

Corrido of the Salvation Army Collapse

sung to the tune of Bob Dylan's "Forever Young"

This tragic ballad was written in the Mexican corrido style by the Corrido Songwriting Workshop class hosted by the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on June 28, 2018. The workshop instructor was Juan Días of Sones de México Ensemble. This program was sponsored in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



1. It happened in Philadelphia
In late Spring, under the sun
June 5th of twenty-thirteen
The wall fell. Six lives were done.
2. Griff was a shady contractor,
And a cheap code violator.
Ron, a rubber stamp inspector
Sean, a stoned crane operator.
3. Said the owner of the building
—“Wall must come down brick-by-brick
Ron’s has failed to see the peril
If Sean knocks it down too quick.”
4. Griffin would not hear the warning
With his bid cut to the bone.
He preferred to do it cheaper,
And he would not use his dome.
5. —“Demolition will be done,
Or else my name is not Griff!”
Sean told him “You are the boss,
(But) first I must finish my spliff.”
6. The wrecking ball was released
Knocking this precarious wall
On Salvation Army’s roof
Six were buried in the fall.
7. And when Ronald heard the news
His poor conscience could not rest.
Wretched by guilt and tribulation
Put a bullet in his chest.
8. Vultures circle Market Street
As the moon silently wanes.
Sean is serving time in jail;
Griffin sits tied up in chains.

