

Monday, August 15, 2005



I have been listened to a mp3 '*Chimes of Freedom*'. It is a bootleg live recording of Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead from 1987 . The lyrics describe a thunder storm:

*"Far between sundown's finish an' midnight's broken toll
We ducked inside the doorway, thunder crashing
As majestic bells of bolts struck shadows in the sounds
Seeming to be the chimes of freedom flashing ..."
"Through the mad mystic hammering of the wild ripping hail
The sky cracked its poems in naked wonder ..."*

Dylan is a guest artist at a Dead concert at Sullivan Stadium. Foxboro, Mass. At that time Dylan is recovering from a deep artistic crisis but this performance is an inspired one. The powerful electric guitars of Jerry Garcia and his bandmates suggest a sound of a thundering sky. With his beard and his baret Dylan looked like a stranded pirate. In a his poor nasal voice Dylan is singing rich poetry. Now that I have listened to it often, I realize that the song is so visual that it gives you an impression of a painting. And now I know why I like the song so much. Oil paintings of J.M.W. Turner come to my mind like this '*Slave Ship (Slavers Overthrowing the Dead and Dying - Typhon Coming)*'. Turner is the best artist I know in creating space and atmospheric effects in his paintings.

There is a lot of rain and wind (not so much sun) in the songs of Bob Dylan. He often uses weather images to create the mood of the song. You can find phrases in his songs like '*tonight as i stand in the rain*' to suggest loneliness. or '*the wind it was howlin' the snow was outrageous*' referring to hard circumstances. Alan Robock, professor in meteorology, gives many examples of Dylan's weather imagery, see:

<http://climate.envsci.rutgers.edu/pdf/DylanBAMS.pdf>

