

Alice's Restaurant Massacre

(1966)

di Arlo Guthrie

Periodo: La ricostruzione e il boom economico (1946-1966)

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You can get anything you want at Alice's
Restaurant
You can get anything you want at Alice's
Restaurant
Walk right in it's around the back
Just a half a mile from the railroad track
You can get anything you want at Alice's
Restaurant

Now it all started
two Thanksgivings ago, was on -
two years ago on
Thanksgiving,
when my friend
and I went up
to visit Alice at the restaurant,
but Alice doesn't live
in the restaurant, she lives in the
church nearby the restaurant,
in the bell-tower,
with her husband Ray
and Fasha the dog.
And livin' in the bell tower like that,
[they got a lot of
room downstairs where
the pews used to be in.
Havin' all that room,
seein' as how they took out
all the pews, they decided that they didn't
have to take out their garbage
for a long time.

We got up there,
we found all the garbage in there,
and we decided it'd be
a friendly gesture
for us
to take the garbage down
to the city dump.
Sowe took the half a ton of garbage,
put it in the back of a red VW
microbus, took shovels and rakes and
implements
of destruction and headed
on toward the city dump.

Well we got there
and there was a big sign and a chain across
across the dump saying, "Closed on
Thanksgiving."
And we had never heard of a dump
closed on Thanksgiving before,

and with tears in our eyes we drove off
into the sunset looking
for another place to put the garbage.

We didn't find one.
Until we came to a side road,
and off the side of the
side road there was
another fifteen foot cliff
and at the bottom of the
cliff there was
another pile of garbage.
And we decided
that one big pile
is better than two little piles,
and rather than bring that one up we
decided to throw our's down.

That's what we did,
and drove back to the church,
had a thanksgiving
dinner that couldn't be beat,
went to sleep and didn't get up
until the
next morning,
when we got a phone
all from officer Obie.
He said,
"Kid,
we found your name
on an envelope at the bottom
of a half
a ton of
garbage, and just wanted to know
if you had any
information about it."
And I said,
"Yes, sir, Officer Obie,
I cannot tell a lie,
I put that envelope
under that garbage."

After speaking to Obie for about
fourty-five minutes
on the telephone we
finally arrived at the truth
of the matter and said that we had
to go down
and pick up the garbage,
and also had to go down and speak
to him at the
police officer's station.

So we got in the red VW microbus
with the
shovels and rakes and
implements of destruction
and headed on toward the
police officer's station.

Now friends, there was only
one or two things that Obie
coulda done at
the police station,
and the first was he could have
given us
a medal for
being so brave and honest on the telephone,
which wasn't very likely,
and we didn't expect it,
and the other thing was
he could have bawled us out
and told us never to be see
driving garbage around
the vicinity again,
which is what we expected,
but when we got
to the police officer's station
there was a third possibility
that we hadn't even counted upon,
and we was
both immediately arrested.
Handcuffed.
And I said
"Obie, I don't think I
can pick up the garbage with these handcuffs
on."
He said, "Shut up, kid.
Get in the back of the patrol car."

And that's what we did,
sat in the back of the patrol car and drove
to the
quote Scene of the Crime unquote.
I want tell you about the town of
Stockbridge, Massachusetts,
where this happened here,
they got three stop
signs, two police officers,
and one police car,
but when we got to the
Scene of the Crime there was
five police officers and three
police cars,
being the biggest crime
of the last fifty years,
and everybody wanted to
get in the newspaper story about it.
And they was using up all kinds of
cop equipment that
they had hanging around the police officer's
station.

They was taking plaster tire tracks,

foot prints, dog smelling prints, and
they took twenty seven eight-by-ten
colour glossy photographs with circles
and arrows and a paragraph
on the back of each one explaining what each
one was to be used as evidence
against us.
Took pictures
of the approach,
the getaway,
the northwest corner
the southwest corner and that's not to
mention the aerial photography.

After the ordeal, we went back to the jail.
Obie said he was going to put
us in the cell. Said,
"Kid, I'm going to put you in the cell,
I want your
wallet and your belt." And I said,
"Obie, I can understand you wanting my
wallet so I don't have any money
to spend in the cell, but what do you
want my belt for?" And he said,
"Kid, we don't want any hangings."
I said, "Obie, did you think
I was going to hang myself
for littering?"
Obie said he was making sure,
and friends Obie was,
cause he took out the toilet seat so
I couldn't hit myself over the head
and drown, and he took
out the toilet paper so
I couldn't bend the bars roll out the - roll
the
toilet paper out the window,
slide down the roll and have an escape.

Obie was making sure,
and it was about four or five hours
later that Alice
(remember Alice?
It's a song about Alice),
Alice came by and with a few
nasty words to Obie on the side,
bailed us out of jail,
and we went back
to the church,
had a another thanksgiving dinner
that couldn't be beat,
and didn't get up until
the next morning,
when we all had to go to court.

We walked in, sat down,
Obie came in with the twenty seven eight-by-ten
colour glossy pictures
with circles and arrows
and a paragraph on the back

of each one, sat down.
an came in said, "All rise."
We all stood up,
and Obie stood up
with the
twenty seven eight-by-ten
colour glossy
pictures,
and the judge walked in sat down
with a seeing eye dog,
and he
sat down, we sat down.
Obie looked at the seeing eye dog,
and then at the
twenty seven eight-by-ten colour
glossy pictures
with circles and arrows
and a paragraph on the back
of each one,
and looked at the seeing eye dog.
And then
at twenty seven eight-by-ten colour
glossy pictures with circles
and arrows and a paragraph
on the back of each one
and began to cry,
'cause Obie came to
the realization that it was
a typical case of American
blind justice,
and there wasn't nothing he could do
about it, and the
judge wasn't going to look at
the twenty seven eight-by-ten
colour glossy
pictures with
the circles and arrows
and a paragraph on the back of e
ach one explaining
what each one was to be used
as evidence against us.
And we was fined \$50
and had to pick up the garbage
in the snow, but thats not
what I came to tell you about.

Came to talk about the draft.

They got a building
down New York City,
it's called Whitehall Street,
where you walk in,
you get injected,
inspected, detected, infected,
neglected and selected.
I went down to get
my physical examination one
day, and I walked in,
I sat down, got good and drunk
the night before, so
I looked and felt my best when

I went in that morning.
'Cause I wanted to
look like the all-American kid
from New York City,
man I wanted, I wanted
to feel like the all-,
I wanted to be the all American kid
from New York,
and I walked in, sat down,
I was hung down, brung down,
hung up, and all
kinds o' mean nasty ugly things.
And I waked in and sat down
and they gave
me a piece of paper, said,
"Kid, see the phsychiatrist,
room 604."

And I went up there,
I said, "Shrink, I want to kill.
I mean, I wanna, I
wanna kill. Kill.
I wanna, I wanna see,
I wanna see blood and gore and
guts and veins in my teeth.
Eat dead burnt bodies.
I mean kill, Kill,
KILL, KILL."
And I started jumpin up and down
yelling, "KILL, KILL,"
and he started jumpin up and down
with me
and we was both jumping up and down
yelling, "KILL, KILL."
And the sargent came over,
pinned a medal on me,
sent me down the hall,
said, "You're our boy."

Didn't feel too good about it.

Proceeded on
down the hall gettin more
injections, inspections,
detections, neglections
and all kinds of stuff
that they was doin' to me
at the thing there,
and I was there for two hours,
three hours,
four hours,
I was there for a long time

going through all kinds
of mean nasty
ugly things
and I was just having
a tough time there,
and they was
inspecting, injecting
every single part of me,

and they was leaving no
part untouched.
Proceeded through,
and when I finally came to the see
the last man,
I walked in, walked in sat down
after a whole big thing there,
and I walked up and said,
"What do you want?" ùHe said, "Kid, we only
got
one question.
Have you ever been arrested?"

And I proceeded to tell him
the story of the
Alice's Restaurant Massacre,
with full orchestration
and five part harmony
and stuff like that and all
the phenome...
- and he stopped me right there
and said,
"Kid, did you ever
go to court?"

And I proceeded to tell him
the story
of the twenty seven eight-by-ten
colour glossy pictures
with the circles and arrows
and the paragraph on
the back of each one,
and he stopped me right there
and said, "Kid, I want
you to go and sit down on that bench
that says Group W
NOW kid!!"

And I, I walked over to the,
to the bench there,
and there is, Group W's
where they put you if
you may not be moral enough
to join the army after
committing your special crime,
and there was
all kinds of mean nasty ugly
looking people on the bench there.
Mother rapers.
Father stabbers.
Father rapers the bench next to me!
And they was mean and nasty
and ugly
and horrible crime-type guys
sitting on the
bench next to me.
And the meanest,
ugliest, nastiest one,
the meanest
father raper of them all,
was coming over to me

and he was mean 'n' ugly
'n' nasty 'n' horrible
and all kind of things
and he sat down next to me
and said, "Kid, whad'ya get?"
I said, "I didn't get nothing,
I had to pay
\$50 and pick up the garbage."
He said,
"What were you arrested for, kid?"
And I said,
"Littering."
And they all moved away from me o
n the bench
there,
and the hairy eyeball
and all kinds of mean nasty things,
till I
said,
"And creating a nuisance."
And they all came back,
shook my hand,
and we had a great time
on the bench, talkin about crime,
mother stabbing,
father raping,
all kinds of groovy things
that we was talking about
on the bench.
And everything was fine,
we was smoking cigarettes
and all kinds of
things, until the Sargeant came over,
had some paper in his hand,
held it up and said.

"Kids, this-piece-of-paper's-got-47-words-
37-sentences-58-words-we-wanna-
know-details-of-the-crime-time-
of-the-crime-and-any-other-kind-
of-thing-
you-gotta-say-pertaining-to-
and-about-the-crime-
I-want-to-know-arresting-
officer's-name-and-any-other-kind-
of-thing-you-gotta-say",
and talked for
forty-five minutes
and nobody understood
a word that he said, but we had
fun filling out the forms
and playing with the pencils
on the bench there,
and I filled out
the massacre with
the four part harmony,
and wrote it
down there, just like it was,
and everything was fine
and I put down the
pencil, and I turned over

the piece of paper, and there,
there on the
other side,
in the middle of the other side,
away from everything else on
the other side, i
n parentheses, capital letters,
quoted, read the
following words:

("KID, HAVE YOU REHABILITATED YOURSELF?")

I went over to the
sargent, said, "Sargeant,
you got a lot a damn gall to
ask me if I've rehabilitated myself,
I mean, I mean,
I mean that just, I'm
sittin' here on the bench,
I mean I'm sittin here on the
Group W bench
'cause you want to know if
I'm moral enough join the army,
burn women,
kids, houses and villages
after bein' a litterbug."
He looked at me and
said, "Kid, we don't like your kind,
and we're gonna send you fingerprints
off to Washington."

And friends, somewhere
in Washington enshrined
in some little folder, is a
study in black and white of my fingerprints.
And the only reason I'm
singing you this song now is cause
you may know somebody in a similar
situation, or you may be in a similar
situation,
and if your in a
situation like that there's
only one thing you can do
and that's walk into
the shrink wherever you are ,
just walk in say "Shrink,
You can get
anything you want,
at Alice's restaurant."
And walk out.
You know, if
one person,
just one person does it
they may think he's really sick and
they won't take him.
And if two people, two people do it,
in harmony,
they may think they're
both faggots and they won't take
either of them.
And three people do it, three,

can you imagine,
three people walking in
singin a bar of Alice's Restaurant
and walking out.
They may think it's an
organization.
And can you,
can you imagine fifty people a day,
I said
fifty people a day
walking in singin a bar of Alice's Restaurant
and
walking out.
And friends they may thinks
it's a movement.

And that's what it is ,
the Alice's Restaurant Anti-Massacre
Movement, and
all you got to do to join
is sing it the next time
it come's around on the
guitar.

With feeling.
So we'll wait for it
to come around on the guitar,
here and
sing it when it does.
Here it comes.

You can get anything you want,
at Alice's Restaurant
You can get anything you want,
at Alice's Restaurant
Walk right in it's around the back
Just a half a mile from
the railroad track
You can get anything you want,
at Alice's Restaurant

That was horrible. If you want
to end war and stuff
you got to sing loud.
I've been singing this song now
for twenty five minutes.
I could sing it
for another twenty five minutes.
I'm not proud... or tired.

So we'll wait till
it comes around again,
and this time with four part
harmony and feeling.

We're just waitin' for it
to come around is what we're doing.

All right now.

You can get anything you want, at Alice's

Restaurant
Excepting Alice
You can get anything you want, at Alice's
Restaurant
Walk right in it's around the back

Just a half a mile from the railroad track
You can get anything you want, at Alice's
Restaurant

Da da da da da da dum
At Alice's Restaurant

Informazioni

"Alice's Restaurant Massacree" (comunemente chiamata Alice's Restaurant) è la più famosa canzone di Arlo Guthrie. È una canzone che racconta una storia, basata su avvenimenti veramente accaduti, che dura 18 minuti e 20 secondi ed occupa infatti l'intera facciata A dell'album di debutto di Arlo Guthrie, del 1967, anch'esso intitolato Alice's Restaurant.

Arlo Guthrie la presentò a Woodstock nel 1966.