

Duncan & Brady

Words & Music:
Traditional American

Covered by Bob Dylan, Leadbelly, Hoyt Axton and a host of others. Most pick & choose from the verses. Some omit the chorus altogether. David Hodge has an arrangement of this in the June 2007 issue of Acoustic Guitar. The venerable Mudcat Café provided the Leadbelly lyrics.

1. Version 1 by David Hodge

D Em A
Down in St. Louis at 12th & Carr,
D Em A7 D
Big Bill Brady was a-tendin' bar.
D Em A
In walked old Duncan, a star on his chest
D Em A7 D
Duncan said, "Brady, you're under arrest."

CHORUS:

D G A D G E7 A
Brady, why didn't you run? Brady, you should-a run.
D G A D
Brady, why didn't you run
D Em E7 A7
When you saw Old Duncan comin' in with his gun?

2. Version 2 by Bob Dylan

C
Twinkle, twinkle, little star
G
'Long comes Brady in his 'lectric car
G
Got a mean look right in his eye
C
Gonna shoot somebody jus' to watch him die
F C
He been on the job too long

Duncan, Duncan was tending the bar
'Long came Brady with his shiny star
"Duncan," said Brady, "you are under arrest"
Duncan shot a hole right in Brady's chest
He been on the job too long.

Old King Brady was a big, fat man
Doctor looked down, and took hold of his hand
reached for his pulse, the doctor said
"I believe to my soul, king Brady, you're dead"
He been on the job too long

Up upon the hillside, eight hundred at hand,
vases of roses standing around
[...] horses and a rubber-tired hack
bring him down to the graveyard, it won't bring him back.
He been on the job too long

When the women all heard King Brady was dead,
They went home and they'd be back in red [raggin' red?]
Slippin' and a-slidin', shuffelin' down the street,
In their big mother hubbards and their stockin' feet.
He been on the job too long

"Brady, Brady, Brady, you know you done wrong
breakin' in here when this game's goin' on
Bustin' down the window, tearin' down the door
Now you lyin' dead on the barroom floor
You been on the job too long."

Twinkle, twinkle, little star
'Long comes Brady in his 'lectric car
Got a mean look in his eye
Gonna shoot somebody jus' to watch him die
He been on the job too long.
G C
He been on the job too long.

3. Version 3 by Leadbelly

Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, little star
Up comes Brady in a 'lectric car
Got a mean look all 'round his eye
Gonna shoot somebody jus' to see them die

Duncan, Duncan was tending the bar
In walked Brady with a shining star
And Brady says, "Duncan you are under arrest
And Duncan shot a hole in Brady's breast.

Brady, Brady carried a '45,
Said it would shoot half a mile,
Duncan had a '44
That what laid Mr. Brady so low.

Brady fell down on the barroom floor,
"Please Mr. Duncan don' shoot me no more
Women all cryin, ain't it a shame,
Shot King Brady, goin' shoot him again.

"Brady, Brady, Brady, you know you done wrong
Walkin' in the room when the game was goin' on
Knockin down windows, breakin' down the door
Now you lyin' dead on the grocery [barroom] floor.

Women all heard that Brady was dead,
Goes back home and they dresses in red.
Come a snifflin' and a sighin' down the street,
In their big mother hubbards and their stockin' feet.

Note: Leadbelly omitted the first verse; others have added the chorus:

'Cause he been on the job too long.

4. Version 4 by Leadbelly

Duncan, Duncan was tending the bar,
In walked Brady with a shining star,*
And Brady says, "Duncan you are under arrest,"
And Duncan shot a hole in Brady's breast.

Brady, Brady carried a '45,
Said it would shoot half a mile,
Duncan had a '44
That what laid Mr. Brady so low.

Brady fell down on the bar-room floor,
"Please Mr. Duncan don' shoot me no more,"
Women all cryin, ain't it a shame,
Shot King Brady, goin' shoot him again.

"Brady, Brady, Brady, you know you done wrong,
Walkin' in the room when the game was goin' on,
Knockin down windows, breakin' down the door,
Now you lyin' dead on the grocery floor.

Women all heard that Brady was dead,
Goes back home and they dresses in red.
Come a snifflin' and a sighin' down the street,
In their big mother hubbards and their stockin' feet.

or [Up drives Brady in his 'lectric car]