

# Dancing In Paradise

Bruce Cockburn

Praying mantis on screen  
Canoes prowl reef in early morning sun  
As it flashes on the rhythmic fall of weed cutter's cutlass blade  
Everybody's got something to sell besides the obvious dollars and dope  
Aloe rub, starfish, vegetable patties, braid your hair miss and bush doctor  
cures  
Sudden angry eruption between aloe peddler and man with property to protect  
Muscular security guard with truncheon of twisted wire  
"Kiss my blood clot" she hisses and they're enemies for life  
In the beach front bar they're playing reggae versions of Jim Reeves' Greatest Hits  
The waitress sings along, eyes focused dreamily on that sentimental world and there's Dancing in Paradise...

Blue green ship in turquoise bay  
Swollen bauxite-red river rushing  
Stream rising from feathered bamboo hills  
Tracks once paved now falling away into deep lush valleys  
And the farmed-out road contracts pass through so many hands  
The print erodes with the weather-worn blacktop  
And the jungle's always trying to reclaim the right of way  
And the mangoes cacao turmeric goats soursop  
Mushrooms cane plantains limes  
Horses crayfish long-legged birds donkeys  
Curved horns of cattle above dense grass  
Ganja sensitive plant ackee  
And some thorn whose prick brings lockjaw  
And tires torn by sharp yellow rocks --  
Young girl stares pensively from dark door in pale blue wall  
Big About and friends at their crossroads bar  
With its dirt corral for dancing  
Drink soursop juice all day long  
In quest of the perpetual stiff bamboo  
And there's Dancing in Paradise...

Biggy Dread gunned down by police at Big Bridge March 16  
Riding a mule cart to Sav-la-Mar pulled out a cutlass and they had to shoot  
That's what they say  
Something tells me they like to shoot  
Something in the eyes of the ones at the road block  
Where they searched the car and tried to get us to confess to whatever...  
There's truncheons and gas down in Harbour St.  
Typical response where life isn't so sweet  
And somebody gets desperate enough to say so  
Price of fish price of flour  
Going up up up almost by the hour  
And they throw away money on spectacular shows  
To show the world the right likes the right music  
And the Prime Minister sucks ice cream in the company of a happy band of children  
While a naked man, sores on his neck,  
Lies for days in Washington Blvd. gnawing chicken bones  
And the Chamber of Commerce thinks there's too much crime  
And there's a kung fu movie in every town  
And there's Dancing in Paradise...