

Allison Moorer "Ruby Jewel Was Here"

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In Nineteen and Double-Aught
A harlot who was hot to trot
Gave a fine little bijoux to the world
With a blacksmith for a makeshift doc
In a cat house far from Camelot
Her goldmine brought to bear a baby girl

When the child screamed from life's first slap
The boss said, "Kid, get used to that
You'll never meet a day that isn't cruel"
And she wrapped her babe in a petticoat
Grabbed a bottle and made a toast
Here's to my gorgeous bastard, Ruby Jewel

And the man at the piano played a tune
And everybody sang and danced in the saloon
Except Ruby
(Ruby)
No, not Ruby
(Ruby)
Ruby Jewel

Reared among the guttersnipe
While her mama puffed a Chinese pipe
The salad days for Ruby didn't last
Forced to work and pay her dues
Inside that poor man's Moulin Rouge
A snot-nosed kid had to grow up fast

Night and day she toiled and sweat
While brothel patrons placed their bets
On who would be the first to break her in
Then one night the madam screams
"Ruby, get to room thirteen
There's someone there who thinks you're quite a gem"

And the man at the piano played a tune
And everybody sang and danced in the saloon
Except Ruby
(Ruby)
No, not Ruby
(Ruby)

Ruby Jewel

In done-up hair and a borrowed dress
She climbed the stairs scared to death
Said a prayer and tiptoed through the door
But on deaf ears her prayer fell
'Cause through a tear she stared at hell
Standing there in nothing but his drawers

She recognized the whiskered chin
Bloodshot eyes and foul-mouthed grin
He was the man who wore the silver star
She tried to turn around and run
But he pulled out his big six gun
And said, "Hon, you won't get very far"

And the man at the piano played a tune
And everybody sang and danced in the saloon
Except Ruby
(Ruby)
No, not Ruby
(Ruby)
Ruby Jewel

Ruby Jewel woke up in bed
A crimson pool between her legs
Naked as the day she was born
But lying there next to him
Made her wish she hadn't been
If this was all that living had in store

Making sure he was asleep
She quietly got to her feet
Found his gun and aimed it between his eyes
She kept it there til he came to
So he could stare down the barrel too
Pulled the trigger once and watched him die

And the man at the piano played a tune
And everybody sang and danced in the saloon
Except Ruby
(Ruby)
No, not Ruby
(Ruby)
Ruby Jewel

On a rainy night in nineteen twelve
Locked inside the town's new jail
Ruby carved a message in the stone
When morning came, hacks lead her out
In ankle chains right through the crowd

Who waited in the mud to watch the show

They walked her up the gallows steps
Put the rope around her neck
Dropped the trap as all the watchers cheered
But on the wall of a cell
In a tiny scrawl and misspelled
Were the words, 'Ruby Jewel was here'

And the man at the piano played a tune
And everybody sang and danced in the saloon
Except Ruby
(Ruby)
No, not Ruby
(Ruby)
Ruby Jewel

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