

Bob Dylan

"Lily, Rosemary And The Jack Of Hearts"

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The festival was over and the boys were all plannin' for
a fall
The cabaret was quiet except for the drillin' in the wall

The curfew had been lifted and the gamblin' wheel
shut down
Anyone with any sense had already left town
He was standin' in the doorway lookin' like the Jack of
Hearts

He moved across the mirrored room, "Set it up for
everyone" he said
Then everyone commenced to do what they were doin'
Before he turned their heads

Then he walked up to a stranger and he asked him with
a grin
"Could you kindly tell me, friend, what time the show
begins?"
Then he moved into the corner, face down like the Jack
of Hearts

Backstage the girls were playin' five-card stud by the
stairs
Lily had two queens, she was hopin' for a third to
match her pair

Outside the streets were fillin' up, the window was open
wide
A gentle breeze was blowin', you could feel it from
inside
Lily called another bet and drew up the Jack of Hearts

Big Jim was no one's fool, he owned the town's only
diamond mine
He made his usual entrance lookin' so dandy and so
fine

With his bodyguards and silver cane and every hair in
place
He took whatever he wanted to and he laid it all to
waste

But his bodyguards and silver cane were no match for
the Jack of Hearts

Rosemary combed her hair and took a carriage into
town
She slipped in through the side door lookin' like a
queen without a crown

She fluttered her false eyelashes and whispered in his
ear
"Sorry, darlin', that I'm late" but he didn't seem to hear
He was starin' into space over at the Jack of Hearts

"I know I've seen that face before," Big Jim was thinkin'
to himself
"Maybe down in Mexico or a picture up on somebody's
shelf

But then the crowd began to stamp their feet and the
house lights did dim
And in the darkness of the room there was only Jim and
him
Starin' at the butterfly who just drew the Jack of Hearts

Lily was a princess, she was fair-skinned and precious
as a child
She did whatever she had to do
She had that certain flash every time she smiled

She'd come away from a broken home, had lots of
strange affairs
With men in every walk of life which took her
everywhere
But she'd never met anyone quite like the Jack of
Hearts

The hangin' judge came in unnoticed and was being
wined and dined
The drillin' in the wall kept up but no one seemed to pay
it any mind

It was known all around that Lily had Jim's ring
And nothing would ever come between Lily and the
king
No, nothin' ever would except maybe the Jack of Hearts

Rosemary started drinkin' hard and seein' her
reflection in the knife
She was tired of the attention, tired of playin' the role
of Big Jim's wife

She had done a lot of bad things, even once tried
suicide
Was lookin' to do just one good deed before she died
She was gazin' to the future, riding on the Jack of
Hearts

Lily took her dress off, buried it away
"Has your luck run out?" she laughed at him
"Well, I guess you must have known it would someday"

"Be careful not to touch the wall, there's a brand-new
coat of paint
I'm glad to see you're still alive, you're lookin' like a
saint"
Down the hallway footsteps were comin' for the Jack of
Hearts

The backstage manager was pacing all around by his
chair
"There's something funny going on" he said
"I can just feel it in the air"

He went to get the hangin' judge, but the hangin' judge
was drunk
As the leading actor hurried by in the costume of a
monk
There was no actor anywhere better than the Jack of
Hearts

No one knew the circumstance
But they say that it happened pretty quick
The door to the dressing room burst open and a cold
revolver clicked

And Big Jim was standin' there, ya couldn't say
surprised
Rosemary right beside him, steady in her eyes
She was with Big Jim but she was leanin' to the Jack of
Hearts

Two doors down, the boys finally made it through the
wall
And cleaned out the bank safe
It's said that they got off with quite a haul

In the darkness by the riverbed they waited on the
ground
For one more member who had business back in town
But they couldn't go no further without the Jack of
Hearts

The next day was hangin' day, the sky was overcast
and black
Big Jim lay covered up, killed by a penknife in the back

And Rosemary on the gallows, she didn't even blink
The hangin' judge was sober, he hadn't had a drink
The only person on the scene missin' was the Jack of
Hearts

The cabaret was empty now, a sign said, "Closed for
repair"
Lily had already taken all of the dye out of her hair

She was thinkin' 'bout her father, who she very rarely
saw
Thinkin' 'bout Rosemary and thinkin' about the law
But most of all she was thinkin' 'bout the Jack of Hearts

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