

## "Hurricane"

Bob Dylan

Pistols shots ring out in the barroom night  
Enter Patty Valentine from the upper hall  
She sees the bartender in a pool of blood  
Cries out "My God they killed them all"  
Here comes the story of the Hurricane  
The man the authorities came to blame  
For something that he never done  
Put him in a prison cell but one time he could-a been  
The champion of the world.

Three bodies lying there does Patty see  
And another man named Bello moving around mysteriously  
"I didn't do it" he says and he throws up his hands  
"I was only robbing the register I hope you understand  
I saw them leaving" he says and he stops  
"One of us had better call up the cops"  
And so Patty calls the cops  
And they arrive on the scene with their red lights flashing  
In the hot New Jersey night.

Meanwhile far away in another part of town  
Rubin Carter and a couple of friends are driving around  
Number one contender for the middleweight crown  
Had no idea what kinda shit was about to go down  
When a cop pulled him over to the side of the road  
Just like the time before and the time before that  
In Patterson that's just the way things go  
If you're black you might as well not shown up on the street  
'Less you wanna draw the heat.

Alfred Bello had a partner and he had a rap for the corps  
Him and Arthur Dexter Bradley were just out prowling around  
He said "I saw two men running out they looked like middleweights  
They jumped into a white car with out-of-state plates"  
And Miss Patty Valentine just nodded her head  
Cop said "Wait a minute boys this one's not dead"  
So they took him to the infirmary  
And though this man could hardly see  
They told him that he could identify the guilty men.

Four in the morning and they haul Rubin in  
Take him to the hospital and they bring him upstairs  
The wounded man looks up through his one dying eye  
Says "Wha'd you bring him in here for ? He ain't the guy !"

Yes here comes the story of the Hurricane  
The man the authorities came to blame  
For something that he never done  
Put in a prison cell but one time he could-a been  
The champion of the world.

Four months later the ghettos are in flame  
Rubin's in South America fighting for his name  
While Arthur Dexter Bradley's still in the robbery game  
And the cops are putting the screws to him looking for somebody to blame  
"Remember that murder that happened in a bar ?"  
"Remember you said you saw the getaway car?"  
"You think you'd like to play ball with the law ?"  
"Think it might-a been that fighter you saw running that night ?"  
"Don't forget that you are white".

Arthur Dexter Bradley said "I'm really not sure"  
Cops said "A boy like you could use a break  
We got you for the motel job and we're talking to your friend Bello  
Now you don't wanta have to go back to jail be a nice fellow  
You'll be doing society a favor  
That sonofabitch is brave and getting braver  
We want to put his ass in stir  
We want to pin this triple murder on him  
He ain't no Gentleman Jim".

Rubin could take a man out with just one punch  
But he never did like to talk about it all that much  
It's my work he'd say and I do it for pay  
And when it's over I'd just as soon go on my way  
Up to some paradise  
Where the trout streams flow and the air is nice  
And ride a horse along a trail  
But then they took him to the jailhouse  
Where they try to turn a man into a mouse.

All of Rubin's cards were marked in advance  
The trial was a pig-circus he never had a chance  
The judge made Rubin's witnesses drunkards from the slums  
To the white folks who watched he was a revolutionary bum  
And to the black folks he was just a crazy nigger  
No one doubted that he pulled the trigger  
And though they could not produce the gun  
The DA said he was the one who did the deed  
And the all-white jury agreed.

Rubin Carter was falsely tried  
The crime was murder 'one' guess who testified  
Bello and Bradley and they both baldly lied  
And the newspapers they all went along for the ride  
How can the life of such a man  
Be in the palm of some fool's hand ?  
To see him obviously framed  
Couldn't help but make me feel ashamed to live in a land  
Where justice is a game.

Now all the criminals in their coats and their ties  
Are free to drink martinis and watch the sun rise  
While Rubin sits like Buddha in a ten-foot cell  
An innocent man in a living hell  
That's the story of the Hurricane  
But it won't be over till they clear his name  
And give him back the time he's done  
Put him in a prison cell but one time he could-a been  
The champion of the world.

1. Initial Reaction:

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2. Complete a close reading:  
What is your initial reaction?  
Are there any words or ideas that are repeated? Identify words that stand out.  
What are the *connotations* and *denotations*?  
Connotation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Denotation: \_\_\_\_\_  
What might things in the writing symbolize?  
What is the writer trying to say/what message is he trying to convey?