

# Murder Most Foul: Dylan Recognizes Another “Hit” When He Sees One

By [John Kirby](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#)

*Bob Dylan has chosen this moment, of all moments, to release his masterful epic on the assassination of President Kennedy, “[Murder Most Foul](#).” Why now?*

Could it be that his artist’s heart feels a world under assault, once again, by the powers that be? For whatever the actual lethality of the *virus*, (a question whose answer now appears to be [far less terrifying than originally advertised](#)), there is no doubt that we are all suffering from the same sort of “shock and awe” we did when our collective hopes for a New Frontier were blown away in 1963.

Now much of the world is locked down, physically and socially isolated, bankrupted and thrown out of work, with a whole “new normal” of [medical and governmental authoritarianism on the way](#).

And Wall Street is about to receive the lion’s share of two trillion dollars.

You don’t have to have a religious streak for it all to feel something like the fulfillment of the prophecy spoken to Dylan’s narrator:

The day that they killed him, someone said to me, “Son, The Age of the Antichrist has just only begun”

When Kennedy died, so died the efforts he had been making to end the Cold War, to withdraw from Vietnam, to create a rising economic tide that would “lift all boats.”

And while much has been made of Lyndon Johnson’s carrying-on of Kennedy-era social and civil rights initiatives, the reality was as Martin Luther King described it:

“The promises of the Great Society have been shot down on the battlefields of Vietnam, making the poor, white and Negro, bear the heaviest burden, both at the front and at home.”

Well, as Mark Twain once allegedly said: “History doesn’t repeat itself, but it rhymes.”

Dylan describes the Kennedy assassination as “the greatest magic trick ever under the sun/ Perfectly executed, skillfully done.”

What trick is playing out all around us as you read this? And would we see it now, as so few

really saw it then?

It happened so quickly, so quick by surprise

Right there in front of everyone's eyes

It would seem Dylan, courageously, has sent us a message when we needed it most, with little in the way of encryption. It is up to us to break the simple code, take in its meaning, and act.

Act as we didn't then.

"This is an unreleased song we recorded a while back that you might find interesting. Stay safe, stay observant and may God be with you."

And also with you, Bob.

\*

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*John Kirby is the director of FOUR DIED TRYING, an upcoming feature documentary about the extraordinary lives and calamitous deaths of John Kennedy, Malcom X, Martin Luther King, and Bobby Kennedy.*

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