

CHERRY RED RECORDS
PRESENTS



*“DEEP IN THE DARK” is a heritage project, recorded and produced by Beau in England at TM Studios Derbyshire, Hertfordshire and Norfolk and The Way We Live’s studio in Lancashire.
All songs written by C J T Midgley and published by Cherry Red Songs
(except track 14, published by Ceedee Music).*

1 Rooks & Ravens (1981 electric original) 4.33

– inspired by the experience of John McCain (and others) as prisoners in North Vietnam during the Vietnam War; ironically mirrored in the 21st Century by the US’s own barbarisms at Guantanamo Bay detention camp...

...the prisons, the prisons, the prisons, the prisons were full, and the chains were all taken,
And silence was bought in the passage of time.
And the wolves on the hills howled for the forsaken
Who, painted in glory, came bonded and shaken;
Stood shackled and shambling and nailed to the vine
Like old friends of mine.

The sky lost its light to an overcast evening,
When criminal corporals stood spitting out pips.
And the rain pounded down on a sergeant whose dreaming
Seemed only to stretch to the stutter and screaming
Of the two Smith & Wessons that hung from his hips –
From the smile on his lips.

All the mirth and the mercy in slumber were sleeping
To no-one’s amazement, or even surprise.
And deep in the darkness the wails of the weeping

Lie drowned in the sound of the blue lightning leaping
Out from the dark of the Judge's blue eyes
That all mercy defies.

Oh, the circus parades in its bells and its leather.
Its clowns and its jugglers ride the trapeze.
And with smiles and with sentences tumbled together,
The honey pot glistens, the bear slips its tether
And all that is heard is the buzz of the bees
In the high galleries.

So the sentence is spoken with scarcely a quiver;
A few weighted words in the balance of trade.
And who will deny he suppresses a shiver?
Whilst ever the factory can fail to deliver,
The meat is marooned on the edge of the blade –
'Til an ace has been played.

So the lessons have ended, and the college stays shuttered,
And the churches have closed on the wayward divine;
On the solid gold statues and the dirges they muttered.
As they danced in the light of the candles that guttered,
The rooks and the ravens stayed hard to define
Like old friends of mine...

2 Speedbird (1982 electric forerunner) 4.09

– *the great-granddaddy of* “Fly The Bluebird”.

Right now the sky is turning into fire.
Right now the earth is turning into ash.
So slow the clouds are turning into cotton.
So slow the whip will lash...

So high will fly the supersonic bluebird.
So high will fly the dreams that keep us young.
So I will fly as high as any other.
So what will I become?

Have I the right to leave this place without a question or a word,
Left unsaid and left unheard?
And are these tears behind my eyes to make me blind or make me wise?
I can't see the difference...

So young, the little children we are bearing.
So young in whom to trust the world to come.
So strange, the world is theirs and yours no longer.
So strange to be so young.

So right to be the start and not the ending.
So right to be the one with life to come.
So slow in understanding one another.
So strange to be so young.

So can it be that they have learned to do more than sing along?
I do hope so!
Is it for them, or is it you to whom I bring this song?
Who knows?

Right now the sky is turning into fire.
Right now the earth is turning into ash.
So slow the clouds are turning into cotton.
So slow the whip will lash...

So high will fly the supersonic bluebird.
So high will fly the dreams that keep us young.
So I will fly as high as any other.
And what will I become?

3 The Simplest Of Things (1971 acetate) 3.19

– written before the first moon landing, and one of my Elektra audition songs.

He likes morning dew and evening skies
And ladybirds and butterflies,
And summer sun and winter snow
And valleys where the rivers flow.
He likes his pleasures of a simple kind,
For the simplest of things will tend to please a simple mind.

He likes corn a'blowing in the breeze
And Wensleydale and Cheshire cheese;
A simple fork and spoon and knife,
And a house where he can live his life.
He likes his pleasures of a simple kind,
For the simplest of things will tend to please a simple mind.

He likes a road where he can drive his car
And a shop to buy his Evening Star;
A pub to take his evening drink;
A crossword that will make him think.
He likes his pleasures of a simple kind,
For the simplest of things will tend to please a simple mind.

He wants an education grant,
He wants a heavy-water plant.
He wants the stars, he wants the Moon
And probably he'll get them soon.

He likes his pleasures of a simple kind,
For the simplest of things will tend to please a simple mind.

4 Here They Come (1981 electric forerunner) 2.26

– later recorded acoustically as “So Far Away”.

Come and see, come and join the boys in blue
As they march along so proud, attracting such a crowd
With their bayonets fixed and their rifles at the slope.
The nation’s mother’s sons, they fly the planes, they fire the guns
For you and me.

Come along, see the khaki on parade.
See the General salutes, see the highly polished boots
March along to the beat of the drum
Through the mud and through the rain. Will you ever see again
The friends you knew?

But the time will come for the boys’ return
With the broken limbs and the napalm burns
And expressions of sympathetic pride
And memorials to those who died...

And here they come, here they come down the street,
Not so many as before, their backs are tired, their feet are sore
And the music long since ceased to play.
But the sound will linger on of the comrades who have gone
Saying goodbye...

But the time will come for the boys’ return
With the broken limbs and the napalm burns
And expressions of sympathetic pride
And memorials to those who died...

And here they come, here they come down the street,
Not so many as before, their backs are tired, their feet are sore
And the music long since ceased to play.
But the sound will linger on of the comrades who have gone
Saying goodbye...
Saying goodbye...
Saying goodbye...
Saying goodbye...

5 The Part We Have To Play (1984 band original) 3.54

– conceived around the life and times of President Ronald Reagan.

We joined the theatre company before we learned to speak
And swept the stage for a so-called wage, and seven days a week

The talented were hungry as they struggled to improve.
The talentless were quietly rehearsing every move
And we all knew the part we had to play,
We all knew the part we had to play.

The press reported sadly across a tear-stained page
Their ringing lies that eulogise the passing of the sage.
And the gathering of the great and good, the humble and the wise,
Will celebrate and seal an actor-managers demise.
And we all know the part we have to play,
We all know the part we have to play.

Beneath the wistful twilight in the cold and swirling cloud
Where images are conjured and with magic are endowed,
The Grecians and the Avant-Garde so violently crossed swords
'Til one arose as principal and Chairman of the Boards;
Then we all knew the part we had to play,
We all knew the part we had to play.

And now the wind is blowing in the tragedy of death.
The cardboard castle still maintains the story of Macbeth.
But all this, plus integrity, is swiftly broken down
When Duncan is a P.T. Barnum three-ring circus clown
Who knows not the part he has to play,
Who knows not the part he has to play.

The Great Eccentric learns the lines he knows he has to rail;
But ultimately starring in a very different tale,
He thanks you for your confidence, and for playing by the rules.
You cannot understand the funny feeling we were fools.
And we all know the part we have to play,
We all know the part we have to play.

6 Singapore (1980 electric original) 3.43

– an atmospheric reflection on some rather less savoury colonialist attitudes and approaches...

“Pass the lady’s cape!” said I
To the rickshaw boy
As midnight kissed a sighing Singapore.
“Take us to the highway
Of spluttering champagne
And candles dancing over every door.”
And he smiled, and he said “Yessir”.

“Once more down the coast road;
Take us to the bay –
Let us see the fireboats nestle to the quay.
And you listen to me,

You rickshaw boy,
You see you keep your yellow eyes turned to the sea!"
And he smiled, and he said "Yessir".

"Take the lady's cape," said I.
"Let her body breathe
And let the wind have all that it reveals.
Let the whispered silver
From the China moon
Alight upon the gently rocking wheels."
And he smiled, and he said "Yessir".

"Pass the lady's cape," said I,
"You, rickshaw boy,
She's seen the sky but now she needs her comb.
Back up on the highway.
Take me back to Raffles
Then take her cape and take your sister home."
And he smiled, and he smiled,
And he smiled, and he said "Yessir".

7 Joseph & Amanda (1980) 3.20

– my one and only Christmas song!

And the tiny train was standing
Alone upon the rails,
And the model yacht was floating
And showing off her sails,
And the yellow bricks stood silent
Awaiting those who play
As the movement of the morning
Brought forth the welcome day.

And the sun crossed the horizon,
And through the window came
The first rays of the dawn
And Christmas once again.
And Joseph and Amanda
Both opened up their eyes,
As the movement of the morning
Made them realise...

That the room was overflowing
With presents by the score,
As Joseph and Amanda
Both looked around and saw
The yellow umbrella
And matching parasol.

A bicycle for Joseph;
Amanda found her doll...

And they opened wide the curtains,
And on that Christmas Day
The sun shone on the snow
That oh so thickly lay
The whole way down the garden
And on the apple trees
For Joseph and Amanda
To do with as they pleased.

And they played and played for hours,
But soon the evening came;
Time to put their toys away
And go to sleep again.
But the memories will linger,
Never to decay,
How Joseph and Amanda
Enjoyed their Christmas Day.

8 The Hum Of The Cable (1981 electric original) 2.17

– and the crackle of high-tension wires on foggy nights tell of dangers we ignore at our peril...

When they come in the night with their lamps burning bright
To bear all the Gypsies away,
The cries burrow deep to the depths of my sleep
Of the roots being wrenched from the clay.
However much I care, it's cold out there
And in the darkness I turn away.

When they cross all the fields with the sun on their shields,
The Baptists are easy to find.
At the point of a gun they force them to run
And they leave not a one left behind.
But the sun is bright, and at its height,
And in its lightness I am blind.

When they scour the lanes and find the remains
Of the writers who peddle ideas,
With little to seize, the presses can squeeze
The word, and the word disappears.
But I cannot decipher what
Is but a blot, my dears.

Out late on the street I hear on its beat
The growl of a Doberman dog.
The red of its eyes destroys my disguise

As slowly it searches the smog.
But with a howl, it finds its prey,
As the blind and the sleepy all turn away,
And they cast adrift this useless cog
As the hum of the cable comes down through the fog.

9 Don't Let Them Take You Away (1985 electric original) 3.17

– an interesting aberration! The initial demo for this medical saga was much more akin to the version that appears on the “Shoeless In The Desert” album!

Take your time, do not hurry.
Life may pass you by, but worry
Will only give you ulcers
In your duodenum.
If you find your heart is beating
Faster and you're overeating,
Then take your time and take it easy.
Don't let them take you away.

Take your time and try relaxing.
Cease your endless over-taxing.
Try to look upon the bright side
Of your hypertension.
If your veins are growing harder
From the cholesterol in your larder,
Then take your time and take it easy.
Don't let them take you away.

Take your time, face reality.
Do you need their hospitality?
Take your cocktails in Park Lane
Or in the cardiac unit.
Either way, there is the chill of ice
And a modicum of good advice
To take your time and take it easy.
Don't let them take you away.

Take your time, do not hurry.
Life may pass you by, but worry
Will only give you ulcers
In your duodenum.
If you find your heart is beating
(Faster, faster) faster and you're overeating,
Then take your time and take it easy.
Don't let them take you away.

Take your time and take it easy –
Don't let them take you away...
Don't let them all take you away...

10 Castle Song (1978 electric original) 2.24

– an uncompromising take on the defensiveness of “haves” when confronted by “have-nots”; still sadly relevant...

Who are you, waiting,
Waiting at the gates of my city?
Who are you, waiting?
Blood streams from the nails on your fingers.

Who are you, pleading,
Pleading into the walls unyielding?
Who are you, scratching
At the mortar, splashed and crimson?

And you are on the outside
And I am on the inside
And I won't let you in!
Yes, you are on the outside
And I am on the inside
And I won't let you in!

Who are you people
In the damp of the misty morning?
Who are you people
Who disturb my hours of sleeping?

Who are you children
On your fathers' shoulders yawning?
Who are you children,
You who rise above the clamour?

And you are on the outside
And I am on the inside
And I won't let you in!
Yes, you are on the outside
And I am on the inside
And I won't let you in!

Where are you hiding
As I rise this lonely morning?
Why are you silent
When I gaze from my chamber window?

Why are you hiding?
Did you die as I lay sleeping?
All of you people,
Thank you for your gift –
Now let me rest.

11 Behind the Eye Of The Mind (1979 electric original) 3.25

– is, I think, a song about birds...

The birds fly high over the forest,
Over the leaves now tinged with brown.
The birds fly high over the forest,
Over the leaves now tinged with brown.
Fly to the south where the sun still beckons,
Fly to the south where the sun still beckons,
Fly to the south where the sun still beckons
From behind the eye of the mind, yeah...

Wings that lift them into the sunrise,
Up to the cold of the morning air –
Wings that lift them into the sunrise,
Up to the cold of the morning air
Carry the traveller over the mountain,
Carry the traveller over the mountain,
Carry the traveller over the mountain
From behind the eye of the mind, yeah...

Some will fall below their comrades
Losing the height that they must maintain,
Some will fall below their comrades
Losing the height that they must maintain;
Unavailing, and all feathers flailing,
Unavailing, and all feathers flailing,
Unavailing, and all feathers flailing
From behind the eye of the mind, yeah...

In strength of wing, the first arrival
Alights in the dust of his summer home –
In strength of wing, the first arrival
Alights in the dust of his summer home.
And many's the instinct that carries the migrant,
Many's the instinct that carries the migrant,
Many's the instinct that carries the migrant
From behind the eye of the mind, yeah...

The birds fly high over the forest,
Over the leaves now tinged with brown.
The birds fly high over the forest,
Over the leaves now tinged with brown.
Fly to the south where the sun still beckons,
Fly to the south where the sun still beckons,
Fly to the south where the sun still beckons
From behind the eye of the mind, yeah...

12 Waverley Junction (1983) 2.27

– hails from the “Red Robbo” era of industrial unrest in the UK, when even Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson was telling union leaders Hughie Scanlon and Jack Jones to “get your tanks off my lawn!”

At Waverley Junction the engines are silver
With ebony fly-wheels. The coaches are never empty.
The lines are of tungsten, they’re truer than justice;
The sleepers are jade, they’re glowing and lustrous
At Waverley Junction.

Driver McMichael and Fireman Greasy
Are waiting the signal, the train will be leaving early.
So here’s to their final and formalised duty.
The tea is from China; it’s brewed to perfection and then...

Jesus Christ, there’s dregs in m’teacup!
Who should have strained it? Greasy, where are you?
Out of the cabin, lad. Shut down the engines!
Shut down the station, call down the union!
They’re not getting away with this!

Don’t be defeated, never you be chided –
The workers united can never be divided!
Call down the signals, throw down a picket line!
Shut down the station, call down the union!
They’re not getting away with this!

Now all that the coaches will ever convey
Are flowers of innocence, withered away.
And it’s true...
Now Driver McMichael and Fireman Greasy
Are waiting the signal, for they will be leaving
Waverley Junction.
Waverley Junction was easy.

13 Storm In The Eye Of God (1983 electric original) 4.43

– is a completely different (and much harder) reading of the song than the much later opener for the “Shoeless In The Desert” album.

The sailorman who knew the truth
Below the shingle, sand and weed
Battened down the memories
Of the Motor Vessel “*Cruel Deed*”.
The purple veins across his cheeks
Ran scarlet in the sunset’s pyre
As he heard the bosun tell the crew that
There are no pictures in the fire,

There is only a storm in the eye of God –
Only a storm in the eye of God.

The Eskimo had settled down
To sleep away the endless years;
His rifle and his crucifix
He tied and tethered to his fears.
Without the sun, his unicorn
Had perished in the frozen mire.
He had learned the hunter's homily
That there are no pictures in the fire,
There is only a storm in the eye of God –
There's only a storm in the eye of God.

The peasant squatted in the mud
Upon the ground that he had ploughed,
His lifted eyes and leather lines
Appeasing every gathered cloud;
His spirit, ash to history's flame,
Went wheezing through the creeping briar
And the sun bled through the thorns and said
“There are no pictures in the fire,
There is only a storm in the eye of God.”

We let them in in their ones and twos
But when so many joined the bus
The peasants and the sailors and
The hunters and the rest of us
Took aim as they approached the flame
And shot away their leading tyre,
For there may be comfort in our dreams
But there are no pictures in the fire,
There is only a storm in the eye of God.
There's only a storm in the eye of God...
There's only a storm in the eye of God...
Only a storm in the eye of God...

14 The Wine Was Sweeter Then (1981 electric take) 3.26

– a band rendering of the tune that first appeared on 1975's “Twelve Strings To The Beau”.

The wine was sweeter yesterday,
The tables of the street café
Held Pernod and Grand Marnier;
The syrup of the summer day
Untainted by the clink of ice
But side by side with scent of spice
Came poems from the flashing pen.
The wine was sweeter then.

When skies were bluer yesterday,
The longer summers went their way
From year to year and day to day,
To sing a drunken roundelay
On nights it never seemed to rain;
To sing the poem once again
With gaiety remembering when
The skies were bluer then.

The firelight flickers playing games
With pine-log perfume in the flames
Went dancing on the window panes
As winters daylight slowly wanes.
And shadows that seemed soft and warm
Kept whispering as they performed
Mazurkas in the winter's night.
The fire flickers bright.

These memories have never gone,
For something somewhere lingers on
That conjured by nostalgia's wand
Comes silently from far beyond;
From pastures where the grass grew high
And green within the memories eye.
The memories do themselves fulfil.
The wine is sweeter still.

15 Poisoned Epitaph (1983) 3.20

– recalls one of many terrible incidents during the time of the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

The blood ran cold and steeply through the heather on the hillside.
Above, the diamond sky was frozen still by winter breath.
The butcher's van was leaving on its journey to the city;
Behind it, anonymity and death...

The stunted trees clung naked to the weather-beaten mountain
That overcast the valley down amid the shades of dawn.
A hint of misty halo danced around the frozen branches
And the scarecrow, hanging tattered and torn...
And the scarecrow, hanging tattered and torn.

16 The Rabbi At The Gates Of Prague (1988 electric original) 3.24

– later re-recorded acoustically for the album "The Way It Was".

The age-old Rabbi dreamed his dream
Throughout the night of troubled sleep
Of gold and silver buried deep
Inside the clay outside the keep

And under the pillars of the gates of Prague,
Under the pillars of the gates of Prague.

Across a barren land he came
Through frontiers that were cold and chill,
Until he saw upon a hill
A soldier trained to maim and kill
Guarding the pillars of the gates of Prague,
Guarding the pillars of the gates of Prague.

It took a lifetime to explain
The wherefore of his journey west,
But nothing moved the iron breast
And laughter echoed from the jest
Between the pillars of the gates of Prague,
Between the pillars of the gates of Prague.

“Such faith in you, you foolish Jew!
Are you,” he asked in disbelief,
“A fool or but a common thief?
There is no gold or silver leaf
Beneath the pillars of the gates of Prague,
Beneath the pillars of the gates of Prague.

“I dreamed a dream,” he mocked the sage,
“Of some old Rabbi from the East
Who found a royal crown at least
Beneath his door before a feast.”
So scoffed the soldier at the gates of Prague,
So scoffed the soldier at the gates of Prague.

The old man turned against the cold
To face the barren waste ahead,
Yet faster came his weary tread
When thinking what that soldier said
Beside the pillars of the gates of Prague,
Beside the pillars of the gates of Prague.

Upon the day of Yom Kippur,
The Rabbi dug deep in the ground.
And there beneath his door he found
The diadem that David crowned.
And a light still burns above the gates of Prague,
Burns for the Rabbi at the gates of Prague.
A light still burns above the gates of Prague,
Burns for the Rabbi at the gates of Prague.

17 The Hilltop (1971 acetate) 2.46

– *another original Elektra audition song.*

I was sitting on a hill in the early morning, singing.
Way up high in the sky was a bluebird winging.
And away in the valley a bell someone was ringing,
And we were all together in the early morning, living.

Out on the sea, a small white yacht was sailing.
In a hospital, a new-born child was wailing.
And some were passing exams, and others failing,
And we were all together in the early morning, living.

And I heard the hoof beats of the horses of the men out a'riding.
And the railway engineer shunted several swaying trucks into a siding.
And Parliament arose after hours disagreeing and deciding,
And we were all together in the early morning, living.

And the water in the river bubbled noisily along as it was flowing.
And the salmon swam against the current, maybe they knew just where they were going,
And the seamstress with her needle and her thread sat silently a'sewing,
And we were all together in the early morning, living.

And the clinking of the cups drowned the radio, and what the man was saying.
And the breakfast-time DJ introduced the next artist who was playing.
And the conductor on the bus asked the couple on the seat which one was paying,
And we were all together in the early morning, living.

And the rain that was dropping on the window-sill started freezing.
And the man whose feet had been wet started sneezing.
And from where I was sitting the view was rather pleasing,
'Cos we were all together in the early morning, living.

18 So Far Down (1991) 2.41

– *was inspired by a tragic incident at Beachy Head in 1990.*

It flies out clear across the water –
The last present daddy ever bought her –
As the Shogun screams at the broken dreams
Of daddy's ever-loving daughter
She goes so far down, so far down,
She goes so far down, so far down.

Out there at the moment of midnight,
The mist clears from the halogen headlight.
Though the cycle brakes there are no mistakes
As it cartwheels into the starlight.
She goes so far down, so far down,
So far down, so far down...

Some go slithering and sliding;
Some are sick, and so tired of hiding
In a jungle tree when they can be free
And there's nothing left to take a pride in.
They go so far down, so far down,
So far down, so far down.
They go so far down, so far down,
So far down, so far down...

19 All I Ever Wanted (1981) 1.43

– is surely one of the most “poppy” songs I’ve ever written (and one of the shortest)!

All I ever wanted was
A roof upon a rafter and
A fire in a grate but
You were the one who led me on,
You were the one I leaned upon;
You were the one who had me on
Until I turned around and I found you gone...

All I ever wanted was
A skin upon my shoulder and
A fire in my belly and
A crutch and a castle and
An eye to believe that
You were the one who led me on,
You were the one I leaned upon;
You were the one who had me on
Until I turned around and I found you gone...

All I ever wanted was
A moment to myself to string
A thought or two together in
A vastly changing vista where
It's hard to remember that
You were the one who led me on,
You were the one I leaned upon;
You were the one who had me on
Until I turned around and I found you gone...

20 Poor Old Thing (1982) 3.20

– intimations of mortality at the age of thirty-six!

Maybe the strings are growing old now –
Maybe the guitar's lost its ring?
Maybe the wood is growing dry now –
Poor old thing, poor old thing.

Maybe the fingers are growing old now –
Maybe the voice has lost its ring?
Maybe the throat is growing dry now –
Poor old thing, poor old thing...

Sometimes the sound will die of sadness,
Sometimes the strings will ring;
And I will sing with them, I will sing with them...

Maybe the shadows are growing long now –
Maybe the seasons dulled the string.
Maybe the harmony lies broken –
Poor old thing, poor old thing...

Maybe a song is never-ending –
Even the last elusive ring
Seeming to wend away for ever,
Poor old thing, poor old thing,
Poor old thing...

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