**Dylan and Virgil, taming the proud – Lonesome Day Blues**

*“Love and Theft” - 2001*

For those interested in the Roman poet Virgil and in the art of Bob Dylan, the strange days that followed September 11, 2001 were particularly memorable. Dylan’s two-year stint in the Hibbing High Latin Club was at that point unknown to many people. There was Virgil, loud and clear, in the tenth verse of “Lonesome Day Blues”:

*I’m gonna spare the defeated, I’m gonna speak to the crowd*

*I’m gonna spare the defeated, boys, I’m going to speak to the crowd*

*I am goin’ to teach peace to the conquered, I’m gonna tame the proud*

**Dylan’s “Lonesome Day Blues”**

*But yours will be the rulership of nations,*

*remember Roman, these will be your arts:*

*to teach the ways of peace to those you conquer,*

*to spare defeated peoples, tame the proud*

**Virgil’s “Aeneid”**

Teaching peace, sparing the defeated, and taming the proud. Too much precision there for accident, even without the album’s title with its quotation marks. Now Virgil’s Latin with the three Roman arts spread over a line and a half:

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento*

*(hae tibi erunt artes) pacique imponere morem*

*parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*

But that is the point: Dylan’s intertext is not created from the Latin of Virgil––though Hibbing High’s Robert Allen Zimmerman may possibly have gotten far enough in his Latin to have read some Virgil back then.

Rather, Dylan probably read the English translation of Allen Mandelbaum, the best contemporary translation until 2005, when Stanley Lombardo’s excellent new version arrived on the field.

*Well, today has been a sad and lonesome day*

*Yeah, today has been a sad and lonesome day*

*I'm just sitting here thinking with my mind a million miles away*

*Well, they're doing the double shuffle, throwing sand on the floor*

*They're doing the double shuffle, they're throwing sand on the floor*

*When I left my longtime darling, she was standing in the door*

*Well, my pa he died and left me, my brother got killed in the war*

*Well, my pa he died and left me, my brother got killed in the war*

*My sister, she ran off and got married, never was heard of anymore*

*Samantha Brown lived in my house for 'bout four or five months*

*Samantha Brown lived in my house for 'bout four or five months*

*Don't know how it looked to other people, I never slept with her even once*

*Well the road washed out, weather not fit for man or beast*

*Well the road's washed out, weather not fit for man or beast*

*Funny, the things you have the hardest time parting with are the things you need the least*

*Well, I'm forty miles from the mill, I'm dropping it into overdrive*

*I'm forty miles from the mill, I'm dropping it into overdrive*

*Set my dial on the radio I wish my mother was still alive*

*I seen your lover man comin', comin' across the barren fields*

*I see your lover man comin', comin' 'cross the barren fields*

*He not a gentleman at all, he's rotten to the core, he's a coward and he steals*

*Well my captain, he's decorated, he's well-schooled and he's skilled*

*My captain, he's decorated, he's well-schooled and he's skilled*

*He's not sentimental, don't bother him at all; how many of his pals have been killed*

*Last night the wind was whispering, I was trying to make out what it was*

*Last night the wind was whispering something, I was trying to make out what it was*

*Yeah I tell myself something's coming, but it never does*

***I'm going to spare the defeated, I'm going to speak to the crowd***

***I'm going to spare the defeated, 'cause I'm going to speak to the crowd***

***I'm going to teach peace to the conquered, I'm going to tame the proud***

*Well, the leaves are rustling in the wood, things are falling off of the shelf*

*Leaves are rustling in the wood, things are falling off the shelf*

*You're gonna need my help sweetheart, you can't make love all by yourself*