

Marc Almond, The Gambler

On a dark night in a lost hour
In a town built from neon and chrome
Where Las Vegas seeks the desert
In an old broken down casino
There the gambler slapped his money down
Dirty dollars one hundred or more
Placed his last bet on a poker game
Crossed his heart for the winning score

But the players at the table
Two men of the phantom creed
Seemed to play with sombre purpose
Than a reason and pure greed
And the gambler felt his back freeze
And fear brushed his ageing brow
For he'd seen those men before in his dreams
Here they sat before him now

And the one smoothed back his black hair
With a comb slicked by brylcream and grease
Flipped the cards with a flippancy
Of a wily and slippery ease
With his sharp suit shade of lilac
On a shuffle he made the cards sing
Gold studs and menthol cigarettes
Rubies set in a skull ring

And the other of the clergy
With a colour and robe of pale ivory
Silver grey at the temples
And a smile that was stern and was kindly

Jack of hearts lead, wait for aces
Became faces of family and friends
Until the deck showed him a picture
Of his life from beginning to end
Reverend Life he flipped an ace
And the gambler felt blood in his heart
For he knew this was the game of games
He would need all the Reverend's heart

Anger, lust and gluttony
The gambler seems hit hard
Each failure and each feature
Mapped out in the slippery cards
Greasy Mr.D. flashed a winning grin
And stood facing Reverend Life
The Reverend paled as he saw the score
The gambler felt pain as a knife

His troubles, tribulations
Revelations and regrets
A wife, a child, a fight to trial
Turned by the hand of death
And the gambler saw his hand stained
with the blood of his family ties
And with the yellow smile of Mr.D.
In his mind he crumples and dies

And these two great men from different worlds
Faced each other and shook of hands
The reverend shrugged & "ah well next time" &
And departed for heaven's land

And the flames leapt and the soul screamed
And the cards scattered round the room
And life is always a gamble
A game from the cradle to tomb

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