





## The Basement Tapes Caper: a New / Old Mystery

The Basement Tapes  
Bob Dylan and the Band  
Columbia C2 33682  
By Paul Nelson

I. There was a desert wind blowing that night, and the hot breeze that sighed through the open window had just enough muscle to swid the smoke from the ghosts of a hundred cigarettes a single time around the solitary desk lamp before giving it up as a bad job. I knew the feeling. I had been sitting in the office for days, thinking and rethinking the case. It added up all right -- hell, it had added up from the very beginning -- but I just couldn't figure out why. The more I tried to analyze it, the more it resisted my efforts. I got that nervous feeling on the back of my neck that someone very close was telling me to lay off, that to get too involved with the quest for the white-hot center would be to miss the whole point.

Logic is a funny thing to a private detective. It has nothing to do with facts but rather with intuition -- a kind of mathematics without damage. After a number of years, you learn to trust your hunches, to draw occasionally to that inside straight no matter what the book said. Especially if the people you were playing with -- in this case, Bob Dylan and the Band -- made up new rules each time out in the only worthwhile game in town.

What got to me was that I knew what they were doing but I couldn't explain it, not in words anyway. Arguably, I'd had some luck with Dylan before, was not unfamiliar with his circuitous, sporadic manner. He wasn't a classicist; instead he played spontaneously, from the heart, stringing together such disparate cards that only the force of his will held his ideas together. The results he got were amazing, often magical. He'd had some lean years in the late Sixties and early Seventies when he'd tried to run some more or less conventional bluffs, but now he was as personal and enigmatic as ever.

Or was he? I couldn't be sure?

"The Basement Tapes" seemed destined to remain a mystery, and I wasn't at all sure that Dylan hadn't planned it that way from the start.



II. The office was in the Arbogast Building on Embryo Street off Perelman Square, half a block from Coma Noodle Corporation, right next to the Ambergis Diner and the Dead Souls Church and Motel. It's in the basement -- a little irony there -- and that fact perhaps provides a peculiar perspective.

I swung my feet up on the desk, thumbed a match, set fire to a cigarette, stared at the phonograph and got ready to face the music again. I had always prided myself on being a professional, an eye who looked up straight into all that heaven allowed. In my life, there was always a new case, new clients, a few old ones who never left; thus far I managed to satisfy most of them -- and myself as well -- with the proper explanations at the proper time. This go-round, I didn't feel half so cocky.

Marcus, the Berkeley op who'd done some preliminary work on the case, had warned me. He'd said: "Do it quickly. If you listen too long and don't get out fast, you'll never get out."

He was right.

All of the documentation was in order, plus a lot of inspired speculation. The music was eight years old, but it could have been made eight minutes or eight decades ago; it wouldn't have mattered. It had once been illegal, sold under the counter. Hell, even now it wasn't complete -- these things never are. Nobody had even heard any of the Band's songs before -- they were sapped before "Music from Big Pink" -- and at least four of them ("Yazoo Street Scandal," "Katie's Been Gone," "Bessie Smith," "Ain't No More Cane") would have as difficult to hide as a bosomy blonde under a bushel basket.

Missing from the Dylan file were "Get Your Rocks Off!," "Sign on the Cross," "I'm Not There (I'm Gone)," the celebrated "Quinn the Eskimo (The Mighty Quinn)" and "I Shall Be Released" and who knows what else. Added was an unheard ace in the hole, "Goin' to Acapulco," the kind of cosmic bawdy song that is so achingly beautiful it is about everything that it isn't about as well as what it is about, if you know what I mean. So was most of "The Basement Tapes," for that matter.

Marcus had pretty well let the cat out of the bag with his report, included in the total package. It's all there. You can read it. The facts, the camaraderie of equals, the notion of a hard testing ground, superb musicianship, randiness, roots, memory, archetypal American music and its obsession with mystery and death. All there and all true.

But the white-hot center remains laughing and unexplained.

Untouched.





III. I was on my fourth carton of cigarettes and time was running out fast. I knew I had to take a shot at it soon but no man likes to play the fool. Truths? There were no truths in this case. I had known that for a long time, that and little else. In death and matters of the heart, we are all of us amateurs, someone once said. Maybe it was me.

Down the hall came the eager footsteps of my partner, my alter ego. Something of a dandy, he once translated the complete works of Leonard Cohen into Canadian so he's probably not to be trusted. I usually take what he has to say with more than a shot of rye. He opened the door and debauched in, a wolfish smile on his face as he polished a simile. He'd been out doing the usual legwork. He stared at the wax on the machine. "Tears of Rage," was playing.

"The traditional approach to Dylan is through his lyrics," he said. "Figuring out what those words mean is like trying to read a book with your ears."

"That's a metaphor," I said. "But it's not bad."

"Since all of these songs were recorded between June and October of 1967, they should logically provide an aesthetic link between "Blonde on Blonde" and "John Wesley Harding," not to mention "Big Pink. . ." "They don't," I said.

He looked worried. His eyes, the color of unset rhinestones, darkened, lightened, got darker again.

"We are dealing with the real Bob Dylan and the Band here," he said. "Yet there is a hidden language, masks within masks. . ."

"No," I said slowly, rolling the syllable across my tongue like a billiard ball on the table of night. "No." I bit off the end of the word sharply.

He said: "You don't think . . ."

I stared at him. "The Basement Tapes" are no more the real Dylan, the real band, than are the 'official' recordings. They are no better and no worse than "Highway 61 Revisited," et al., but surely very different. There's something to the hidden-language theory, but not the way you mean it --ahell, the janitor, laughs at "Clothes Line Saga" and cries at "The Wheel's on Fire." There are no masks."

Nobody said anything for a while. I let a cigarette burn down between my fingers, until it made a small red mark. It had been that kind of caper. The end was very near. I could feel it on the back of my neck. Suddenly, I felt very sad.

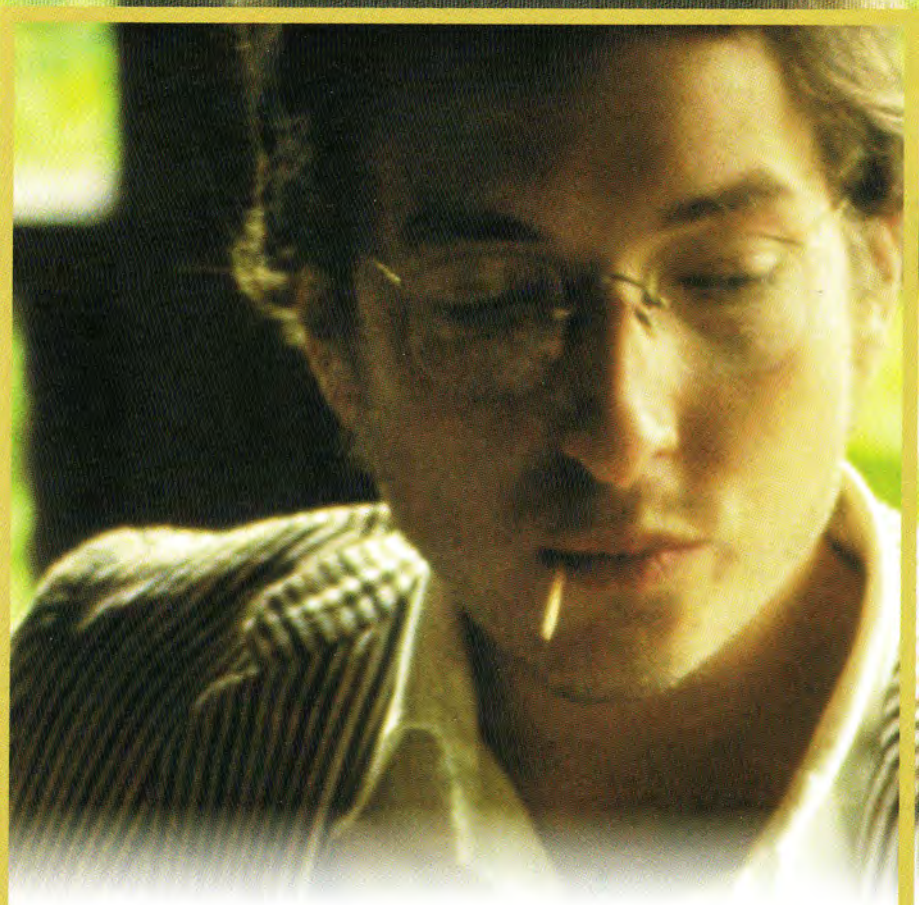
"You've solved the case?" he said. He acted like a sulky child.

"No," I said thickly. My face was set hard and deeply lined. I could feel my eyes burning madly. "I haven't solved the case and I don't intend to. No one will ever figure out "The Basement Tapes" the way you want to; somehow it would be indecent. They're either "King Lear" or they're nothing -- take your pick, then leave them alone. I respect them and I think I understand them, and that's enough for me."

"You're not serious," he said. "You don't expect me to think . . ."

"I don't care what you think," I said.





IV. I nodded toward the inner office to indicate that I was going in there, and went in there. I picked up a book named "Keep It Crisp" and read a story called "Farewell, My Lovely Appetizer." I liked it fine. When a man's partner is routed, you're supposed to do something about it. I kept thinking. It doesn't make any difference what you thought of him.

He said: "Listen. This isn't a damned bit of good. You'll never understand me, but I'll try once more and then we'll give it up."

"All right," he said.  
"Listen. The songs on "The Basement Tapes" are the hardest, toughest, sweetest, saddest, funniest, wisest songs I know, yet I don't know what they're about. Friendship, sex, death, heroism, learning from others. I guess History and inevitability are in there too. And sorrow and longing. Second, they're as personal or impersonal as abstract paintings, but, that doesn't make them difficult. You just have to go at them in a different way. Third, they're about survival with honor and without bitterness. If there are tests, they've all been passed, and what you're hearing are the results. Serious comedy. Deadpan tragedy."

He said: "I think . . ."

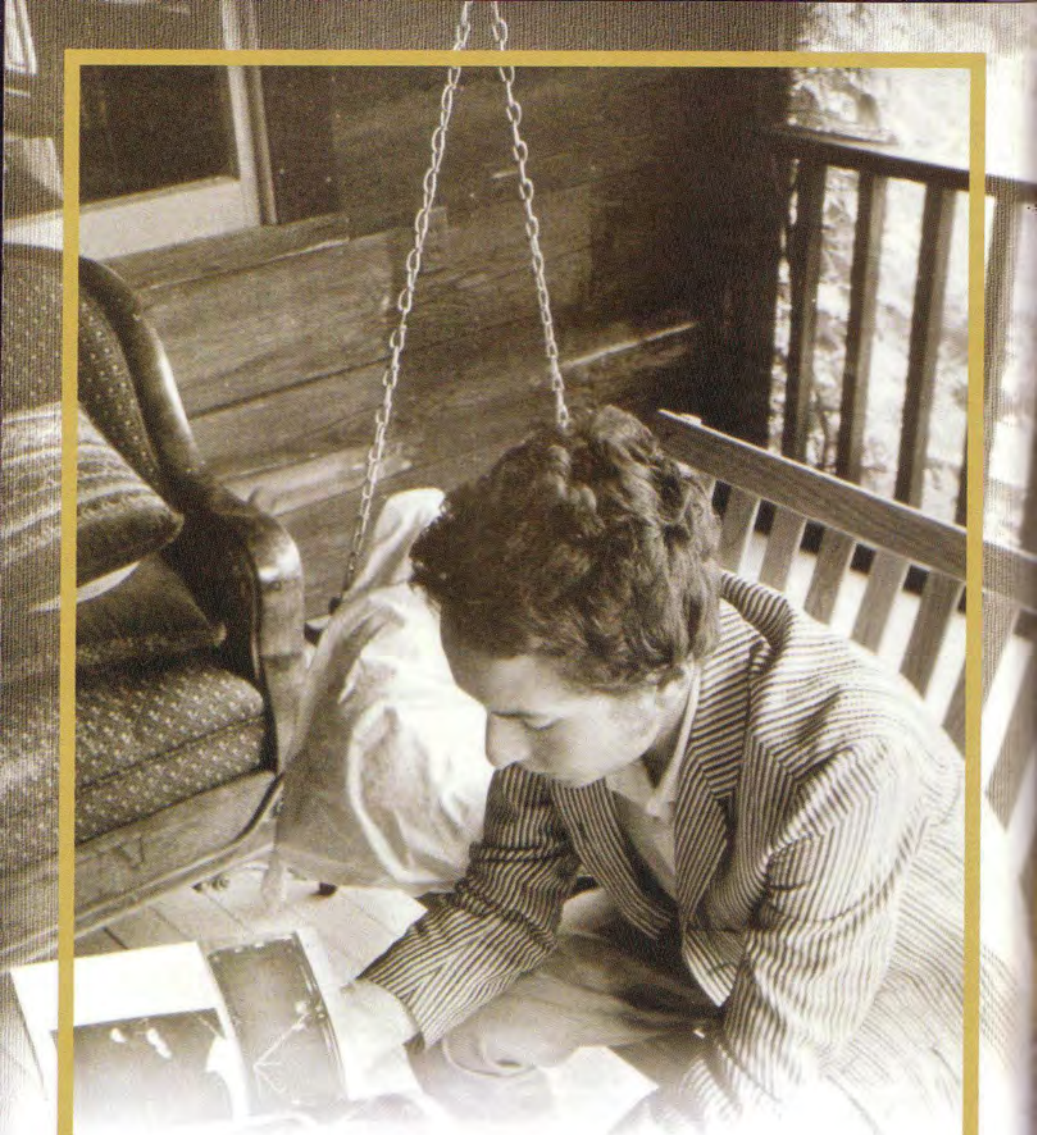
"Wait till I'm through and then you can talk. Fourth, the songs are home music, barroom music played pleasure and for the hell of it by and for musicians with a shared experience outsiders may not fully understand. Nobody ever figured they'd be an album someday. Next, they're playful and competitive, the music and lyrics snarled and spit out of the corners of one's mouth. That's five of them. The sixth would be that these were inspired tunes, and Dylan and the Band could as well have been singing and playing the telephone book. Seventh, when somebody offers me a joke, I just say no thanks. I try to tell it like it is. And eighth -- but that's enough. All those on one side. Maybe some of them are unimportant. I won't argue about that. But look at the number of them. Now on the other side we've got what? All we've got is the fact that you want one hard clean answer."

I do," he whispered, "whether you do or not."

"I don't. I won't play the sap for you. As far as I'm concerned "The Basement Tapes" are the stuff of dreams, brass-lined maybe. I like them like that. You want to solve the case? It's yours."

I jammed on my hat and went out into the rain.





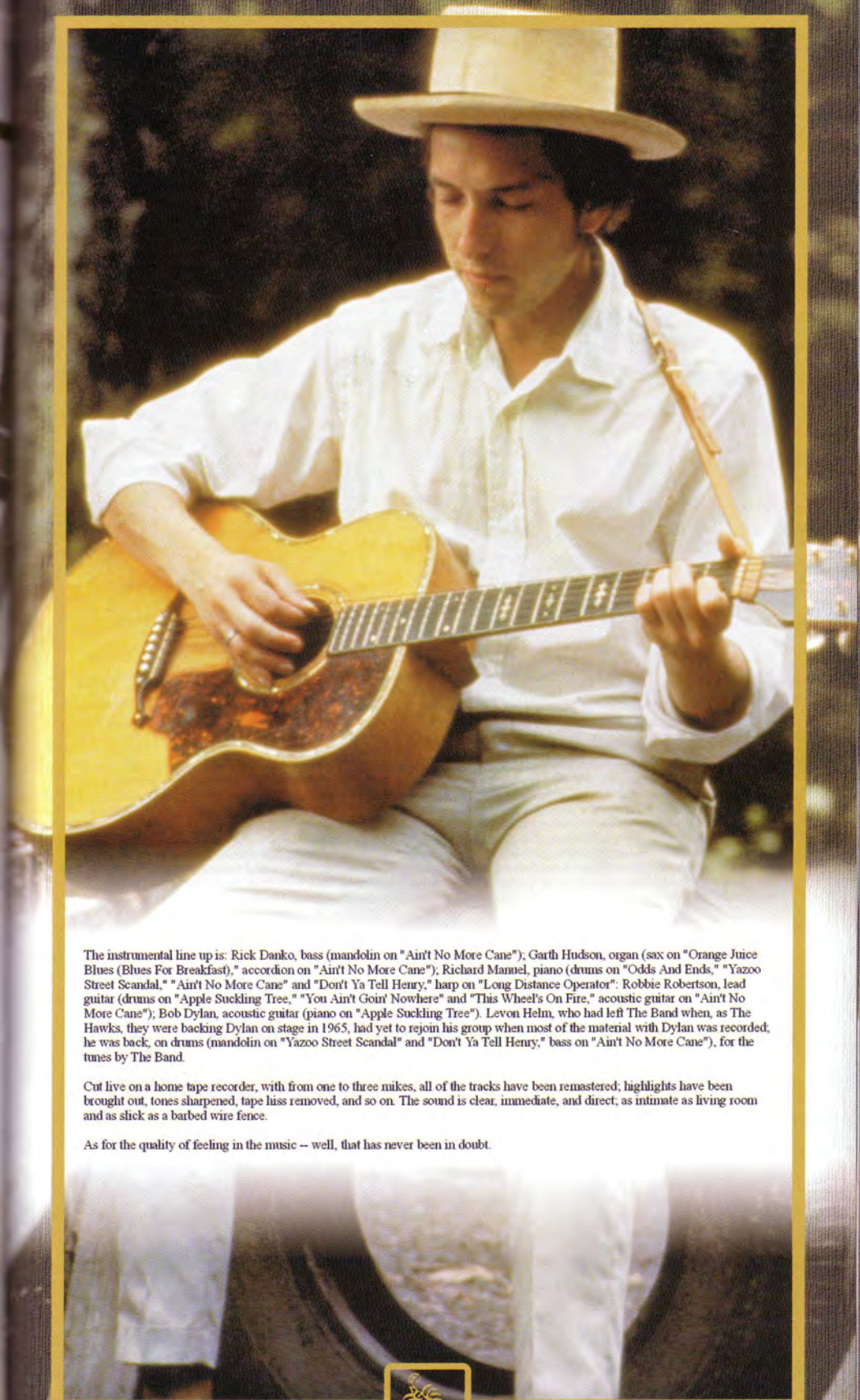
## The Basement Tapes liner notes

By Greil Marcus

Some years back, The Band cut a song called "The Rumor." It's a tune that could well describe the music now collected here. "The Basement Tapes" are a bit like the phantom 1956 session that brought Elvis, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash together for the first and last time. In spite of the bootlegs and cover versions, "The Basement Tapes" have always been more of a rumor than anything else.

Some facts, then. The twenty-four songs on these two discs are drawn from sessions that took place between June and October, 1967, in the basement of Big Pink, a house rented by some members of The Band, up in West Saugerties, New York. Bob Dylan sings lead on sixteen numbers; one of them, "Goin' To Acapulco," has never been bootlegged -- for that matter, it has never even been rumored. Richard Manuel, Levon Helm, Rick Danko, and Robbie Robertson take the lead on eight others, none of which has ever surfaced either. There's a lot of back-up singing all around.





The instrumental line up is: Rick Danko, bass (mandolin on "Ain't No More Cane"); Garth Hudson, organ (sax on "Orange Juice Blues (Blues For Breakfast)," accordion on "Ain't No More Cane"); Richard Manuel, piano (drums on "Odds And Ends," "Yazoo Street Scandal," "Ain't No More Cane" and "Don't Ya Tell Henry," harp on "Long Distance Operator"; Robbie Robertson, lead guitar (drums on "Apple Suckling Tree," "You Ain't Goin' Nowhere" and "This Wheel's On Fire," acoustic guitar on "Ain't No More Cane"); Bob Dylan, acoustic guitar (piano on "Apple Suckling Tree"). Levon Helm, who had left The Band when, as The Hawks, they were backing Dylan on stage in 1965, had yet to rejoin his group when most of the material with Dylan was recorded; he was back, on drums (mandolin on "Yazoo Street Scandal" and "Don't Ya Tell Henry," bass on "Ain't No More Cane"), for the tunes by The Band.

Cut live on a home tape recorder, with from one to three mikes, all of the tracks have been remastered; highlights have been brought out, tones sharpened, tape hiss removed, and so on. The sound is clear, immediate, and direct, as intimate as living room and as slick as a barbed wire fence.

As for the quality of feeling in the music -- well, that has never been in doubt.





"...with a certain kind of blues music, you can sit down and play it... you may have to lean forward a little." -- Bob Dylan, 1966

In 1965 and 1966 Bob Dylan and The Hawks played their way across the country and then around the world; those rough tours pushed Bob Dylan's music, and The Band's, to a certain limit, and they had made stand-up, no-quarter-given-and-no quarter-asked music if there ever was such a thing. In the summer of 1967 Dylan and The Band were after something else.

Neither "John Wesley Harding," made later that year, nor "Music From Big Pink" (for which all of The Band's numbers here were at one time intended), sound much like "The Basement Tapes," but there are two elements the three sessions do share; a feeling of age, a kind of classicism; and an absolute commitment by the singers and musicians to their material. Beneath the easy rolling surface of The Basement Tapes, there is some serious business going on. What was taking shape, as Dylan and The Band fiddled with the tunes, was less a style than a spirit -- a spirit that had to do with a delight in friendship and invention.

As you first listen to the music they made, you'll be hard put to pin it down, and likely not too interested in doing so. What matters is Rick Danko's loping bass on "Yazoo Street Scandal"; Garth Hudson's omnipresent merry-go-round organ playing (and never more evocative than it is on "Apple Suckling Tree"); the slow, uncoiling menace of "This Wheel's On Fire"; Bob Dylan's singing, as shy as Jerry Lee Lewis, and as knowing as the old man of the mountains.

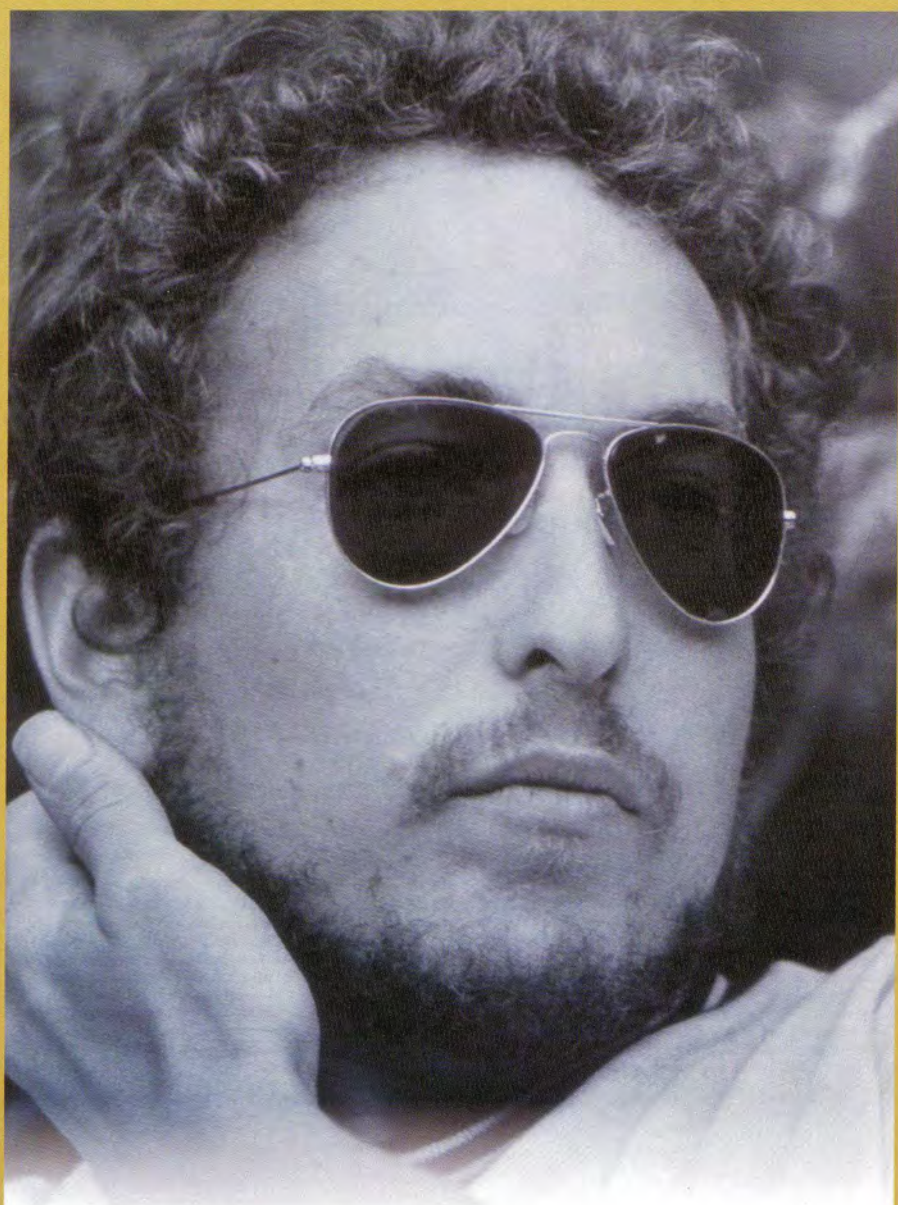






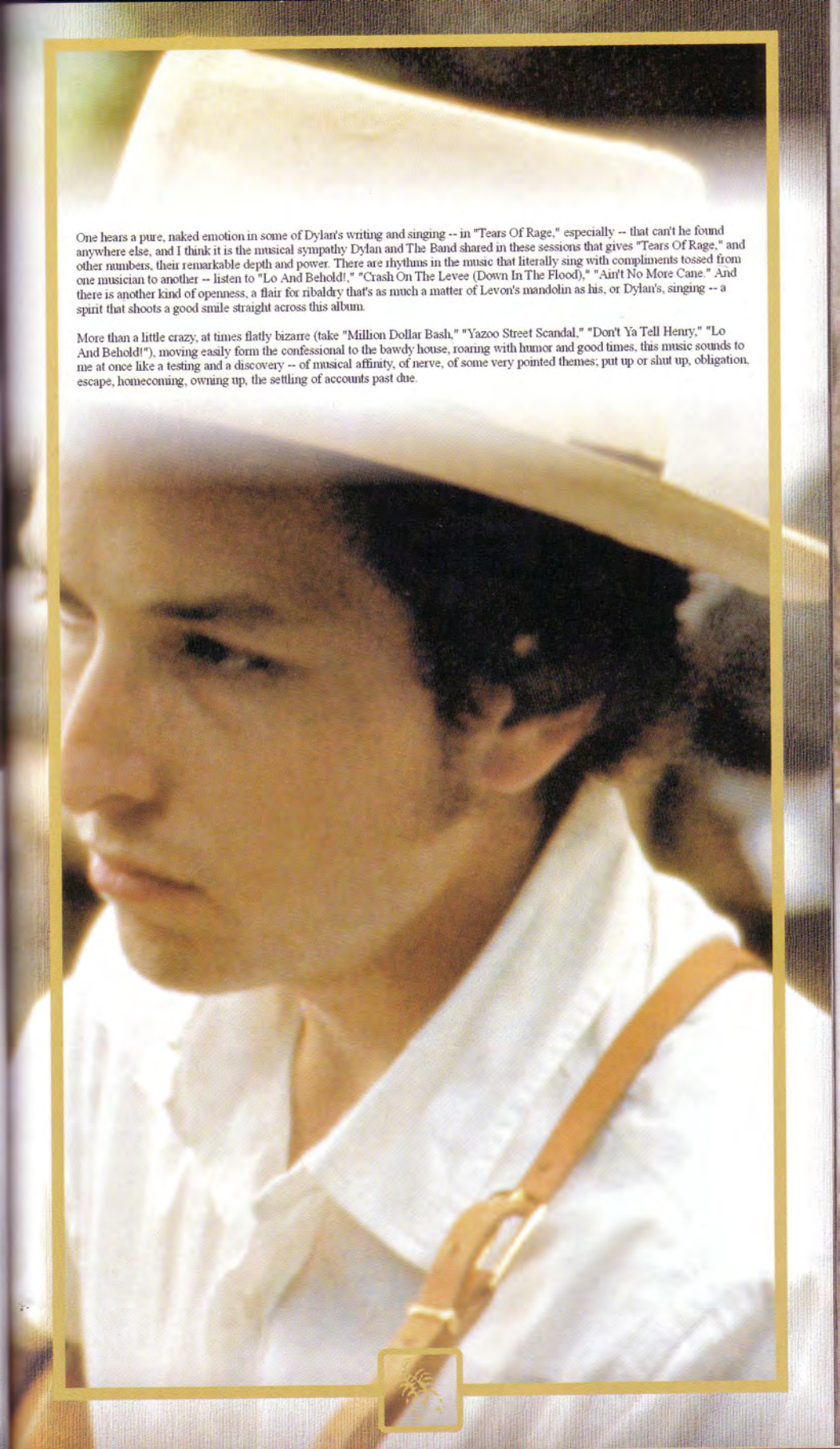
There's the kind of love song only Richard Manuel can pull off, the irresistibly pretty "Katie's Been Gone"; there is the unassuming passion of The Band's magnificent "Ain't No More Cane," an old chain gang song that ought to be a revelation to anyone who has ever cared about The Band's music, because this performance seems to capture the essence of what they have always meant to be. There's the lovely idea of "Bessie Smith," written and sung by Robbie and Rick as the plaint of one of Bessie's lovers, who can't figure out if he's lost his heart to the woman herself or the way she sings. There is Levon Helm's patented mixture of carnal bewilderment and helpless delight in "Don't Ya Tell Henry" (and the solos he and Robbie stomp out on that tune) -- and the tale he tells in "Yazoo Street Scandal," a comic horror story wherein the singer is introduced, by his girlfriend, to the local Dark Lady, who promptly seduces him, and then scares him half to death.





"The Basement Tapes," more than any other music that has been heard from Bob Dylan and The Band, sound like the music of a partnership. As Dylan and The Band trade vocals across these discs, as they trade nuances and phrases within the songs, you can feel the warmth and the comradeship that must have been liberating for all six men. Language, for one thing, is completely unfettered. A good number of the songs seem as cryptic, or as nonsensical, as a misnumbered crossword puzzle—that is, if you listen only for words, and not for what the singing and the music say -- but the open spirit of the songs is as straightforward as their unmatched vitality and spunk.

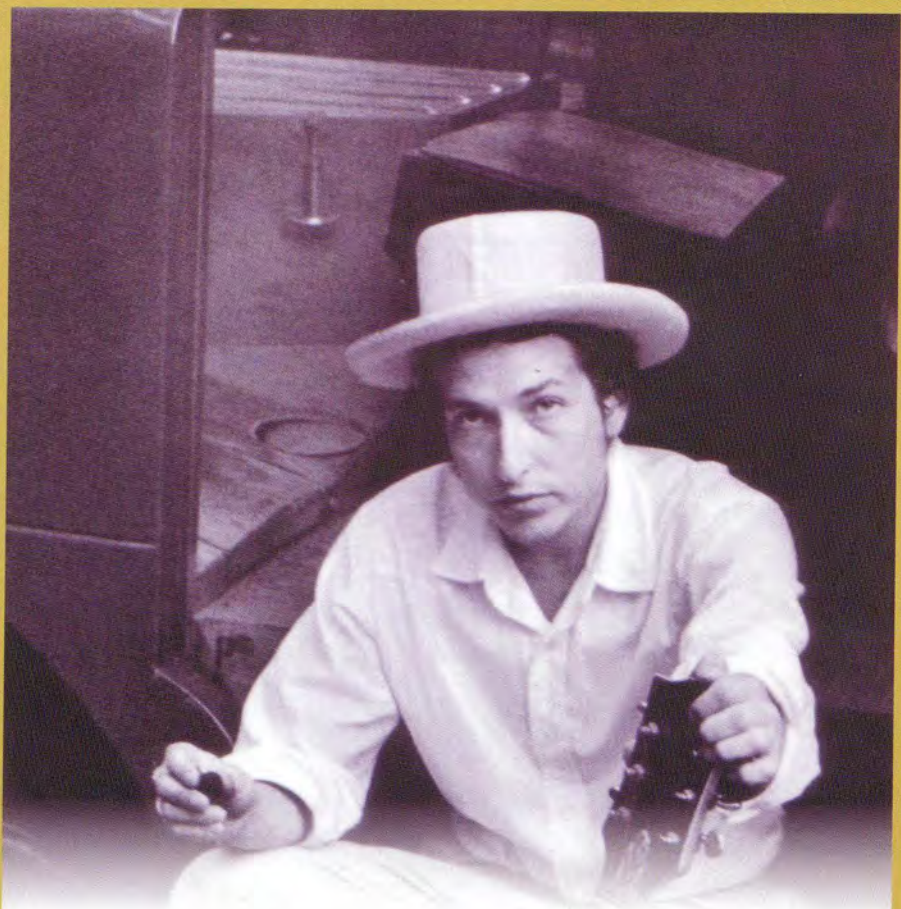




One hears a pure, naked emotion in some of Dylan's writing and singing -- in "Tears Of Rage," especially -- that can't be found anywhere else, and I think it is the musical sympathy Dylan and The Band shared in these sessions that gives "Tears Of Rage," and other numbers, their remarkable depth and power. There are rhythms in the music that literally sing with compliments tossed from one musician to another -- listen to "Lo And Behold!," "Crash On The Levee (Down In The Flood)," "Ain't No More Cane." And there is another kind of openness, a flair for ribaldry that's as much a matter of Levon's mandolin as his, or Dylan's, singing -- a spirit that shoots a good smile straight across this album.

More than a little crazy, at times flatly bizarre (take "Million Dollar Bash," "Yazoo Street Scandal," "Don't Ya Tell Henry," "Lo And Behold!"), moving easily from the confessional to the bawdy house, roaring with humor and good times, this music sounds to me at once like a testing and a discovery -- of musical affinity, of nerve, of some very pointed themes: put up or shut up, obligation, escape, homecoming, owning up, the settling of accounts past due.





It sounds as well like a testing and a discovery of memory and roots. "The Basement Tapes" are a kaleidoscope like nothing I know, complete and no more dated than the weather, but they seem to leap out of a kaleidoscope of American music no less immediate for its venerability. Just below the surface of songs like "Lo And Behold!" or "Million Dollar Bash" are the strange adventures and poker-faced insanities chronicled in such standards as "Froggy Went A-Courtin'" "E-n-i-e," Henry Thomas's "Fishing Blues," "Cock Robin," or "Five Nights Drunk"; the ghost of Rabbit Brown's sardonic "James Alley Blues" might lie just behind "Crash On The Levee (Down In The Flood)" ("Sometimes I Think That You're Too Sweet To Die," Brown sang in 1927, "And Another Time I Think You Oughta Be Buried Alive") "The Basement Tapes" summon sea chanteys, drinking songs, tall tales, and early rock and roll.

Along side of such things -- and often intertwined with them -- is something very different.

"Obviously, death is not very universally accepted. I mean, you'd think that the traditional music people could gather from their songs that mystery is a fact, a traditional fact." -- Bob Dylan, 1966





I think one can hear what Bob Dylan was talking about in the music of "The Basement Tapes," in "Goin' To Acapulco," "Tears Of Rage," "Too Much Of Nothing," and "This Wheel's On Fire" -- one can hardly avoid hearing it. It is a plain-talk mystery; it has nothing to do with mumbo-jumbo, charms or spells. The "acceptance of death" that Dylan found in "traditional music" -- the ancient ballads of mountain music -- is simply a singer's insistence on mystery as inseparable from any honest understanding of what life is all about; it is the quiet terror of a man seeking salvation who stares into a void that stares back. It is the awesome, impenetrable fatalism that drives the timeless ballads first recorded in the twenties; songs like Buell Kazee's "East Virginia," Clarence Ashley's "Coo Coo Bird," Dock Boggs' "Country Blues" -- or a song called "I Wish I Was A Mole In The Ground," put down by Bascom Lamar Lunsford in 1928. "I wish I was a mole in the ground -- like a mole in the ground I would root that mountain down -- And I wish I was a mole in the ground."





Now, what the singer wants is obvious, and almost impossible to really comprehend. He wants to be delivered from his life, and to be changed into a creature insignificant and despised; like a mole in the ground, he wants to see nothing and to be seen by no one; he wants to destroy the world, and to survive it. Dylan and The Band came to terms with feeling -- came to terms with the void that looks back -- in the summer of 1967; in the most powerful and unsettling songs on "The Basement Tapes," they put an old, old sense of mystery across with an intensity that has not been heard in a long time. You can find it in Dylan's singing and in his lyrics on "This Wheel's On Fire" -- and in every note Garth Hudson, Richard Manuel, Robbie Robertson, Levon Helm and Rick Danko play.

And it is in this way most of all that "The Basement Tapes" are a testing and a discovery of roots and memory; it might be why "The Basement Tapes" are, if anything, more compelling today than when they were first made, no more likely to fade than Elvis Presley's "Mystery Train" or Robert Johnson's "Love In Vain." The spirit of a song like "I Wish I Was A Mole In The Ground" matters here not as an "influence," and not as a "source." It is simply that one side of "The Basement Tapes" casts the shadow of such things and in turn, is shadowed by them. -- Greil Marcus





Bob Dylan -- Acoustic Guitar, Piano & Vocals  
Robbie Robertson -- Electric Guitar, Acoustic Guitar, Drums & Vocals  
Richard Manuel -- Piano, Drums, Harmonica & Vocals  
Rick Danko -- Electric Bass, Mandolin & Vocals  
Garth Hudson -- Organ, Clavinette, Accordion, Tenor Sax & Piano  
Levon Helm -- Drums, Mandolin, Electric Bass & Vocals

Recorded in the basement of Big Pink, West Saugerties, NY., 1967  
Recording Engineer -- Garth Hudson  
Mixing Engineers -- Rob Fraboni, Nat Jeffrey, Ed Anderson & Mark Aglietti  
Mixed at Village Recorders & Shangri-La Studios  
Mastering Engineer -- George Horn  
Photography -- Reid Miles  
Design Consultant -- Bob Cato  
Compiled by Robbie Robertson  
Produced by Bob Dylan & The Band



- 
1. **LOCK YOUR DOOR\***
  2. **BABY WON'T YOU BE MY BABY\***
  3. **TRY ME LITTLE GIRL\***
  4. **YOUNG BUT DAILY GROWIN'\*\*\***  
(Trad.)
  5. **BONNIE SHIP THE DIAMOND\***  
(Trad.)
  6. **THE HILLS OF MEXICO\***  
(Trad.)
  7. **DOWN ON ME\***  
(Trad.)
  8. **I CAN'T MAKE IT ALONE\***
  9. **DON'T YOU TRY ME NOW\***
  10. **ONE FOR THE ROAD\***
  11. **I'M ALRIGHT\***
  12. **ONE SINGLE RIVER\***  
(Ian Tyson-Sylvia Fricker)
  13. **PEOPLE GET READY**  
(Curtis Mayfield)
  14. **I DON'T HURT ANYMORE\***  
(Don Robertson-Jack Rollins)
  15. **(BE CAREFUL OF) THE STONES  
THAT YOU THROW\***
  16. **ONE MAN'S LOSS\***  
(Bonnie Dodd)
  17. **BABY, AIN'T THAT FINE\*\***  
(Dallas Frazier)
  18. **ROCK, SALT & NAILS\***  
(Bruce Phillips)
  19. **A FOOL SUCH AS I\***  
(Bill Trader)
  20. **SILHOUETTE\***  
(Frank C. Slay Jr.-Bob Crewe)
  21. **BRING IT ON HOME\***
  22. **KING OF FRANCE\***
  23. **NINE HUNDRED MILES\***  
(Trad.)
  24. **GOIN' DOWN THE ROAD\***  
(Trad.)
  25. **SPANISH IS THE  
LOVIN' TONGUE\*\***  
(Charles Badger Clark-J. Williams)
  26. **PO' LAZARUS**  
(Trad.)
  27. **SANTA FEE\* ©**
  28. **INSTRUMENTAL JAM**

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\* Remastered from a generationally Superior version of the source tape utilized on 5-CD set.

\*\* Remastered from an alternate source tape to that utilized on 5-CD set.

All other recordings have been remastered from a Brand new, state-of-the-art A-to-D transfer of The original cassette sources utilized on the Genuine Basement Tapes 5-CD set, with songs Rebalanced and EQ'd where appropriate.





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1. ON A RAINY AFTERNOON\*
  2. I CAN'T COME IN WITH A BROKEN HEART\*
  3. COME ALL YE FAIR & TENDER LADIES\*\*\*  
(Trad.)
  4. UNDER CONTROL\*
  5. OL' ROISON THE BEAU\*\*  
(Trad.)
  6. I'M GUILTY OF OF LOVING YOU\*\*
  7. JOHNNY TODD\*\*  
(Trad.)
  8. COOL WATER\*\*  
(Bob Nolan)
  9. BANKS OF THE ROYAL CANAL\*\*  
(Brendan Behan)
  10. BELCHEZAAR  
(Johnny Cash)
  11. I FORGOT TO REMEMBER TO FORGET HER  
(Stan Kesler-Charlie Feathers)
  12. YOU WIN AGAIN  
(Hank Williams)
  13. STILL IN TOWN, STILL AROUND  
(Johnny Cash)
  14. WALTZIN' WITH SIN  
(Hayes-Burns)
  15. BIG RIVER TAKE 1\*\*  
(Johnny Cash)
  16. BIG RIVER TAKE 2\*\*  
(Johnny Cash)
  17. FOLSON PRISON BLUES\*\*  
(Johnny Cash)
  18. BELLS OF RHYMNEY\*\*  
(Idris Davies-Pete Seeger)
  19. I'M A FOOL FOR YOU FALSE START + TAKE
  20. NEXT TIME ON THE HIGHWAY
  21. TUPELO  
(John Lee Hooker)
  22. YOU GOTTA QUIT KICKIN' MY DOG AROUND  
(Webb M. Oungst-Cy Perkins)
  23. SEE YOU LATER, ALLEN GINSBERG  
(Robert Guidry)
  24. TINY MONTGOMERY ©
  25. THE SPANISH SONG TAKE 1
  26. THE SPANISH SONG TAKE 2
  27. I'M YOUR TEENAGE PRAYER

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1. **FOUR STRONG WINDS**  
(Jan Tyson)
  2. **THE FRENCH GIRL TAKE 1**  
(Jan Tyson)
  3. **THE FRENCH GIRL TAKE 2**  
(Jan Tyson)
  4. **JOSHUA GONE BARBADOS**  
(Eric Von Schmidt)
  5. **I'M IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE**  
(John Lee Hooker)
  6. **ALL-AMERICAN BOY**  
(Bobby Bare-Orville Lunsford) ©
  7. **SIGN ON THE CROSS\*\*** ©
  8. **SILENT WEEKEND\*** ©
  9. **DON'T YA TELL HENRY\*** ©
  10. **BOURBON STREET\*** ©
  11. **MILLION DOLLAR BASH**  
TAKE 1 ©
  12. **YEA! HEAVY AND A BOTTLE**  
**OF BREAD TAKE 1** ©
  13. **MILLION DOLLAR BASH**  
TAKE 2\*\*
  14. **YEA! HEAVY AND A BOTTLE**  
**OF BREAD TAKE 2\*\***
  15. **I'M NOT THERE (1956)\*\*** ©
  16. **PLEASE MRS HENRY\*\*** ©
  17. **CRASH ON THE LEVEE**  
**(DOWN IN THE FLOOD)**  
TAKE 1\*\* ©
  18. **CRASH ON THE LEVEE**  
**(DOWN IN THE FLOOD)**  
TAKE 2\*\*
  19. **LO AND BEHOLD TAKE 1\*\*** ©
  20. **LO AND BEHOLD TAKE 2\*\***
  21. **YOU AIN'T GOING**  
**NOWHERE TAKE 1\*** ©
  22. **TOO MUCH OF NOTHING**  
TAKE 1\*\* ©
  23. **THIS WHEEL'S ON FIRE\*\*** ©
  24. **YOU AIN'T GOING NOWHERE**  
TAKE 2\*\*
  25. **I SHALL BE RELEASED\*\*** ©

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1. TOO MUCH OF NOTHING  
TAKE 2\*\*
2. TEARS OF RAGE TAKE 1 ©
3. TEARS OF RAGE TAKE 2
4. TEARS OF RAGE TAKE 3
5. QUINN THE ESKIMO (THE  
MIGHTY QUINN) TAKE 1 ©
6. QUINN THE ESKIMO (THE  
MIGHTY QUINN) TAKE 2
7. OPEN THE DOOR HOMER  
TAKE 1 ©
8. OPEN THE DOOR HOMER  
TAKE 2
9. OPEN THE DOOR HOMER  
TAKE 3
10. NOTHING WAS DELIVERED  
TAKE 1 ©
11. NOTHING WAS DELIVERED  
TAKE 2
12. GOIN' TO ACAPULCO ©
13. GONNA GET YOU NOW
14. WILDWOOD FLOWER  
(A.P. Carter)
15. SEE THAT MY GRAVE IS  
KEPT CLEAN  
(Trad. arr. Jefferson)
16. COMIN' 'ROUND  
THE MOUNTAIN  
(Trad.)
17. FLIGHT OF THE  
BUMBLE BEE
18. CONFIDENTIAL TO ME  
(Dorinda Morgan)
19. ODDS AND ENDS TAKE 1 ©
20. NOTHING WAS DELIVERED  
TAKE 3
21. ODDS AND ENDS TAKE 2
22. GET YOUR ROCKS OFF\*\* ©
23. CLOTHESLINE SAGA  
(ANSWER TO ODE)\*\* ©
24. APPLE SUCKLING TREE  
TAKE 1 ©
25. APPLE SUCKLING TREE  
TAKE 2
26. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS  
DREAM TAKE 1\*
27. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS  
DREAM TAKE 2\*

All compositions by B. Dylan  
unless otherwise indicated. Those  
tracks marked © have been  
copyrighted to Bob Dylan by  
Dwarf Music.

\* Remastered from a generationally  
Superior version of the source  
tape utilized on 5-CD set.

\*\* Remastered from an alternate  
source tape to that utilized on  
5-CD set.

All other recordings have been  
remastered from a brand new,  
state-of-the-art A-to-D transfer of  
the original cassette sources  
utilized on the Genuine Basement  
Tapes 5-CD set, with songs  
rebalanced and EQ'd where  
Appropriate.



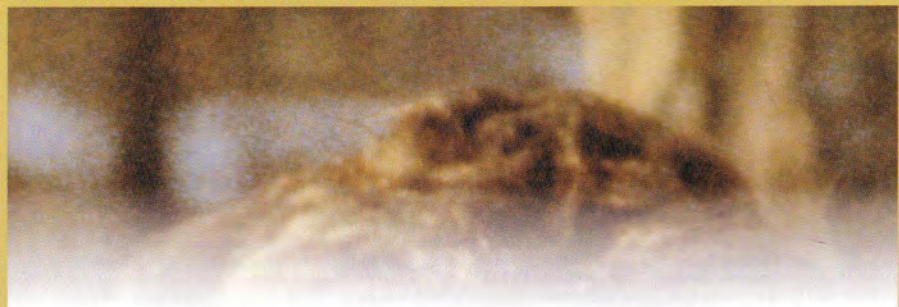


The following source tapes have been drawn upon, in varying degrees, to arrive at this set:

1. A Ten-Song Demo: Million Dollar Bash 2. Yeat Heavy and a Bottle of Bread 2. Please Mrs. Henry. Crash on the Levee 2. Lo and Behold! 2. Tiny Montgomery. This Wheel's on Fire. You Ain't Going Nowhere 2. I Shall Be Released. Too Much of Nothing 2.

Note: This demo tape was copyrighted in October 1967, and was utilized as a source for all subsequent acetates/Dwarf Music demo tapes that circulated in the ensuing years. Unfortunately, all songs were folded into mono from their original panned stereo.





2. A Five-Song Demo: Tears of Rage 3. Quinn the Eskimo 2. Open the Door Homer 3. Nothing Was Delivered 1. Get Your Rocks Off.

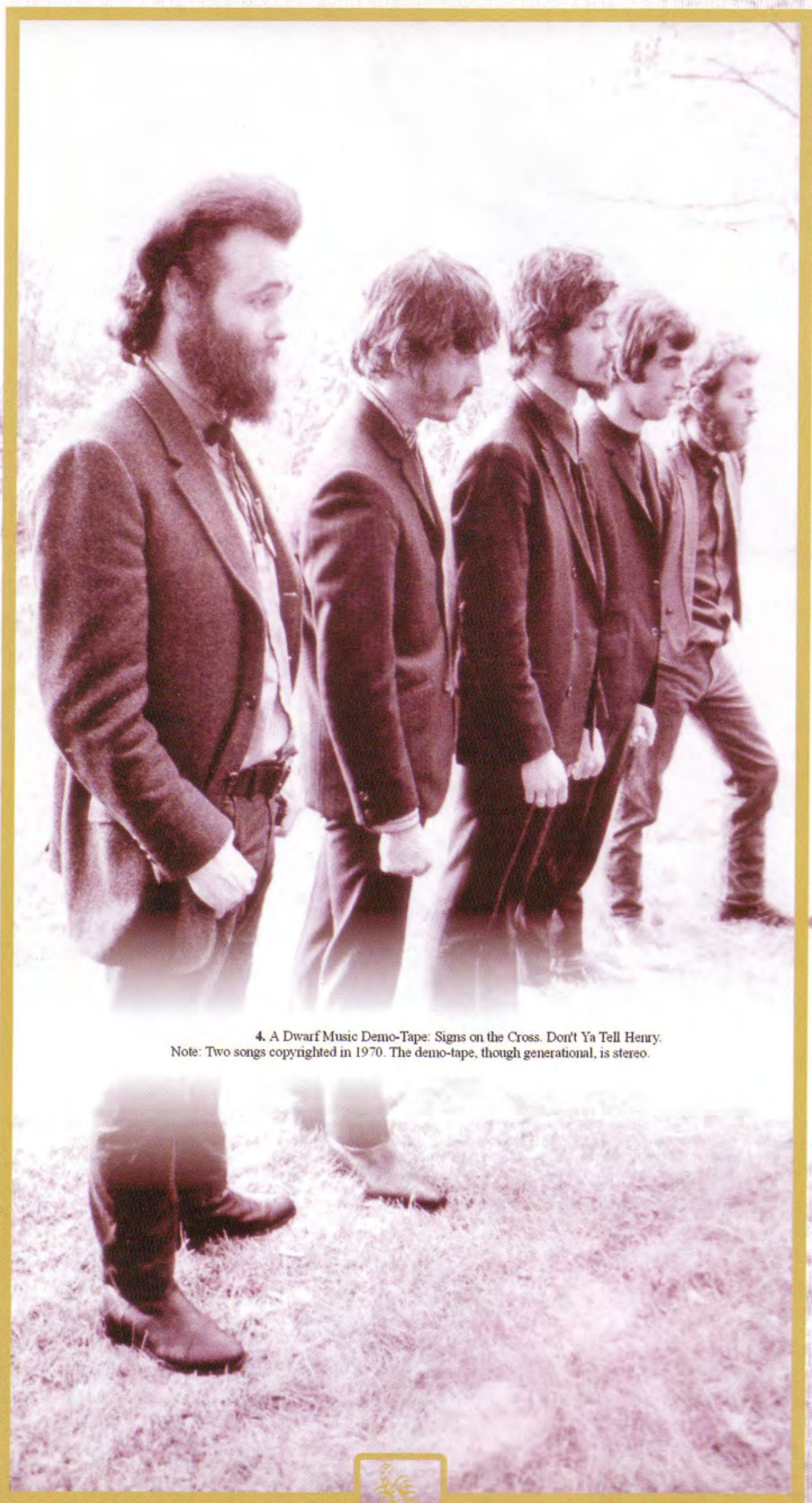
Not: This demo tape was copyrighted in January 1968. The first four songs, along with the previous demo-tape, comprised a 14-song acetate from which many bootlegs were drawn. Again all songs were folded into mono from their original panned stereo.



3. The 'Basement' Safety: Million Dollar Bash 2. Yea! Heavy and a Bottle of Bread 2. I'm Not There (1956). Please Mrs. Henry. Crash on the Levee 2. Lo and Behold! 2. This Wheel's On Fire. You Ain't Going Nowhere 2. I Shall Be Released. Too Much Of Nothing 2. Nothing Was Delivered 3. Odds and Ends 2. Get Your Rocks Off. Clothesline Saga. Apple Suckling Tree 1. Apple Suckling Tree 2. Open The Door Homer 1\* Open The Door Homer 2\* Open The Door Homer 3\* Nothing Was Delivered 1\* Nothing Was Delivered 2\* Tears of Rage 1\* Tears of Rage 2\* Quinn the Eskimo 1\* Quinn the Eskimo 2\*.

Note: This 15 i.p.s. transfer from the original tapes (save for the asterisked songs, which appear to be from a generational copy) was made at some point in 1968. All songs are in their original stereo. However, there are at least two strange omissions, 'Tiny Montgomery', already an acetate song, and 'Sign on the Cross'. The tape boxes are reproduced in Clinton Heylin's: The recording Sessions 1960-1994.





4. A Dwarf Music Demo-Tape: Signs on the Cross. Don't Ya Tell Henry.  
Note: Two songs copyrighted in 1970. The demo-tape, though generational, is stereo.






5. The Robertson-Fraboni Compilation Reels: Odds and Ends 1. Nothing Was Delivered 3. Odds and Ends 2. Get Your Rocks Off. Clothesline Saga. Apple Suckling Tree 1. Apple Suckling Tree 2. Try Me Little Girl. Young But Daily Growin'. Tiny Montgomery. Don't Ya Tell Henry. Bourbon Street. Million Dollar Bash 1. Yea! Heavy and a Bottle of Bread 1. Million Dollar Bash 2. Yea! Heavy and a Bottle of Bread 2. I'm Not There (1956). Please Mrs. Henry. Crash on the Levee 1. Crash on the Levee 2. Lo And Behold 1. Lo And Behold 2. One Single River. Baby Ain't That Fine. You Ain't Going Nowhere 1. This Wheel's on Fire. You Ain't Going Nowhere 2. I Shall Be Released. Too Much Of Nothing 1. Too Much Of Nothing 2. Tears of Rage 3. Quinn the Eskimo 1. Open The Door Homer 3. Nothing Was Delivered 1. Folsom Prison Blues. Sign on the Cross. Santa Fe. Silent Weekend. Silhouette. Bring It On Home. King of France. Going to Acapulco. Gonna Get You Now. Banks of the Royal Canal.

Note: Compiled in preparation for the official 1975 double-set on Columbia, these reels presumably represent the songs short-listed. Though songs had been panned in, not all songs were the full-on mono of the official set. Though a version of this tape was drawn upon for the 5-CD set, it was a poor generational dub, now superseded by a significantly superior version.







6. The Band Roadie Reels: Lock Your Door. Baby Won't You Be My Baby. Try Me Little Girl. I Can't Make It Alone. Young But Daily Growin'. Bonnie Shup the Diamond. The Hills of Mexico. Down On me. One For the Road. I'm Alright. One Single River. People Get Ready. I Don't Hurt Anymore. The Stones That You Throw. One Man's Loss. All You Have To Do Is Dream 2. I'm Not There (1956). Please Mrs. Henry. Down in the Flood 2. Lo and Behold 2. Odds and Ends 2. Get Your Rocks Off. Clothesline Saga. Apple Suckling Tree 2. Tiny Montgomery. Sign on the Cross. This Wheel's On Fire. You Ain't Going Nowhere 2. I Shall Be Released. Instrumental jam. Baby Ain't That Fine. Salt and Nails. A Fool Such As I. Going to Acapulco. Gonna Get You Now. Million Dollar Bash 2. Yea! Heavy and a Bottle of Bread 2.

Note: These reels, accessed in 1986 and subsequently bootlegged on two double-albums, are in their original stereo. Songs on this release from the 1986 reels appear direct from master for the first time.





7. The 1991 Cassettes: cassette 1 Million Dollar Bash 1. Yea! Heavy and a Bottle of Bread 1. Million Dollar Bash 2. Yea! Heavy and a Bottle of Bread 2. I'm Not There (1956). Please Mrs. Henry. Crash on the Levee 1. Crash on the Levee 2. Lo and Behold 1. Lo and Behold 2.

Cassette 2 I'm A Fool For You 1+2. Next Time on the Highway. Tupelo. You Gotta Quit Kickin' My Dog Around. See You Later. Allen Ginsberg. Tiny Montgomery. The Spanish Song 1. Spanish Song 2. I'm Your Teenage Prayer. Four Strong Winds. The French Girl 1. The French Girl 2. Joshua Gone Barbados. I'm in the Mood For Love. All-American Boy. Sign on the Cross.

Cassette 3 Tears of Rage 1. Tears of Rage 2. Tears of Rage 3. Quinn the Eskimo 1. Quinn the Eskimo 2. Open the Door Homer 1. Open the Door Homer 2. Open the Door Homer 3. Nothing Was Delivered 1. Nothing Was Delivered 2.

Cassette 4 Going to Acapulco. Gonna Get You Now. Wildflower Flower. So That My Grave Is Kept Clean. Comin' Round the Mountain. Instrumental jam. Flight of the Bumble Bee. Confidential to Me. Odds and Ends 1. Nothing Was Delivered 3. Odds and Ends 2. Get Your Rocks Off. Clothesline Saga. Apple Sucking Tree 1. Apple Sucking Tree 2.

Cassette 5 Belcheznar. I Forgot to Remember to Forget Her. You Win Again. Still in Town, Still Around. Waltzin' with Sin. Big River 1. Big River 2. Folsom Prison Blues. Bells of Rhymney. Nine Hundred Miles. Goin' Down the Road. Spanish is the Loving Tongue. I Can't Come In With a Broken Heart. Come All Ye Fair and Tender Ladies. Under Control. Ol' Roison the Beau. I'm Guilty of Loving You. Johnny Todd. Cool Water. Banks of the Royal Canal. Po' Lazarus.

Note: The primary source for the Genuine Basement Tapes Vols. 1-5, the cassettes are all in the original stereo, though some suffer from over-recording in their transfer from reel. An alternate dub of the same material for this set has yielded some better transfers. Also included in this collection of cassettes was misc. Dylan/Band material from 1965-66 as well as a dub of the 10-song Dwarf Music demo.





## Dylan's Basement Tape should be released

By Joan Warner

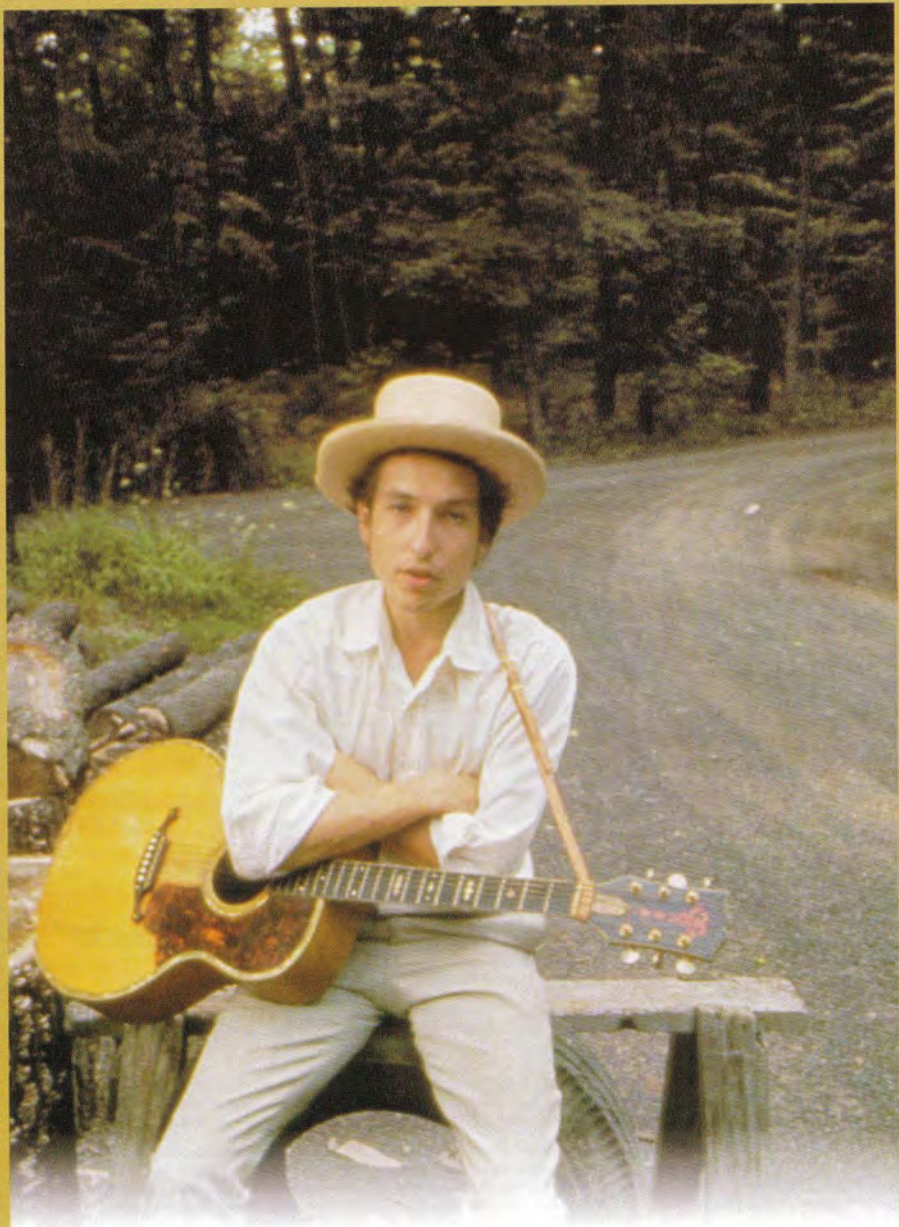
Two months before he went to Nashville to record John Wesley Harding, Bob Dylan spent some time in the basement of his upstate New York home. There he made a rough but very listenable tape with thirteen songs.

There is enough material most all of it very good to make an entirely new Bob Dylan record, a record with a distinct style of its own. Although it is highly unlikely that Dylan would want to get into the studio to record new material that is now seven or eight months old, nonetheless these tapes could easily be remastered and made into a record. The concept of a cohesive record is already present.

Whatever the original intention of the session, what happened was that Dylan and his band made a demo, a collection of songs vaguely arranged and fitted to instrumentals, for other artists to audition to see if they would like to record any of the material. One of the songs on the tape "Quinn the Eskimo"

or "The Mighty Quinn" reached the top position on radio surveys in a version by the English group Manfred Mann. Another of them, and one of the best "This Wheel's on Fire" has just been released in England in a version by British vocalist Julie Driscoll and organist Brian Auger. Their version is supposed to be quite good and will probably be released shortly in the United States.





The group backing Dylan on this tape is called the Crackers, formerly they were the Hawks. The band which lives with Dylan at his home, consists of Levon Helm on drums, Rick Danko on bass and Robbie Robertson on guitar. They accompanied him at Carnegie Hall for the recent Woody Guthrie Memorial program. Robbie Robertson has been working with Dylan for the past three years.

The instrumentation is closest to *Blonde on Blonde*, including an organ, an electric bass, drums and two guitars, acoustic and electric. The singing is more closely related to John Wesley Harding, however. The style is typically Dylan: humorous rock-and-roll with repetitious patterns. One of the things peculiar to this tape is that Dylan is working with a group; there is more interaction between him and the instrumentalists than can be seen in any of his other efforts, plus there is vocal back up in the choruses from his band.

The quality of the recording is fairly poor, it was a one-track, one-take job with all the instruments recorded together. The highs and lows are missing, but Dylan's voice is clear and beautiful. Additionally the tape has probably gone through several dozen dubs, each one losing a little more quality.





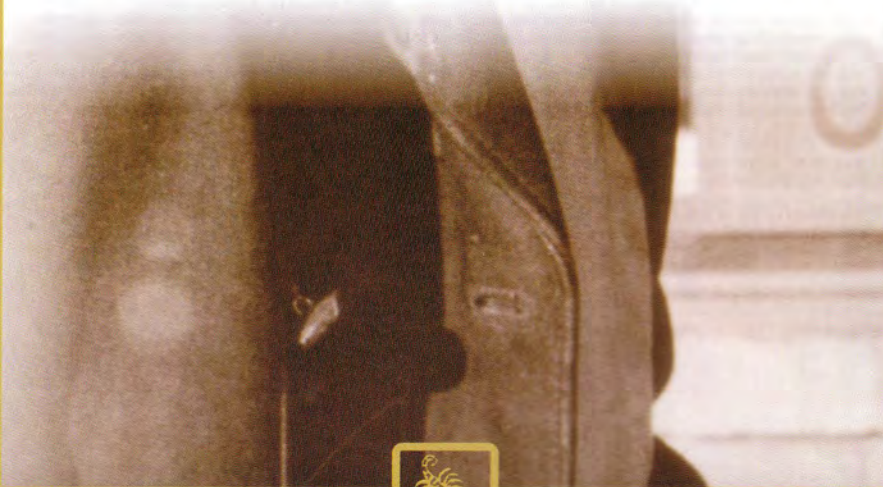
Here is a summary of some of the songs:

**Million Dollar Bash:** In the background of all Dylan's material is the style of rock and roll, and in this song is the sing-songy tune and the "ooo-baby, oooli-weee, ooo-baby, oooli-weee"

chorus. The song is just a funny one, about people who run around like chickens with their heads cut off ("I get up in the morning, but it's too early to wake") trying to get someplace or other, including a good party, like the Million Dollar Bash where everybody ends up anyway.

**Yea Heavy and a Bottle of Bread:** This will probably not be recorded by anyone because it isn't terribly good. The imagery is Highway 61, the melody non-existent. ("The comic book and me caught the bus, then the chauffeur she was back in bed.")

**Please Mrs. Henry** starts out like a Johnny Cash song, a tale about a poor cat without a dime and with too much to drink. ("I'm a sweet bourbon daddy and tonight I am blue.") It is indicative where Dylan was headed because it's about a man who's hit some hard times and needs a little help. The song is a sort of swaying "Rainy Day Woman" number, but without all the laughing and hoopla.





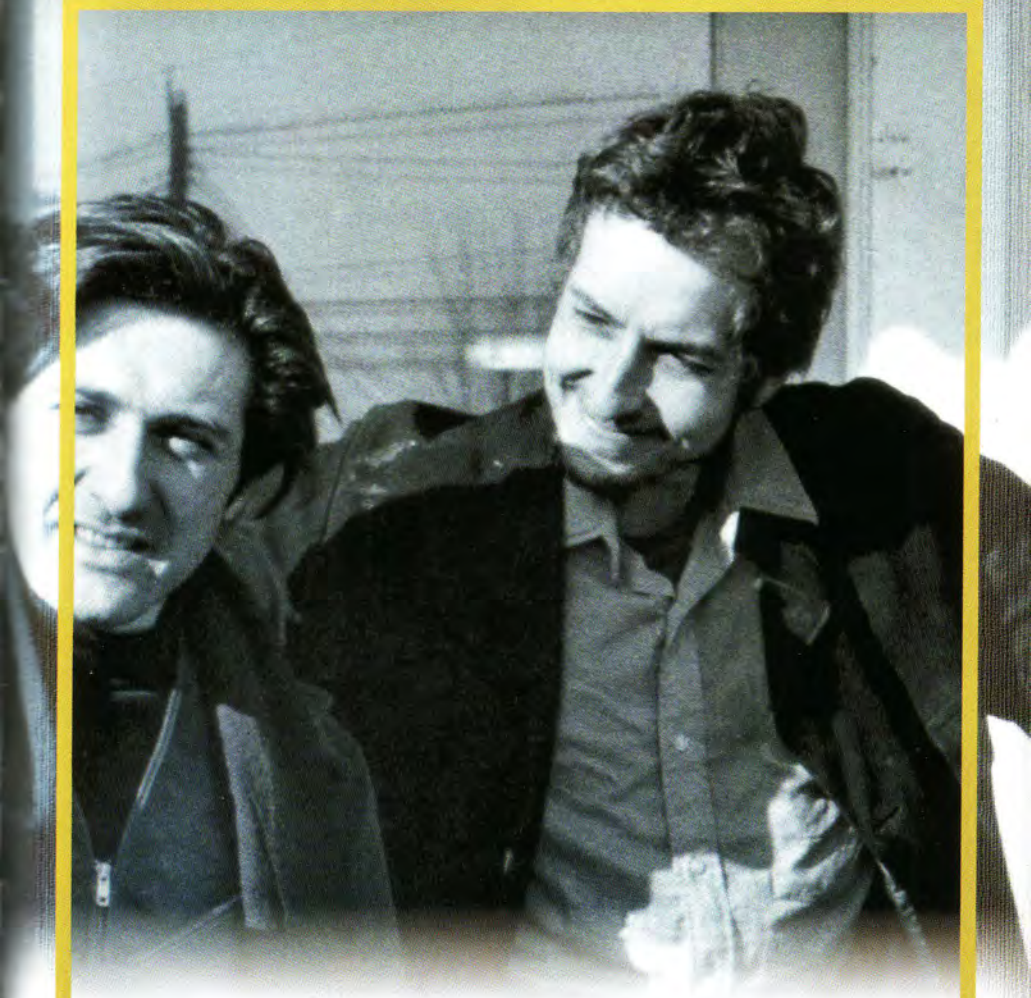
**Down In The Flood:** Flatt & Scruggs did this song. In Dylan's version the organist makes a lot of dancing figures around Dylan's vocal. It has the potential of being a great swinging rock and roll song, capable of sustaining in a lot of tension between the rhythm and the vocal. The potential for a rock and roll treatment is not at all coincidental, as the theme is very much reminiscent of "Like a Rolling Stone" and "Positively Fourth Street", in that the subject is about a chick ("Mama") who let the singer down and will have to "find another best friend now." The statement and drama is not as harsh as the previous songs, in fact much milder in style, words and situation, but it is the familiar set-up.  
**Tiny Montgomery:** The lyric strategy here is rather diffuse, about telling everybody in "old Frisco" that "Tiny Montgomery says Hello."

"Everybody" is a collection of rather moderate freaks and non-descripts, and one can't help thinking that Dylan is taking cognizance of some of the more publicized aspects of San Francisco. The organ in this song does several hard-to-hear electronic bits and the vocal is backed a continual high-pitched chorus.

**This Wheel's on Fire:** A little Del Shannon piano in the beginning tips off the most dramatic and moving vocal by Dylan in this collection. The drums come clear for the very first time on this song. It is a great number, possibly the very best by this group.

"This wheel's on fire/Rolling down the road/Just notify my next of kin/This wheel shall explode."





The song is a very passionate love story ("You know we should meet again/If your memory serves you well") about a woman who must inevitably return bound by a fate, to the man she has neglected but who has done everything he possibly can for her. The style here is close to J.W. Harding, the aching and yearning is soul wrenchingly intense.  
Ain't Goin' Nowhere: "Get your mind off wintertime." This song like many others and much of John Wesley Harding could be characterized as part of Dylan's continuing advice to calm down, smile on your brother, let's get together...

I Shall Be Released: Curiously enough the music in this song and the high pleading sound of Dylan's voice reminds one of the Bee Gees. It is one of the few songs on the tape with an instrumental break. "They say every man needs protection/They say every man must fall/Yes I swear I see my reflection/someplace so high above this wall."

Tears of Rage: This is a very sad and confusing song. I'm sure you will understand it when it is recorded and released by some artist. "Why must I always be the one."

Quinn the Eskimo is familiar to most in the version by Manfred Mann. Dylan does the song slower, does use flutes but doesn't make the great differentiation between the verse and the chorus. "Mighty Quinn is the most obvious of these songs to give a full-blown rock and roll treatment.

Open the Door Richard: "Take care of all of your memories/For you can not relive them;/And remember when you're out there/You must always first forgive them." This is a light swinging song.

Nothing Is There: If this doesn't prove Dylan's sense of humor, little will. This sounds like 1956 vintage rock and roll, the piano triplets (Dylan himself playing, I'm sure) are a direct cop from Fats Domino's "

Blueberry Hill." Dylan is one of the few rock and roll artists who uses both a piano and an organ.

The last song gives interesting insight into the nature of this unreleased Dylan material. Even though he used one of the finest rock and roll bands ever assembled on the Highway 61 album, here he works with his own band, for the first time. Dylan brings that instinctual feel for rock and roll to his voice for the first time. If this were ever to be released, it would be a classic.







**BOB  
DYLAN**

**A TREE WITH ROOTS**

**1**

**BOB  
DYLAN**

**A TREE WITH ROOTS**

**2**

**BOB  
DYLAN**

**A TREE WITH ROOTS**

**3**

**BOB  
DYLAN**

**A TREE WITH ROOTS**

**4**