



CARRIE NEWCOMER

A GREAT WILD MERCY

A Great Wild Mercy - Credits and Lyrics

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Credits

Produced by Carrie Newcomer & David Weber

Engineered & Mixed by David Weber

Recorded and Mixed at Airtime Recording Studio, Bloomington, IN

Mastered by Steve Fallone & Greg Calbi at Sterling Sound NJ

Jordan Tice Vocal **Engineered** by Dave Sinko, Anthony da Costa at Camp Senia, Nashville, TN

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Executive Produced by Robert Meitus

Carrie Newcomer is a Taylor Guitars artist

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Musicians

Carrie Newcomer - acoustic guitar, harmony vocals on tracks 7, 9

Jim Brock - drums, percussion

Brittany Haas - violin, mandolin, banjo track 3

Paul Kowert - bass

Jordan Tice - guitars, banjo track 4, harmony vocal on track 1, 4, 6

Gary Walters - piano, Wurlitzer, organ

Siri Undlin - harmony vocal on tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

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Gratitude and Appreciation

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This album is dedicated to A Great Wild Mercy, wherever it is found.

A Great Wild Mercy

It feels like we've been sheltering under our umbrellas for a very long time. This is a song about being ready to put the umbrella down and step into the rain.

It was a summer storm that broke the heat,
She had a blue umbrella as she stepped into the street.

I saw her look up from beneath the brim,
Thought better of it and closed it up again.

The rain slipped down like uncheck tears,
The way that miracles arrive and then disappear.
I nodded as I watched her smile and walked away,
Like I'd just seen the finest prayer ever been prayed.

There's a big wide sky filled with stars
That feels so close but feels so far.
I'm tired of all the rage, tired of all the worry,
I'm ready for a great wild mercy,
A great wild mercy.

"May we all forgive" was tattooed on his arm,
Like a sign from God or a hit and run.
He handed me my coffee, he just poured,
May we all find the mercy we've been longing for.

There's a big wide sky filled with stars
That feels so close but feels so far.
I'm tired of all the rage, tired of all the worry,
I'm ready for a great wild mercy,
A great wild mercy.

Some of us are just born restless,
Dazzled by the hard and softness of things.
Sensing an ever present goodness,
Still circling on wings.

There is the news of the world and news of the heart,
Stories we tell parcel and part.
It will all unfold, the teller and the told,
The stories that'll heal us and the ones we let go.

There's a big wide sky filled with stars
There's a big wide sky filled with stars
That feels so close but feels so far.
I'm tired of all the rage, tired of all the worry,
I'm looking for some peace, trying not to hurry,
I'm leaning into something absolutely sturdy,
I'm ready for a great wild mercy.
A great wild mercy.
A great wild mercy.

Words and Music by Carrie Newcomer

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Start With A Stone

I wrote this with my friend, John McCutcheon. Starting with the natural world, living with an appreciation for the simplest of things, is a sound kind of wisdom and perhaps even good theology.

It was not in the bread
It was not in the wine,
It was not in the scroll
Or any one line.
It was not in the past
Or whatever comes next.
There it was in the places
I did not expect.

Start with a stone
The humblest of things,
From this relic of bedrock
Eternity springs.
Go back to the source
Go back to your home,
Heaven is waiting
But start with a stone.

I know it, I feel it
Like the laying of hands,
And suddenly, somehow
My whole world expands.
My vision is clear
The circle complete.
All that I needed
Right here at my feet.

Start with a stone
The humblest of things,
From this relic of bedrock
Eternity springs.
Go back to the source
Go back to your home,
Heaven is waiting
But start with a stone.

Walk for a while in your own skin.
This is the place where it all will begin.
Just take a breath, just take your time,
First you are human and then you're divine.

It all is a mystery
How this came to be,
From the tiniest spark
All the way here to me.
And through it all
As I've always suspected,
The past and the future
Are right here, are connected.

Start with a stone
The humblest of things,
From this relic of bedrock
Eternity springs.
Go back to the source
Go back to your home,
Heaven is waiting
But start with a stone.

Words and Music by John McCutcheon & Carrie
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Take More Time Cover Less Ground

The seed for this song was a quote from the contemplative Trappist monk, Thomas Merton.

I'm the old wind-up clock in an ancient tower
I'm a lone table lamp and the appointed hour
I'm what's never been named and is nameless still
I'm the echo that comes back, from the bottom of the well.

Let me rest in the arms of these tangle roots.
I've been wearing my longing like a backpack and boots.
Let me notice the wheels, how they rattle and turn.
How my life's filled with kindness that I didn't earn.

Time to pick it all up and to lay it back down,
Time to know what I seek has already been found.
Time to listen for what never made a sound.
Time to take more time and cover less ground.
Time to take more time and cover less ground.

I'm surprise how these days so quickly pass,
Not half empty or full, just a big ol' glass.
Some answers don't come, but its enough to ask.
Deep calls to deep, and vast calls to vast.

Time to pick it all up and to lay it back down,
Time to know what I seek has already been found.
Time to listen for what never made a sound.
Time to take more time and cover less ground.
Time to take more time and cover less ground.

When the light lets loose and the stars take a bow,
I'm grateful we're all safe and here for now,
And that love keeps us tethered somewhere
somehow.

Now in the season of come on home,
Slowing my life to the speed of my soul.
Now when the reason's been never more clear,
At the end of a hard but holy year.

Time to pick it all up and to lay it back down,
Time to know what I seek has already been found.
Time to listen for what never made a sound.
Time to take more time and cover less ground.
Time to take more time and cover less ground.

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Path Through The Evening Woods

For Parker and his little sister

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There are last year's leaves scattered on the ground,
Like countless letters of tan and brown,
I remember when they were drifting down,
As I walk this path through the evening woods.

There are muddy tracks of doe and fawn,
A flash of fox that was here and gone.
I can sense the souls of those who've passed on,
As I walk this path through the evening woods.

May I sing tonight like a whippoorwill,
As the sun sinks low behind the hill.
May I find some peace when the world goes still,
As I walk this path through the evening woods.

The trees draw a circle in the canopy
Like a cloud of ancestors gathering.
Nodding and smiling and whispering
On this path through the evening woods.

We were both like new roses on the stem,
And the world was still one big shining gem.
But oh we were so much younger then,
As we walked this path through the evening woods.

I was born to be a restless soul,
May I lean where love leads me to go,
May I be ever mindful of what I'll never know,
As I walk this path through the evening woods.

Potluck

I really loved writing this song with one of my favorite young writers, Siri Undlin. Siri and I had both recently read Roy Gay's luminous book "Inciting Joy" and loved his description of a potluck gathering where people brought their sorrows as well as their joys. We started talking about how potlucks are such a beautiful metaphor for truly welcoming community — people are welcomed just as they are, bringing their joys, their sorrows and sometimes a hot dish.

The plates are stacked,
The house is clean.
At least as close,
As I've ever seen.
Soup on the stove,
The record sings,
Sometime you gotta trust
Whatever people bring.

Just put it on the table
Next to the wine and beer.
Don't mind the mess,
Glad you're here.
Come in from the cold dark,
Pull up a chair.
Whatever you've brought on in,
It's welcome here.

Louise made those deviled eggs,
On the edge of a heart break.
Johnny picked up a bag of chips,
Because he had nothing at home to take.
Audrey brought all the kids,
With cookies as a bribe,
Paul hesitates at the door,
Before he finally walked inside.

Of all the troubles we carried around,
All the losses we can't seem to put down
It's a quiet mercy, we're saying grace,
Holding the soft light, juggling plates.

The kids are tired, the dog is asleep
Leftovers in hand and a hug when you leave.
Gravel steps and a slipper moon
The big dipper shines like a big ol silver spoon

Just put it on the table,
When the night is bright and clear,
Don't mind the mess,
Glad you were here.
May the meal go with you,
You're not alone,
As the heavens keep turning,
On the slow way home.
On the slow way home.

Words and Music by Carrie Newcomer and Siri
Undlin ©2023 Carrie Newcomer Music (BMI)

Singing in the Dark

I do take comfort in knowing that there is always someone singing vigil at the darkest hour of the night.

We gather in morning,
The darkest hour of night,
The darkest days of the winter,
Feeling for the light,
Sitting in the silence,
As all the world's asleep,
The monks of Gethsemane,
The watch they daily keep.

I am a wayfaring stranger,
Hungry for some grace,
I am a soul forever searching,
A pilgrim to this place,
I am here to meet whatever,
Is listening for me here,
While all the world is waiting,
At the turning of the year.

Singing in dark,
Calling up the day,
Joining with the voices,
Opening the way,
Sitting here in vigil,
Waiting for the spark,
That bursts into being,
Singing in the dark.

It's there at every hour,
It happens everywhere,
In the tenderest of times,
In faithful, common prayer,
Seen and unseen,
For the many by the few,
There is always someone,
Singing in the dark for you.

Singing in dark,
Calling up the day,
Joining with the voices,
Opening the way,
Sitting here in vigil,
Waiting for the spark,
That bursts into being,
Singing in the dark.

The prayer is never over,
The work is never done.
We all raise up our voices,
And our voices become one,
Voices become one,
Voices become one.

When we think that we are lost,
And out there on our own,
And the dawn is in the distance,
Still, we are not alone,
Heaven is right here,
If we open up our heart,
And join the far-flung choir,
That is singing in the dark

Singing in dark,
Calling up the day,
Joining with the voices,
Opening the way,
Sitting here in vigil,
Waiting for the spark,
That bursts into being,
Singing in the dark.

Words and Music by Carrie Newcomer and John
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A Book Of Questions

This song was inspired by reading a lovely poem by Jeanne Lohmann. I've never written a song because I had an answer, I've always written because I have a question.

Do you put honey in your tea,
Do you let it cool gradually,
Do you feel the strange wash of time and memory?
Have you made peace with your worst day,
Ever kissed in a busy café?
Are there things you feel, but you still don't know how to say?

Brief as the light on wheels of hay,
All that you've kept or was given away.
Questions that come before dark, at the end of a day.

Did you lose a lover or friend,
Was there a story that just had to end,
Did you finally learn what kept coming around again?
Did you work in a bookstore,
Are there things that you don't do anymore,
Ever watch an oncoming train or gathering storm?

Brief as the light on wheels of hay,
All that you've kept or was given away.
Questions that come before dark, at the end of a day.

Did you say yes, did you say no?
Was it true or just wasn't so?
Did you land hard or gracefully,
Was it not what you planned,
But right where you needed to be?

Have you ever made a grilled cheese,
Ever prayed down on your knees,
Did you ever love a place that you still had to leave?
Did you walk before you crawled,
Have a dog when you were small,
Did make it through but it was, such a close call?

Brief as the light on wheels of hay,
All that you've kept or was given away.
Questions that come before dark, at the end of a day.

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In The Shape Of A Perfect Arc

I want to rise and set like the sun and moon,
Not to late but not to soon,
Like a shooting star in the dark,
Whole life lived with an open heart,
Like a ball that's hit out of the park,
In the shape of a perfect arc.

I want to be a start from an ancient tree,
Growing up and down gratefully.
Like a wave lifting up out of the sea,
In the shape of a perfect arc,
In the shape of a perfect arc.

I believe in things unseen,
What's here and there and in-between.
I believe in things yet unsaid,
Like the coat that hangs on a wooden peg,
Like a bow that waits in a thunder head,
In the shape of a perfect arc.

I want to be a start from an ancient tree,
Growing up and down gratefully.
Like a wave lifting up out of the sea,
In the shape of a perfect arc,
In the shape of a perfect arc.

I want to open my arms and breathe,
Forgive the street that skinned my knees,
Like a dolphin leaping out of the sea,

I hope I set like the moon and sun,
With no hard feelings for anyone,
Like incense smoke drifting up,
A dam that breaks with a little luck,
Like light that's poured from cup to cup,
In the shape of a perfect arc.

I want to be a start from an ancient tree,
Growing up and down gratefully.
Like a wave lifting up out of the sea,
In the shape of a perfect arc,
In the shape of a perfect arc.
In the shape of a perfect arc.

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A Tissue Or Two (Love Holds Steady)

My mother believed
Among many things,
Baking soda and water
Could calm a bee sting.
That crackers and soup
Could heal fever and flu,
Cure the common cold
Or some heartbreaking news.

But mostly I recall
Her hand on my head
The smell of Vapor Rub
As she sat on the bed.
Love holds steady
And still rings true,
In a world where we all
Could use a tissue or two.

The rain fell hard
As we sat in that dive
You passed me a beer
And you told me you'd drive
Endings are tough,
But enough is enough
If I needed some help,
You'd stop by with your truck

But mostly I recall
Your hand on mine
Saying it's gonna be alright
But it's gonna take time
Yeah, love holds steady
And still rings true
In a world where we all
Could use a tissue or two

You never know when some flour and water
Or little bit of sweetness, is all the doctor ordered.
You never know how long a kindness might last,
Like a bell in the distance, or an echo from the past.

That's why I have crackers
And soup on the shelf,
Why I pack up a basket
And I bring it myself.
There's power in what passes
For humble and small,
Always shifting the balance
In spite of it all.

But mostly I recall
The counting of sheep
As the whole world went still
And I drifted to sleep.
Love holds steady
And still rings true,
In a world where we all
Could use a tissue or two.
Yeah, love holds steady
And still rings true,
In a world where we all
Could use a tissue or two.

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Another Day

Last night I awoke
I just couldn't sleep,
I'd read too much news
There was a dog on my feet.
Too much to remember,
or not finished yet
A list of new worries
And older regrets.

Let it go says my heart
It's too late and too dark,
This is just a chance to pray.
Let it go for now darlin'
Tomorrow is another day.

I've been looking for beauty
In these broken times,
By making some beauty
In the world that I find.
Some say it's no use,
It's too much to brave.
But I believe there's still
So much worth being saved.

Let it go says my heart
It's too late and too dark,
This is just a chance to pray.
Let it go for now darlin'
Tomorrow is another day.

Up on the roof is an old weathervane,
In the shape of a fish swinging toward change,
Let it go for now, let it go.

There are reasons to wonder
And witness to why,
Troubled times coming
No way to deny.
So, I'll lean into you
As you quietly dream,
And sense all that's right
Still here and unseen.

Let it go says my heart
It's too late and too dark,
This is just a chance to pray.
Let it go for now darlin'
Tomorrow is another day.
Let it go for now darlin'
Tomorrow is another day.

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