

Hurricane (Bob Dylan cover)

Ani DiFranco

Pistol 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 somethin' that he never done
Put in a prison cell, but one time he could-a been
The champion of the worldThree bodies lyin' there, does Patty see?
And another man named Bello, movin' around mysteriously
"I didn't do it," he says, and he throws up his hands
"I was only robbin' the register, I hope you understandI saw them leavin'" 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 flashin'
In the hot New Jersey nightMeanwhile, far away in another part of town
Rubin Carter and a couple of friends are drivin' 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 roadJust like the time before and the time before that
In Paterson that's just the way things go
If you're black you might as well not show up on the street
'Less you wanna draw the heatAlfred Bello had a partner and he had a rap for the cops
Him and Arthur Dexter Bradley were just out prowlin' around
He said, "I saw two men runnin' 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 menFour in the mornin' and they haul Rubin in
Take him to the hospital and they bring him upstairs
The wounded man looks up through his one dyin' eye
Says, "Wha'd you bring him in here for? He ain't the guy" Yes, here's the story of the hurricane
The man the authorities came to blame
For somethin' that he never done
Put in a prison cell, but one time he could-a been
The champion of the worldFour months later, the ghettos are in flame
Rubin's in South America, fightin' for his name
While Arthur Dexter Bradley's still in the robbery game
And the cops are puttin' the screws to him

Lookin' 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 that you saw runnin' that night?"

"Don't forget that you are white"Arthur Dexter Bradley said, "I'm really not sure"

Cops said, "A poor boy like you could use a break

We got you for the motel job and we're talkin' to your friend Bello

Now you don't wanna have to go back to jail, be a nice fellowYou'll be doin' society a favor

That sonofabitch is brave and gettin' 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 wayUp 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 mouseAll 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 bumAnd 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 D.A. said he was the one who did the deed

And the all-white jury agreedRubin 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 rideHow 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 gameNow 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 hellThat'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 in a prison cell, but one time he could-a been

The champion of the world

Songwriters

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