

To  
 BOB DYLAN; Friendly;  
 From Johnny  
 Cash

I, JOHNNY CASH, just today re-  
discovered in one of my many back  
 pages

A letter from you, long looked for

We were writing each other —  
 back and forth —  
 BEARSVILLE to GNASHVILLE  
 back and forth

to & FROTH  
 HOWEVER;

Though I immediately (I think)  
 wrote my response or in re-action  
 to your letter

I just noticed  
 (I guess I just now)  
 REALLY read it,  
 where you sed;

ANSWER, Box 125, BEARSVILLE  
 N.Y.

Bounce the bubbling brain of  
 my friend Bob back now, if  
 you will, 3 years ago —

I reply.

1. I know how you feel about the California beach. The ocean is still brand new, like a sweet young girl whose hair covers her breasts.
2. The Atlantic Ocean from New York is still like an old sick whore who has got a bunch of things wrong with her and won't say what.
3. The sandy beaches of Kansas are still there — but it's 50 fruit-of-tears far to the water.
4. I flew over your sleepy hollow mountain country recently. It's sleepier hollower. Pollution Micky Finns most of it.

5. You say theres no meaning in  
anything in your letter. +  
Three years later I say there  
was, and is. And will. So.

6. You compliment me on being  
truly "angelic" - also "alive"  
I'm blushing.

Everytime a little of me comes  
to life, another part goes sleep.

Angelic?

Friend Bob, I'd like to, but  
I can't get that high!

I still see you this way;  
"In the midst of the so-  
called "Folk song revival,"

The North wind turned into  
a twister, picking up one  
Bob Dylan, took him south,  
East, West, dropping his  
berries into everybody's fruit  
cocktail. To some he tasted  
bitter. Some he poisoned,  
Some he re-incarnated, Some  
he woke up, some he shaped  
and fashioned into puppets,

But my friend Bob,  
you had more strings than  
you had fingers. Your puppets  
started shaking for themselves.

But I'll close now,

having replied to only a small  
portion of your letter, saying  
The ones you poisoned are dead  
The re-incarnated are your subjects  
The ones you awake are your slaves  
The ones you molded are petrified  
that way.

you've still got enough strings  
left to handle puppets.

The World is still your  
apple.

Sharpen your BARLOW.

Friend Johnny Cash is waiting  
watching, knowing you can  
hoping you'll still peel it.