

The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll

Bob Dylan

William Zanzinger killed poor Hattie Carroll
With a cane that he twirled around his diamond ring finger
At a Baltimore hotel society gath'rin'
And the cops were called in and his weapon took from him
As they rode him in custody down to the station
And booked William Zanzinger for first-degree murder
But you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears
Take the rag away from your face
Now ain't the time for your tears.

William Zanzinger who at twenty-four years
Owns a tobacco farm of six hundred acres
With rich wealthy parents who provide and protect him
And high office relations in the politics of Maryland
Reacted to his deed with a shrug of his shoulders
And swear words and sneering and his tongue it was snarling
In a matter of minutes on bail was out walking
But you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears
Take the rag away from your face
Now ain't the time for your tears.

Hattie Carroll was a maid in the kitchen
She was fifty-one years old and gave birth to ten children
Who carried the dishes and took out the garbage
And never sat once at the head of the table
And didn't even talk to the people at the table
Who just cleaned up all the food from the table
And emptied the ashtrays on a whole other level
Got killed by a blow, lay slain by a cane
That sailed through the air and came down through the room
Doomed and determined to destroy all the gentle
And she never done nothing to William Zanzinger
And you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears
Take the rag away from your face
Now ain't the time for your tears.

In the courtroom of honor, the judge pounded his gavel
To show that all's equal and that the courts are on the level
And that the strings in the books ain't pulled and persuaded
And that even the nobles get properly handled
Once that the cops have chased after and caught 'em
And that ladder of law has no top and no bottom
Stared at the person who killed for no reason
Who just happened to be feelin' that way witout warnin'
And he spoke through his cloak, most deep and distinguished
And handed out strongly, for penalty and repentance
William Zanzinger with a six-month sentence
Oh, but you who philosophize disgrace and criticize all fears
Bury the rag deep in your face
For now's the time for your tears.