

High Water (for Charley Patton)

Bob Dylan

High water rising, rising night and day
All the gold and silver are being stolen away
Big Joe Turner looking east and west from the dark room of his mind
He made it to Kansas City, Twelfth Street and Vine
Nothing standing there
High water everywhere

High water rising, the shacks are sliding down
Folks lose their possessions and folks are leaving town
Bertha Mae she shook it, broke it, and she hung it on the wall
Say: "You dancin' with whom they tell you to, or you don't dance at all"
It's tough out there
High water everywhere

I got a craving love for blazing speed, got a hopped up Mustang Ford
Jump into the wagon, Love, throw your panties on the board
I can write you poems, make a strong man lose his mind
I'm no pig without a wig I hope you treat me kind
Things are breaking up out there
High water everywhere

High water rising, six inches 'bove my head
Coffins dropping in the street, like balloons made out of lead
Water poured into Vicksburg, don't know what I'm gonna do
"Don't reach out for me," she said, "Can't you see I'm drowning too"
It's rough out there
High water everywhere

Well, George Lewes told the Englishman, the Italian and the Jew,
"You can't open up your mind, boys, to any conceivable point of view,
They got Charles Darwin trapped out there on Highway 5"
Judge says to the High Sheriff, "I want him dead or alive,
Either one, I don't care"
High water everywhere

Well, the cuckoo is a pretty bird, she warbles as she flies
I'm preaching the word of God, I'm putting out your eyes
I asked fat Nancy for something t' eat, she said, "Take it off the shelf
As great as you are, man, you'll never be greater than yourself."
I told her I didn't really care
High water everywhere

I'm gettin' up in the morning, I believe I'll dust my broom
Keeping away from the women, I'm giving them lots of room
Thunder rollin' over Clarksdale, everything a-lookin' blue
I just can't be happy, love, unless you're happy too
It's bad out there
High water everywhere.