



JANUARY FEATURED SONG

BACK TO BACK, BELLY TO BELLY

by Paul Cooper

It might be considered unusual to start the new year with a song about zombies, but this one has special significance for me. In about 1959, when my Dad brought home our first Hi-Fi record player – a little RCA in a blonde cabinet on spindly legs, the first two LP albums he bought were *The Kingston Trio at the Hungry I* and *Harry Belafonte at Carnegie Hall*. I was hooked from that point on. I wanted to do nothing but play folk music for the rest of my life. *Zombie Jamboree* was one of the more notable songs on the Kingston Trio's album. Dave Guard tells about this song in the introduction to their rendition, which you can hear at <https://youtu.be/p4k5XftdTMs>, or on the HFMS Audio Archive page at http://www.houstonfolkmusic.org/HFS_Audio_Archive.html.

ZOMBIE JAMBOREE

C G7 C

Zombie Jamboree took place in a New York cemetery. (*Where?*)

G7 C

Zombie Jamboree took place in Long Island cemetery.

F G7 C

Zombies from all parts of the island – some of them are great Calypsonians.

F C G7 C

And since the season was *carneval* they all got together in bacchanal.

A' what you doin'?

Chorus:

F C G7 C

Back to back, belly to belly, well I don't give a damn 'cause I done dead already.

F C G7 C

Back to back, belly to belly at the Zombie Jamboree.

One female zombie wouldn't behave.

She say she want me for a slave.

In the one hand she's holding a quart of wine,
in the other she is pointing that she'll be mine.

Well, believe me folks, yes I had to run.

The husband of a zombie ain't no fun.

I said "Oh, no my turtle dove,
that old bag o' bones I cannot love.

Chorus

Right then and there she raise her feet.

She said I'm going to catch you now my sweet.

I'm gonna make you call me sweetie pie. I said, "Oh, no get back, you lie."

I may be lyin' but you will see. After you kiss this dead zombie. (*Bla-a-h!*)

I never had such a horror in me life. Can you imagine me with a zombie wife? (*Yes!*)

Chorus



Keith Morrison, *Zombie Jamboree*, 1988, oil on canvas, Smithsonian American Art Museum