the building is quite impressive too.)

We get back later than anticipated & I go out for a MacDonalds just to be native but as I stand in the queue a flickering light catches my attention and it is *The Kettle Of Fish* of all places. I have to go in & there it is, a lovely folk-sports bar with newspaper clippings re the early Sixties scene on the walls. Ah...

Anyway it is back to get the food & then on to DYLAN.

THE ROSELAND: It is a shitty venue for a rock concert but as it is a world famous ballroom dancing theatre it is right in the middle of theatre-land. And various famous places are around the corners. Not that I notice much as by this time I'm in that pre-concert nervous state that only similar sufferers can relate too.

This first night was great - great because I was right in front of Bob with only people interested in Dylan around me. We only got there thanks to the generosity of Andy and Michelle who not only persuaded their friends to arrange to let us get there but who even at one point gave their own hard won position right at Bob's feet to us.

Jokerman

If You See Her, Say Hello

All Along The Watchtower

I'll Be Your Baby Tonight

Tangled Up In Blue

Man in the Long Black Coat

Mr. Tambourine Man (acoustic)

Masters of War (acoustic)

Don't Think Twice (acoustic)

Knockin' On Heaven's Door

God Knows

Tears Of Rage

Maggie's Farm

Ballad Of A Thin Man

My Back Pages (acoustic)

The concert only really took off after *Masters Of War*. The segueing into *Knockin' On Heaven's Door* from *Don't Think Twice* was both unexpected and ushered in a much more confident and purposeful performance. *Tears Of Rage* is one I've always wanted to hear & was magnificent, the very best was saved for last, though with an gorgeous, acoustic *My Back Pages*. When we were right at the front we were even closer than you get at Hammersmith. Bob was about a foot away, he was never more than a yard away when singing. He was wearing a black smock/frock coat type thing & white collar & black tie. Unfortunately his trousers were about fourteen sizes too long for him but he looked great (though he does really look his age these days.) Where he gets the energy from to do this night after night year after year I really cannot imagine.

After the shows, in Magee's Bar beside the David Letterman Show Theatre, I talked to friends from home and previous Dylan concerts. (It is amazing that the London Bob Dylan club folded when I find myself surrounded by people I meet every fortnight at Camden!) I also met some American fans that I either didn't know at all or had only met briefly before. A nicer group of people would be hard to imagine; friendly, helpful, and well into Dylan. What a tragedy that they are in such a small minority when it comes to the shows because, although this is anticipating the next days of the diary - I have to say that the next two shows were spoiled by the 'fans'.

I'd not swap any part of that first concert for any of the next two even though the shows probably got progressively better. (I find it hard to be definitive: *Masters Of War*, *Knockin' On Heaven's Door*. *Tears Of Rage* and *My Back Pages* thrilled me on the 18th but the 19th was much more consistent -

from the little I could hear in peace it sounded like it could've been one of my favourite shows. The show on the 20th had unbelievable peaks but I would hazard a guess it wasn't as overall as impressive as the 19th but I don't really know.) The main reason I "don't really know" and that the first show is my best memory is that the venue and crowd conspired to make the shows other more an endurance test than an enjoyable, far less a meaningful, experience. As a final point on the first show although I felt the first electric set was not very good - interestingly enough Pia hadn't seen him since the last Hammersmith show & was more impressed with this segment than she'd expected to be.

Wednesday Oct. 19th

And so the Dylan fever grips at least one of us. (Guess which one?) And the holiday, like this diary becomes dominated by THE BOB. It is time to revisit the record shops, to pick up a bootleg CD - just to play *Lucky Old Sun* for Pia, you understand, because we'd been discussing it the night before. (There is a great little stereo system in the flat.)

It is time to buy every paper in the US to see if there are reviews of the opening night. There aren't. It is time to plan the eating time carefully. First I must take Pia to *The Kettle Of Fish* where we read some of these multitudinous papers - including the Monday UK football stuff, match - and talk to the barmaid (a semi-Dylan fan) & take some photographs.

Pia isn't going to the concert tonight - apparently she thinks there are other things to do in New York. I get a taxi, he explains Clinton (the president not the Dylan author - though he'd have been correct on both counts) is in town tonight & many roads might be blocked off for security reasons. Turns out to be not bad - unlike when Bush was around & whole blocks had to be sealed off - & we pass the hotel with a number of security heavies looking for all the world like bit part movie actors.

On to the Roseland & Dylan: c. 08:55pm & I'm standing with Clinton and Glen fairly close to the stage but way out to the side. My position has worsened considerably in the last few minutes but I can still just about see the centre mike on the stage. Someone behind me is telling his friends what he thought of yesterday's show: "he only played for 1hr 40m and his voice packed in after the first half-hour." Odd, I thought he only picked up after the first half-hour...but there is a sudden rush of people pushing in as Dylan's arrival is imminent. Glen and Clinton had warned me that the crowd might make our position untenable but I wasn't prepared for the following. I was trying to hold my ground when a booming voice declared "COMING THROUGH" and I felt the people behind falling back and tried to hold my place. (Not easy since any of this guy's 4 chins weighed the same as me.) The only thing helping keep him back was his sheer bulk & he couldn't get through on my left side as Clinton just refused to budge, alas he boomed "COMING THROUGH" again and barged by my right hand-side by bowling whoever had been standing there away. He had a couple of friends in tow. I can see a patch around Dylan's mike.

Dylan hits the stage and into *Jokerman*. More people push forward, the recent interloper has a few more friends situated right behind us, they try to push in, we refuse to let them. Much pushing and shoving later they decide they won't get through so just shout across us continually whooping occasionally but mainly just indulging in talking at an incredible level. (The band are unhelpfully loud, you understand, so they've got to strain to keep their inane conversations going.) We are about three quarters way through *Jokerman*, I vaguely sense Bob is in excellent voice when I suddenly find myself being thumped on the shoulder, no violence intended just one of this obnoxious set had set my T-shirt alight trying to pass a joint forward to his friends. This attempt was repeated interminably through the next two songs, often my first glimpse of Dylan in ages was suddenly blocked by a spliff holding arm. Those in front of us spent as much time facing us & their friends as they did the stage. They shouted and pushed and shoved through what sounded a potentially great *If You See Her Say Hello*.

Glen had already given up and left. I told Clinton I'd go to the back sometime near the end of *Watchtower*. This I did. The back of the theatre was amazing - the noise level was just extraordinary. People stood in little groups - not facing the stage - bellowing to each other about their sex lives, trying the most pathetic chat-up lines - you'd think Dylan fans would have a better store, and going over what appear to be endless family problems with all the insight of those who cannot tell when Woody Allen is being serious-funny rather than funny-serious. Oh I know that I'm just sounding bitchy, but the banality was extraordinary and the depth of ignorance over Dylan just incredible - anyway my main point is "what on earth do these people go to a concert for?" They paid no attention to the stage at all - remember I am hearing all this over the electric set in a tiny hall.

This hall is also a major part of the problem. It is not designed for live music & boy does that show. A little slope and some thought to the acoustics might help! I have by now walked around the hall and there is nowhere I want to see the show from. I meet other Dylan fans who are fighting to see and hear, they are all suffering the antics of Deadheads who presumably couldn't get into Madison Square Gardens. (Later I hear other stories similar to mine about jobs pushing in at the start of the set. All the stories concern fat Deadhead-fatheads, I've no idea if those I talked of earlier were Deadheads but they certainly seemed to fit the mould I heard about on 19th & met with a vengeance on the 20th. Even so I doubt ALL the blame is on Deadheads - which is even more worrying, really.)

The electric set passes. Clinton appears beside me, having given up his spot near-ish the stage - things had just got worse - and reports he too has been unable to find a bearable spot to watch from. We try to just watch the crowd's increasingly bizarre behaviour and catch whatever glimpses we can of Dylan. I had brought binoculars with me, but every time I used them at the back of the hall someone came and either bumped into me or stood right in front of the binoculars - this in an area with plenty of space. I'm glad to say that the same thing happened to Clinton, the minute he tried to use them someone came up and head-butted the binoculars! (Actually that was probably my fault I was charging \$5 a time to let people head-butt Clinton - I made thousands!!!)

The acoustic set starts & you can hardly hear it over the crowd! When we hear the opening strains of *One Too Many Mornings* we decide it is time to move. We amble down one side of the crowd, there is a tremendous amount of movement going on, Clinton spots a good area and we stop there, both with pretty good visibility of the stage, though quite far away from it. Dylan sounds in good voice. There is an awful lot of chattering around us, though, so it is difficult to tell how good. *Baby Blue* opens and it sounds Woodstock-ish but I only partly enjoy it, the six people directly in front of me have formed a horse-shoe facing away from the stage as their conversation has reached a critical point and they are now all deeply involved in it.....so the night drags on...by the time of *It Ain't Me Babe* I have returned to the back of the hall, binoculars trained on Bob when a deadhead grabs me and shouts in my ear "Do you think Jerry will come on?" I suspect he is at the Dead show but just reply "I hope not - this is a music show" He thinks I'm joking, his mouth is right to my ear as though he's worried I hear a bit of the show I travelled 3,000 miles for. "Maybe they'll do *All Along The Watchtower*!?" - he is getting excited. I don't point out that the song has been played already and then I really think Dylan is about to end his show for the night, I don't say anything, in fact. Dylan is approaching the final words of the night. Fittingly though I don't hear them, the voice bellows "Wouldn't it be a gas if they played *All Along The Watchtower* at two in the morning, wouldn't that be a blast, eh?" End of show, goodnight.

I get a taxi back home after a brief meeting with US Dylan fans & more of the UK ones.

=====
For the record the set list was:

Jokerman
If You See Her, Say Hello
Watchtower
You're A Big Girl Now
Tangled Up In Blue
You'll Go Your Way (And I'll Go Mine)

**BOB DYLAN AND BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN PERFORMING
“FOREVER YOUNG”**



**OK ! This is from a year later, but it's a photo of Bob and Bruce
nonetheless.**

Mama You've Been On My Mind (acoustic band)
One Too Many Mornings (ab)
It's All Over Now, Baby Blue (ab)

Memphis Blues
Shelter From the Storm
Maggie's Farm

(encore:)

Rolling Stone
It Ain't Me, Babe (ab)

Thursday Oct. 20th

Ten years to the day since Pia & I met. We were determined to go to the Empire State Building. Of course the uniformly good weather up 'til now decided to become foggy and rainy! Maybe we wouldn't see so much, perhaps with my vertigo that'd be a bonus!

We only got up to the 86th floor, the rest was closed. It was wrapped in mists but you could still see a helluva lot as our photos show. It was so high that my vertigo wasn't too bad, my brain just couldn't cope with the drop. However, I didn't spend overly long near the sides!

The Grateful Dead stint at Madison being over the queues for Dylan suddenly increased by about 50000% and the easy walk into the theatre now became a four times round the block queue. A queue full of people drinking from bottles in brown paper bags, as you often see them do in the streets. This is what they historically do if drinking alcohol - they still do though lots of signs say it is illegal even with a brown paper bag. The said brown paper bag is, of course, like a giant big sign saying "I'm drinking booze" but there you go, "ours is not to reason why...."

The majority of the crowd are here in the hope of seeing Jerry Garcia, though, and I wish to God they'd stayed away or that the Dead had played one more night to spare us this onslaught. The one thing they did do was make tickets for the night very valuable. Pity for me, I'd had 5 spares for the first two nights and could hardly give them away. (I gave 2 away & got \$2 total for the other 3.) Tonight was a scalper's feast.

I enjoyed the show as much as I could with the constant chattering, the ceaseless moving around of a crowd who rarely seemed to care about what was happening on stage and the never-ending questions of "Can you see Jerry yet?" "Jerry who?" became my standard reply.

It was, however, a historic night, with top-of-the-second-leaguers Neil & Brooce on stage for two extra encores. And, best of all, Bob was great (Thank goodness for your binoculars, mum!)

Jokerman
If You See Her, Say Hello
All Along The Watchtower
Simple Twist of Fate
Tangled Up In Blue
Like A Rolling Stone
Mama, You've Been On My Mind
Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll
Boots of Spanish Leather
God Knows
Joey
Maggie's farm

encore:

Most Likely You'll Go Your Way & I'll Go Mine
My Back Pages

extra encore #1

Rainy Day Women (in the middle, Neil then Bruce come on from opposite wings)

extra encore #2

Highway 61 (with Broooooce & Neil)

During this last song as Bob tried to keep up with Neil Young, our hero was heard to exclaim (by those very near) "Enough! Enough already, Neil" as Mr. Young took it further than most could follow...

We go out with all the Dylan fans, some, like us, at the end of their current jaunt, others going on to further shows, other states.

Friday Oct. 21st

Which, naturally enough, resulted in a long lie in the next morning. Feeling suitably refreshed we walked about 20 blocks to The Chelsea Hotel which is fittingly strange, the other Dylan as well as Brendan Behan and various others are nicely commemorated outside. No mention of Dylan, Cohen or Sid Vicious, though! A great Friday night and Saturday in the Village followed but it was non-Dylan related now (well, almost) so you'll not wish to hear about it.

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A re-issue of Pickering's classic "bookleg" by Tony Shackleton in conjunction with Desolation Row Promotions.

The original is extremely difficult to find, expensive when you can, and rarely in good condition. This is an A4 copy of an original Pickering, but using the latest in laser scanning technology to produce masters with bold text on a virgin-white, "as new as the day it was printed" background. Copies are then produced from the master using laser-copying. Covered and velo-bound in the usual Desolation Row format. Far superior to other copies you might have seen before, but not cheap to reproduce.

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ORDERING DETAILS ON BACK PAGE

SPRING TOUR 1995

And so to 1995. Reeling from the expense of New York, hassled at work and not wishing ever again to go on a Dylan-fan-only-London-Calling type trip, I give the opening jaunt a miss. And what a one to miss! After the first date was cancelled/rescheduled, Dylan crooned his way, virtually guitarless, through the 11th March set. I still have tapes of the hysterical phone calls back to the Homer Line on tape; mind you, they betray more happiness at my non-presence than Dylan's magnificent performance! I remember Peter Vincent remarking on how well I was taking all the ribbing, I would be the first to admit that a year earlier I'd have been devastated but the giving up on the 23 hour a day commitment to Homer paid its first dividend. I was once again back in the real world where pleasure in hearing Dylan had performed well was the important thing and one's personal (or otherwise) involvement was incidental.

It was another of those occasions when a great current Dylan performance sparked off an abundance of extravagant claims of it being as good as the best of '66, '79, '78, '81 (name your year). Those who continued on the tour thought some of the immediately subsequent shows were even better.

So, suddenly, everyone was buzzing in expectation (yet again) at the prospect of a UK tour. I did most of the dates and was very impressed with a number of them but you'll have heard all my comments at the time, so I won't repeat them here.

But, I do have a lot of strong personal memories of this leg:

- ◆ Managing to be unaware that the clock time had changed while going to meet Chris, Stephan and Daniel at Heathrow
- ◆ Arranging to meet Jon and Carol Casper at the doors to a Barclays' Bank Branch that had been taken over by another company
- ◆ Hailing a taxi in Brighton only to be subjected by anti-German racist abuse by the driver who seemed to wish death on the racing driver Schumaker and my travelling companions as swiftly as possible
- ◆ Sitting up all night with Rab C Bennett after the Brighton show only to be rewarded with his immortal dawn-greeting words: "And another thing, Muir, see all this writing you do on Dylan it is utter shit...(Dramatic pause, bloodshot eyes try to fix me a withering stare)...pure pish!" And here I am - proving the sod right!
- ◆ Surviving the next day's trip to Cardiff only to be lambasted for stopping Joe driving to the legendary John Hume's house after the show. (Joe had been surviving on the previous day's alcohol till evening so there was NO WAY he could continue without a drink and I refused to get in the car with Joe over the limit. Christ almighty, it'd be like going back to the city with him after his day "working" in the suburbs.)

And on and on until the magnificent show in Glasgow. I was sated, I'd had enough, I didn't need to see Dylan again for a long time really, did I? But before we go on to my further travels, I offer for you a unique view from the pen of JRS of the Live Dylan experience in Birmingham, UK, 1995:

DOWN IN THE FLOOD
SENROR
WATCHTOWER
BORN IN TIME/I DON'T BELIEVE
TOMBSTONE/RIVER FLOW
SHELTER/SIMPLE TWIST

TAMBOURINE
HATTIE CARROL
BABY BLUE

HIGHWAY 61
WHAT GOOD AM I/IN THE GARDEN
JOEY/ I'LL REMEMEBER YOU

MR. JONES/ROLLING STONE
BACK PAGES

**BRIXTON
FINAL NIGHT
PROVISIONAL SET LIST**

DOWN IN THE FLOOD
I WANT YOU/TOM THUMB/IF YOU
SEE HER/IF NOT FOR YOU
WATCHTOWER
BORN IN TIME/JOKERMAN/LICENSE
TO KILL/WHAT GOOD AM I
TOMBSTONE/4TH ST./RIVER FLOW
BIG GIRL/SIMPLE TWIST/
TEARS OF RAGE

TAMBOURINE
BOOTS/DESOLATION
RAMONA/DESOLATION

HIGHWAY 61
JOKERMAN
LENNY BRUCE/HEAVEN'S DOOR

ROLLING STONE
AIN'T ME BABE

**BIRMINGHAM
PROVISIONAL SET LIST**

The Ramona Experience

(Dylan in concert 2/4/95

A Battle of Him and His Public)

Ah! Sunflower

*Ah Sunflower! Weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the Sun:
Seeking after that sweet, golden clime,
Where the travellers journey is done.*

*Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale virgin shrouded in snow:
Arise from their graves and aspire,
Where my Sunflower wishes to go.*

William Blake
A Song of Experience

A bright blue digital spider crawls across the face of time and the numbers change in sequence... click... 9.04 p.m. Right now, on a street corner somewhere in this Global Village a deal is going down and a million dollars is being exchanged for a shipment of high grade crack cocaine... Click... 9.05 p.m.... Behind the barbed wire barricade of a refugee camp built in hell's despair that is the darkest heart of Africa a mother is being raped right now and her family are being slaughtered... Click.. .9.06p.m. Right now on death row in some foreign penitentiary a simple mind starts to count down the hours to that moment when the world will take it's bitter revenge for his life by passing 2,000 volts through his body... Click... 9.07p.m. Right now in this sports hall on the outskirts of Birmingham, Bob Dylan moves to the centre of the stage and beckons "*Come closer, shut softly your watery eyes*".

The song is called *To Ramona* but it could equally be directed at Ramon for the audience, en masse, is genderless: in unison a throng of everyday folk just seeking a goodnight's entertainment; but here and there a life broken by restlessness, another by illness, another by frustration, another by misunderstanding. Standing next to me in this lonely crowd a youth pines away with desire, a pale virgin is shrouded in snow. Dylan sings to those lives who seek release: "*Come closer, shut softly your watery eyes*".

The command is so easy to follow. Eyes closed to shut out the glare of the bright blue digital spider who crawls relentlessly across the face of time; eyes closed to dream of release from human frailty; right here, right now, the only way is in ascension: "*The pangs of your sadness shall pass as your senses will rise*". And where does he take us? - beyond the sun that rises in time with our senses: "*The flowers of the city though lifelike (as he sings it tonight) get deathlike at times*".

Ah Blake! The Immortal; Blake the God; Blake the Son; Blake the Holy Ghost. Dylan is Blake's Sunflower of the City: he turns his head to follow the sun's course yet his roots are planted firmly in the earth. He watches with us all as the sun rises and sets, in cyclical motion, day after day, time after time. But he only asks that we should look where he is looking beyond the sun to that sweet golden clime, where the travellers journey is done. Right here, right now, he sings to us who are held down to earth by the frailty of the human condition in all it's forms. He asks that we should shut our watery eyes, arise from our earthly graves and aspire to where he also wishes to go. To follow the sound of his tambourine, itself in the shape of the sunflower, for our sadness to disappear through the smoke rings of our minds, to go escaping on the run, swinging madly across the sun.

But Ah sweet sunflower. You want to say that you are just like us, you can only wish to attain flight - your roots are buried in the earth too. And doesn't the sunflower in it's vegetative cycle rise in all it's glory and then wither and fade - "*though lifelike gets deathlike sometimes*" ? Yet tonight, right here, right now, with our watery eyes closed in dreams of aspiration, with our senses rising, all illness and despair are forgotten. We want to be alive and experience the sun at it's highest point. So, sweet sunflower "*There's no use in tryin' t' deal with the dyin'*". We just will not listen to such talk: you've taken us too far. Indeed too far already, for he needs to remind us of his own human frailty. Him the Wordsmith, Him the Eloquent, Him the Infallible. How dare he admit it: "*I cannot explain that in lines*". What? We don't want to hear that. You must explain every mystery.

So the battle commences: the sunflower knowing his time here will rise and then fade away just like ours, will take us no further. But we want to see the sun and not just the sunflower. This feeling of release right here, right now is too strong. You are the sun that cracks country lips. You are the sun whose strength can burn our skin. We are worshippers of the sun, not the sunflower and we are drawn to you by some unnatural force: "*Your magnetic movements still capture the minutes I'm in*".

Ah sunflower! Weary of time. Are you weary of us too, so soon? Can you not sustain your strength, can you not satisfy our desire for release, are you not the one to deliver us in this world and not in some other golden clime where the traveller's journey is done: not just for these minutes we're in but for ever thereafter never to wither and die. Are you not just the sunflower but the very sun itself? I will not heed your reply: why do you treat us like this.

*"But it grieves my heart, love,
To see you tryin' to be a part of
A world that just don't exist
It's all just a dream, babe,
A vacuum, a scheme, babe,
That sucks you into feelin' like this."*

So round and round in circles we go

*"I've heard you say many times
That you're better 'n no-one
And no-one is better 'n you
If you really believe that, you know you got
Nothing to win and nothing to lose"*

Better, worse. Worse, better. Win, lose. Lose, win. The cyclical movement of rise and fade, bloom and die. Just like the sunflower with its circular face. Yet the sunflower is fixed by its stem to the earth and that is the deep root of our sorrow: the dread realisation that we can never hope to satisfy our longing to be released from the monotony of our broken lives, a monotony that finds no pleasure among our fellow man and as we look towards our only hope of release, you are, momentarily sympathetic and pinpoint exactly the cause of our sorrow:

*"From fixtures and forces and friends,
Your sorrow does stem,
They'll hype you and type you,
Making you feel
That you must be exactly like them."*

But, despite your sympathy, we still go round and round in circles. Us wanting release to that place beyond the sun and you imploring that you are merely a sunflower that has to wither and fade. We are getting nowhere, this eternal circle is becoming meaningless. You sense it too:

*"I'd forever talk to you,
But soon my words,
They would turn into a meaningless ring"*

You bluntly deal with our dreams of aspiration, our hopes of release from all this:

*"For deep in my heart
I know there's no help I can bring. "*

And again, emphatically reminding us of your frail mortality:

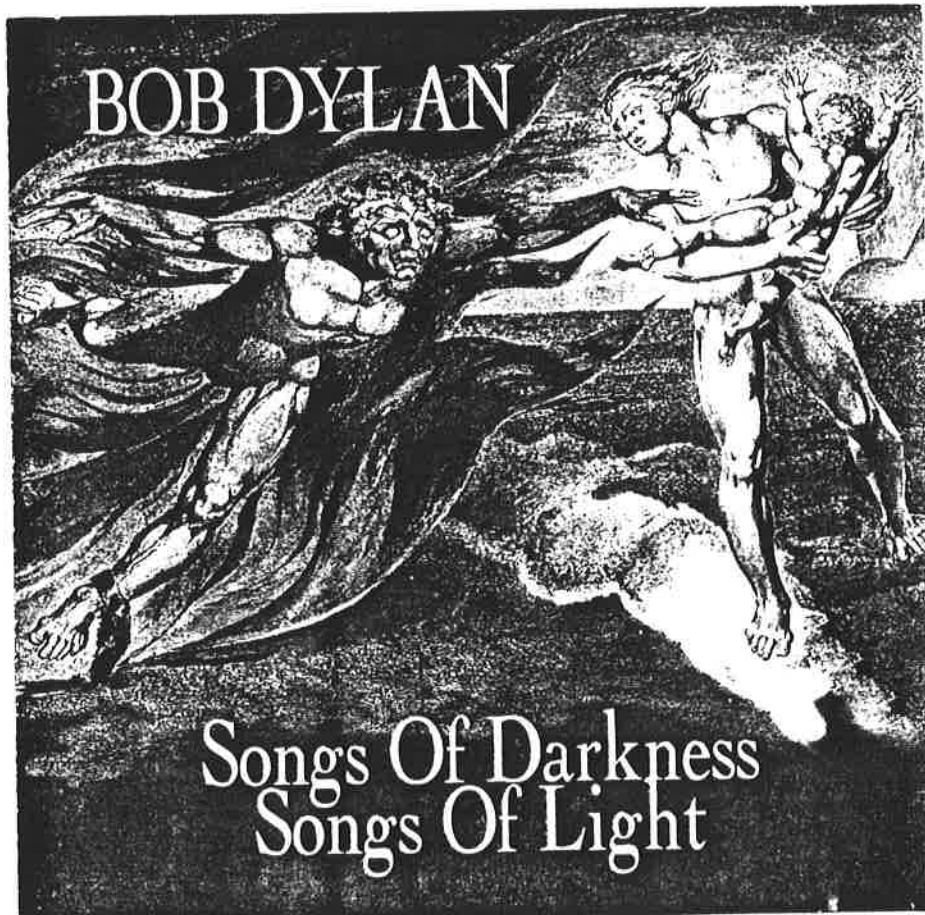
*"Everything passes,
Everything changes
Just do what you think you should do"*

Just like the seasons that pass and change; just like the steps of the sun that rise and fade; just like the sunflower that blooms and dies and then, the final circular movement: a complete reversal of roles as you become as we are and we become as you are:

"And someday maybe, who knows, baby, I'll come and be cryin' to you."

In that sweet golden clime where the travellers journey is done perhaps you will be here, a broken life in this lonely crowd, and one of us will be standing up there where you are. And on that day, sweet sunflower, you'll come and be cryin' to us for release.

The music fades, our watery eyes are open again and the dream ends. The bright blue digital spider crawls forward, forward across the face of time and the numbers continue to change in sequence.... Click... 9.12 p.m. Another deal goes down.... Click... 9.13 p.m. Another mother is raped and her family slaughtered.... Click... 9.14 p.m. That simple mind on death row comes closer to an appointment with revenge.... Click. Click. Click. Ah, simple mind, some day maybe, who knows, baby, I'll come and be cryin' to you.



On Blake's Sunflower

"The central spring of the poem is the image of the sunflower. The flower which turns its head to follow the sun's course and is yet rooted in the earth is Blake's symbol for all men and women whose lives are dominated and spoiled by a longing which they can never hope to satisfy, and who are held down to the earth despite their desire for release into some brighter, freer sphere."

Taken from *The Romantic Imagination* by C.M. Bowra
– (London: Oxford University Press).

THE RAMONA EXPERIENCE PART 2.**(Across The Battleline)**

Dylan: Come closer, shut softly your watery eyes. The pangs of your sadness shall pass as your senses will rise. The flowers of the city though lifelike get deathlike at times.

Audience: There's no use in tryin' t' deal with the dyin'.

Dylan: I cannot explain that in lines.

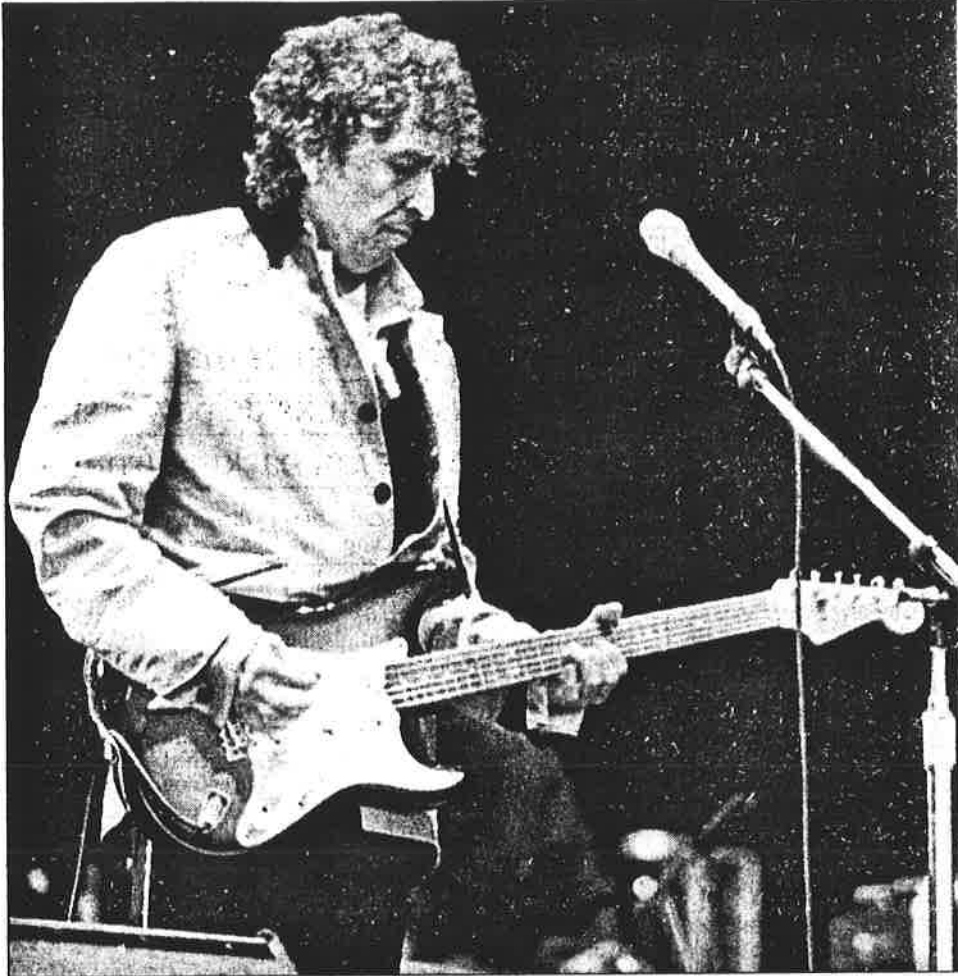
Audience: Your cracked country lips I still wish to kiss, as to be **under** the strength of your skin. Your magnetic movements still capture the minutes I'm in.

Dylan: But it grieves my heart love, to see you tryin' to be a part of a world that just don't exist. It's all just a dream, babe, a vacuum a scheme, babe, that sucks you into feelin' like this.

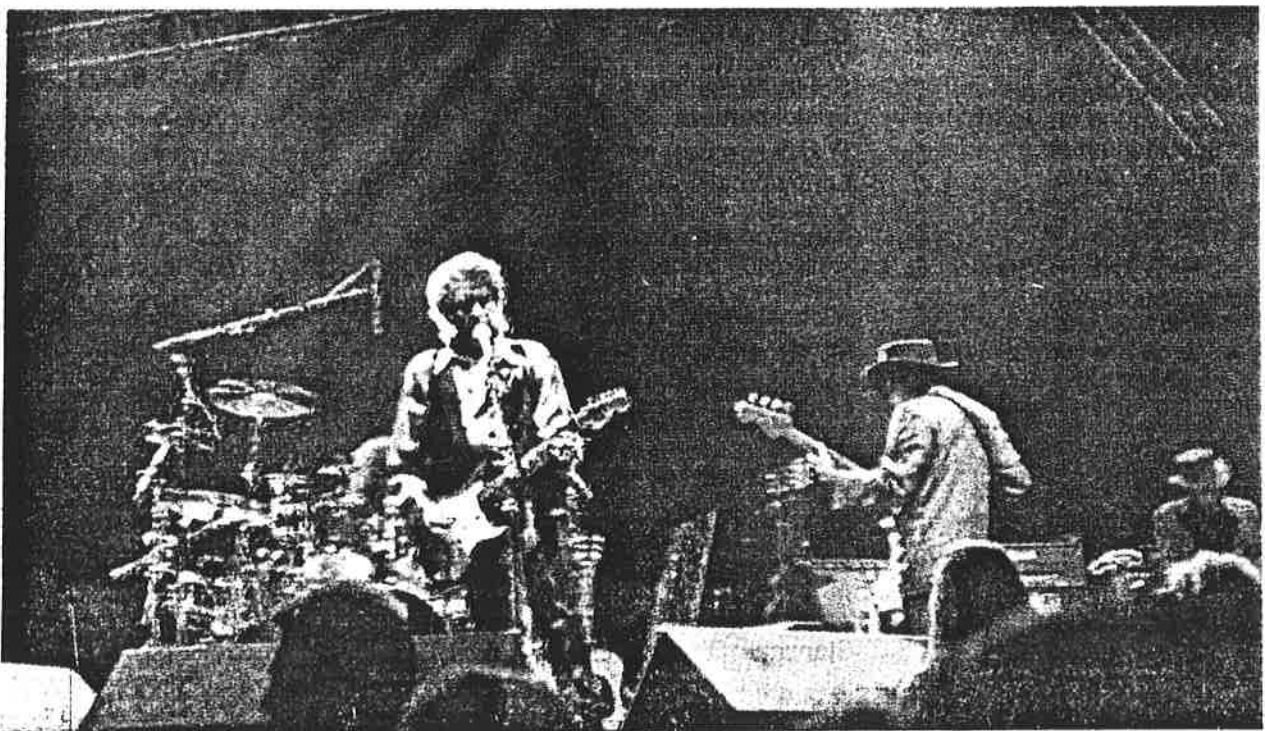
I've heard you say many times that you're better than no one and no one is better than you. If you really believe that you know you've got nothing to win and nothing to lose. From fixtures and forces and friends your sorrow does stem. That hype you and type you making you feel that you must be exactly like them.

I'd forever talk to you but soon my words would turn into a meaningless ring. For deep in my heart I know there's no help I can bring. Everything passes, everything changes. Just do what you think you should do. And someday maybe, who knows baby, I'll come and be cryin' to you.

LINDSAY MAGGS



Bob Dylan puts top-billing squabbles behind him with an impressive set at Phoenix



Bathed in the stage lights, Dylan, the ageing rock legend, enralls an ecstatic capacity crowd at Edinburgh's Play

TIME SCHEDULE

BOB DYLAN

09:00 **Load in**

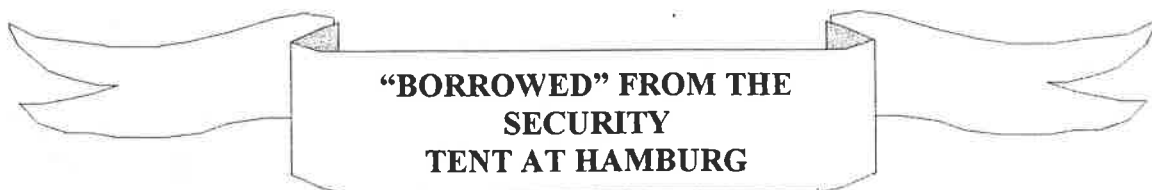
13:00 - 15:00 **STRICTLY NO NOISE**

^{16³⁰}
~~15:00~~ - 18.00 **Soundcheck BOB DYLAN**

18:00 **Doors open**

19:00 **Showtime BOB DYLAN**

22:00 **STRICT CURFEW**



Where was I again? Oh yes, being smugly secure that I'd overcome the extreme levels of obsessive behaviour that Bob Dylan inspires; comfortable in the feeling that 8 UK shows were enough for me.

So where am I now? Well, it is July and I am in Germany; it seems like ages since I last saw him.

I SHINE NOT BURN * (GERMANY JULY 1995)

July 1st

Due to a peculiarity of air flight prices in Europe, it is much cheaper to fly if you "stay over" a Saturday night. I take advantage of this oddity to fly to Frankfurt Airport and meet up with my good friends and travelling companions; (Germany '94, UK & Germany '95 and many more to come, I hope) Stephan, Chris and Daniel. They live nearby, and after the obligatory swapping of & listening to, recent Dylan tapes we head off for a pleasant day walking on the hills overlooking the Rhine. The weather is glorious and I am taken to a picturesque tourist village. It turns out to be Rudesheim which just happens to be the home of a famous - and utterly adorable - brandy coffee. This coffee is the highlight of the meal at an obscure country restaurant in Scotland that is the celebratory place for major events in my family's life (engagements, graduations etc.). I am stunned by this coincidence but take it as a good omen for the days ahead. The omen was true. The evening was perfectly rounded off with a visit to a Straussenwirtschaft, run by Daniel's girlfriend, Moni, and her parents.

July 2nd

Intense excitement as today is the first time I'll see Bob since April 9th. We are up early as it is a six or seven hour drive to Hamburg. By the time we arrive in the city Ray, Marion and Giovanna are already on their way to queue up at the venue. The Stadtpark in Hamburg is a sensational venue. If you were given the chance to design the perfect outdoor venue it'd look like this. The whole area is enclosed by cultivated hedges and trees, the sun is shining brightly throughout the evening. Dylan is due to start at 19:00 as there is a strict curfew at 22:00.

After soaking in the ambience, the great moment arrived. "Ladies and gentlemen, will you please...." The stomach muscles clench in painful anticipation, and then there he is, the centre of all our attention. Looking cool, looking great, wearing shades to protect his eyes from the glare. (New but same style trousers, looks like a new shirt - or, rather, a new version of the shirt he seems to have worn all year.)

He tears into *Crash On The Levee*. It is the first time I've seen him do it with a guitar in his hands. I like it, I was getting bored with the old version. (I realize I am too demanding - in March I was so excited by it, now only a change in its presentation assuages the pining for *Drifters Escape*. The voice is very strong and assured. This I notice as all the tense anticipation of waiting to see him again melts away. I am back in the presence of our Bob. Next up is *If Not For You* with its pleasant country-ish backing, the acoustics are superb, Bob is in good voice. Before I know it the Toilet Song has started. (I find it so galling that *Tangled Up In Blue* is no longer there in 5th place as it was a much more convenient bladder break.) Toilet is au naturelle in the trees around this setting. Dylan is behind me singing one of his best known songs, but, surreally enough, tennis games are being played on the other side of the trees. I have no idea if he performed *All Along The Watchtower* well or not, and until it moves from the third spot, will never know or care again. I do know that the fourth song, the majestic *Queen Jane Approximately* raised everything to a whole new level. The intro. to the fifth song sounded very like *Watching The River Flow* but then quite clearly, no doubt at all, became

* Title = "*I shine not burn*": Xmas quiz - where was this proclaimed by Dylan during this leg of the tour?

I'll Be Your Baby Tonight (honest.) Dylan had greater things on his mind and went into Pledging My Time. This was turning into a very fine show indeed.

Silvio brought the first electric set to an ear-shattering close, the song building to a crescendo on wave after wave of guitar attacks.

The acoustic set began with *Tangled Up In Blue*. It would be my dearest wish to report to you that Dylan reclaimed this masterpiece from the trashing he's given it in recent years, alas it was not to be. Here is a strange thing: Dylan sang *Tangled Up In Blue* acoustically, carefully enunciating each word, and it didn't move me. He just didn't inhabit the song. Even the first appearance - to predictable applause - of the harmonica at its climax failed to hide the fact that this just hadn't worked. I asked myself during the third verse if the fault lay in me, if I'd expected too much but I knew that wasn't it. (The fact I could even think such things during the song proving the point!) A final point here is just to say that much as I like "truck drivers' wives" in the final verse I wish he'd occasionally sing the more complex and satisfying "carpenters' wives".

I don't think it was a particularly strong *Masters of War*, but he was clearly projecting it better than *Tangled* and suddenly the whole evening warped into another universe (you know the one I mean - where Bob is in our heaven) with a heart rending *It's All Over Now Baby Blue*. This was to prove my favourite single performance of this particular trip. The lovely slow version first unveiled just before Woodstock II. You could have heard a pin drop, in fact the only interruption was the singing of the birds above in the tree tops as Dylan poured himself into a glorious rendition of a magnificent song in a balmy evening in Northern Germany. Heaven.

Slam, bang, thank you ma'am guitars led into the second electric set with *Memphis Blues*. This song peaked for me at Hammersmith Odeon in 1990, one of my favourite memories. Three years after that I was completely fed up with it after seemingly endless, turgid renditions. I have never recovered affection for it, so took the opportunity to sidle over to the mixing desk to see what was upcoming on the set list. (Anyway I could keep the stage in constant sight throughout this manoeuvre, just in case you think I was being too cool.) I was pleased to see *Obviously 5 Believers* on the list and resumed my place noting that Dylan was still singing "smoked my eyeballs" as opposed to "eyelids". I prefer the latter but he's Bob Dylan and anything he wants to do is fine by me, *She Belongs To Me* as the next song in particular. Then the dark glasses come off at last and we can see his expressions as he plays - *Obviously 5 Believers* and a damn fine version too. Highlight of the encores - and second best performance of the night for me - was a gorgeous acoustic version of the magnificent *My Back Pages*.

After the closing strains of *Rainy Day Women # 12 & 35*. I wander around, meeting lots of friends from Germany and the UK. Then it is time to find a 'phone to call Lambchop and get him to update my information line.

July 3rd

An early start after a late night to ensure we get some sight seeing done. As we head out for Hamburg harbour Ray, Marion and Giovanna go off to Hannover to queue. Thoughts and talk of Thomas Mann as we sail around the marvellous old port. Our sailing finishes just as a downpour of biblical proportions begins. Ray should be about queuing in Hannover by now, I hope it is drier for him. We go for a meal, there is plenty of time yet to head off for Hannover.

Everything has gone to plan so far; but, as it aft does, is about to gang all agley.

We are in Hannover in plenty of time, 18:30 or so, Dylan is back to the more customary 20:00 starting time. We drive in circles. We stop to ask directions. We drive in circles. Time passes. We stop to ask directions. We drive in circles. It is approaching 19:30. We are told to follow the signs. We haven't seen any signs. we look with increasing desperation. 19:48 we see a half obscured sign. (All Music Hall signs have been obscured by a poster campaign!) Ten minutes later we catch sight of the venue, Bob is

on in 2 minutes. All three of us bravely wait on Stephan returning from his car in the ante room as the band strike up the opening to *Crash On The Levee*. Stephan is astonished to find us all waiting for him, we have missed all of 34 seconds of Dylan. (I explain later that it was a sacrifice worth making as a friend and, if the opening song had been *Drifters Escape* he wouldn't have seen me for dust!)

It is not difficult seeing Dylan in a venue this size nowadays. It is with no problem at all that we all walk down to the front, slightly off centre to the right, and all have a perfect view from about the third row. (I always think back to the queuing mayhem of 1978 when this kind of thing happens. 1995, Dylan always easily accessible, Dylan as opening act for chrissakes....)

Anyway it is an excellent show, Dylan giving a high energy, powerful performance. My highlights from the first set being *Positively Fourth Street* and *Jokerman*, the majority of the audience - as at the other two shows - being far more enthusiastic about *All Along The Watchtower* and *Silvio*.

The acoustic set was the usual delight, with *Mr. Tambourine Man* absolutely stunning as it has been so often in '95.

From the remainder of the set, *Tombstone Blues*, *Leopard Skin Pill Box Hat* and *Rainy Day Women # 12 & 35* were real pile-driver party pieces. As I said to Lambchop and as he repeated in a quaint Scottish accent on my line: "You couldnae help but dance."

So, now it is an overnight drive to Berlin, with Ray Webster joining us in the car. We stop at the first opportunity off the motorway for refreshments, toilets etc. Later that night we discover we missed Dylan and his entourage at the same stop by a matter of minutes. Mmm.

And so we all arrive at Marion's place in the middle of the wee sma' hours & she generously sees that all these itinerant nutters are comfortably settled for a few hours sleep. Next morning we get an introduction to her collection before setting off sightseeing. I love meeting people whose interest in Bob makes me look normal-ish, and it keeps happening in Germany!

We make the most of the day in Berlin, it is my first visit and the centres of the old West and East form our forward path. This is a most affecting part of the trip, in particular the shell scarred buildings in what was East Berlin still standing as a(nother) monument to the futility and horror of war. There is a fascinating exhibition of the proposed reconstruction of Berlin centre. "Berlin 2005", 'the acoustic tour', I murmur. It is leaving this exhibition that EDLIS TOUR AGENT Ray Webster comes out with a comment that I think sums all of us up. Ray is deep in discussion with Stephan re previous German Dylan tours he's attended, and makes a slip of memory by calling Frankfurt '87, Frankfurt '89. When Stephan points this out, Ray says, straight-faced and with due gravitas, "Ah, yes, of course, the Berlin Wall came down in '89, Dylan in Frankfurt was '87". Honestly - we measure our history in Dylan tours!

We all go to witness the spectacle of the Wrapped Reichstag that has caused such a stir around the world. It is certainly an impressive sight - much more so in actuality than in photographs - and there is a great deal of enthusiasm for it amongst the thousands of visitors. I am not too sure what I feel about it, it is still, to my mind, just a building wrapped up. On the other hand anything which has so many thousands of people (millions world-wide) discussing the nature of art can be no bad thing. The more you stand in front of it and balance the view with what you know of the history of the place (occluded but simultaneously present) the more you feel the prominent flag of the new Germany to be symbolic. I decide I like the idea of it more than anything else, Ray Webster agrees, and claims we have an English consensus. He has never come closer to missing a show & quickly amends this to British consensus.

Zurück in die Zukunft

Bob Dylan & Band im Terminal – da groovte der ganze Flughafen

Was haben sie nicht alle dumm dahergeredet vor diesem Konzert. Daß er doch bloß nicht von der Bühne fallen möge, war noch der frömmste Wunsch jener, die in Bob Dylan nicht einmal mehr einen prominenten Vertreter jener Grauen Panther sehen, die derzeit der Generation X zeigen, wo der Rock-

Bartl den Most holt. Die dachten, aus diesem Robert Zimmerman aus Minnesota sei ein von sich und dem Leben zerstörter Greis geworden, der's nicht glauben will, daß der Rollstuhl besser zu ihm paßt als die Bühne. Nix Rollstuhl, sondern Rock'n'Roll, nix Graue Panther, sondern farbige, höchst lebendige Musik von einer Qualität, wie man sie selten zu hören bekommt. Bob Dylan? Noch nie war er so wertvoll wie heute.

„There are many here among us who feel that life is but a joke. But you and I, we've been through that, and this is not our fate.“ So sang Bob Dylan in „All Along The Watchtower“, dem ersten Höhepunkt des mit ungewohnter Pünktlichkeit begonnenen Konzerts (hinter der man anfangs gar Unlust

wähnte). Das Leben ist kein Scherz, aber es kann schön sein, wenn man die schwierigsten Klippen hinter sich hat. Als wäre dies das Motto, spielte Dylan sich in einen Groove hinein, der wie eine Walze über die gut tausend Besucher hinwegrollte. Dieser uralte Dylan-Sound, angereichert vom treibenden Beat des präzisen Schlagzeugs, von der manchmal der Knopfler-Sound-geladenen Gitarre, vom vollen, uneitlen Baß, er zog sie alle in Bann, die gekommen waren, um zeitlose Musik zu hören.

Auch beim Switch ins *fashionable unplugged*-Spiel folgte man Dylan fast wie im Gebet. Er spielte die Harmonika wie ein Trompeter

US-Kavallerie beim Angriff, er lachte bei „Like A Rolling Stone“ über sich als sicher schlechtesten Sologitaristen, den Minnesota je hervorgebracht hat, er zauberte das Publikum der 90er Jahre zurück in jene Zeit, in der seine Worte noch Botschaften waren. Und so blickte man sich bei der Zugabe „Everybody Has To Be Stoned“ an und wußte, worüber dieser alte, junge Mann sang.

NOCH NIE war er so wertvoll wie heute: Bob Dylan. SZ-Archiv / Reuter



KARL FORSTER

FURTH

DOWN IN THE FLOOD
IF YOU SEE HER
WATCHTOWER
WOMAN
UNBELIEVABLE
4TH STREET/I'LL BE YOUR BABY

TAMBOURINE
MASTERS/BOOTS
DESOLATION A

MEMPHIS
LONG BLACK COAT
MAGGIE'S

ROLLING STONE

BIELEFELD

DOWN IN THE FLOOD
IF NOT FOR YOU
WATCHTOWER
JUST LIKE A WOMAN
TANGLED
4TH STREET

TAMBOURINE
MASTERS
BOOTS/DON'T THINK/MAMA

DIGNITY
LONG BLACK COAT/SHE BELONGS
MAGGIE'S

ROLLING STONE

As usual we then split up, Ray for his customary half day's queuing for a front row position. (I was once that obsessed too, you know, until I became more mature) I am a bit concerned for Ray as he has not had his obligatory bloody-Mary-breakfast, still I know the thought of Dylan will sustain him. I go for a lovely meal with my trio of German guides, just by the shattered remains of the war memorial, Remembrance Church.

After our meal we take a bus back to the venue - still with plenty of time before the doors open - and alight to hear the strains of *The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll* We follow the sounds, 'It is alright, it isn't Bob singing...' I begin but Stephan is over the road and far away already!

We stand outside the gates. It's cool. (I don't mean the weather, it is a perfect summer's day.) There are intermittent breaks in the soundcheck, so during one I shout to John Jackson. Ever-accommodating, he returns my greeting with a big smile. He then does - to my none guitarist view - a strange thing. He intently practices while facing a mirror. I can't see how this could be anything other than confusing, anyone have any ideas? We see Winston and Tony too. The soundcheck, since we first heard it, has consisted solely of various versions of *The Lonesome Death Of Hattie Carroll*.

We are having a pleasant time, particularly as we are standing where Bob's bus must almost certainly be arriving. Victor, a man whose features are carved out of a material even older and more experienced than Keith Richards', walks up to the security gates - which have remained unlocked but observed all this time. He cannot find his pass and fumbles for it in every pocket, just like me at work on a Monday morning. He eventually finds it - not that anyone is waiting on it as he was immediately recognised anyway. The only person who had more trouble with his pass was Bucky. This was, from our point of view, a very funny incident. We watched Bucky walk up and down and then he decided to go in. He has his Bob Dylan access badge round his neck and walks through the guards showing his card to each one. They all completely ignore him. (Because he's recognised too, I suppose.) Bucky clearly feels someone should nod to him or open the gates or whatever so, he makes a very firm point of showing his pass to the last person at the gates. This is our companion Daniel, who is intently reading the sports pages in his German paper and will only lift his head when Dylan himself arrives. So Daniel also completely ignores Bucky who is left to wander in in a rather aimless fashion.

Minutes later the German paper - which included the great line: "Watching Dylan perform *Like A Rolling Stone* is like hearing Goethe reading *FAUST*" - is discarded as THE (pronounced thee) bus arrives. Only now are we asked to move, albeit quite firmly! There is no way we can miss Dylan coming off the bus. In utter nutty Bob follower fashion I follow Chris rushing round to the side Dylan will come off. Stephan and Daniel stay on the other side of the bus. Dylan comes off the bus pretty fast but I get a lovely glimpse of him, dressed in the hooded sweatshirt with jacket on top in the height of summer. Stephan and Daniel are rewarded with a longer glimpse. When I return to the UK I am asked more questions about this brief glimpse than all three shows combined, which is a kind of worrying indicator of what we Dylan fans are like. Then again, as David Bristow remarked to me, "Those are the moments we live for."

So, with Bob in place, it is time for us to join the queue at the doors to The Berlin Tempodrome. Strange venue, really. Like a big circus tent, pretty good way to see Dylan with the massed foot-soldiers at the front and well raised seats around. As it transpires I watch from various vantage points throughout the show.

We get fairly near the front but I am not convinced I'll be able to see well from where I stand. Still it was fine for the opening two songs and there was a great atmosphere when Bob took stage. *I Want You* was a gorgeous choice as the second song but the crowd really went daft when the opening chords to *All Along The Watchtower* started. This was a double disappointment for me (well, triple actually!) - firstly I just didn't need to go to the toilet and secondly a surge forward had subtly altered the crowd in front of me so that Bob was almost constantly obscured by a head or a hat. Time for a move! I wandered around, keeping my eyes on the stage, and came across a bar not too far back that afforded a metal support as a slight elevation for my feet. a rubbish bin whose rim provided a resting

place for my butt and the corner of the bar acted as a leverage point when anyone tall walked in front of me. Sorted! *Under The Red Sky* followed and was thoroughly enjoyable; it is a song I've always loved and he's doing it proud. The crowd don't seem quite as taken with it, though they are wildly enthusiastic for the next two.

Tangled Up In Blue is a big improvement on Hamburg but still has some way to go to be the standout song it clearly deserves to be. (Some of you someday will hear it open the acoustic set and it'll be so transcendent you'll not even notice the next song, I'm sure.) The next two are their usual gorgeous selves and the crowd are applauding the harmonica solos to the rafters. Highlights of the remaining songs, for me, are - *Lenny Bruce* and *Cat's In The Well* - both great, driving versions. *Knockin' On Heaven's Door* and *The Times They Are A Changin'* are pretty special too.

It was a really great show, and during a magnificent harmonica climax to *Times* I feel overwhelmed with sadness that I won't be seeing him again properly for months. If it wasn't for the festival at Stratford-Upon-Avon to come I'd probably be crying my eyes out. Words from a completely different Dylan voice, from the incomparable Basement Tapes sessions, fill my head as tears fill my eyes:

Pardon me, if I'm sentimental when we say goodbye
Don't be angry with me should I cry
When you Are gone yet I'll dream...

I am writing this on July 15th, I can remember my feelings exactly. The foreboding was accurate. I now don't even know when I'll see him again. His absence is physically painful.

I am close to tears again when I see the set lists with acoustic alternatives including *Visions Of Johannah* and *Desolation Row* and *Tears Of Rage* being, appropriately enough, among the electric.

It is back to Marion's for the three Germans, a Scot, an Italian and an Englishman. Marion and Giovanna have Glaucha to look forward to, Chris, Daniel and Stephan have Dortmund and Stuttgart, Ray has Stratford and Spain. I only have Stratford, it doesn't seem enough! The next morning sees me bid farewell, with heavy heart, to Chris, Daniel and Stephan. At least Ray gets a bloody Mary for his breakfast though. After a series of inexplicable crises and panics Ray and I manage to say farewell and Bob-speed to Marion and Giovanna. Next it is home to the Bob-less reality of daily life; the non-real in other words.

Postscript: The Phoenix Festival 14th July

I am standing with Joe McShane but it doesn't seem right that Chris, Stephan and Daniel aren't with us.

We arrive in an airfield packed with thousands of Suede fans. On the other hand Bob shouldn't be here as a titular-only headliner. He is out of place and so are we. There is a rumour Dylan won't appear but he does, I wasn't worried, I knew by the incipient thunder clouds he was nearby. The two acts before Dylan, Van Morrison and rap-group Tricky, play to packed crowds. There is no way forward. Never mind - there is a huge screen showing the singer's face in startling clarity. Of course the minute Dylan takes stage this is switched off and the minute he leaves it comes back on again. You aren't making this easy for us are you, Bob? No problem, the arrival of Dylan is a sign for thousands to leave the main stage area and we easily get to a few rows from the front, stage left.

He looks fantastic as he takes the stage, Supper-Club jacket, shades. THAT hair

I finally get to hear *Drifter's Escape*, though that claim is more in theory than practice. This opening thrash bears virtually no resemblance to the song and I am alarmed to discover that I recognize the sound mix is awful even through the dreadful noise Dylan and the boys are making. *I Want You* makes an overwhelmingly joyous contrast. *All Along The Watchtower* is more memorable than normal for me; I spend the song trying to get the security guards to move as they are blocking my view of Dylan. This is probably quite rash, as other than children and Joe McShane.

I am probably the smallest person in the field. All I get for my trouble is a V-sign and a curse, perhaps it was the way I delicately phrased my request? Stewards help to solve the situation and, with my personal viewing now OK, I am left to wonder at the manic security that tries to block videos and photographs of our man. The giant, blank screen a mute testimony to this nonsense.

The majestic *Tears Of Rage* is next up, not the best ever version but a highlight of this show. *Silvio* is really getting on my nerves now and *Tangled Up In Blue* is still not working. Things look up with *Mama You've Been On My Mind* and really take off with its climactic harmonica playing. The highlight of the night is a beautifully paced, vocally rich *One Too Many Mornings*. It is all over far, far too soon - *Seeing The Real You At Last* and *Rainy Day Women # 12 & 35* finishing off what seems a let down of a set after the three German shows. Maybe it is just me, there are a number of factors that could be the cause of my dissatisfaction:

- bad sound
- horrific venue
- shortened set

and, finally, the heaven's opened and poured a torrent of last track, first side *Freewheelin'* like proportions on us as we left. There was no shelter from this storm.

Still, I don't think so. *I Want You* and *Tears Of Rage* were pretty good, *Mama You've Been On My Mind* ended gloriously and *One Too Many Mornings* was breathtaking. Unless my subjective feelings distorted my hearing, nothing else was special. The tapes may prove me wrong - it wouldn't be the first time - but this didn't seem a fitting farewell to my July stint on the Bobwatch campaign. Besides I miss him already and wish to hell I was going to Spain and then on to the USA in the Fall!

--
Andrew Muir

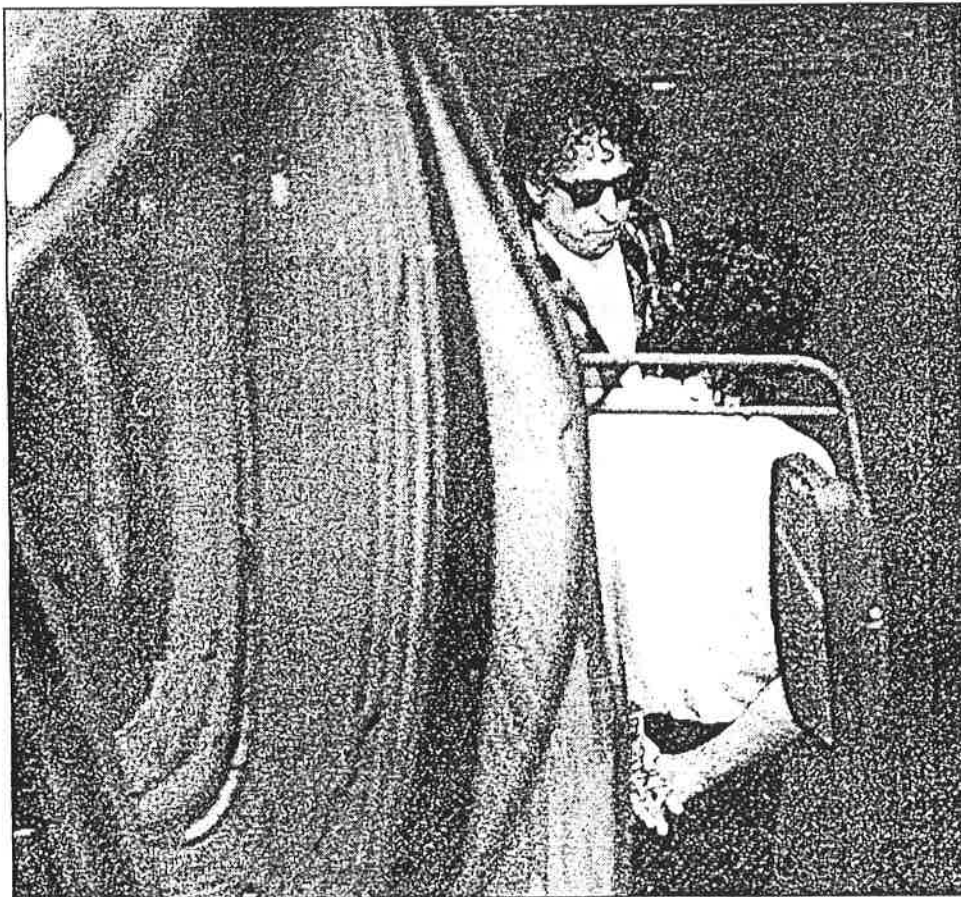


ERINNERUNGEN: Bob Dylan in Gotha.

TA-Foto: R. OBST



Bob Dylan —que anoche se negó a ser fotografiado durante el concierto—, en su actuación del domingo en Bilbao. EFE



Bob Dylan, ayer, a su llegada a la Plaza de Toros de Bilbao.

RESTLESS FAREWELL

December 6th 1995

I have refrained from writing this last page until the good Mr. Baldwin has printed all the rest, and indeed, a little beyond that time now. I can prevail upon his patience no longer.

Since the July report I have not seen Dylan live (Sob, Sob...violins wail etc.). My friends have done well, though: particularly the ubiquitous Ray Webster, and, during the Fall tour I received a call from Stephan and Chris in Texas that had Daniel, Christine Consolvo, Jon Casper and goodness know who else chiming in, giving their concert reviews & passing on their best wishes. This is what running the Homer Line is all about! Also, the other day, Josh Nelson called from the States to say he'd ring in after the upcoming shows because, YES, Bob's still on the road, heading for another joint. Danbury tomorrow sees the beginning of an incredible December mini-tour with Patti Smith as support act (and Tom Verlaine in attendance too). So - Peter, Clinton, Roy, John, Tim, and for all I know & suspect David and Ray are mobilizing as I type these very words to cross the ocean for what will surely be a momentous set of gigs.

This page was re-titled **RESTLESS FAREWELL** because of Dylan's performance of the song at Frank Sinatra's 80th birthday party tribute concert. According to early reports Dylan was scheduled to play **THAT'S LIFE** or **MY WAY** but chose to play this remarkably appropriate song instead, it is heartening that these instincts have not left him. I look forward to it being broadcast in the States a week tomorrow - yet another high profile TV appearance!

Also, of course, it is a restless farewell from me. It has been fun putting this little personalzine together and your warm and enthusiastic response to the Homer Line has made that very fulfilling too.

All the best wishes for 1996 I can give are yours to take
..... *Adios Mis Amigos.*

The Homer Line (UK) 0171 385 6119 is a friendly, up-to-the-minute Bob Dylan news service run by Andrew Muir, 24a Inglethorpe Street, Fulham, London, SW6 6NT, UK. It is paid for by voluntary contributions - usually of five pounds per year. This fanzine is a Xmas card & extra thank you to all those who sent in contributions in the summer of 1994 to ensure the line's continuation after its parent fanzine, **HOMER**, *the slut*, came to an end. Special thanks go to Lambchop and all those who have phoned in news from around the globe. See you at a gig somewhere soon.

For those who are not Homer line subscribers or for subscribers who require extra copies, these may be obtained from John Baldwin, Desolation Row Promotions, 57 Tempsford, Welwyn Garden City, Herts., AL7 2PA - and not from Andrew Muir. Price for the Christmas 1995 Information Line Special is £4.00 (including postage) for U.K. customers.



The fiddler now upspoke

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Following the successful launch of this series in the Spring, Volume 2 is now available. You may already have many Dylan interviews somewhere or other dotted around the place but never at hand when you want them. That's the first idea behind this series - to get all of his interviews gathered together in one place. The second idea is to be able to cross-refer through an index, so if you want to know what Dylan said about, for example, Woody Guthrie, you can go right to the source or sources. Volume 2 contains an index to entries in both Volumes 1 & 2 and the index will grow with future volumes. The third aim is accuracy. Quite a few of the existing transcripts are inaccurate - '*The fiddler now upspoke*' tries to improve on them.

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