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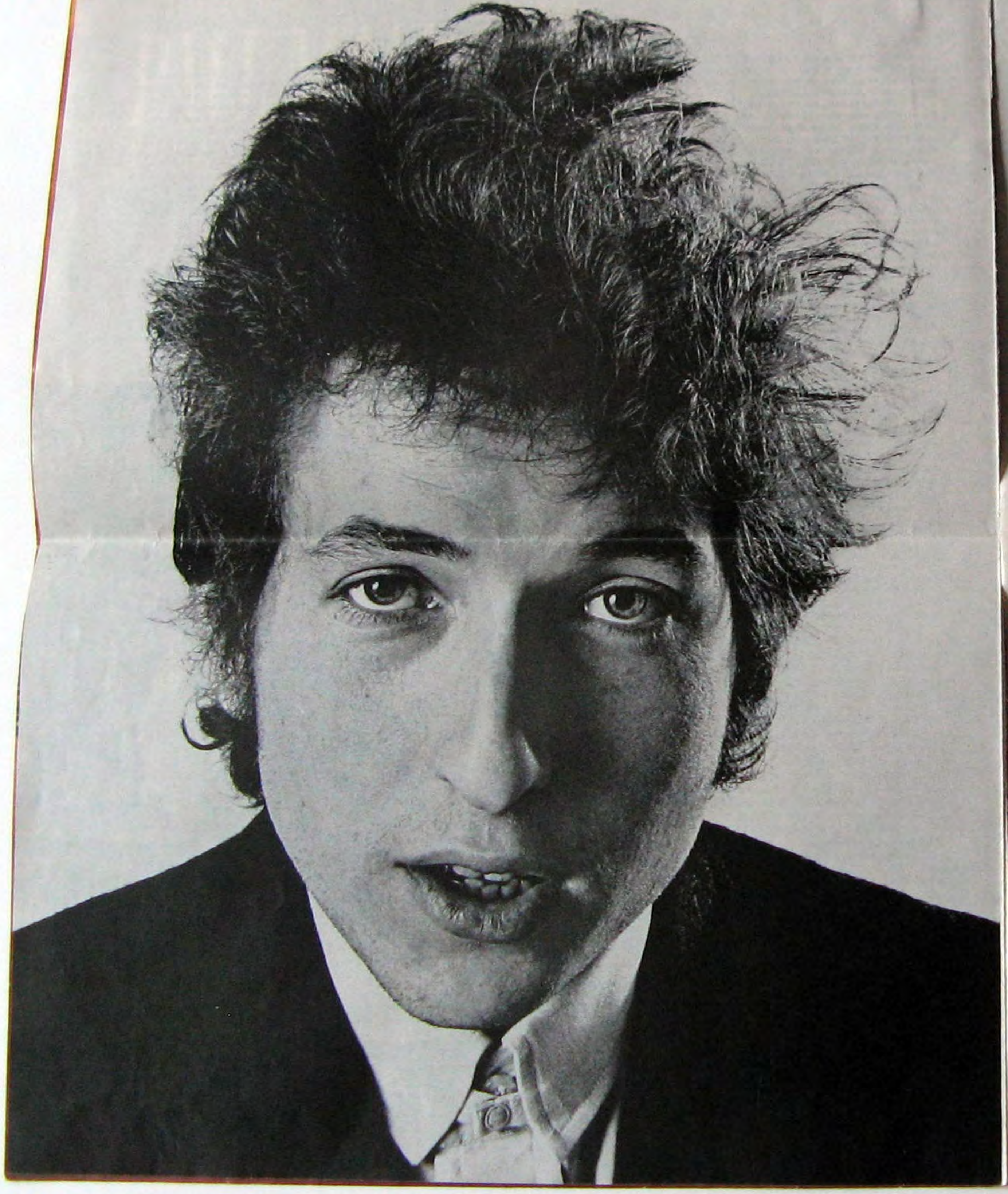
POST

A major report on
THE NEW NUNS

FREE DRUGS FOR ADDICTS?

HORATIO HORNBLOWER
Part two

BOB DYLAN:
Rebel king of rock 'n' roll



'WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE?'

We have Bob Dylan, singer, songwriter, poet, who at 25 admits he's a millionaire but denies being a genius.

By JULES SIEGEL *Photographs by Daniel Kramer*

Quick and little, Bob Dylan scrambled from the safety of a rented gray sedan and ran for his dressing room through a wildness of teen-age girls who howled and grabbed for his flesh. A cordon of guards held for a moment against the overwhelming attack. Then it broke and Dylan disappeared beneath yards of bell-bottoms and long hair. After a brief struggle he was rescued by one of his assistants, who methodically tore small and large girls off him, but it was too late. With a pair of enormous shears, a giant blond girl had snipped a lock of the precious Dylan hair and now was weeping for joy.

"Did you see that?" said Dylan in his dressing room, his pale face somewhat paler than usual. "I mean did you *see* that?" repeated Dylan, who tends to talk in italics. "I don't care about the hair, but she could have killed me. I mean she could have taken my eyes out with those scissors."

This is Bob Dylan's year to be mobbed. Next year it will probably be somebody else. But this year Bob Dylan is the king of rock 'n' roll, and he is the least likely king popular music has ever seen. With a bony, nervous face covered with skin the color of sour milk, a fright-wig of curly brown hair teased into a bramble of stand-up tangles, and dark-circled hazel eyes usually hidden by large prescription sunglasses, Dylan is less like Elvis or Frankie than like some crippled saint or resurrected Beethoven.

The songs he writes and sings, unlike the usual young-love pap of the airwaves, are full of dark and, many insist, important meaning; they are peopled with freaks, clowns, tramps, artists and mad scientists, dancing and tumbling in progressions of visionary images mobilized to the massive beat of rock 'n' roll. They often make very little logical sense, but almost always they make very good poetic sense. According to a recent poll, college students call him the most important contemporary poet in America.

He is certainly the only poet who gets his hair snipped off by shrieking teen-age girls, but Dylan has always been a defier of categories. His first fame was as a folk singer and folk-song writer. Last year he modified his style to what has been labeled "folk-rock," a blend of serious, poetic lyrics and rock 'n' roll music, which has brought him his greatest commercial success but has alienated some purists who were his early fans. He is a singer whose voice has been compared to the howl of "a dog with his leg caught in barbed wire"; a performer whose stage presence includes no hip wiggling or even, until recently, any acknowledgment of his audience; a public figure whose press conferences are exercises in a new kind of surrealism in which reporters ask, "Are you planning to do a movie?" and Dylan answers, deadpan, "Yes, I'm going to play my mother."

Yet, Bob Dylan, at the age of 25, has a million dollars in the bank and earns an estimated several hundred thousand dollars a year from concerts, recordings and publishing royalties. He is even more popular in England and Europe than in America. Four hours after tickets went on sale for his recent London concerts at Albert Hall, the SOLD-OUT sign was put up, and at one time five of his LP albums were selling in the top 20 in London. One paperback book on him has already been published; a hard-cover book about him by Robert Shelton, folk critic of *The New York Times*, will be published this winter; a third book of photographs and text by Daniel Kramer is scheduled for winter publication. A two-hour documentary of his English tours will soon be released for theater showing; he is about to begin production of his own movie; ABC-TV has signed him for a television special. A book of his writings, *Tarantula*, is to be published by Macmillan late this summer, with a prepublication excerpt to appear in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

And although he is still not nearly so popular as the Beatles, who have sold nearly 200 million records in four years, his artistic reputation is so great that in the recording business Dylan is ranked as the No. 1 innovator, the most important trend-setter, one of the few people around who can change radically the course of teen music.

"Dylan," says a folk-singer friend of his, "is the king. He's the one we all look to for approval, the one we're all eating our hearts out about, the one who proved you could make it with the kids without any compromises. If I didn't admire him so much, I would have to hate him. In fact, maybe I do hate him anyway."

Born Robert Zimmerman, May 24, 1941, in Duluth, Minn., Dylan is a product of Hibbing, Minn., an iron-ore mining town of 18,000 inhabitants about 70 miles from the Canadian border. The southwestern accent in his singing voice is apparently acquired; he speaks without it. His father is a prosperous, witty, small (five-foot-six), cigar-smoking appliance dealer. His mother, a deeply tanned, attractive woman, is

Electric guitar in hand, Bob Dylan plays and sings one of his rock 'n' roll songs during a recent recording session

During a joint concert in New Haven last year, Joan Baez listens while Dylan plays one of the folk songs that made him musical spokesman for the civil-rights movement. He has since outraged some early admirers by switching to rock 'n' roll.

Dylan signs autographs during his folk-music period. The hat was a steady ornament for a while, but has been discarded.

described by acquaintances as extremely intelligent, well informed and very talkative.

Dylan has a brother, David, 20, who attends St. Olaf College on a musical scholarship, and in the family it was always David who was thought of as "the musical one." Abe Zimmerman remembers buying a piano ("Not an expensive one," he says) when Bob was 10. Bob took one lesson and gave up in disgust because he couldn't play anything right away. David, then five, began taking lessons and has been playing ever since.

Despite his initial impatience, Bob Zimmerman soon taught himself how to play the piano, harmonica, guitar and autoharp. Once he began to play the piano, says Mrs. Zimmerman, he beat the keys out of tune pounding out rock 'n' roll. He also wrote—not only music but also poetry. "My mother has hundreds of poems I wrote when I was twelve years old," says Dylan.

As an adolescent, Dylan helped his father in the store, delivering appliances and sometimes attempting to make collections. "He was strong," Abe Zimmerman recently told an acquaintance. "I mean he could hold up his end of a refrigerator as well as kids twice his size, football players.

"I used to make him go out to the poor sections," Mr. Zimmerman said, "knowing he couldn't collect any money from those people. I just wanted to show him another side of life. He'd come back and say, 'Dad, those people haven't got any money.' And I'd say, 'Some of those people out there make as much money as I do, Bobby. They just don't know how to manage it.'"

In more than one way the lesson was well taken. Dylan today, while professing not to know anything about his wealth, appears to be a very good manager of money, careful sometimes to what might be considered stinginess.

A photographer friend of his recalls having to meet him at a hotel. "I called him," he says, "and asked if he wanted me to bring anything up for him. 'A container of tea,' Bobby said. I said, 'Bobby, they have room service in the hotel; you can have it sent up.' He thought about that for a couple of seconds and then said no, room service was too expensive." This was in 1965, the year that Dylan became a millionaire.

But Dylan learned more than frugality in the depressed areas of Hibbing. He learned, as Abe Zimmerman hoped he would, that there were people who knew nothing about middle-class life and middle-class values, people whose American dream had become a nightmare of installment debt. He seems to have felt a blood tie with them, based on a terrifying sense of his own peculiarity.

"I see things that other people don't see," he says. "I feel things other people don't feel. It's terrible. They laugh. I felt like that my whole life.

"My friends have been the same as me, people who couldn't make it as the high-school football halfback, Junior Chamber of Commerce leader, fraternity leader, truck driver working their way through college. I just had to be with them. I just don't care what anyone looks like, just as long as they didn't think I was strange. I couldn't do any of those things either. All I did was write and sing, paint little pictures on paper, dissolve myself into situations where I was invisible."

In pursuit of invisibility, Bob Zimmerman took to running away from home. "I made my own depression," he says. "Rode freight trains for kicks, got beat up for laughs, cut grass for quarters, met a waitress who picked me up and dropped me off in Washington." He tells of living with carnivals, of some trouble with police in Hibbing, of entertaining in a strip joint.

Be that as it may, he managed to finish high school at the appropriate time and even earned a scholarship to the University of Minnesota. Then the middle-class college boy from Hibbing began to remake his life and his image radically. He moved from his fraternity house to a downtown apartment. He began singing and playing the guitar and harmonica at Minneapolis's Ten o'Clock Scholar for two dollars a night; it is said that when he asked for a raise to five dollars, he was fired. He became Bob Dylan, and has since changed his name legally. This was not in tribute to Dylan Thomas, as the widely circulated legend maintains, but for some reason which he doesn't feel compelled to explain seriously.

'I feel things

that other people

don't feel.'

"Get that straight," he says. "I didn't change my name in honor of Dylan Thomas. That's just a story. I've done more for Dylan Thomas than he's ever done for me. Look how many kids are probably reading his poetry now because they heard that story."

Dylan also gave up his very conventional college-boy dress—for his first professional appearance in Minneapolis he had worn white buck shoes—and began to develop his own personal style. At first, he was influenced by the uniform of folk singers everywhere—jeans, work shirt, boots, collar-length hair. Now that he's a rock-'n'-roll star, the uniform has changed. The boots are still part of it, but the jeans are now tight slacks that make his legs look skinnier than they are. The work shirt has been replaced by floppy polka-dot Carnaby Street English shirts with oversized collars and long, puffed sleeves. Sometimes he wears racetrack-plaid suits in combinations of colors like green and black. His hair seems to get longer and wilder by the month.

In December, 1960, Dylan gave up on Minnesota and took off for New York to try rock 'n' roll, then in an uncertain state and dominated by clean-cut singers like Fabian and Frankie Avalon. It was not an auspicious time for someone who looked and sounded like Bob Dylan.

"I tried to make it in rock 'n' roll when rock 'n' roll was a piece of cream," he says. "Elvis had struck; Buddy Holly was dead; Little Richard was becoming a preacher, and Gene Vincent was leaving the country. I wrote the kind of stuff you write when you have no place to live and you're very wrapped up in the fire pump. I nearly killed myself with pity and agony. I saw the way doors close; the way doors that do not like you close. A door that does not like you needs no one to close it. I had to retreat."

Retreat for Dylan was folk music and Greenwich Village. He was strong medicine for both—nervous, cocky, different from anyone else around.

Arthur Kretchmer, a young magazine editor, remembers meeting Dylan at a party: "There was this crazy, restless little kid sitting on the floor and coming on very strong about how he was going to play Holden Caulfield in a movie of *Catcher in the Rye*, and I thought, 'This kid is really terrible'; but the people whose party it was said, 'Don't let him put you off. He comes on a little strong, but he's very sensitive—writes poetry, goes to visit Woody Guthrie in the hospital,' and I figured right, another one. I forgot all about him until a couple of years later he was famous and I wasn't. You can't always be right about these things, I suppose." Both Kretchmer and his wife are now Dylan fans.

Says Robert Shelton, whose book about Dylan is to be published this winter, "He was so astonishing-looking, so Chaplinesque and cherubic, sitting up on a stool playing the guitar and the harmonica and playing with the audience, making all kinds of wry faces, wearing this Huck Finn hat, that I laughed out loud with pleasure. I called over Pat Clancy (an Irish folk singer, one of the Clancy Brothers) and he looked at this cherub and broke into a broad smile and said, 'Well, what have we here?'"

Not too long after that, Shelton wrote a laudatory review in the *Times* of a Dylan performance. About the same time, Columbia Records executive John Hammond met Dylan at the home of folk singer Carolyn Hester, whom Dylan was going to accompany on a new record Hammond was producing. Without hearing him perform, Hammond offered Dylan a two-year contract with Columbia, and immediately hit a snag.

Dylan, a minor of 20, refused to admit to having any living relatives who could sign for him. "I don't know where my folks are," he told Hammond. "I think I've got an uncle who's a gambler in Nevada, but I wouldn't know how to track him down." Taking another chance, Hammond finally let the boy execute the contract himself.

The young folk singer's first LP was called *Bob Dylan*. It cost $403 to produce and sold, initially, 4,200 copies. By way of comparison, Dylan's most recent record as of this writing, *Highway 61 Revisited*, has sold 360,000 in the United States. All together, it is estimated that 10 million Dylan records have been sold throughout the world. His songs have been recorded in more than 150 other versions by performers ranging from Stan Getz to Lawrence Welk, and the royalties, Dylan admits, have made him a millionaire.

Exhausted after performing at Princeton, Dylan gets a scalp massage from a friend. He now divides his concerts in two. The first half is folk music; the second, rock 'n' roll.

In achieving this success, Dylan has had powerful allies. Not the least of these was Billy James, a young Columbia public-relations man who is now the record company's West Coast artist-relations director. It was through James's efforts that Dylan got his first taste of national publicity, but the singer's past was to come between them. In 1963, when Dylan was entering his first flush of fame with *Blowin' in the Wind*, a song which became an unofficial anthem of the civil-rights movement and a major popular hit, *Newsweek* revealed that Bob Dylan was Robert Zimmerman and went on to suggest that not only was Dylan's name a fake but it was rumored another writer had created *Blowin' in the Wind*. One part of the story was false—Dylan was the author of the song; but the other part, of course, was true: Bob Dylan was Robert Zimmerman.

Dylan was infuriated by the article and blamed Billy James for it. For two years the two did not speak. James won't talk about the incident at all, but people who know both of them say that Dylan attempted to get the public-relations man fired. Two years later, they met at a party and Dylan was all friendship again. When James mentioned the *Newsweek* affair, Dylan put an arm around him and said, "Thousands of people are dying in Vietnam and right at this minute a man is jumping off the Empire State Building and you got *that* running around in your head? Forget it!"

One of the great factors in Dylan's early success was his profound ability to articulate the emotions of the civil-rights revolution, which was developing its peak of power in the early '60's. Recognition of this talent came in dramatic form at the Newport Folk Festival of 1963.

Although he had already appeared once on the program, which is a sort of Hall of Fame of folk singing in action, he was called back to the stage at the end of the final concert. Accompanied by a stageful of folk stars, from Pete Seeger, the gentle "king" of folk music, to Joan Baez, the undisputed queen, Bob Dylan sang *Blowin' in the Wind* to an audience of 36,000 of the most important folk-singing fans, writers, recording executives and critics.

"How many roads must a man walk down before

'When I want money, I ask for it. After I spend it, I ask for more.'

you call him a man?" they sang. "*Yes, 'n' How many seas must a white dove sail before she sleeps in the sand? Yes, 'n' How many times must the cannon balls fly before they're forever banned? The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind, The answer is blowin' in the wind.*"*

Recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary, *Blowin' in the Wind* was Dylan's first major hit, and very quickly there were 58 different versions of the song, by everyone from The Staple Singers (a screaming gospel version) to Marlene Dietrich. Almost overnight Dylan was established at the top of the folk-music field. Here at last, sighed the folk critics and the civil-rights people, was a songwriter with the true "proletarian" touch, one who could really reach the masses. For two years, Dylan was the musical spokesman for civil rights, turning up in Mississippi, in the march on Washington, at the demonstrations and rallies.

"I feel it," said Joan Baez, whom Dylan had met before Newport, "but Dylan can say it. He's phenomenal."

For a while, Joan and Bobby were to be inseparable, the queen and crown prince of folk music. When Dylan went to England for a concert tour, Joan Baez went with him. As much as anyone's, it was her voice and authority which helped to create the charismatic reputation of Bob Dylan the folk singer.

These days Dylan and Baez are not as close as they used to be. When the rough cut of the film of his English tour was screened in Hollywood this spring, Baez was everywhere on the film, in the limousine, at the airport, singing in the hotel room. After the screening, Dylan said to the film editor, "We'll have to take all that stuff of Joan out." He hesitated and then added, "Well, it looks as if she was the whole thing. She was only there a few days. We'll have to cut it down."

Far more important to Dylan, however, was Albert Grossman, who took over Dylan's career and, to a great extent, his life. He is not only Dylan's manager, but also his confidant, healer and friend. Until recently, in fact, Dylan had no home of his own. He lived in Grossman's New York City apartment or the manager's antique-filled country home in Woodstock, N.Y.

He appears to be only vaguely aware of the extent or nature of his wealth, leaving the details to Grossman. "When I want money," Dylan says, "I ask for it. After I spend it, I ask for more."

Dylan has had his effect on Grossman, too, however. "I used to remember Albert as a nice-looking businessman, the kind of middle-aged man you would meet in a decent restaurant in the garment center," says one acquaintance. "Then, a while after he signed Dylan, I met him again. I couldn't believe it. I just couldn't believe what had happened to him. He had long gray hair like Benjamin Franklin and wire-rimmed spectacles, and he was wearing an old sweatshirt or something and Army pants. 'Albert,' I screamed, when I finally recognized him. 'Albert, what has Bobby done to you?'"

A measure of Dylan's relationship with his manager is found in the tone and style he uses in talking to Grossman. Even in the most ordinary conversation, Dylan can be almost impossible to understand. He is often vague, poetic, repetitive, confusing. But his flow of imagery can be startlingly precise and original, and the line of his thought brilliantly adventurous, funny and penetrating. So, in describing his music he will say, "It's all math, simple math, involved in mathematics. There's a definite number of Colt .45's that make up Marlene Dietrich, and you can find that out if you want to."

This kind of talk is not useful for more than a few situations. Nonetheless, it is the way Dylan speaks to fans, disk jockeys, reporters, acquaintances and, frequently, friends. It is not the way he speaks to Grossman. Then his voice often goes into a kind of piping whine, the voice of a little boy complaining to his father.

Thus, after a concert on the West Coast, at three o'clock in the morning, Dylan was told by a visitor that his voice was not heard over the blast of the electronically amplified rock-'n'-roll instruments. Grossman lay dozing on the hotel bed, his tinted glasses still on, a slight smile of repose on his heavy face.

"Al-*bert*," Dylan cried, "Albert, did you hear that? They couldn't hear me. Al-*bert*, I mean they couldn't *hear* me. What good is it if they can't hear me? We've got to get that sound man out here to fix it. What do you think, Albert?"

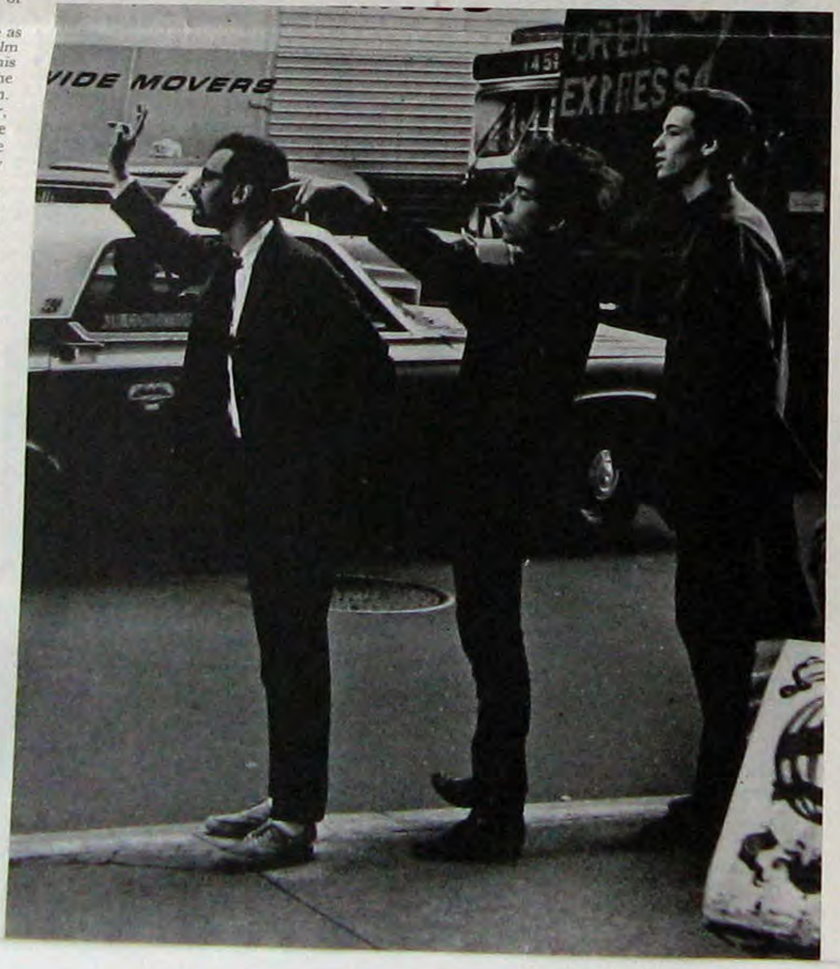
Grossman stirred on the bed and answered soothingly, "I told you in the car that the volume was too high. Just cut the volume by about a third and it'll be all right." Grossman went back to sleep, very much like an occidental Buddha, snoring lightly. Dylan was satisfied.

Grossman's formidable managerial talent is displayed most clearly when Dylan is on concert tour. From Grossman's New York office, the logistics of moving the singer and his crew from concert to concert halfway around the world are worked out with an efficiency that makes the whole operation seem effortless.

On the road the Dylan entourage usually consists of Dylan, his road manager, a pilot and copilot for the 13-seat two-engine Lodestar in which the group travels over the shorter distances (tourist-class commercial jets are used for overseas and transcontinental travel), two truck drivers who deliver the sound equipment and musicians' instruments from stop to stop, a sound man and five musicians—two guitarists, a drummer, pianist and organist. Grossman flies out from time to time to hear a concert or two and then returns to New York. On foreign tours he usually stays with the group throughout the trip.

Dylan's people are protective and highly attentive to his wants, and Dylan himself, given his status as a star, is neither especially demanding nor temperamental, even when things don't quite go according to schedule.

Last spring, for example, a concert in Vancouver was an acoustical disaster. The arena still smelled strongly of its last guests—a stock exhibition. It was perfectly round, with a flat dome that produced seven echoes from a sharp handclap in the center, and large open gates which let sound leak out of the hall as easily as if the concert were held in the open air. Although Dylan's $30,000 custom-designed sound system filled eight large crates with equipment, it could never fill this gigantic echo chamber with clear sound. To add to the problem, one of the small monitor speakers, placed on stage to enable the musicians to hear themselves play, was not working.



With Peter Yarrow (of the folk-music group Peter, Paul and Mary) and John Hammond Jr. (son of a record-company executive), Dylan tries for a cab in New York.

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Dylan's concerts are divided into two halves. During the first, in which he played his acoustic guitar into a stage microphone, the sound was patchy; in some spots it was perfect, in others it was very bad. In the second half, however, in which rock 'n' roll songs were played on the amplified instruments and electric guitars, the music was a garble of reverberation, and Dylan's voice was totally scrambled by the echo. The sound man sweated and twirled his knobs, but it was no use. At one point Grossman ran up to the stage to tell Dylan to stop "eating the mike," getting too close to the microphone and contributing to the electric jumble. The musicians, deprived of the monitor, watched each other tensely as they tried to keep their beat by observation rather than sound.

"Man, that was just terrible," Dylan said when he came offstage and hurried into the waiting car. "That was just awful. I mean that was worse than Ottawa, and Ottawa was the worst hole in the universe." He turned to each person in the car and asked them separately, "Wasn't that worse than Ottawa, and wasn't Ottawa the worst hole in the universe?" Everyone agreed that it was worse than Ottawa.

"That was really worse than Ottawa, and Ottawa was the worst, terrible, miserable hole in the entire universe," Dylan repeated, with a certain satisfaction. "Worse than Ottawa," he mused, and then, laughing, turned around and said, "And anyone who doesn't think it was worse than Ottawa can get out of the car right now."

Later he and Grossman discussed the problem again, and it was agreed that the fault lay in the arena, not in the equipment. In a better hall or a theater there would have been no trouble. Dylan's concern now was with the halls in which he was booked in Australia.

"Albert, it's no good in those arenas," he said. "I just would rather forget about arenas and play theaters. To hell with the money. I mean I would much rather have a good show. Are we going to play any arenas in Australia?"

"We have to," Grossman answered, after quickly going through the Australia situation with Dylan. "We haven't any choice, Bobby. There just aren't enough big concert halls or theaters there. It's not America. The country is still undeveloped."

"Well, all right," said Dylan. "I mean if we have to, but I wish we could just play theaters and halls. I mean that place was worse than Ottawa and ——" "Ottawa was the worst hole in the universe," someone chimed in.

"Yeah. The worst in the universe. And this was worse."

At no time, perhaps, was Dylan's closeness with Grossman more important than in 1965, the year Dylan turned from folk music to rock 'n' roll. He had by this time cut three more albums, two of them, *The Times They Are A-Changin'* and *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, outstandingly successful, not only in sales but in acclaim from the critics and the civil-rights activists. But he came back from a stunningly successful English tour with a feeling of *malaise* and a desire for change.

"After I finished the English tour," he says, "I quit because it was too easy. There was nothing happening for me. Every concert was the same: first half, second half, two encores and run out, then having to take care of myself all night.

"I didn't understand; I'd get standing ovations, and it didn't mean anything. The first time I felt no shame. But then I was just following myself after that. It was down to a pattern."

In his next album, *Bringing It All Back Home*, Dylan broke the pattern. Instead of playing either conventional "protest" as it was understood then, or using the traditional folk-music modes, he electrically amplified his guitar and set surrealistic verses to the rock-'n'-roll beat.

'I'd get standing ovations and it didn't mean anything. It was down to a pattern.'

Ironically, it was one of the album's few non-rock songs that brought Dylan his first great success in the pop market. *Mr. Tambourine Man*, recorded by The Byrds in a hard-rock version complete with falsetto, was a massive hit.

"When *Mr. Tambourine Man* broke, we didn't know anything about Bob Dylan" says "Cousin Brucie" Morrow, a disk jockey on WABC Radio, New York. "Oh, I remember a few years ago we'd listened to a single of his. It didn't seem to fit the sound then, so we didn't play it. That was all I knew about Bob Dylan until The Byrds hit with *Tambourine Man*. Then everyone was asking, 'Who's this Bob Dylan?' It's the only time I can remember when a composer got more attention for a hit than the performers did."

Then when Dylan released his new single, *Like a Rolling Stone*, and his new album, *Highway 61 Revisited*, the folk fans knew Bobby was going to be a teen-age idol, and if he was a teen-age idol he wasn't theirs anymore. For people who had thought they owned Bob Dylan it was a bitter disappointment, and Dylan lost a great many people he thought were his friends. "A freak and a parody," shrieked Irwin Silber in the folk-music magazine *Sing Out!* At the Newport Folk Festival of 1965, Dylan was booed off the stage. At his Forest Hills concert in September, the audience listened attentively through the first, folk, half of the program and then began to boo when the musicians came out for the rock 'n' roll portion. This time Dylan did not walk off the stage as he did at Newport, but fought his way through the performance, supported by 80 percent of the crowd.

Like a Rolling Stone finally put Dylan across as a rock 'n' roll star. He wrote it in its first form when he came back from England. "It was ten pages long," he says. "It wasn't called anything, just a rhythm thing on paper all about my steady hatred directed at some point that was honest. In the end it wasn't hatred, it was telling someone something they didn't know, telling them they were lucky. Revenge, that's a better word.

"I had never thought of it as a song, until one day I was at the piano, and on the paper it was singing, 'How does it feel?' in a slow motion pace, in the utmost of slow motion following something.

"It was like swimming in lava. In your eyesight, you see your victim swimming in lava. Hanging by their arms from a birch tree. Skipping, kicking the tree, hitting a nail with your foot. Seeing someone in the pain they were bound to meet up with.

"I wrote it. I didn't fail. It was straight." *Like a Rolling Stone* climbed rapidly to the top of the charts. It was followed by *Positively 4th Street* and then by *Ballad of a Thin Man*, and Dylan's lead was soon followed by other songwriters released from the inane bondage of the "I Love You, Teen Queen" straitjacket. Soon the airwaves were full of songs about the war in Vietnam, or civil rights, or the general disorder of the world and society in America. It was quickly labeled "folk-rock," and the kids wolfed it down and are still listening to it.

Along with the teen-agers, Dylan got a surprising bonus audience—the adult hip intellectuals who had just found out about rock 'n' roll. National magazines began writing favorably about both Dylan and rock 'n' roll, and rock concerts became the social events of the intellectuals' seasons. Allen Ginsberg said, "He writes better poetry than I did at his age . . . I'd say he's a space-age genius minstrel more than an old library poet . . ." One Sunday, the magazine sections of *The New York Times* and *The New York Herald-Tribune* simultaneously published long articles on the poetry of Bob Dylan, complete with learned analyses and exegeses of the most fashionable academic-journalistic-sociological kind.

Dylan's reaction is predictably thorny. "The songs are not meant to be great," he said. "I'm not meant to be great. I don't think anything I touch is destined for greatness. Genius is a terrible word, a word they think will make me like them. A genius is a very insulting thing to say. Even Einstein wasn't a genius. He was a foreign mathematician who would have stolen cars."

Some of his recent songs have brought him new criticism: it has been claimed that the lyrics of *Mr. Tambourine Man* and his latest hit, *Rainy Day Women #12 and 35* ("Everybody *must* get stoned!"), are all about drugs and drug experiences. Grossman denies it. Dylan won't talk about his songs. "Don't interpret me," he says. Talking about drugs, he is typically elusive.

"People just don't need drugs," he says. "Keep things out of your body. We all take medicine, as long as you know why you're taking it. If you want to crack down on the drug situation, the criminal drug situation takes place in suburban housewives' kitchens, the ones who get wiped out on alcohol every afternoon and then make supper. You can't blame them and you can't blame their husbands. They've been working in the mines all day. It's understandable."

During the past year Dylan has got married, fathered a son, Jesse Byron Dylan, and bought a townhouse in Manhattan's fashionable East 30's. Typically, he has attempted to keep all of this a secret. When his wife, a beautiful, black-haired girl named Sara Lownds, visited him in Vancouver and attended his concert, Dylan was faced with a problem: two disk jockeys were coming up to the dressing room to interview him; how was he to hide his wife from them? "Sara," said Dylan, opening a large closet, "when they arrive I want you to get in here." His wife looked at him quizzically but stepped reluctantly toward the open door. Dylan began to laugh, but it is a mark of the seriousness of his desire for privacy that his wife was ready to get into the closet.

The only thing anyone now will predict for certain is that Dylan will change. "I'll never decay," he says. "Decay is when something has stopped living but hasn't died yet, looking at your leg and seeing it all covered with creeping brown cancer. Decay turns me off. I'll die first before I decay." ☐

Dylan warms up before a concert, his cigarette in a makeshift holder that frees both hands for his guitar.

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