

WORDS FILL MY HEAD

Poems & Other Pieces

Go Away You Bomb

For Dave Glover

Lonesome Christmas

Blowin' In The Wind

The Kennedy Poems

A Message From Bob Dylan

A Letter From Bob Dylan

Six Poems

Letter To Larry

Dear Mummy

Letters To Tami Dean

First Letter

Second Letter

Third Letter

Fourth Letter

Walk Down Crooked Highway

Adam's Rib

Go Away You Bomb

Go away you Bomb get away go away
Fast right now fast quick you get me sick
My good gal don' like you none an' the kids on my corner are sacred a' you
An' my friends 're gettin headaches that split an' spit an'
That kind a feelin' is rubbin' off on me an' I don' like it none too good
I hate the letters in yer word - B that means bad yer so bad that even
A dead hog in the sun would get up an' run O that stands for horrible
Yer so horrible that the word drops it's first letter and runs M
that stands for morgue an' all them folks in it 're feelin' lucky an' I don't
Mind folks feelin' lucky but I hate that feelin' of envy an' sometimes when
I get to thinkin' about how lucky they are I get envious
of 'm an' that's a bad lonesome feelin' too B - that means bad but that's
The second time 'round so it's twice as bad

I hate you cause you make my life seem like nothin' at all
I hate you cause yer name's lost it's meaning an' you can fool anybody now
I hate you cause yer man made and man owned an' man handled
An' you might be missmade an' miss-owned an' miss handled an' even miss used
An' I hate you cause you could drop on me by accident an' kill me
An' I never liked yuh anyway - I'm against yuh to begin with
An' I hate you twice as much as Jimm Crow hates me

I want that bomb - I want it hangin' out a' my pocket an' danglin'
On my key-chain - I want it strapped to my belt buckle -
I want it stickin' out a' my boot
I want it fallin' out a' my sock
I wanna wear it on my wedding finger an' I wanna tie it with bandanas
To my head

I want that Bomb -
I want it settin in my mouth like a cigar
I want it stickin from my ears like a carrot
I wanna look in the mirror an' see it in my eyes
I want one in both hands
I want two in both arms
I want that bomb to be hangin' an' hurtin' an' shinin' an' burnin'
I want it glowing and backbiting - and whistling an' side winding
I want it showin' all over my living self
I want it breathin' from every porthole
I want it blowin' from every pore
I want it weightin' me down so I can't even walk right
I wanna get up in the mornin' an' scare the day right out a' it's dawn
Then I walk into the White House an' say "DIG YOURSELVE'S"

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

Poem written for Izzy Young's Bomb Book 1962
[Source: photocopy of manuscript]

For Dave Glover

We used t drink cough medicine bottles a vodka t'gether
We used t stay up all nite laughin and singin
And we did that when there weren't too many people doin it
Hey man - I'm sorry - // I mean I'm really sorry
I wrote many lines in the past few years but there ain't no letters in
 none a the words t spell out how sorry I am
It's a complicated day
I keep rememberin the songs we used t sing an play
The songs written thirty fifty years ago
The dirt farm songs - the dust bowl songs
The depression songs - the down and out songs
The ol blues and ballads
I think a Woody's songs
I think a Woody's day
"This land I'll defend with my life if it be"
An I say t myself "Yeah that's right"
"Hitler's on the march"
"I don't wan"m takin my ground"
"I don't wan"m livin on my land"
An I see two side man
I see two roads to pick yer route
The American way or the Fascist way
When there was a strike there's only two kind of views
An two kinds of tales t tell the news
Thru the unions eyes or thru the bosses eyes
An yuh could stand on a line an look at yer friends
An stand on that same line an see yer foes
It was that easy
"Which Side're You On" ain't phony words
An they ain't from a phony song
 An that was Woody's day man
Two sides
I don know what happened cause I wasn't aroun but somewhere along
 the line a that used t be day things got messed up
More kinds a sides come int' the story
Folks I guess started switchin sides an makin up their own sides
There got t be so many sides that no eyes could see the eyes facin'm
There got t be so many sides that all of'm started lookin' like each other
I don pretend to know what happened man, but somehow all sides lost their
 purpose an folks forgot about other folks
I mean they must a all started goin against each other not for the good
 a their side but for the good a jes their own selves
An them two simple sides that was so easy t tell apart bashed an

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

boomed an exploded so hard an heavy that t'day all'ts left and
made for us is the one big rockin rollin

COMPLICATED CIRCLE

Nowadays folk's brains're bamboozled an bowled over by categories
labels an slogans an advertisements that could send anybody's
head in a spin

It's hard t believe anybody's tellin the truth for what that is
I swear it's true that in some parts a the country folks believe the
finger-pointers more'n the President

It's the time a the flag wavin shotgun carryin John Birchers

It's the time a the killer dogs an killer sprays

It's the time a the billboard sign super flyin highways

It's the time a the pushbutton foods an five minute fads

It's the time a the white collar shirt an the white sheeted hood and the
white man's sun tan lotion

It's time a guns and grenades an bombs bigger'n any time's ever seen

It's the time a Liz Taylor fans - sports fans and electric fans

It's the time when a twenty year ol colored boy with his head bloody
don get too much thought from the seventy year ol senator who
wants t bomb Cuba

I don't know who the people were man that let it get this way but they
got what they wanted out a their lives an left me an you facin a
scared raped world

They frained the free thinkin air an left us with a mental institution
circle

They rotted the poor wind and left us mixed up mislead
puny breeze

They stole Abraham Lincoln's road an sold us Bill Moore's highway

They shot down trees - buried the leaves an nailed "Profess" t the
gravestone

They damned up the clear runnin river of "Love thy neighbor"
said by Jesus Christ a Bethlehem an poluted us with "I'll guard"
"the school with my body" said by governor Wallace of
Alabama

They robbed the Constitution of the land an snuck in the censors of
the mind

They bought up everythin at the auction an left us with a garbage
market a fools an fears an frustratin phoniness

Yuh ask how I'm doin Dave

I'm still singin - I'm still writin

I'm still doin all a things I used to do I guess

But the difference is probably that now I really ain't thinkin
about what I'm doing no more

I do worry no more bout the covered up lies and twisted truth in front

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

a my eyes
I don worry no more bout the no-talent criticizers an know-nothin
philosophizers
I don worry no more bout the cross-legged corner sitters who try an
make rules for the ones travelin in the middle a the room
I'm singin an writin what's on my own mind now
What's in my own head and what's in my own heart
I'm singin for me an a million other me's that've been forced t'gether
by the same feelin

Not by no kind a side
Not by no kind a category
People hung up and strung out
People frustrated an corked in an bottled up
People on no special form or field - age limit or class
I can't sing "Red Apple juice" no more
I gotta sing "masters a War"
I can't sing "Little Maggie" with a clear head
I gotta sing "Seven Curses" instead
I can't sing "John Henry"
I gotta sing "Hollis Brown"
I can't Sing "John Johannah" cause it's his story an his people's story
I gotta sing "With God On My Side" cause it's my story an my
people's
I can't sing "The Girl I Left Behind" cause I know what it's like
to do it
I gotta sing "Boots a Spanish Leather" cause I know what's like
to live it
But don't get me wrong now
Don think I go way out a my way not t sing no folk songs
That ain't it at all
The folk songs showed me the way
They showed me that songs can say somethin human
Without "Barbara Allen" there'd be no "Girl From The North Country"
Without no "Lone Green Valley" there'd be no "Don't Think Twice"
Without no "Jesse James" there'd be no "Davy Moore"
Without no "Twenty one Years" there'd be no "Walls a Red Wing"
Hell no
Them ol songs're the only kinda picture left t show the new born
how it used t be in them times
Them ol songs tell us what they had t run thru or walk thru or
dance thru
The ol songs tell how they loved an how they kissed
They tell us what they rejected and objected to
They laid it down an made the path
They were simple an tol the story straight

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

They said who they fought an what they fought for an with what they
fought with

An who they fought against

Now's a complicated day

An all I'm sayin' is 'at I gotta make my own statement bout this day

I gotta write my own feelins down the same way they did it before
me in that used t be day

An I got nothin but homage an holy thinkin for the ol songs and
stories

But now there's me an you

An I'm doin what I'm doin for me

An I'm doin what I'm doin for you

I'm writin an singin for me

An I'm writin an singin for you

I'm writin an singin for me cause I'm human an I'm breathin

In a world that was made for me

I'm writin an singin for you cause yer a part a me an everythin I
stand for

I don know why I aint written t yuh

maybe cause I never write letters t'myself

yeah maybe that's why

See yuh when I get there

yer friend

Bob

Dylan

[Source: the Newport Folk Festival program 1963]

Lonesome Christmas

the school quarter ended, an there I stood ...
stranded ha ...
it was harder then I thought yes...
I dont think I made it ... no ... the nite was drunk and it was now winter ...
Christmas vacation ... the almighty restin
period ...
I was livin in this fraternity house.
Everybody's gone ... they all went home ... the house?
mine ... belongs t me.
big lonesome house.
nobody's even ???? not even in the kitchen ...
I sat between two barrals of butter this mornin. thinkin about poor me.
sittin between two barrals of butter.
it's now nite the street is mine.
god it's lonesome ...
who will I go see?
I love Judy.
Judy says she loves me but she also says she's busy. I told her I love her ...
I hate her cause I sense she dont love me ...
I wish I didn't love her. I wish she'd invite me for christmas for
christ's sake ... I wish I had a car ...
I wish I wish. Hey mr. christmas man I wanna know where I'm supposed t be.
gimme that for christmas ... (no answer).
I shut the lights off in the main room of the house so nobody can see me an I
watch out the window ...
dirty window nobody even cleans the windows here
well it aint gonna be me (bitin my teeth)
I'm just
roomin here ... they advertised for boarders an they got me ...
they didn't get no fraternity pledge of alligence cat whose got t wait
on them or their windows ...
I aint even friends with any of em
they think I'm odd ... my clothes an hair aint right ...
they smile at me too ...
sometimes I smile back but then they chuckle ...
why in the fuck do they chuckle?
I gotta chuckle back what's they start it for?
headlights turn into the alley!
somebody's comin ...
I quick pick up the phone an pretend I'm talkin ...
dont want nobody whoever it is t think I'm all alone here ...
the brakes slam the car door slams the screen door slams an somebody
who I hardly know walks up the steps an seems startled by me ...

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

he stops headin for whatever he was headin for as he hears me say
goodbye an hang up the phone ...

"you been here the last couple day?"
"no I went up north but came back down"
"aint yuh going home for christmas?"
"well I did man but like I said I came back down"
"well where you going for christmas?"

I look out the window pretendin I'm waiting for somebody -
he's gotta have porpoise brains t believe this

"I dont know I got about three places I chose from"
"yeah well I's just surprised t see anybody here that's all"
"yeah well I'm kinda takin care the house ha"
"I'm on my way upstairs t get some books see yuh on my way down"

he jumped the steps three at a time thud thud ...
man if I had the guts I think I do I'd steal
your louzy car an turn on your louzy heat an drive down
that lousy road ... an blow out your lousy radio -
thud thud ... he's back again wavin notebooks.

"see yuh take it easy now"
"yeah yeah take it easy too"

I walked upstairs ... the house was cold ...
the first snow that fell had melted
outside it was rainin
in the mornin there'd be snow again
I stopped into somebody's room an glanced
over some dirty magazines ... man I wish I could jump right
into one a them magazines ... ah yes gimme that
for christmas too ...
what's all this wrapped up ribbon shit ...
gimme some kinda world t jump into ...
judy judy god damn I gotta call judy ...
ring ring her ma answers.
her ma hates me.
snobby sort ...
wants the best for her daughter.
society bitch.
bitch of a mother ...
talks down at me when she knows it's me callin ...
sometimes she even says that judy aint there ...
judy says not t call at certain times ...

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

ah man it's all so fuckin complicated ...

"is judy there?"
"pause"
"is judy there?"
"muffled sound"
"I gotta talk t judy"
"a muffled silence"
"hello"
"hello judy?"
"I told you not t call what d'yuh think you're doing?"
"I just gotta ask yuh something"
"what?"

I feel good from hearin her voice but feel sad
cause I know she's gotta go ...
probably with someone else ...
someone else her mother likes an makes more sence t her than me ...
ah I wanna cry out load an scream over the phone ...

"when can I see you?"
"I told you not t come back"
"yah but yuh said you loved me"
"but I cant see yuh this week"
"why?"
"cause I made other plans that's why"
"but you love me - you said yourself"
"but I cant break plans"
"what d'yuh mean yuh cant, will yuh please come over here, it wont take long an ..."
"but I dont break dates"
"dates? ah wow I just ... I mean I dont understand"
"look I gotta go please dont call til after Christmas"
"Judy you son of a bitch you said ... that ..."
click
"you said that you loved me ..."
slam

girls have hung up on me an have hung up on me as far back
as I can remember ... each one promises t be the last.
I walked out in the lonesome nite hearin bells off in the distance.
the rain drizzled as I too wished I was off in the distance.

[Source: The Telegraph # 35, from the Margolis & Moss manuscripts]

Blowin' In The Wind

It aint no use in talkin about folk music -
It aint no use in takin stands an sides an gettin all sweat about it -
It don make sense really t learn names an shout labels an get yer-
self all confused -
It aint got no meanin at all t discuss an defend it -
An it dont mean nothin t offend it -
Of all the corners a the question there aint no answers noplace worth
 lookin at seriously cause the question jus aint that almighty big
What folk music an what aint's got nothin t do with the world -
It just aint healthy t let the music run yer life like that -
Yer life's gotta run the music -
You can't afford t let yer guitar own yer mind -
Yer mind's gotta own that guitar -
So what if other folks try an makes rules for it -
So what if other folks try an boundary it all up -
So what if other folks try an chain it down and tell yuh what's it all about -
It don make no difference at all if yer own life is running things -
But if the music's runnin you then yuh get swallowed up by all blabber talk -
You don have t worry about that's folk music an what aint -
Man, it's just a wide circle a silly tongues ant it aint important at all -
Don let nobody block your head off -
Don let no one weave a wall in front of yer eyes -
Don let no one teach yuh what t call things -
Just get up in the mornin an go -
Just open your eyes an walk -
Forget the silly talk -
There's a million paths t take -
There's a million miles t make -
There's a million border lines t break -
The shadow a the mountain sure moving an shiftin -
Raindrops an snowflakes're free fallin an forever driftin
Tree top're wavin an shakin an the fog is liftin
The white line on the highway's reflectin -
Behind the ditch broken down empty shack're still standin
Above the road an the cove caves're still hidin -
In back a the fence the dogs're still barkin -
The pacific Ocean is soundin and poundin
An the Monterrey sands're waitin
For yer bare feet t be walkin -
There's train lines rattlin an there's whistle's screamin -
The wind's jaunтин an there's hitchhikers thumbin an bummin -
The color a the sky's changin
An the color a the clouds're turnin

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

An the color a the ground's fadin
Fathers an mothers laughing an biebies're cryin
Young girls're sighin
An ol men're dyin -

The dark nite's foldin an people're fightin an frightened
Ships're sailin an trucks're haulin
An New York City's crawlin
With hungry voices callin
An ol buildings fallin
An clothes lines're stretched an strung out
With all different colors a pants an shirts hangin -
An the dirt in the alley's risin
An jackhammer dust's flyin -
An the Hudson river're restin
An kid's voices're ringin
The hobo poet's whisperin and the bartender's not listenin -
The East Side is sweatin an steamin
an fightin' t be breathin -
Forty 2nd Street's flyin an floatin and jumpin an twistin an explodin -
Subways're loadin
Folks 'f all colors an creed're settlin an sittin on park benches an street
corners an curbs an roof tops an bus stops -
The back a the bar rooms're lined steady an standin full with road
walkers an road workers an road poets an road painters with
lonesome thoughts an hungry feelings -
Junkies an flunkies line the wind along side ban-the-bomb demonstrators
Girls're hustlin for dollars on one side a the street an
Girls're sittin down for their rights on the other side a the street -
The new Premise's playin
an Moondog's beatin his drum an sayin his lines -
Lenny Bruce's talkin
an Lord Buckley's memory still movin
An Doc Watson's walkin
Ray Charles's shoutin an speakin
Bertrand Russell's yellin from across the ocean
an Julian Beck's tellin the same on this side a the sea -
Jim Forman is livin an Ross Barnett's losin -
Harry Jackson's paintin -
Maybelle Carter's really standin an really strummin
an Mike Seeger's really real -
An Pete Seeger's really Pete Seeger -
An Joan Baez is still unshattered
An Marlon Brando's on the good side -
An the time's a rollin down every single street -
There's a girl waitin on every single corner -

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

An men're still breathin
An men're still breathin
An it's all music -
Every space a human life
It's all music -
An it don have t have no stamp 'f approval from nobody -
It don have to be ok ed by no one -
There aint no scholar that's smart enuff t invent the rules -
There aint no lawmaker high enuff t chain it down with boundaries -
There aint no guard that's good enuff t hold a gun on it -
An there aint no gun that's got enuff bullets an shells t shoot it -

An it's yer life
Do it - don talk it -
Forget about the talkers -
They'll always be around
You won't

Bob Dylan

[Poem published in Hootenanny magazine December 1963]

The Kennedy Poems

Mrs Kennedy ... you were crawlin
on all fours ... I saw you
they printed you that way
for the curiosity seekers
t get a close glimpse
of Mr Kennedy's last
car ride ... yes I too was
forced into acceptin my
role as curiosity seeker ...
they showed you in four separate
pictures runnin in slow motion
after you knew your
husband was shot ...
the second after you knew your husband was shot
you were up an past
the back seat ... climbin
down the trunk ...
then a man came runnin ...
he came runnin t'wards you ...
he was called a security guard
he came closer as you were farther out on the trunk
he jumped up on the trunk ...
there were no more pictures

showin this the magazine
then proclaimed that you
were tryin t help the man
into the car ...
Mrs Kennedy you dont
need excuse for being out on the trunk
the seconds after your husband was shot
everybody could see what was happenin
in these pictures with their own eyes ...
why was the truth of human beings distorted?
how far can this hero image go?
everybody aint a hero ...
why am I deliberately lied wild lies
about what I see with sound eyes
who am I t be so insulted?
I respect you Mrs Kennedy
but I need no pictures t provide the respect ...
my respect springs from reasons in my soul
of which I cant touch

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

nor explain ...
I do not feel better knowin you are human
I knew it all the time.

Mr President I too take off my hat t you
I shall abandon the rumours from mogrul's world
as old hags in high clothes
an court my truth as a youthful girl
an not worry about my heart being broken

oh some say it was more men than one
oh the wind blows bitter
I am sick t my soul an my stomach
thru communication I heard the high men speak of him
as tho they were best friends
all criticizers
t recall the day once more in my mind
I'd just as soon not for its useless

Broadway was salted like a truse had been sighed
all eyes were magnitised t each other
all regret they'd ever criticised him
even those who've even been known t 've dispised him

to compliment one
the complete reward
oh your hair looks fine today

I look at myself
with cause to examine
dressed in jeans
like the magazines say
ah I ask "would I kill the president"
for any reason ...
an men have reasons
for how they act
an I say

I stand an watch the clock tick
a bridge of time 'tween
my cliff an the one across
the great white way
I've never seen the likes

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

of where I'm goin before
I do not know how
soft or how hard the ground is over there
for its never been explained
in terms of standin on it ...
but with every tick
I take another step
because

stunned by disbelief
as everybody in the room
we watched Walter Cronkite
half asleep tryin his best
t fasten rumor t'gether
it was friday mornin
yesterday a riot started up
in Harlem
t'day at least for now it is no more

I shall court the truth
like any other youthful girl
an worry not about a broken heart
but the sword that bleeds
from a mortals blood
shows only its holder's reflection

Broadway was sleepin with people
as groups gathered round radios
it was

[Isis # 30-31 from the Margolis & Moss manuscripts]

A Message From Bob Dylan

to anybody it may concern
clark?
mairi?
phillip?
edith?
mr. lamont?
countless faces I do not know
an all fighters for good things I can not see

when I speak of bald heads, I mean bald minds
when I speak of the seashore, I mean the restin shore
I dint know why I mentioned either of them

my life runs in a series of moods
in private an in personal ways, sometimes,
I, myself, can change the mood I'm in t the
mood I like t be in, when I walked thru the
doors of the americana hotel, I needed t change
my mood ... for reasons inside myself

I am a restless soul
hungry
perhaps wretched

it is hard to hear someone you dont know, say
"this is what he" "meant" "t say" about something
you just said

for no one can say what I meant t say
absolutely no one
at time I even cant
that was one of those times

my life is lived out daily in the places i feel
most comfortable in. these places are places where
i am unknown an unstared at. I perform rarely, an
when I do, there is a constant commotion burnin
at my body an at my mind because of the attention
aimed at me. instincts fight my emotion an fears
fight my instincts ...

I do not claim t be smart by the standards set up
I dont even claim to be normal by the standards

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

set up
an I do not claim to know any kind of truth

but like an artist who puts his painting (after
he's painted it) in front of thousands of unknown
eyes, I also put my song there that way
(after I've made it)
it is as easy an as simple as that

I can not speak, I can not talk
I can only write an I can only sing
perhaps I should've sung a song
but that wouldn't a been right either

for I was given an award not to sing
but rather on what I have sung

no what I should've said was
"thank you very much ladied an gentlemen"
yes that is what I should've said

an I didn't because I did not know

I thought something else was expected of me
other than just sayin "thank you"
an I didn't know what it was
it is a fierce heavy feelin
thinkin somethin
is expected of you
but you dont know what exactly it is
it brings forth a weird form of guilt

I should've remembered
"I am BOB DYLAN an I dont have to speak"
"I dont have t say nothin if I dont wanna"
but

I didn't remember

I constantly asked myself while eatin supper
"what should I say? what should I tell'm?"
"everybody else is gonna tell'm somethin"
but I could not answer myself
I even asked someone who was sittin nex t me
an he couldn't tell me either, my mind blew
up an needless t say I had t get it back in its
rightful shape (whatever that might be) an so

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

I escaped from the big room.... only t hear my
name being shouted an the words "git in here,"
"git in here" overlappin with the findin of my
hand being pulled across hundreds of tables
with the lights turned on strong.... guidin me
back t where I tried t escape from
"what should I say? what should I say?"
over an over again

oh God, I'd a given anything not t be there
"shut the lights off at least"
people were coughin an my head was poundin
an the sounds of mumble jumble sank deep in
my skull from all sides of the room
until I tore everything loose from my mind
an said "just be honest, dylan, just be honest"

an so I found myself in front of the plank
like I found myself once in the path of a car
an I jumped....
jumped with all my bloody might
just tryin t get out o the way
but first screamin one last song

when i spoke of Lee Oswald, I was speakin of the times
I was not speakin of his deed if it was his deed
the deed speaks for itself
but I am sick
so sick
at hearin "we all share the blame" for every
church bombing, gun battle, mine disaster,
poverty explosion, an president killing that comes about
it is so easy t say "we" an bow our heads together
I must say "I" alone an bow my head alone
for it is I alone who is livin my life
I have beloved companions but they do not
eat nor sleep for me
an even they must say "I"
yes if there's violence in the times then
there must be violence in me
I am not a perfect mute
I haer the thunder an I cant avoid hearin it
once this is straight between us, it's then an
only then that we can say "we" an really mean
it.... an go on from there t do something about it

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

When I spoke of Negroes
I was speakin of my Negro friends
from harlem
an jackson
selma an birmingham
atlanta, pittsburgh, an all points east
west, north, south an wherever else they
might happen t be
i rat filled rooms
an dirt land farms
schools, dime stores, factories,
pool halls an street corners
the ones that dont own trees
but know proudly they dont have to
not one little bit

they dont have t be like they naturally aint
t get what they naturally own no more'n anybody
else does
it only gets things complicated
an leads people into thinkin the wrong things
black skin is black skin
it cant be covered by clothes an made t seem
acceptable, well liked an respectable....
t teach that or t think that just tends the
flames of another monster myth....
it is naked black skin an nothin else
if a Negro has t wear a tie t be a Negro
then I must cut off all ties with who he has
t do it for
I do not know why I wanted t say this that
nite
perhaps it was just one of the many things
in my mind
born from the confusion of my times

when I spoke about the people that went t Cuba
I was speakin of the free right t travel
I am not afraid t see things
I challenge seein things
I am insulted t the depths of my soul
when someone I dont know commands that I
cant see this an gives me mysterious reasons
why I'll get hurt if I do see it.... tellin me
at the same time about goodness an badness in
people that again I dont know....

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

I've been told about people all my life
about niggers, kikes, wops, bohunks, spicks, chinks,
an I been told how they eat, dress, walk, talk,
steal, rob an kill but nobody tells me how any of'm cries
or laughs or kisses, I'm fed up with most newspapers,
radios, tv an movies an the like t tell me, I want
now t see an know for myself....
an I accepted that award for all others like me
who want t see for themselves.... an who dont want
that God-given right taken away
stole away
or snuck out from beneath them
yes a travel ban in the south would protect
Americans more, I'm sure, than the one t Cuba
but in all honesty I would want t crash that
one too
do you understand?
do you really understand?
I mean I want t see. I want t see all I can
every place there is t see it
my life carries eyes
an they're there for one reason
the reason t see thru them

my country is the Minnesota - North Dakota territory
that's where I was born an learned how t walk an
it's where I was born an learned how t walk an
it's where I was raised an went t school.... my
youth was spent wildly among the snowy hills an
sky blue lakes, willow fields an abandoned open
pit mines, contrary t rumors, I am very proud of
where I'm from an also the many blood streams that
run in my roots but I would not be doing what
I'm doing today if I hadn't come t New York. I was
given my direction from new york. I was fed in
new york. I was beaten down by new york an I was
picked up by new york. I was made t keep going on
by new york. I'm speakin now of the people I've met
who were strugglin for their lives an other peoples'
lives in the thirties an forties an the fifties
an look t their times
I reach out t their times
so, in a sense, I'm jealous of their times
t think I have no use for old people is a betrayin thought
those that know me know otherwise
those that don't, probably're baffled

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

like a friend of mine, jack elliot, who says he
was reborn in Oklahoma, I say I was reborn in
New York....
there is no age limit stuck on it
an no one is more conscious of it than I

yes it's a fierce feeling, knowing something you
dont know about's expected of you, but it's worse
if you blindly try t follow with explodin words
(for that's all they can do is explode)
an the explodin words're misunderstood
I've heard I was misunderstood

i do not apologize for myself nor for my fears
I do not apologize for any statement which led
some t believe "oh my God! I think he's the one
that really shot the president"

I am a writer an a singer of the words I write
A am no speaker nor any politician
an my songs speak for me because i Write them
in the confinement of my own mind an gave t cope
with no one except my own self. I dont have t face
anyone with them until long after they're done

no I do not apologize for being me nor any part of me

but I can return what is rightfully yours at any
given time, I have stared at it for a long while
now. it is a beautiful award, there is a kindness
t mr Paine's face an there is almost a sadness in
his smile. his trials show thru his eyes. I know
really not much about him but somehow I would like
t/sing for him. there is a gentleness in his way
yes thru all my flounderin wildness, I am, when it
comes down to it, very proud that you have given this
t me. I would hang it high, an let my friends see in
it what I see, but I also would give it back, if
you wish. There is no sense in keeping it if you're
made a mistake in givin it. fir it means more'n any
story bought thing and it'd only be cheetin t keep it

also I did not know that the dinner was a donation
dinner. I did not know you were gonna ask anyone
for money, an I understand you lost money on the
masterful way I expressed myself.... then I am in debt t you

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

not a money debt but rather a moral debt
if you'd sold me something then it'd be a money debt
but you sold nothin, so it's a moral debt
an moral debts're worse'n money debts
for they have t be paid back in whatever is missing
an in this case it's money

please send me a bill
an I shall pay it
no matter what the sum
I have a hatred of debts an want to be even in
the best way I can
you needn't think about this, for money mens
very little t me

so then
I'll return once again t the road

I can't tell you why other people write, but I
write in order to keep from going insane
my head, I expect'd turn inside out if my hands
were t leave me

but i hardly ever talk about why I write, an I
scarcely ever think about it, the thought of it is
too alarmin

an I never ever talk about why I speak
but that's because I never do it. this is the
first time I am talkin about it.... an I pray
the last
the thought of doing it again is too scary

ha! it's a scary world
but only once in a while huh?

I love you all up there an the ones i dont love
it's only because I do no know them an have not
seen them.... God it's so hard hatin it. it's so
tiresome.... an after hatin something to death,
it's never worth the bother and trouble

out! out! brief candle
life's but an open window
an I must jump back thru it now

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

see yuh
respectfully an unrespectfully
bob dylan

[Message sent to the Emergency Civil Liberties Comitte after Dylan received the "Tom Paine award at the Bill of Rights dinner on 13 December 1963]

A Letter From Bob Dylan

for sis and gordon an all broads of good sizes

let me begin by not beginning
let me start not by startin but by continuin
it sometimes gets so hard for me
I am now famous
I am now famous by the rules of the public famiousity
it snuck up on me
an pulverized me
I never knew what was happenin
it is hard for me t walk down the same streets
I did before the same way because now
I truly dont know
who is waitin for my autograph...
I dont know if I like givin my autobiograph
oh yes sometimes I do
but other times the back of my mind tells me
it is not honest.... for I am just fulfillin
a myth t somebody who'd actually treasure my
handwritin more'n his own handwritin....
this gets very complicated for me
an proves t me that I am livin in a contradiction....
t quote mr froyd
I get quite paranoyd....
an I know this isn't right
it is not useful healthy attitude for one t have
but I truly believe that everybody has their fears
everybody yes everybody....
I do not think it good anymore t overlook them
I think they ought t be admitted....
an I think that all feelings should be admitted....
people ask why do I write the way I do
how foolish
hos monsterish
a question like that hits me....
it makes me think that I'm doin nothin
it makes me think that I'm not being heard
yes above all the mumble jumble an rave praises
an all the records I've sold.... thru all the packed
houses I play.... thru all the communication systems
an rants an bellows an yellin an clappin comes
a statement like "Why do you do what you do"
what is this?

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

some kind of constipated idiot world?
some kind of horseshoe game we're all playin
respondin only when a ringer clangs
no no no
not my world
everybody plays in my world
aint nobody first second third or fourth
everybody shoots at the same time
an ringers dont count
an everybody wins
an nobody loses
cause everybody lives an breathes
an takes up space
an cant be overlooked
an I am a people too
I cannot pretend I'm not
an I feel guilty
god how can I help not feel guilty
I walk down on the bowery and give money away
an still I feel guilty for I know I do not
have enuff money t give away....
an people say "think a yourself, dylan, you're
gonna need it someday" an I say yeah yeah
an I think maybe about it for a split second
but then the floods of vomit guilt swoop my
drunken head an I spread forth more gut torn
bloody money from the depths of my forsaken
pockets.... an I whisper "ah it's so useless"
man so many people need so many things
an what am I anyway? some kind of messiah walkin
around....?
hell no I'm not
an I ask why dont other people with things give
some of it away
an I know the answer without lookin
security security security....
everybody wants security
they want t be secure
they want t be protected
an I say protected?
protected against what?
protected against starvin I guess
an power too
an protected against the forces that they know will
get them if they lose their money
ah why does it have t be like that?

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

man why are these walls built?
who is this god that is so feared?
certainly not in my life this isnt
yes I have my fears but mine are the fears of
the mind. the fears of the head
a lonely person with money is still a lonely person
I had never had much money before
an so it is easy for me I guess t spend it
an overlook it
but I'm sure that many other people could overlook
some of theirs too
I'm not speakin now of the century ridin millionares
but rather of "get theirs and get out" people
I dont understand them
I dont understand them at all
there's many things I admit I dont understand
I dont understand the blacklist
I dont understand how people against it go along
with it
I'm talkin about the full thing
not just a few of us refusin t be on the show
I'm talkin about the people that stand up
against it violently an then in some way have something
t do with it....
not just the singers mind you
but the managers an agents an buyers an sellers....
they are the dishonest ones
for the are never seen
the play both sides against each other
an expect t be respected by everybody

the heroes of this battle are not me an Joan
an the Kingston Trio nor Peter Paul an Mary
for none of us need it go on that show
none of us really *need* that kind of dumbness
but there's some that could use it
for they could use the money
I mean people like Tom Paxton, Barbara Dane,
an Johnny Herald.... the are the heroes if
such a word has t be used here
they are the ones that lose materialistically
ah yes but in their own minds they dont
an that is much more important
it means much more
we need more kind a people like that
people that cant go against their conscience

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

no matter what they might gain
an I've come to think that that might be the most
important thing in the whole wide world....
not going against your conscience
nor your own natural senses
for I think that that is all the truth there
is.... an no more
thre all the gossip, lies, religions, cults
muths, gods, history books, social books,
all books politics decrees, rules, laws,
boudarie lines, bibles, legends, an bathroom
writings, there is no guidance at all except
from ones natural senses
from being born
an it can only be exchanged
it cant be preached
nor sold
nor even understood....

my mind sometimes runs like a roll of toilet paper
an I hate like hell t see it unravel an unwind
at my empty walls
I'm movin out a here soon
yes the landlord has beaten me it hurts me t tell you.
this place I'm typin in is so filthy
my clothes cover the floor an once on a while
I pick up somethin an use it for a blanket....
the damn heat goes off at ten
that's mornin wise
gushes of warm smelly heat always wake me up
when I sleep here
the plaster falls constantly
an the floor is tiltin an rottin
but somehow there is a beauty to it
columbia records gave me a record player
oh the goodness of some keeps on amazin me
an sometimes I play it.
gettin back t the landlord tho
he is really too much
he owns I guess three buildings
I pay him way too high
an I'm gettin screwed an I know it
an he knows it
but I just dont have the time t go down t the
rent control board. I been told they'd get after
him but I'm so lazy. when sue was here he was

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

gonna jack up the prize cause he said I never told
him I had a wife. you really got t see this place
t believe it. I ought a've jacked him up a long
time ago an used him for heat. last year he put
in a new window (there was a god damn hole in the
other one) man it was like I asked 'm for his blood relation
or something (which he'd probably give away)
anyway the record player's one now
an I'm listenin t Pete sing Guantanamera for
the billionth time. I don't have many folk music
records (I dont have many records really) but
I do have that one of Pete's.
god it's like I go in a trance
he is so human I could cry
he tells me so much
he makes me feel so good
it's as tho all of the things that're sold t make
one feel better, aint none of it worth while.
all the cars, an clothes, an trinkets an food,
an jewels an diamonds an lollypops an gifts of
glad tidings, just dont do nothin for the soul.
I believe I'd rather listen to Pete sing Guantanamera than t
own everything there is t own,...
(that's my own private selfishness shinin thru there)
yes for me he is truly a saint
an I love him
perhaps more than I could show
(as always is the case ha)
I think of love in weird terms.
sometimes I even feel guilty about it
because I know I love sue
but I should love everybody like I love sue
an in all honesty I dont
I just love her that way
an I say what way?
an a voice says "that way"
an I get quite up tite
an I know I have a long way t go
when the day comes when I can love everything
that breathes the way I love sue then
I will truly be a Jesus Christ ha ha
(but I dont wanna be a Jesus Christ ha ha)
an so I am again contradictin meself
away away be gone all you demons
an just let me be me
human me

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

wild me
gentle me
all kinds of me

saw the last issue of broadside
an especially flipped out over
"talkin Merry Christmas"
I have never met Paul Wolfe but I'd like to
he has an uncanny sense of touch
as for Phil, I just cant keep up with him
an he's gettin better an better an better
(spoke with someone who was with him in Hazzars
named Hamish Sinclair.... an englishman
of high virtues and common tongue)
I want t get over an see Phil's baby
I'm told the girl came out yellin about
the bomb. good girl

my novel is going noplac
absolutely noplac
like it dont ever tell a story
it's about a million scenes long
an takes place on a billion scraps
of paper.... certainly I can't make nothin out of
it.
(oh I forgot.
hallelujah t you for puttin Brecht in your
same last issue. he should be as widely known as
Woody an should be as widely read as Mecky Spalline
as an widely listened to as Eisenhower.)

anyway I'm writin a play out of this here so called
novel (navel would be better I guess)
an I'm up to my belly button in it.
quite involved yes
I've discovered the power of playwritin means
as opposed t song writing means
altho both are equal, I'm wrapped in playwritin
for the minute my songs tell only about me an how
I fell but in the play all the characters tell how
the feel. I realize that this might be more confusin
for some but in the total reality of things it might
be much better for some too. I think at best you could
say that the characters well tell in an hour
what would take me, alone, two weeks t sing about

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

I shall get up t see you one of these days
just cause I haven't in a while please dont think
I'm not with you. I am with you more'n ever.
yours perhaps is the only paper that I am on the
side of every single song you print an I am with with with you

my nite is closing again now
an I shall drift off in dreams
an climb velvet carpets up t the stars
with newweek magazines burnin an disappointin
people smoulderin an discustin tongues blazin
an jealous mongrel dogs walkin on hot coals
before my smilin unharmlful eyes
(of such nitemares)

an I shall wake in the mornin an try t start
lovin again

I got a letter from Pete an he closed by sayin
"Take it easy but take it" I thought about that
for an hour or more when I reached my conclusion
of what it really meant I either cried or laughed
(I cant remember which) I will repeat the same an
add "give it easy but give it" an I'll think about
that for an hour an at the either cry or laugh
(I'll write you another letter an tell you which
one it is)

all right then
faretheewell
shaloom an vamoose
I'm off again
off t the hazzards an lost angels an minneapolicemen
an boss town an burnin hams an everything else
combines and combustioned for me....
tryin t remain same at all times

love t agnes
she is one of the true talents of the universe
I've always thought that an would like t see her
again some time

love t everybody in your house

see yuh

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

softly an sleepy
but ready an waitin

Bob Dylan

[Source: Broadside Magazine, January 1964]

Six Poems

a snap a the fingers in the face of time
brought the clocks to a halt
brought the hour t its end
brought the
the village bells toll the
an the flags at half mast they're a wavin

Of his personal life I proclaim to know nothin
an unconscious comparison will sleep in my mind
between the followin ones
an their daughters and sons
with politics havin nothin t do with it
an unconscious comparison now sleeps in my mind

please if your not sure
pray not for death
on what you hear
 skills are cheap
an men are mortal an the hills're steep
for men are mortal an skills are cheap

you curse fast when the odds are good
an run your tongue as a dagger blade
into the soul that needs no wound

rap rap rap
upon my door

I skipped a rock across a pond
an watched the water ripple once
an the stone sank
fast ... much too fast
for such an arm
as strong as mine

no reach in sight mama. there is no reach.
yes, the long arm prances high
 mighty
 and even daring
but according t the wind today

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

there are no pockets waitin
an the breeze has even built it's wall
down with tryin. down with tryin ... so hard
up with forgetness ... an unknown regrettin
forgiveness. not forgettin
an then will the same sun rise tomorrow?
I pray your fingers'll stay deep in step
all but when nite's cradle passes
leavin all bird's songs undone:
please do not crucify the dawn
by grabbin for it ... uh uh an it is only me that
tells only you
for the swingin of your arms
is all that I need t see
if you could
only
believe that

LeRoy was the kind a boy
that listened t his ma's advice
when she said "LeRoy stand up tall
in front of who you're standin to
an you shall never be in chains
for they'll not try not even once
for they'll know of you there is no hope
t swing around your neck a rope"
an LeRoy did what his mother told
he stood up tall so tall an bold
In a room of peers he couldn't allow
t chain his neck tho he couldn't see how
they could do it anyway
he stood up so tall that the roof gave way
an he stuck his head out in the day
leavin his peers down there below
an he heard the doors slam in the house
an he saw the cars drive away

On the street a the city I happened t be walkin
When I spied a crowd watchin a political rally
I immediately started in it's noisy direction
An soon was surrounded by many a person
Who I guess were there for the same curious reasons
I made my way forward as the banners was wavin
Til I stood directly in front a the platform

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

As the people was shovin an the flags was a flyin
An as the crowd grew larger the band played louder
An I was bumped an thumped an pushed an grabbed
I waited for the speech by the good politician
Who'se name was plastered on the papers an posters
But nobody spoke and no speech was given
Just the trumpets an drums on a tuxedo suit singer
Who sang the same song over an over
An finally after forty five minutes
The air was gettin thinner an thinner
An I pushed my way out t the sound a the singer
An the song he was singin was "Lady Be Good"
An the hour was high sundown
An the day was low Sunday

[Isis # 30-31 from the Margolis & Moss manuscripts]

Letter To Larry

deare larry.
have no sports car.
weather., good.
traffic moving slowly thru tunnel.
breeze is from the west an I ahah am goin
t france tomorrow. have t look thru all my pants pockets
an collect things t send t you.
as of now I am in the midst of destroyin all I've
done (I've even crashed my old typewriter t pieces an have burned my
pens into little tiny plastic statues)
I know I will send you something one of these days.
all I have t do is finish something t send you.
in any case, if I am poisoned or framed or kilt orratted on
I will will will you some edgar lee masters?
type (bob dylan written) poems of grand embarassment.
thelonus monk grand style grand (me upright)
the world's fair begun down there.
I'm gone.
Sailin on (across the sone) son,
sawn. dawn. anyway I'm gone.
I'm up here.
my adress is me-bearsville. just got back from trip t boston area.
sung songs at providence.
amhearst.
arrived in amhearst with 15 friends from cambridge.
left providence with 15 friends from providence.
ditched them on highway tho. (yes I pledge alliegence t the luckyness of havin
some so many friends.)
an here's t the republic.
up the irish.
ah yes my flag has turned into one color.
who fast?
me fast?
choking?
ha you must be joking. I'm not turnin. burnin. maybe smokin.
not running cunning.
not me.
I aint none of them things.
not me.
yes most deffinatly would like t borrow cabin at big sur.
cant say when.
sometime.
wham.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

it just hit me.
I do got things of songs an stories for you.
my hangup is tho that I know there will be more.
I want t send the more more then I want t send the got.
yes I guess that's it.
that's it in a nutshell pruneskin.
that's the whole story.
nothin but the truth.
nothin but the nothin.
would've liked t spent more time in san francisco.
would like t spend more time in many places.
sometime I will.
someday I will.
tomorrow. yeah tomorrow.
I a, in a strange light alright.
I remember a few years ago.
tramping. bummin.
ridin the rods all wrong.
hitchhiking (pretending stock markets crashin all over me) thru the ever ready
usa. guitar on my back.
my thoughtful tool.
yes an the only thing I wished was that someday I'd be able t come back
t these fucked up shootin gallery pay me for my playin coffee houses.
coffee bars.
oh how I used t hope that someday if nothin else. I'd have enuff friends or
know the right people t survive with my head at least as groovy as
theirs ... man.
I never got a chance.
I got a motorcycle tho.
but unlike the last ones I had on south dakota an minnesota roads,
this one's for the fields.
so you see, after all, I'm not really going all that fast.
you cant go too fast in the fields you know.
the only thing that's wrong is that there's no fuckin motels.
absolutely no advertising.
I'm the first one hit by the forest fires an god knows that a fallout
shelter'd be insane.
terrible buzzard flies an my front steps all loaded with killed dear
hit by cars ... yet I still wave t airplanes
an shit like that (what whit like that?) so I'm not all bad.
all good.
would?
yes I've chopped much wood.
I'll write you later an send clippings from my head.
as for now there's a horn honkin.
must be for me.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

hhmmmmmmmm.
or however you spell that.
will be in france for awhile.
someplace where they dont read life magazine.
of course I'll be back tho.
an will be out in sanfrancisco again.
I have nothin t do.
an no place t go.
fretheewell.
faretheegoodbye.
say hi for me.
say hi t anybody
see you then
 comemoratin figitatin
 agitatin satined
 positivelyated
 homogenized. egg creamed. pie in the faced
 egg in the eyed
 untied. complied. plywooded. do-gooded. hooded.
 lamp shaded understated hated backdated
muscatelled. muscatold musca went wrong someplace
 displaced. cock traced
 embraced umbraced ohbraced
 church laced
 straight faced
 an all that
 yes

 see you then
 gently

[Source: The Telegraph # 36, letter to Lawrence Ferlinghetti 28 April 1964]

Dear Mummy

on the 21st
sometime

dear mummy
it's me here.
i'm up in woodstock at uncle alby's.
nice house you oughta be here.
swimming pool.
all that stuff.
i'm with you-know-who.
dick an mimi're also around the place but i've hardly seen them
sinse you-know-who got a hold on me.
mummy you must believe me.
i was gonna stay at the foremans as planned i mean i was all set
to an everything.
anyway when me an mimi got t town an right away first thing we
did was t go there.
an you know me i was tired and it was already past noon an well i fuigered
like t get t sleep you know an well i got in t bed
y'know an jesus i pulled back the blankets an who do you think
was hiding under under the quilt?
yeah him.
i mean like i don't know if you'll believe me or not
but i swear t gawd he was rolled up like a ball inside the pillow.
mummy, i shit.
the first thing i did was t call for mimi.
mimi came running down the hall but do you think it did anygood?
you-know-who just slowly stood up an jumped on the floor.
mummy, his hair had grown down past his waist,
he was wearing this monster sweater that stank like he hadn't
taken a bath for a year.
mummy, he was terrible.
i mean like even alfredo the cuban was heard t comment later "ay tairdbil"
(aye, que terrible) anyway, mimi saw him there an she turned
an ran.
mummy, she just turned an ran.
you-know-who didn't waste any time let me tell yuh.
he threw me on the bed like some kind of caveman. (he hadn't shaved for about
four days mummy. honest t gawd. four days!)
an you know how tired i get.
i mean like i was in no position t fight.
an he wa sayin something.
he was sayin like i never heard before.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

i mean like i never heard it in any movie.
i mean like he was sayin "hey c'mon hey c'mon" over an over again.
hey an you know me like i just fall like an anvil.
clunge.
when it comes t new things that i aint never heard before.
i mean like i don't want you t think he's (you-know-who) influenced me or nuthin
mummy i just fall into all these traps.
maybe that second shrink was right.
maybe i DONT know myself as i should know myself.
maybe he was right when he said "Joannie darling, you just don't know
yourself" anyway, you-know-who, for lack of better word, just about seized me.
it wasnt like any captain kid came swirling
down from the masttype thing but still it was kind of wierd.
i mean he really did sort of take me by surprise.
i mean like what would you do?
i mean i fought an everythin.
mummy i fought him no end.
i bit the shit out of his nose.
kicked him where it really hurts.
clawed the back of his neck till blood came out a his bellybutton.
mummy, i blew so hard in his ear, i thought his eyes would pop out.
but then he did this dumb thing.
i mean like he was still sayin "hey c'mon, c'mon" but then also too now
he started reciting poetry.

like it was about the time i was
scratching an trying t bend his elbow off he started
calling me ramona.
i swear at first i thought it was some game.
he kept sayin things like "no use trying" an words like "exist" an
mummy i swear he even mentioned something about
crack country lips.
mummy, i couldn't fight.
i mean like i just couldn't fight.
yeah like so i passed out.
yeah an i woke up here.
aint played a concert for a month.
manny is calling perpetually.
victor keeps answering the phone an says "no, she aint here"
in a funny voice an you-know-who doesn't say nothin
excpt "everything's all right" an "nuthin matters"
yeah well i gotta go. you-know-who's making this movie
an he wants me t rub his head while he gets ready.
all in all everything i guess is ok.
house is coming along.
oh, i signed over my car t you-know who.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

yeah, he said it'd take a lot of worry off my mind about owning things
an well ... it has a little i guess.
i wouldn't mind that too much but well ...
you-know-who sold the car.
he says that's better that way cause now i wont be pesterin him
t let me drive it.
mummy, he's the worst driver in the world.
i swear i nearly have a bird everytime he takes me t the shrink.
my shrink hates him but that's another story an i'll write you later about it.
ok then faretheewell

manard solomon says hello
an keeps asking when you're
coming back
ok 'bye
an dont worry bout me none

oh, p.p.s
i gave that little tiny picture of me
t you-know-who an he posted it on top
of his ford station wagon interior

mummy, i'm fine
dont worry about me please
everything passes everything changes
oh, mummy mummy I love you so much
oh mummy
give regards t brice an pauline

oh oh! here comes you-know-who
i dont want him t catch me writin
t you
gotta go
luv yuh

Joannie

[Source: Joan Baez: And A Voice To Sing With, letter to Joan Baez's mother]

Letters To Tami Dean

First letter

oh how I got your letter this morning ... (troubled times yes)
why aren't you here.
why aren't you hear (here) ah the good an happy times slay me. do they slay you.
who are you.
I mean really now. (you know I dont).
do you write poetry as well as paint. (I read yo ur letter twice.
my friend is readin it now. (I claim you to be one of thee great disrobed
artists. (your texas blood disturbs me) ... say hi t John faulk.
tell him I dont mind that he grabbed my leg.
tell him I dont mind at all.
as for you, my leg is out anytime.
I'll even close my eyes.
have you hitch hiked long?
stop soon tho' huh.
we need you on the lines.
we need you at home.
hey, we need you with us.
get the fuck off the highway. (a fine spade chick just walked by.)
write out a bunch of letters. (she has plaster in her eyes.)
send them by mail (an she is cryin) an that's all you gotta do. (I think
she was cryin; where is denton texas. I was in dallas three weeks ago.
passin thru. (up tite?) no slushin thru. (wierd)
mozze- in thru.
pullin in a gas station outside of dallas... "hi killer.
fill 'er up" ... "yeh yeh yes sir. right away sir" ...
have you ever rode on number 287 highway.
have you ever been in witchita falls?
it is rainin here today.
new york is a lonesome town. (as the forsakeness of high degree romance
overtakes me.)
my poor embeded soul.
mu lusty soul. (tell me about my soul.)
I said tell me ... click. (oh these humphrey bogart weegy
words at times do bury me.
why did you think that I might think that you thought i think
you were for a second an ivy joe? (wow!)
you dirty ivy joe.
do you actually know any ivy joes?
I know what a grassy john is explainin what color
you eyes are to me.
tell me how you walk.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

yes talk t me.
forgive (please forgive) me an my directions if you never
hear any echo back again. (fuck the echoes) ...
I have heard your echo by that you know (must know?) that you must've
heard me.
yes heard me at one time or another.
sometime I will talk t you (as opposed to 'shall') if only my time
was mine.
right? (jesus christ anyway.)
hey I'll see you sometime.
sometime on a strange nite.
when the leaves're blowin.
an it's close t shiverin.
when the headlights pass above the bluff yeah (yeah?)
yes I'll meet you by the crossing.
the criss crossin on the edge of town.
in the brown dust. (sneezin) an you can sing love poems in my ears.
I will tell you how I see the outline of the sky. (yes we will
walk all the way t california. t salinas. (no. t sanfrancisco.)
anyway ...
I know you wont get killed waitin for me.
We will just be gettin up the same time on the same day an eventually (oh god)
meet?
at the same place. (come come now mr. dylan)
I'm comin ... hey I'm always comin.
an the so well oh wow therefore ahah what by far -
I mean t say is that i cant think
right now of t much to say.
you have caught me with drowsy thoughts.
I'm going out t ride the ferris wheel.
yes there's one down the street an my driver is waitin.
write me another letter.
I will receive it.
an you know I will read it
hey, so long
 an I see you then
 me ... muzzled? an puzzled
 hustled
 rustled
 in an out
 reeferized homogenized
 tenderized ... cocained
 gas stained
 high brained an half trained
 tell me more

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

(signed 'Bob Dylan')

Second letter

my life, yes, could be better by you.
an also martha an the vandellas. (yes it's true I answer all fan mail.)
I shall concede t the fact I think you are a true poet.
as for my afternoons, they are spent on the smilin highways.
the hysterical street corners.
the mad blushin (russian) ever-flowin flacky snowbanks.
do you dig major lance?
oh gawd (oh god) you have t dig major lance.
I am tappin in time t monkey time. I am swirlin in "you get yours I'll get
mine" an then the music begins t play.
an the forsaken echo of gettin ready prancin.
prancin.
it fills (believe it or not) this whole fuckin room.
I am out in jersey. new jersey.
New Jersey?
I am swarmin in the suburbs.
we have invaded the home of a writer friend of mine.
his kids an my friends an his wife an my kids (all of us) yes we are
runnin wild with all windows open dancin dancin.
flyin around this house.
marvin gaye. do you know "who" marvin gaye is?
he's singin' now.
about somewitness.
he's gotta get a witness.
he's gotta get a witness and me?
me - i gotta get a witness too.
all of us ha yes all of us.
we all gotta get witnesses.
you ask of my notes.
are you askin of MY nite or my NITES?
hey, my nites are nothin.
I stay up sometimes all nite.
sometimes I even go t sleep before nite comes.
before nite falls.
before nitfall.
come fast, you dope fiend angel.
you methedrene pen pal lover. (you freaky lad sister) of (of course)
mounin mournin mornin glory seacher of jesus.
do you dig jesus?
yes, tho, come an save my poor (my poor me) lifeless body,
limp on joannie's strange bed.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

my eyes are blue.
sometimes they (I'm told) turn green.
why do you write such short words.
I have nothin t do.
I have nothin t do at all.
i dont even have sometimes something t do.
I never have nothin t do. (ah but I do so many things)
do you do alot of things?
tell me how many things you do.
do you greet people on the street? (how's your soul today?)
do you talk t the neighbors? (what do yuh mean, 'what do I mean by the
word-soul?' just what d yuh mean what do I mean by that anyway?)
you must ask for cigarettes someplace (ok, ok for you. then I wont ask
you again)
what are you doing in texas?
I dont know what the fuck I spend my rainfalls like.
I gaze out of cathedral windows when I can.
at other times I gaze up at them from the rainy street.
an at other times I just think of them as I know them from rainy (rainy
memories).
remembrances of water soaked days.
yes an recollections of foggy wanderings to and fro.
up and down.
around an about.
here and there.
ahah i would like t meet you.
I would like t meet you as I fade out.
as I lastly laugh.
as I turn an smile.
an say farewell.
come an jump on me.
come an leep on me from a tall building.
I will be high so it wont matter.
I'll even buy you an airplane permit.
what do you do for christsake crizake crise ache down there
in where you live.
write t me nex time at bobdylan box 125
fairsfield, bearsville, new york.
yes you see, I get most letters like you write directed there.
it is my official allen ginsberg adress. (even he, yes writes t me.
in fast form.
so I'll get it quickly, there.)
you write there too.
I'll madly rip your letter open in the dusty driveway of the
1p10 post-office.
tear it savigely an read it droolin an spittin.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

I will dance down the almost forgotten dirtroad
wavin insanely your letter.
yes write t me again.
there is for you much t write. (as for me. my writin is too muchly
as it is) I have t run.
I have t run here.
I have t stop.
I have t jack off my digingness an stroke my uptiteness.
I have t think of my lovin memories.
I have t go breathe on the innocent front porch.
I have t go breathe innocently.
it's quiet there an I know in front that it's quiet.
perhaps that's why I have t go there.
in any case, the paper is growin dizzy on me.
an my words (t say anything at all) are
sting together.

write an tell me more
I am in your bed
so please watch your head
mornin is such a bring down
faretheewell then
I'll see you

breakin feardy worlds
makin wierdy girls
(is that it?)

Signed five times in three margins, a sixth signature has been cut out.

Third letter

hi there. gee it was good t hear from you.
How're the kids?
the weather here is just beautiful.
maggy caught a duck the other day.
little suzy is five now.
you oughta hear her talk.
jesus willikers she can walk an do all the stuff.
she comes in her pants at five years old an keeps
asking when you're coming back.
me?
I'm ok.
fell down the chimney tryin t fix a flat but other than that I'm still
up an at 'm.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

a hard rain rottled all my onions last week.
gonna write a song about it when I get the time.
jerry ate too many cream puffs an blew up.
we tried t feed him pills but nothin worked.
we buried him at the bottom of the pool. "strange algee growin" said
martha when she gazed out from the diving board.
you remember martha.
funny little chick hung up on masterbating in tin can.
yeah well, she saw jerry down there an shit.
the pool's pretty funky now.
this yul brynner looking
spade that hangs out at worlds fair is scheduled to come
clean at it at four o'clock.
we're all just sittin round waiting for him.
nothin new is happenin.
doctor zen says hello.
I told him you were off in oklahoma.
he says no she's not.
i say ok i dig.
there is no oklahoma.
he says you asshole there is no she.
i say ok ok he says hi to her..
doc gets wierd sometimes.
he stuffs lsd in his turban most everyday an is workin on doing
summersault experiments while blowing his nose thru glass tube.
currently he's expecting t come up with a new formula for cross breeding
belly hairs with rattlesnakes.
all in all everybody's been quite busy.
you oughta see Ramar von Cringe do his new act.
Highly top secret am not composed enuff t tell about it except that sky
gets black every time he does it.
jinx and her dog both got draged by high flyin railroad train not too soon ago.
jinx fell off in new jersey.
dog i hear dog ride an rode t florida.
lastly we heard he was in Mexico.
livin with poncho lookin senorita round guantonovistima square.
oh forgeot t tell you.
geno an hugh discovered they were writing the same book.
did pillow feathers fly around here for a week.
geno left carrying stash in open elbow wound down highway 95
in early mornin.
depressed?
goddam you shoulda seen him.
doctor zen just laughed said "see yuh later geno"
geno never heard.
hugh sits with high powered binoculars up totem pole.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

just sits there.
aint ate for a week.
guilty?
oh god we try t pull him out of it but he just
mumble somethin about that he cant understand.
that's he seems t say "i cant understand i cant unnerstand".
neibors say they can hear him at nite.
i think he's sayin "a cannon hurts sand" a cannon hurts sand
but i dont speak too loud an keep the thought t myself
dont hurt no feelings that way an doc says its good
for one t talk t oneself.
oh, the greatest thing happened t mary lou you know-who.
she picked up some wanted posters at the post office an went out
bounty hunting.
caught this cat who robbed tennessee dentist of 20 pounds of gold.
chased him thru lincoln tunnel going 50 hair blowing.
dress flying.
trapped him finally in connecticut deserted mine shaft.
she took off her clothes an he came out with his arms open.
takin off shirts an pants.
she kicked his balls with boot she bought in texas.
the cat just keeled over an moans.
hit the front pages round here.
poor outlaw layin on ground.
mouth twisted out of shape.
mary lou you-know-who standing over him looking like teddy rovevelt.
yeah well i gotta go.
we're filming a movie in about an hour.
i gotta play humprey bogart.
things looking up a little as some fellow
yesterday offered me record contract.
zelda flipped.
says t do it.
me?
i'm not too sure.
i ask Anthello what he thinks an he tells me two a n two never
make four.
not so muchs as (-----) myself thinking about it too seriously.
i disappear in dostoevsky books dont come back til sundown.
have still got my eyes on the future an am not letting go of my
visions t make it with terry thomas.
my friend mavis says it's possible but might have t go thru peter sellers
first.
i ask her what she means by that an she say the answer
is blowing in the wind.
i've always knew she was crazy but the chick has gone outright loony.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

anyway
watch them indians out there
an remember
nothin's right
write

meme.

Aleu

the goodest god

Unsigned.

Fourth letter

so there i was. riding on this umbrella.
omaha passed gaily.
daily i shouted t going by friends "hey hey dig me
can you dig me on this umbrella.
can you do it can you do it?"
rememberin i had no friends anyway in nebraska i decided t cool my energy.
whishin hopin thinkin sucking huuummmmm feeling grabbing.
stabbing.
pulling scathing snathin snellin smelling jump humping
licking fucking wondering no hope thisaway not this time
that time yuhp uh huh that's the way t get 'm.
then heeeee'lillll be yoarsssssssss.
whishin and a hoping hopin rather gather me?
me open.
not scared up there.
ol bee jay rides by.
texas sweatshirt lost he says.
linda bee jay on shoulders shitting down his neck. "nice day parder"
he says all of a sudden looking like a chinaman.
i say "you men PARDNER, doncha buddy?"
he says "while shore" just then, this buzzard with frank sinatra's face
on, if you look closly,
comes flying out the poverty pavilion.
circles the sky.
throws out a few care packages of gorilla shit. smiles.
opens her mouth and her tongue reads "bang".
flies low over all our heads.
ol bee jay shook us all that day i'm not ashamed t say.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

he just lean down on the ground.
picked up a handful of dirt. "land" he called it.
he just stood there.
weiving back and forth.
let the dirt seep slowly thru his fingers.
mumbled something about his back being smelly an said: "thas mah little
lady theh" yes an its been ever sinse that day that i have
become t wonder about just WHO should be allowed
t sit on OUR shoulders.
many times has been the nite when i have had cause t wonder deeply an most
deliberately about these uncaused sensations.
at off beat measures, they seem t be unconsciously eating me.
anyway today finally now i decide t do something about it.
yeah i'm gonna run for office i decide.
i walk to the door an start running.
i bump into fuller brush salesmen two at a time.
all fall down.
get up sorry now. "howdy i'm running for office" they smile.
i buy five toothbrushes an a ring for my kitchen sink. "don't put
it on your fingers" they say as wave goodbye.
me? i stick it dog's mouth travel on. "i guess i showed them"
back on umbrella again by evening time i forget all about
this running for office i fly around circus style.
watch for cave ins an dont be too good to nobody.
they might get wrong idea.
sneer at graveyard.
make patty cake thank you mam good gawd son is at London bridge about t go?
i mix up crazy phantoms.
exchange their eyes bust into plate glass predictions.
get in two timed position.
try t make it with the manacans.
mocasins hurling every which way.
see at a glance i mistaked mistaken inian indian's joe
for j.c.penny any.
i get chopped off head no hair under armpit.
go dancing back t where i'm better known.
arrive in a flurry.
hurry bring tools.
what? me worry?
my head back on backwards i stumble out door.
wave bye bye get hit by loose lion.
knock down cop comes.
old cop.
says what's wrong with your head.
i call him kimosabee in broken french.
arrests me as a trespasser.

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

i say i'm folksinger in real life.
he dont wanna hear it.
i say i'm poet storyteller.
he grabs my throat.
says theres a noose waiting.
i say i got influence round here.
he swings at my heart with fiery billy club.
i kill him leave him lay there.
paint muscateer on forehead so noone recognize him.
head off for points unknown.
wishin hopin
thinkin see picture of dusty springfield in closed out record store.
people point t me tho.
they're all pointin at me tho. "there's dusty springfield" they yell.
i say ok i dig that.
chase me muthafucker.
wham zoom fall in running river on edge of town.
small town.
everyone knows each other.
hey aint that dusty springfield at jes fall down
in that ther o water.
not me t care tho.
got much t do.
seeds all sowed.
corns in.
aint had much rain but the tractor's comein soon i hear tell.
keep rememberin messages of the city.
was there some time not ago.
roar thru.
dont never again live there no more.
used to but not now know for sure.
east side my own first old east side.
same east side.
village has moved over.
village unbelievable.
me lucky lucky.

an god's own pillars've even turned t rust
sugar tastes bitter. salt is sweet
ramming bali ligosi girls on the tails of mice
rats ring the bells
truth dont lie in the alley dead
bums dont die
cleopatra's sister opens her mouth at the manhole
tries t grab mayor wagner's son
he him an them got better things t do

WORDS FILL MY HEAD – Poems & Other Pieces

everybody takes the clap for syphilis
an hank williams dont never sing too well no more these days
ah what care i for sorrow's tomorrow ANYWAY
yeah ANYWAY
the winds aint strong
can only break windows
time ahah
can go thru anything
but cant go backwards. sickly time. stiff neck terrible
will go t death in institution. cremate style. in
silver oven advertiazin perhaps camel cigarettes?
hot point frigerators for sure.
leave records on at nite when going t sleep
an dont be afraid of gene genet.
ghosts on the highway. they will follow you. if you travel up
these highways. dont you know that.
hold on
jeep yr eyes on the plow
(or whatever)
later soon me. jeanny tarter.

Signed "uh-huh".

[Source: The Telegraph # 16, answers to letters from a fan]

Walk Down Crooked Highway

laura speaks of God almighty dragon up avenue B cut throat lyer in long pants.
barks at cream puffish meek salesman who asks: "can I help you?"
acid runs off her teeth.
says t shovel level headed doom freak down toilet.
string up nazi football player by hands backwards.
kill him at sundown hollywood bowl style.
invite his mother too.
laura ponders on historical documents,
memorizes who gets biggest laugh.
invites friends
over t discuss matters, tells them not t answer phone no matter what,
then goes out t phone booth an calls herself.
devotes full time t killing evil.
stomps on cockroaches like giant force laurence of arabia swooping down from peace
love beauty
sweeping sky an hangs a picture of john henry over bed each nite.
i sit with bandaged head two floors up.
make sign language t harpo marx, try not t compare people with people
an wonder just who's gonna be born next.
"we're all in the same boat brother" rings from bong bong wall cracks.
clink an little white mice scatter tryin' to stay out of each other's ships.
i shout "commander commander ok i'm here, i'm here in your vessel now where do we
go?
what's happening? hey hey" a thousand celoes vibrate from sound holes
of rang tang dobro
i hear thunder from left right middleplace everyplace
"follow me follow me" i turn, wipe eyes an laura falls past window going downward.
"what's at?" i yell "what's at you said an who are you anyway uh huh?"
laura hits bottom and screeching voice booms out
"up up up here. up here"
i look high but all i can see is shut off light bulb.
keyhole falls off door as ambulance screams from behind setting sun.
radio gets louder an louder and i realize it'd barbara streisand singing.
she's singing some song about people.
i dust myself off,
write "nothing matters, dear texas" across forehead an get ready t travel west...

[Source: Sing Out! January 1965]

Adam's Rib

Dear Jamie:

Life on the road is not what it used to be.
But what used to be may not have existed anyway.
All of Europe used to be a desert.
What they say about shifting sand is not unfounded.

Everything is happening by the clock.
Without clocks there wouldn't be any useful idea of time.
My soul is unaware of any time, only my mind,
my poor mind which is so bombarded with dates,
calendars and numbers has been deceived into believing
there is such a thing as time, woe me.

hasn't everybody at some point of their life asked "What time is it?"
It's no time.
The sun comes up and the sun goes down.
That's what time it is.
That's why it's taken me so long to write you this letter.

Anyway, Jamie, we say things like "Gee, was that a year ago?", or
"Look at those fields that were so familiar to me as a child
where now skyscrapers stand".
All of us can tell the story it was just the other day
when this or that happened.
That's only our minds talking.

Anyway, travelling around makes you think of these things
including my thoughts to drop you a line.
Reflecting on this, brainwork brings you to the realization
that this earth is truly God's footstool
and until the entire world believes and obeys the same God
there can be no truth or justice peace for anyone.
The soul never dies and neither does it know time.
OK Jamie, until the next moment, God bless you much,
good luck and say hello to the boys.

Bob Dylan

P.S. Congratulations on your second year.

[Letter to the Editor of Sister 2 Sister magazine, 1991]