

DYLAN
BY SCHATZBERG

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ART
BOOKS

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Hey Bob

~~I thought~~ It's about time
I told you how much I
enjoy ~~manipulating~~ ~~you~~
your image. It's now
fifty-three years and still
clicking. I hope you don't
think I "got a lotta nerve"
to say you are my friend.
~~It~~ Look you from the bottom
of my mind's eye.

Jerry Schatzky





A NIGHT WITH BOB DYLAN

by Al Aronowitz

New York Herald Tribune, December 12, 1965

Bob Dylan picked himself up from the revolving turntable; staggered into an armchair, waved his hands above his head and sat down to watch the tube. On it, Soupy Sales was grinning from behind a mask cream pie. Behind him a double exposure of Elvis Presley fired two six guns into the room from a well-silvered Andy Warhol canvas covered with Cellophane.

"I hate it ..." Dylan said. "I'm going to cut a hole in its abdomen and put a water hose through it." He got up, walked with cowboy bow-legs into the kitchen and asked someone to make him some tea. The reflection of Soupy Sales still grinned from his grey-coloured shades.

It wasn't Dylan's pad; he had borrowed it from somebody or other. On the floor, a mink rug played tablecloth for several cups and saucers, ashes and the ashtrays that the ashes had been intended for. Several other people wandered about the room, some of them while still sitting in their chairs.

The doorbell rang. It was Brian Jones of The Rolling Stones with a limousine waiting outside. Dylan wiped Soupy Sales's face off the TV tube, Robbie Robertson wiped the autoharp off his lap and everybody split. Dylan was the last to leave. He took the Temptations record off the turntable, hid it under his double-breasted corduroy jacket and winked at a light bulb. His tea, unsipped, was left to cool in its cup.

In the limousine, Dylan asked to be left off at the next block.

"You must be joking," said Brian Jones.

Inside the limousine, Charlie, the chauffeur, asked if the group was going downtown. "I'm getting off at the next block," said Dylan. "These other people're going downtown..." "Thank you, sir," said Charlie. "No, we're not going to any downtown," said Milly, a friend of Brian's. "Shut up!" said Dylan, "shut up

and quit making that racket or else you'll be thrown to the fire inspectors.... and they are very hungry.”

“What?” yelled Milly. The car stopped at the corner and Milly, one way or another, was thrown out...

“Watch the fire inspectors!” yelled Brian. “Nonsense,” said Dylan, “I’m just fooling. We really don’t have them over in America.”

The limousine eventually stopped at a bar in the Eighth Avenue district. After everyone in the party had entered, a very muscular woman ran up and very surprisingly hugged Dylan. “You’re not supposed to do that without an eyepatch!” he jolted. “Hug my friend there, Brian, he looks more like me!” ...

“You can write on the walls here,” said Dylan later at the table. “This is the only bar I know of where you can write on the walls and nobody calls you a poet.” ... Sailors began wandering over towards the table and eventually everyone decided to leave. “Where’s Harold the Driver?” asked Bob Neuwirth, a third cousin of Bob Dylan’s. “That’s not Harold,” said Dylan. “That’s Mr Egg, and there but for fortune go you or I.” “Ahhhhhh,” said Bob Neuwirth. “You must give me two points!” said Dylan. “And anyway, how do you know his name ain’t Egg?” “Where are we going?” said everyone called Hare-up. “We’re going to the zoo.”

“You Americans must all be soft,” said Brian Jones. “Do you have any coyotes?” A sailor leaped on the table, grinning at Brian, who snarled back. “I like your hair,” the sailor said. “What about hair?” Dylan said. “I thought we were going to the zoo,” said Bob Neuwirth. “That’s what we need,” said Brian Jones, “Some coyotes.” “Are you sure you mean coyotes?” said Dylan. “Are you sure we’re going to the zoo?” said Brian Jones. “Be yourself,” said Dylan. Everybody walked towards the door with the sailor leaping off the table and following them.

“We’re not going anyplace,” said Bob Neuwirth. Dylan leaped on Brian Jones and asked, “Tell me, Brian, why is it that your lead singer does not have a little, pencil-thin moustache?”

Back in the limousine, someone directed the driver to an underground movie house on Lafayette Street. Later on, when questioned about it, Dylan said they were all blindfolded and taken there at gunpoint. On the stage inside, there was no movie, but instead a group of green painted musicians

were presenting a spontaneous ritual which had taken them three months to prepare. Timothy Cain, a friend of Dylan’s whom they had run into under the marquee, grabbed the seat next to Dylan. “Can you smoke here?” he asked Dylan. “Of course you can smoke here,” replied Dylan. “Put that cigarette out!” said a long-haired flowery girl who turned out to be an usherette. Timothy ignored her. The usherette left in a huff, returning moments later with a chubby man who wore a handlebar moustache and slippers. “Put that cigarette out,” the chubby man said. “Oh, my God,” said Dylan, “it’s Porky Oil.” Immediately, Timothy rose, grabbed the usherette’s flashlight, unscrewed it, took the batteries out and threw the batteries at the Exit signs and proceeded to punch the chubby man in his ample stomach. At the same time, everyone in the party got up to leave as Dylan mumbled. “What good are exits anyway?” “I’m not an art fanatic,” said Timothy, “I’m a cigarette-smoker.” “I like you,” said Dylan. “I wish we were both alive during Napoleon’s time.”

After several more stops, which included a pinball arcade on 42nd Street, the back room of a fortune-teller in the Chelsea district, the Phonebooth, a discotheque, and St. Paul’s Cathedral, the limousine wound up in front of a bar in Greenwich Village. Four people remained in the group, the others having been left behind by accident. “Plenty more people inside,” said the chauffeur. “Watch your tongue,” said Dylan.

The group got out to go inside the bar, but it was already closed. “Back to the pad,” said Dylan. There was a small number of people gathered around the mink rug when they returned. Dylan took the Temptations record out from beneath his doublebreasted corduroy jacket and put it on the record-player. Then he went to another room and closed the door.

There was a W. C. Fields movie on the TV set. Dylan walked into the kitchen to get a bandage. “I think Marlon Brando should play the life of W.C. Fields,” he mumbled. He fiddled around in the kitchen. “I also think that Warren Beatty should play the life of Johnny Weismuller,” wrapping the bandage around his finger. Dylan returned to his room, stopping to say, “As for me, I plan to do the life story of Victor Mature.” “Is he serious?” said the mild-mannered, petite colored girl, who was sitting cross-legged on the floor. She was immediately thrown out.

When you got nothing

you got nothing to lose

~~Your invin~~

You're invisible now, ~~you go~~
you got no secrets to ~~conceal~~
conceal

How does it feel?



Schatzberg by Lethem

Jerry, I wonder if you can see your Dylan pictures in any sense from the outside? For me, I see them with a kind of double vision. For one thing, I was born in 1964, and my parents were Dylan fans with a good collection of LPs. So, certain of these images have always been with me, saturated into my sense of a cultural realm I was so fortunate as to be born into. That means I took them, at one childish level, for granted: this was simply what Bob Dylan “looked like,” during his heroic period, in the moment where, to put it crassly, it might seem anyone would want to be him, or be with him. Though by the time I was buying my own Dylan records, in the late ’70s and early ’80s, there were many rival versions of Dylan’s art, persona and image, you had illuminated the polestar version against which all others would be measured (usually, as inadequate). The most widely disseminated of these images are not just good photographs of an unusually interesting person who seems vibrantly responsive to your camera (even when he’s pretending it’s not there) – they’re cultural signal flares that told a generation that “something’s happening here” even if you “don’t know what it is.”

Later I became, however odd it is to admit it, a “Dylanologist” – a student not only of all phases of his work, but of books about the songs and the man, and eventually someone who’d write about him myself. That’s to say, I began to investigate the ways in which the image and the art, that had

seemed so carelessly “tossed off,” were constructed. Listening to a bootleg in which Dylan and his stumbling band tries fifteen different versions of “Like A Rolling Stone” is somewhat analogous to seeing twenty different exposures created before, during, and after the iconic photograph on the jacket (or the ones on the inside jacket) of Blonde on Blonde. It has the effect, on the one hand, of humbling and humanizing the people who made the art. Yet at the same time it renders the effect the iconic version has on our collective sensibility even more miraculous. It reminds you that all art is just something that once happened.

So, all of this is preamble to a fairly simple question: How much did you grasp that you were making something, with Dylan and your camera at that particular moment, that couldn't have existed until that moment? Could you have possibly intended it? Was it a collaborative creation between you and your subject? Did you do it to him, or with him? Or did he do it to you?

Jerry Schatzberg: Well, to be perfectly honest, I came to Dylan somewhat late. I had been hearing about him but it was through the badgering of two friends of mine – every time I would see them they would ask me if I had listened to Dylan yet. At one point, because they were so persistent, I made an extreme effort to do so. One of my friends was here in New York and the other one was in both New York and Paris. The latter was so dogged that she would call me when she knew I was in Paris to ask me if I'd listened to Dylan yet. Finally, I felt it as a duty to my friends, I must listen to Dylan. I started and, lo and behold, I was hooked.

I had heard a lot of personal music before, because as long as there have been songwriters there have been personal songs. But the combination of honesty and art I found in Dylan's work was something totally new to me. As it happened, one day I was photographing in my studio in the presence of Al

Aronowitz, super rock and roll journalist, and Scott Ross, at that time a rock and roll disc jockey who became a religious disc jockey. I don't recall who I was photographing but I was half listening to their conversation with my left ear and they were talking about Dylan. They had just seen him and I wanted to be included. So I said, “Hey, next time you see Dylan tell him I'd like to photograph him.” Figuring he would not know who I am, but what did I have to lose?

The next day I got a call from Dylan's wife. She said, “Bobby hears you want to photograph him.” I said, “Yes, I would love to. I hope it would be possible.” After we chatted for a while she gave me the address where he was recording *Highway 61 Revisited* and said I can go there anytime I wanted to. So, the next day I took my little Nikon and I was off on a new adventure. He greeted me as if I was an old friend and I felt very welcomed. He wanted me to hear what he'd been recording that day. I was very impressed and a little overwhelmed that he was paying so much attention to me.

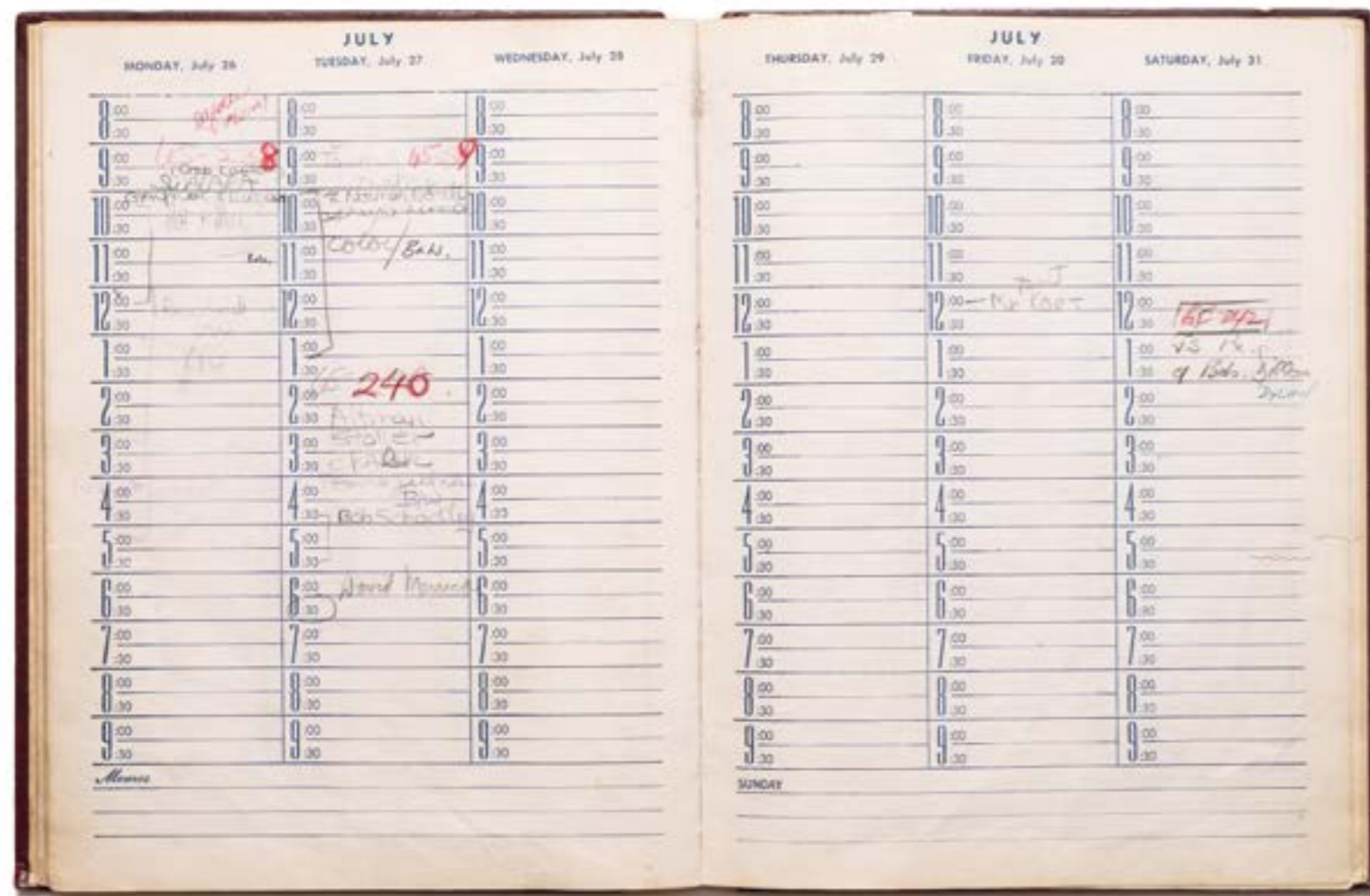
Oh I forgot to mention, his wife was the person in New York that I mentioned earlier, she had told me about Dylan some three years earlier. We sort of lost contact but she didn't lose contact with her admiration of Dylan. She married him. For me it started a true collaboration, and I must say that I'm sure some of Sara's recommendations had something to do with that, since all I had heard about him was that he's very suspicious of journalists and I'd probably say he includes photographers in that category. I was given total freedom in the recording studio. I felt quite honored by that. The shooting went very well, they were pleased with the results and I thought this is the time to strike again. I wanted to photograph him in a situation [where] I felt more in control. That would be my studio. I did not remember any photographs of him taken in a studio surrounding. Since they liked my photographs so much, they agreed to that. That was the beginning, or the continuation of a two-and-a-half year exploration of what I felt was Dylan.











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THANK YOU FOREVER

First and foremost, **Bob Dylan**, whom I had the privilege of capturing in what I believe to be some of the best images allowed to me, and for his innate generosity, such as putting a self-portrait of me in the centerfold of the *Blonde on Blonde* album. He never mentioned it, but I assume it was his way of thanking me for the cover photograph. My name appears nowhere, just my image, and to this day, we have never discussed it.

Whenever I talk to a book publisher, I usually let them know that I realize that I will probably not make much money—if any—but the thing that I most want is for me to be proud of it. And I think **Yolanda Cuomo** and her team **Bonnie Briant**, **Bobbie Richardson**, and **Jonno Rattman** have made me proud as a peacock. I wanted to work with Yolanda for quite a while and now I know I was right.

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And last, but not least, for my two sons, **Don** and **Steven**. I hope they understand that I know what they have gone through. Would I have changed things if I had known better? Yes. I have always loved you and I still do.



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