

The Death of Emmett Till

Bob Dylan

Was down in Mississippi not so long ago
When a young boy from Chicago town
Walked in a Southern door This boy's fateful tragedy
You all should remember well
The color of his skin was black
And his name was Emmett Till Some men, they dragged him to a barn
And there they beat him up
They said they had a reason
But disremember what They tortured him and did some things
Too evil to repeat
There were screaming sounds inside the barn
There was laughing sounds out on the street Then they rolled his body down a gulf
Amidst a blood red rain
And they threw him in the waters wide
To cease his screaming pain The reason that they killed him there
And I'm a-sure, it ain't no lie
'Cause he was born in black-skin barn
He was born to die And then to stop the United States
Of yelling for a trial
Two brothers, they confessed
That they had killed poor Emmett Till But on the jury there were men
Who had helped the brothers commit this awful crime
And so this trial was a mockery
But nobody there seemed to mind I saw the morning papers
But I could not bear
To see smiling brothers
Walkin' down the courthouse stairs For the jury found them innocent
And the brothers, they went free
While Emmett's body floats the foam
Of a Jim Crow southern sea If you can't speak out against this kind of thing
A crime that's so unjust
Your eyes are filled with dead men's clay
Your ears must be filled with dust Your arms and legs
They must be in shackles and chains
And your mind, it must cease to flow
For you to let our human race
Fall down so God-awful low This song is just a reminder
To remind your fellow man
That this kind of thing still lives today

In that ghost-robed Ku Klux Klan
But if all of us folks that thinks alike
If we gave all we could give
We could make this great land of ours
A greater place to live

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