

# CARRIE NEWCOMER

LIVE AT THE BUSKIRK-CHUMLEY THEATER  
WITH FRIENDS





**Carrie Newcomer**  
**Live at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater**

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**Engineered and Mixed by David Weber**  
Executive Producer - Robert Meitus





### **Three Feet or So**

When I'm weary lost or sad,  
Overwhelmed or just fed up,  
I say grace for what I have.  
And most the time that is enough.

We are body, skin and bones,  
We're all the loss we've every known,  
What is gone is always near,  
We're all the love that brought us here.

Chorus: And the things that have saved us  
Are still here to save us.  
Its not out there somewhere  
Its right here, its right here.

If I start by being kind,  
Love usually follows right behind.  
It nods its head and softly hums  
Saying "Honey that's the way it's done."

We don't have to search for love,  
Wring our hands and wring our hearts,  
All we have to do is know  
The love will find us in the dark

Chorus: And the things that have saved us  
Are still here to save us.  
Its not out there somewhere  
Its right here, its right here.

I can't change the whole world.  
But I can change the world I know,  
What's within three feet or so.

We are body, skin and bones,  
We're all the love we've every known,  
When I don't know what is right,

I hold it up into the Light.  
I hold it up into the Light.  
I hold it up into the Light.

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## **Lean In Toward the Light**

Winter is the oldest season,  
But quietly beneath the snow,  
Seeds are stretching out and reaching,  
Faithful as the morning glow.

Carry nothing but what you must.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
Let it go, shake off the dust.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
Today is now, tomorrow beckons.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
Keep practicing resurrection.

The shadows of this world will say,  
There's no hope why try anyway?  
But every kindness large or slight,  
Shifts the balance toward the light.

Waters wind and open wide.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
Don't just walk when you can fly.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
When justice seems in short supply.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
Let beauty be your truest guide.

The shadows of this world will say,  
There's no hope why try anyway?  
But every kindness large or slight,  
Shifts the balance toward the light.

The prayer I pray at eventide.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
All left undone be put aside.  
Lean in toward the Light.

And when forgiveness is hard find.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
Help me to a least to be kind.  
Lean in toward the Light.  
Lean in toward the Light.

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## **The Season of Mercy**

*This song began as a poem written while traveling on a train from Berlin to Hannover Germany.*

Traveling north  
Tall straight pines,  
Ghost white birch,  
On the Hannover Line.

Red tile roofs,  
A lone blue kite,  
It's barely tethered,  
In the silver light.

Its the time of memory  
The season of mercy.  
Following out the thread,  
Humming the tune in my head  
Just out of reach,  
Always out of reach.

Entering radio silence.  
In a train car of sound.  
Two dark eyed children,  
Look up and then down.

You buy a strong coffee,  
I consider the miles,  
Will I be remembered,  
As the woman who smiled.

Its the time of memory  
The season of mercy.  
Following out the thread,  
Humming the tune in my head  
Just out of reach,  
Always out of reach.

How much did I miss or forget to remember,

Here at the edge of November,  
With all we've gained and lost.  
Do I love my life enough to brave it,  
Do I love my life enough to save it,  
Where does this train stop.

A red tail hawk,  
Makes a perfect arc.  
A silent owl,  
Glides in the dark.

The car fills with light,  
That was all that it took.  
It was already there  
Before I thought to look.

Chorus: It the time of memory  
The season of mercy.  
Following out the thread,  
Humming the tune in my head  
Just out of reach,  
Always out of reach.  
Always out of reach.

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## **The Beautiful Not Yet**

Spring is humming,  
Bits of something,  
A melody the simple part,  
A song that I once knew by heart.

Juniper, wild indigo,  
Foxglove, lupine, Queen Ann's lace,  
Will be coming any day,

The restlessness,  
The quickening,  
The almost but  
Not yet.

Muddy boots, last year's leaves  
Every spring that came before,  
All they were and something more.

The restlessness,  
The quickening,  
The almost but  
Not yet.

Do you see, do you see, do you see it  
Take a breath,  
Oh, the restlessness,  
The beautiful not yet.

There's a stirring,  
There's sweetness,  
At the edge of in between.  
I feel it nearly trembling.

The restlessness,  
The quickening,  
The almost but

Not yet.

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## **A Shovel is a Prayer**

A shovel is a prayer  
To the farmer's foot,  
When he steps down  
And the soft earth gives way.  
A baby is a prayer  
When its finally asleep.  
A whispered, "Amen"  
At the end of the day.

And a friend is a prayer  
When they bring over soup,  
When they laugh at your jokes,  
And they don't ask for proof.  
It's a song that you sing,  
When you are alone,  
When you're weary or lonely  
Or that far from home.

For all your searching  
There's nothing to do.  
What you've been looking for  
Is looking for you.

I'm the prodigal daughter,  
You're the dissonant son.  
We've been washed in rainwater,  
We're the fortunate ones.  
On the other side of midnight  
Just before the dawn,  
You can feel it coming up  
When the long night is done.

Its as heavy as grief  
And its weightless as smoke.  
Its the dream you forgot,  
Its the letter you wrote,  
Its the first birds of morning

That sound like a hymn,  
Throw open the windows and  
Let the light in.

I'm a wayfaring stranger,  
You're Indiana Jones,  
We are Gracie and George,  
We're Watson and Holmes.  
The air is filled with angels  
There's no devil to outrun.  
Just sigh and kiss the ground  
When the long night is done.

Its a collar turned up,  
A kiss on the forehead,  
A string and two cans  
Its the last thing you said.  
It's a hunch that you follow,  
A light in the dark,  
An idiot check,  
Its a balm for your heart.

For all you searching  
There's nothing to do.  
What you've been looking for  
Is looking for you.

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## **You Can Do This Hard Thing**

There at the table  
With my head in my hands.  
A column of numbers  
I just could not understand.  
You said "Add these together,  
Carry the two,  
Now you."

Chorus: You can do this hard thing.  
You can do this hard thing.  
Its not easy I know,  
But I believe that its so.  
You can do this hard thing.

At a cold winter station  
Breathing into our gloves.  
This would change me forever  
Leaving for God know's what.  
You carried my bags,  
You said "I'll wait  
For you."

You can do this hard thing.  
You can do this hard thing.  
Its not easy I know,  
But I believe that its so.  
You can do this hard thing.

Late at night I called,  
And you answered the phone.  
The worst it had happened,  
And I did not want to be alone.  
You quietly listened,  
You said "We'll see this thru."

You can do this hard thing.

You can do this hard thing.  
Its not easy I know,  
But I believe that its so.  
You can do this hard thing.

Here we stand breathless  
And pressed in hard times.  
Hearts hung like laundry  
On backyard clothes lines.  
Impossible just takes  
A little more time.

From the muddy ground  
Comes a green volunteer.  
In a place we thought barren  
New life appears.  
Morning will come whistling  
Some comforting tune,  
For you.

You can do this hard thing.  
You can do this hard thing.  
Its not easy I know,  
But I believe that its so.  
You can do this hard thing.

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## Sanctuary

*This song was written after a conversation with my friend Parker J. Palmer. I asked him, "What can we do when we are personally or politically heartbroken?" He responded, "We take sanctuary. We gather with those we love, in places like Brown Chapel. We remember, we share stories or we sit in silence until we can go on."*

Will you be my refuge,  
My haven in the storm,  
Will you keep the embers warm,  
When my fire's all but gone?  
Will you remember,  
And bring me sprigs of rosemary,  
Be my sanctuary,  
'Til I can carry on  
Carry on  
Carry on.

This one knocked me to the ground,  
This one dropped me to my knees,  
I should have seen it coming,  
But it surprised me.

Will you be my refuge,  
My haven in the storm,  
Will you keep the embers warm,  
When my fire's all but gone?  
Will you remember,  
And bring me sprigs of rosemary,  
Be my sanctuary,  
'Til I can carry on  
Carry on  
Carry on.

In a state of true believers,  
On streets called us and them,  
Its gonna take some time,  
'Til the world feels safe again.

Will you be my refuge,  
My haven in the storm,  
Will you keep the embers warm,  
When my fire's all but gone?  
Will you remember,  
And bring me sprigs of rosemary,  
Be my sanctuary,  
'Til I can carry on  
Carry on  
Carry on.

You can rest here in Brown Chapel,  
Or with a circle of friends,  
Or quiet grove of trees,  
Or between two bookends.

Will you be my refuge,  
My haven in the storm,  
Will you keep the embers warm,  
When my fire's all but gone?  
Will you remember,  
And bring me sprigs of rosemary,  
Be my sanctuary,  
'Til I can carry on  
Carry on  
Carry on.

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## **Breathe In Breathe Out**

To live we learn what we love most,  
Embrace it all and hold it close .  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go.

To live is to love so many things,  
Fly on beautiful wax wings.  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go.

Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go.  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go, let it go.  
Breath in breath out, let it go, let it go.

I held anger like a coal,  
Burning hot but did not let go,  
With the thought that I could throw it at someone.  
Such a hard lesson to learn,  
My own hand was what got burned.  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, Let it go

Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go.  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go, let it go.  
Breath in breath out, let it go, let it go.

What is won is won,  
What is done is done  
Let it go  
What is real is real,  
What we feel we feel  
Then let go

I saw one candle in the night,  
Become a thousand lights.  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go.

Life is fleeting this I know,  
Short and draped in marigolds.  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go.

Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go.  
Breathe it in and breathe it out, let it go, let it go.  
Breath in breath out, let it go, let it go.

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## **The Work of Our Hands**

Today while it rained,  
I washed the jars,  
Then I lit a flame,  
Set the water to start.  
At the end of the day  
Lined up to cool and seal,  
Twelve pints of spiced peach jam,  
Twenty jars of dill beans canned,  
From an old recipe,  
That my mother gave to me,  
Because it good to put a little bit by,  
For when the late snows flies,  
All that love so neatly canned,  
By the work of our hands.

They lay hands on boards and bricks,  
And loud machines,  
With shovels and rakes,  
And buckets of soap they clean.  
And I believe that we should bless,  
Every shirt ironed and pressed,  
Salute the crews out on road,  
Those who stock shelves and carry loads,  
Whisper thanks to brooms and saws,  
Dirty boots and coveralls,  
Bow my head to the waitress and nurse,  
Tip my hat to farmer and clerk,  
All those saints with skillets and pans,  
And the work of of their hands.

Laid out on the counter,  
Pulled up out of hot water,  
So everyday, so faithful and true.

I make something barely there,  
Music is little more than air,  
So now every year,  
I'll put by tomatoes and pears.  
Boil the lids and wipe the lip,  
With a callused fingertip,  
And I swear by the winter ground,  
We'll open one and pass the thing around,  
Let the light catch the jar,  
Amber gold as a falling star.  
Its humble and physical,  
It's only love made visible,  
Yes now I understand,  
This is the work of our hands.

Words and Music By Carrie Newcomer



## **A Light in the Window**

Looking out at the night  
Beyond the driver's wheel,  
Curving hips made of snow  
In the winter fields.  
There's a house set way back  
Where a lamplight glows,  
Like star out in the cold,  
Filled with people I'll never know,  
Who left a light,  
Left a light in the window.

What would I change if  
The choice were mine?  
I was doing the best  
I knew at the time.  
And every door that opened  
And door that closed,  
All the things that made me grow,  
Sent me off down another road,  
Off to search for a light,  
For a light in the window.

Now what's old has already passed away  
But the new is too new  
to be born today.  
So I'm throwing out seeds  
On the winter snow,  
As a sharp wind begins to blow,  
Standing here on a new threshold,  
I can see a light,  
There's a light in the window..

The world is made of stone,  
And the world is made of glass.  
The world is made of light,  
And its moving very fast.

We pass from mystery to mystery  
So I won't lie  
I don't what happens  
When people die.  
But I hope I see you walking slow,  
Smiling wide as sunrise grows,  
I drop my map with a thousand folds,  
In the distance I see it glow,  
I can see a light,  
There's a light in the window.

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## **Cedar Rapids 10 AM**

A ceaseless wind blows without mercy,  
I pull my jacket tighter.  
These boots are old,  
But they're still trustworthy,  
To take me somewhere higher.

Will you come with me to the ridge top?  
Lay all your burdens bare,  
Right there,  
There.

I miss you like a typewriter,  
Long and far away.  
I love you like an embered fire,  
That's warmer than the blaze.

Will you come with me to the ridge top?  
Lay all your burdens bare,  
Right there,  
There.

Take away all the white noise,  
It getting hard to hear.  
Souls stretched as thin as tissue paper,  
Edged with cuts and tears.

Will you come with me to the ridge top?  
Lay all your burdens bare,  
Right there,  
There.

So much for all the chips we've earned.  
So much for all the things we've learned.  
So far it is still you and me.

You've always been a cup of coffee,  
You've always been the cream.  
You've always believed that I was better,  
Than I could ever dream.

Will you come with me to the ridge top?  
Lay all your burdens bare,  
Right there,  
There.

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## Help In Hard Times

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I am learning to walk with grace in the dark.  
I am learning to trust and to lead with my heart.  
When the old moon is gone into silence and sighs,  
Its the one and only time a new moon can rise.

Sometimes there is no reason, the moon waxes and wanes,  
It was the 100 year flood and you were in the way.  
Some things we find in daylight and we're grateful to know  
Some things we only learned where we did not want to go.

I can't tell you it will all turn out fine,  
But I know is there's help in hard times.

Bruised and bewildered I am looking out the door,  
Unsure of how to do what I've never done before.  
But I am not alone, with my questions and my fears,  
When the old moon is done, the new moon appears.

I'm inspired and troubled by the stories I have heard.  
In the blue light of evening all boundaries get blurred.  
And I believe in something better, and that love's the final word,  
And that there's still something whole and sacred in this world.

I can't tell you it will all turn out fine,  
But I know is there's help in hard times.

Sure it could, it could all be just fine  
But I know there is help in hard times.  
All I know is there's help in hard times.  
All I know is there's help in hard times.



## Room At the Table

Let our hearts not be hardened  
To those living in the margins,  
There is room at the table for everyone.  
This is where it all begins,  
This is how we gather in,  
There is room at the table for everyone.

Too long we've have wandered  
Burdened and undone.  
But there is room at the table for everyone.  
Let us sing the new world in,  
This is how is all begins,  
There is room at the table for everyone.

Chorus: There is room for us all,  
And no gift is too small,  
There is room at the table for everyone.  
There's enough if we share,  
Come on pull up a chair,  
There room at the table for everyone.

No matter who you are,  
No matter where you're from,  
There is room at the table for everyone.  
Here and now we can be,  
The beloved community,  
There is room at the table for everyone.

Chorus: There is room for us all,  
And no gift is too small,  
There is room at the table for everyone.  
There's enough if we share,  
Come on pull up a chair,  
There room at the table for everyone.

Let our hearts not be harden,  
To those living in the margins,

There is room at the table for everyone.  
This is how we gather in,  
There is room at the table for everyone.  
Room at the table for everyone.  
Room at the table for everyone.  
Room at the table for everyone.

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## **I Believe**

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I believe there are some debts that we never can repay  
I believe there are some words that you can never unsay  
And I don't know a single soul  
Who didn't get lost along the way.

I believe in socks and gloves knit out of soft grey wool,  
And that there's a place in heaven for those  
Who teach in public school.  
And I know I get some things right ,  
But mostly I'm a fool.

I Believe in a good strong cup of ginger tea,  
And all these shoots and roots will become a tree.  
All I know is I can't help but see  
all of this as so very holy.

I believe in jars of jelly put up by careful hands,  
I believe most folks are doing about the best they can,  
And I know there are some things that I will never understand.

I believe there's healing in the sound of your voice,  
And that a summer tomato is a cause to rejoice,  
And that following a song was never really a choice.  
Never really.

I believe in a good long letter written on real paper  
and with real pen,  
I believe in the ones I love and know I'll never see again,  
I believe in the kindness of strangers and the comfort of old  
friends,  
And when I close my eyes to sleep at night it's good to say,  
"Amen"

I believe that life is comprised of smiles and sniffles and tears,  
And in an old coat that still has another good year,  
And I know that I get scared some times  
but all I need is here.

I Believe in a good strong cup of ginger tea,  
And all these shoots and roots will become a tree,  
All I know is I can't help but see  
All of this as so very holy,

I believe.

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## Geodes

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You can't always tell one from another,  
And it's best not to judge a book by its tattered cover.  
I have found when I tried or looked deeper inside,  
What appears unadorned might be wondrously formed,  
You can't always tell but sometimes you just know.

Around here we throw geodes in our gardens,  
They're as common as the rain or corn silk in July.  
Unpretentious browns and grays the stain of Indiana clay,  
They're what's left of shallow seas glacial rock and mystery,  
And inside there shines a crystal bright as promise.

All these things that we call familiar,  
Are just miracles clothed in the common place.  
You'll see it if you try in the next stranger's eyes  
God walks around in muddy boots,  
Sometimes rags and that's the truth,  
You can't always tell, but sometimes you just know.

Some say geodes are made from pockets of tears,  
Trapped away in small places for years upon years.  
Pressed down and transformed, 'til the true self was born,  
And the whole world moved on, like the last notes of a song,  
A love letter sent without return address.

You can't always tell one from another,  
And it's best not to judge a book by its tattered cover.  
Now I don't open them to see folks around here just like me,  
We have come to believe there's hidden good in common things.  
You can't always tell but sometimes you just know.  
You can't always tell but sometimes you just know.



## Silver

Will you love me when we go silver  
When our ears and noses get bigger  
When Arthritis starts to nag  
And our best parts start to sag

Will you love me in reading glasses  
Kiss my neck and still make passes  
And our grandchildren we'll scandalize  
By holding hands and making eyes

Chorus: There is no real way of knowin'  
But if things keep goin' the way they're goin'  
I will promise you again  
I will be with you  
and we'll be the best of friends

Will you love me if I babble  
Let me win sometimes at scrabble  
Will you help me bare the load  
And be somebody I'm still proud to know

Chorus: There is no real way of knowin'  
But if things keep goin' the way they're goin'  
I will promise you again  
I will be with you  
and we'll be the best of friends

Will I still be what you need  
When I drive below posted speed  
Lay down like spoons in quiet wonder  
And love me years and days without number

Will you love me when life hurts

Wake me up if I fall asleep in church  
Sit beside me when evening comes  
And count our blessing one by one?

Chorus: There is no real way of knowin'  
But if things keep goin' the way they're goin'  
I will promise you again  
I will be with you  
and we'll be the best of friends

Will you love me when we go silver

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## **The Gathering of Spirits**

Chorus: Let it go my love my truest,  
Let it sail on silver wings.  
Life's a twinkling that's for certain,  
But it's such a fine thing.  
There's a gathering of spirits,  
There's a festival of friends,  
And we'll take up where we left off,  
When we all meet again.

I can't explain it. I couldn't if I tried,  
How the only things we carry,  
Are the things we hold inside.  
Like a day in out the open,  
Like the love we won't forget,  
Like the laughter that we started,  
And hasn't died down yet.

Chorus: Let it go my love my truest,  
Let it sail on silver wings.  
Life's a twinkling that's for certain,  
But it's such a fine thing.  
There's a gathering of spirits,  
There's a festival of friends,  
And we'll take up where we left off,  
When we all meet again.

Oh yah, now didn't we,  
And don't we make it shine.  
Aren't we standing in the center of  
Something rare and fine.  
Some glow like embers,  
Or light through colored glass,

Some give it all in one great flame,  
Throwing kisses as they pass.

Chorus: Let it go my love my truest,  
Let it sail on silver wings.  
Life's a twinkling that's for certain,  
But it's such a fine thing.  
There's a gathering of spirits,  
There's a festival of friends,  
And we'll take up where we left off,  
When we all meet again.

Just east of Eden,  
But there's heaven in our midst,  
And we're never really all that far,  
From those we love and miss.  
Wade out in the water,  
There's a glory all around,  
The wisest say, there's a 1000 ways,  
The kneel and kiss the ground.

Chorus: Let it go my love my truest,  
Let it sail on silver wings.  
Life's a twinkling that's for certain,  
But it's such a fine thing.  
There's a gathering of spirits,  
There's a festival of friends,  
And we'll take up where we left off,  
When we all meet again.

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## **If Not Now**

If not now, tell me when.  
If not now, tell me when.  
We may never see this moment  
Or place in time again.  
If not now, if not now, tell me when.

I see sorrow and trouble in this land.  
I see sorrow and trouble in this land.  
Although there will be struggle,  
we'll make the change we can.  
If not now, tell me when.

If not now, tell me when.  
If not now, tell me when.  
We may never see this moment  
Or place in time again.  
If not now, if not now, tell me when.

I may never see the healed land.  
I may never see the healed land.  
And yet we'll take the journey  
And walk it hand in hand.  
If not now, tell me when.

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Bridge We'll work it until it's done

Every daughter every son,  
Every soul that ever longed for something better,  
Something brighter.

It will take a change of heart for this to mend.  
It will take a change of heart for this to mend.  
But miracles do happen  
Every shining now and then.  
If not now, tell me when?

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