

Townes Van Zandt, Talkin' Karate Blues

by Townes Van Zandt

Well, I ain't very big for twentyone
and it seems I never could have any good clean fun
cause every time I'd go outside some great big bully'd come along
he'd hit me in the face and he'd knock to the ground
and he'd start kickin' me all around
and that ain't exactly fair, friends, that's wrong.

So I got me a paper the other night
and I crawled up on the sofa and I turned on the light
and flipped through the pages till I found the classified ads.
Said, "take karate from Lee Hung Chow;
man, make your first appointment now
this course is guaranteed to make you bad."

Well, the next day I drove to the address
by japanese design I was really impressed
it looked like a regular house of the rising sun.
I walked inside, I was all alone
I had a nervous feeling down in my bones
I was kind of sorry I'd ever even come.

Then a giant jap came through the door
he must have been about seven foot four
and he looked like he's prone to easy aggrevation.
He said, "Lee Hung Chow, Ah kee dung"
that's japanese for fee fie foo fum
I tried to explain my entire situation.

He said, "Number one course, yankee, self defence,
twohundred dollars and twentyfive cents";
I said "What's the twentyfive cents for?" and he said, "Repairs."
I said, "Repairs to what?";, and he said "To you";
and I thought to myself "Man, that won't do";
felt about a half inch tall under that ol' slender stare

Ah, you think he was yellow...

I said, "I believe I better go check another place";
he said, "Ha so, Yankee don't like my race";
I said, "Now, there's a mistake, man, and that's true;
I've been for you you japanese all along
you japanese just can't do no wrong
and I thought you got mighty dirty deal in World War II.";

Well, he grabbed me by the hand and gave a heave
I figured there's a pretty good time to leave
before he had a chance to do me any definite harm.
But my plan worked out in the end, you see,
now no bully is gonna pick on me
who's gonna hit a fellow with just one arm?