

# Tempest

Bob Dylan

The pale moon rose in its glory  
Out on the Western town  
She told a sad, sad story  
Of the great ship that went down

It was the fourteenth day of April  
Over the waves she rode  
Sailing into tomorrow  
To a golden age foretold

The night was black with starlight  
The seas were sharp and clear  
Moving through the shadows  
The promised hour was near

Lights were holding steady  
Gliding over the foam  
All the lords and ladies  
Heading for their eternal home

The chandeliers were swaying  
From the balustrades above  
The orchestra was playing  
Songs of faded love

The watchman, he lay dreaming  
As the ballroom dancers twirled  
He dreamed the Titanic was sinking  
Into the underworld

Leo took his sketchbook  
He was often so inclined  
He closed his eyes and painted  
The scenery in his mind

Cupid struck his bosom  
And broke it with a snap  
The closest woman to him  
He fell into her lap

He heard a loud commotion  
Something sounded wrong  
His inner spirit was saying  
That he couldn't stand here long

He staggered to the quarterdeck  
No time now to sleep  
Water on the quarterdeck  
Already three foot deep

Smokestack was leaning sideways  
Heavy feet began to pound  
He walked into the whirlwind  
Sky splitting all around

The ship was going under  
The universe had opened wide

The roll was called up yonder  
The angels turned aside

Lights down in the hallway  
Flickering dim and dull  
Dead bodies already floating  
In the double bottom hull

The engines then exploded  
Propellers they failed to start  
The boilers overloaded  
The ship's bow split apart

Passengers were flying  
Backward, forward, far and fast  
They mumbled, fumbled, and tumbled  
Each one more weary than the last

The veil was torn asunder  
'Tween the hours of twelve and one  
No change, no sudden wonder  
Could undo what had been done

The watchman lay there dreaming  
At forty five degrees  
He dreamed that the Titanic was sinking  
Dropping to her knees

Wellington he was sleeping  
His bed began to slide  
His valiant heart was beating  
He pushed the tables aside

Glass of shattered crystal  
Lay scattered roundabout  
He strapped on both his pistols  
How long could he hold out?

His men and his companions  
Were nowhere to be seen  
In silence there he waited for  
Time and space to intervene

The passageway was narrow  
There was blackness in the air  
He saw every kind of sorrow  
Heard voices everywhere

Alarm-bells were ringing  
To hold back the swelling tide  
Friends and lovers clinging  
To each other side by side

Mothers and their daughters  
Descending down the stairs  
Jumped into the icy waters  
Love and pity sent their prayers

The rich man, Mister Astor  
Kissed his darling wife  
He had no way of knowing  
It'd be the last trip of his life

Calvin, Blake and Wilson  
Gambled in the dark  
Not one of them would ever live to  
Tell the tale on the disembark

Brother rose up 'gainst brother  
In every circumstance  
They fought and slaughtered each other  
In a deadly dance

They lowered down the lifeboats  
From the sinking wreck  
There were traitors, there were turncoats  
Broken backs and broken necks

The bishop left his cabin  
To help others in need  
Turned his eyes up to the heavens  
Said, "The poor are yours to feed"

Davey the brothel-keeper  
Came out dismissed his girls  
Saw the water getting deeper  
Saw the changing of his world

Jim Dandy smiled  
He never learned to swim  
Saw the little crippled child  
And he gave his seat to him

He saw the starlight shining  
Streaming from the East  
Death was on the rampage  
But his heart was now at peace

They battened down the hatches  
But the hatches wouldn't hold  
They drowned upon the staircase  
Of brass and polished gold

Leo said to Cleo  
I think I'm going mad  
But he'd lost his mind already  
Whatever mind he had

He tried to block the doorway  
To save all those from harm  
Blood from an open wound  
Pouring down his arm

Petals fell from flowers  
'Til all of them were gone  
In the long and dreadful hours  
The wizard's curse played on

The host was pouring brandy  
He was going down slow  
He stayed right to the end and he  
Was the last to go

There were many, many others  
Nameless here forever more  
They never sailed the ocean

Or left their homes before

The watchman, he lay dreaming  
The damage had been done  
He dreamed the Titanic was sinking  
And he tried to tell someone

The captain, barely breathing  
Kneeling at the wheel  
Above him and beneath him  
Fifty thousand tons of steel

He looked over at his compass  
And he gazed into its face  
Needle pointing downward  
He knew he'd lost the race

In the dark illumination  
He remembered bygone years  
He read the Book of Revelation  
And he filled his cup with tears

When the Reaper's task had ended  
Sixteen hundred had gone to rest  
The good, the bad, the rich, the poor  
The loveliest and the best

They waited at the landing  
And they tried to understand  
But there is no understanding  
On the judgment of God's hand

The news came over the wires  
And struck with deadly force  
Love had lost its fires  
All things had run their course

The watchman he lay dreaming  
Of all the things that can be  
He dreamed the Titanic was sinking  
Into the deep blue sea