

The St. John Family Hour

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Family Hour

Come Right In



Photo by Laura St. John

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# THE ALBUM

Welcome to our garage everyone. Come right in and have a seat on a lawn chair while the band sets up. We are a daughter/dad trio based in Chicago, and this is our second release on Custom Made Records featuring more dad songs written from 1985 to 2017. There are still more tunes left in the can, so stay tuned for upcoming releases. Join our mailing list, like us on our socials and let us know if we can top off your drink.

We want to thank Uncle Doug for all his help in serving up this batch of songs, and his fabulous staff at Gravity Studios for their efforts in putting this all together. We also want to give special thanks to Laura for all her inspiration, and for being the unsinging hero of our family band.

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# COME RIGHT IN

©2017 Marlon St. John & Ella St. John/Work Song

You don't need somebody to say where you belong  
You don't need anybody to tell you what's wrong  
When you need someone with whom to confide  
Come right in, Come right in...

Everyone's got their reasons, even small things got pride  
big and tall ones, nearly all ones, need a shelter inside  
If there's one thing I know, it's where you should go  
Come right in, Come right in...

Pick up the front room, pick up the phone  
long distant calls get expensive when there's no one at home  
Here's where you live with me; here's where you belong  
Come right in, Come right in...

Do you need any cold drink? You need a small dish?  
Where ever you find it, it's somewhere 'round here if you wish  
Don't be a stranger, no need to knock it's open  
Come right in, Come right in

Come right in, Come right in  
Come right in, Come right in  
Come right in, Come right in  
Come right in, Come right in

## ABOUT

Written May 28, 2017 on a rainy day. I was in the office in our apartment on Leland and Ella was in the living room. As I was trying to work on the lyrics, she would throw in the occasional suggestion. It was her first songwriting collaboration at the age of eight.

## CREDITS

Guitars, beat box, and Vocal: Marlon St. John

Vocals: Abigail St. John

Photo taken May 27, 2017

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# DON'T KEEP ME GUESSIN'

©1990 Marlon St. John/Work Song

You gotta give me what you got  
Either you will or you won't Don't keep me guessin'  
Don't keep me guessin'  
Either you will or you won't Either it 'tis or it ain't  
Don't keep me guessin' You get the picture that I paint  
Either you will or you won't Either it 'tis or it ain't  
Either you do or you don't You get the picture that I paint  
Either you will or you won't Either it 'tis or it ain't  
Either you do or you don't Either you can or you can't  
don't keep me guessin' Don't keep me guessin'

Either Yes or it's No Either you will or you won't  
You gotta tell me so Don't keep me guessin'  
Either Yes or it's No Either you will or you won't  
You gotta tell me so Don't keep me guessin'  
Either Yes or it's No Either you will or you won't  
You gotta tell me so Either you do or you don't  
Or please just tell me Either you will or you won't  
plain that you don't know Either you do or you don't  
don't keep me guessin'

Either maybe, maybe not If you love me please  
I'm gonna put you on the spot don't keep me guessin'  
Either maybe, maybe not  
I'm gonna put you on the spot  
Either maybe, maybe not

## ABOUT

This song was written in 1990 and appeared on Borrowed Time's 1991 Album *Standing In The Light*. The tune has come in handy over the years as a set closer and is one of the few songs that I have that “fell out of the guitar”— meaning I picked up the guitar and just played the whole thing and then tried to figure out where I had heard it before. After a while, I realized I must have just written a song.

## CREDITS

Guitar, drums, bass and vocal: Marlon St. John  
Vocals: Abi & Ella St. John  
Engineer: CJ Alexander



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# ALMOST ENOUGH

©1999 Marlon St. John/Work Song

Almost enough love to go around  
nearly every sweetheart at last has been found  
practically no one is lonesome, virtually all are satisfied  
except the few, the weary few including you

I wish you had a story with a bright happy ending  
I wish you had the guts to stand for a love that's worth defending  
Ninety-nine point nine percent receive in kind what they have sent  
What have you done but run away from every truth?

I wish you had a story with a bright happy ending  
I wish you had the guts to stand for a love that's worth defending  
Ninety-nine point nine percent receive in kind what they have sent  
What have you done but run away from every truth?

Almost enough love to go around  
We pass it on from one another that's what life is all about  
And those that are left remaining they must go without  
It's hardly fair, but what is fair after all  
It's hardly fair, but what is fair after all

Written for a Footsteps Theater production of Beth Henley's play "The Wake of Jamie Foster," this song has found its way onto various set lists over the years. It's almost a love song, but not quite.

## ABOUT

## CREDITS

Guitars, bass, drums, vocal: Marlon St. John

Vocals: Abi St. John, Ella St. John



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# STUCK CAR HORN

©1997 Marlon St. John/Work Song

I was sitting by my window, sitting by my open window  
There was a breeze blowing in, man was it nice  
It was both cool and warm if you know what I mean  
It was both cool and warm

And I was just sitting there listening to the quiet of the night  
That hung on everything like rain  
that hung on everything like rain after a storm  
It was right about then that it started in with this stuck car horn

And it wouldn't stop, that stuck car horn  
It just kept blown that same crazy chord  
No one did anything about it!  
No one did anything about it

Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Stuck car horn

I had to listen, I had no choice  
The night was full of desperate noise  
The neighborhood dogs joined the symphony  
And other cars honked like in empathy

Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Stuck car horn

And then it stopped, that stuck car horn  
But the sound stayed in my head  
And it wouldn't let me go that stuck car horn  
'just kept blowing that same phantom note

Until everything was like that stuck car horn  
Everything reminded me of that stuck car horn  
I looked at my newspaper, stuck car horn  
Looked at my television, stuck car horn

Looked at my smart phone, stuck car horn  
Looked at my computer, stuck car horn  
Looked at my congressman, stuck car horn  
Looked at the life I live, stuck car horn

Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Stuck car horn

Oh, baby let me love you right this time  
Oh, baby let me love you right this time  
Oh, baby let me love you, you know I'll love you  
You know I'll love you right this time

Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Good for nothing stuck car horn  
Stuck car horn

## ABOUT

This is an urban blues song and another true story. If you listen to a stuck car horn long enough, you start to lose your mind a little.

## CREDITS

Guitar and vocal:  
Marlon St. John  
Arco Bass:  
Jacque Harper

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# THIS TIME THEY'VE GONE TOO FAR

©1992 Marlon St. John/Work Song

There's a great many number of ghosts in the kitchen  
and I reckon there's many more just down the hall  
they turn over furniture and they steal my beer  
I always talk softly so they don't overhear  
and then they get roaring drunk, or they get pretty near  
and they knock around into my walls

and many's the time I've been startled awake  
by a a big inconsiderate one that's named Jake  
he'll be snapping his fingers saying, "What's that you  
said?"

Nothing at all, Jake, I was asleep in my bed  
If I was talkin' it was off of the top of my head  
"Are you sure?" he says walking away

And when I come home after a hard day of living  
They're spinning records of Fats Domino  
And I know that somewhere an explanation exists  
Logic and reason easily handle this  
But there's a troubling fact amid the evidence  
I don't own any records of Fats Domino

And when I've told them they've broken  
my turntable needle

They look at me laughing, falling apart  
And you must be thinking I'm losing my mind  
Usually everything's normal and most of the time  
They hide in the shadows and I don't even mind  
But this time they've gone too far

This time they've gone too far  
This time they've gone too far

## ABOUT

Back before people became so opinionated about  
their preference of pies with the pro-rhubarb factions  
facing off with the pro-apple and pro-peach factions,  
we use to all kinda agree that pie was delicious.

## CREDITS

Guitar and vocal: Marlon St. John

Ghost chorus: Abi & Ella St. John

photo on facing page by Kristine Kuczora with  
Skeleton Clavis Productions

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# ME AND THE PLANET EARTH

©1993 Marlon St. John/Work Song

Me and the planet Earth one day  
we were strolling about  
and I looked at her and she at me  
we developed a philosophy  
we hit it off in and offhand way  
we got our thing, not much to say  
Me and the planet Earth one day  
Me and the planet Earth

And the stars all like to shout and talk  
we just let them talk  
and the moon's aloof and cold and shy  
but what does it matter to the planet Earth and I  
no trickster games do we ever play  
no innuendo do we overly  
me and the planet Earth I say  
me and the planet Earth

Me and the planet Earth  
Me and the planet Earth  
Me and the planet Earth  
Me and the planet Earth

Me and the planet Earth one day  
we were making our usual rounds  
roaming through the deep, long night  
full of silence and delight  
and then at once without care  
we suddenly grew listless there  
and just as quick we slid apart  
it liked to nearly break my heart

Me and the planet Earth  
Me and the planet Earth  
Me and the planet Earth  
Me and the planet Earth

## ABOUT

I wrote this song back in Muncie for Borrowed Time, the band I was with at the time, but we never got around to recording it. So in 2017, when Abi and I did a session at Gravity I decided to try it on a whim.

It was Abi's first time every hearing the tune, but with a lyric sheet that I had scribbled out she gamely gave it a go.

## CREDITS

Guitars, drums and vocal: Marlon St. John

Vocals: Abigail St. John

Bass and Tamborine: Doug McBride

Organ: Bruce Breckenfeld



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# I'M FREE

©2003 Marlon St. John/Work Song

I'm free and I go where I want to go to  
Nobody doing this or saying that  
I'm out of here in nothing flat  
Am I bothering you?

I'm free  
Freedom's gone when you lay down your voice  
Or give it to someone who will leave you with  
absolutely no choice  
I'm free, I'm free, free...

I'm free  
From twelve to fifteen I danced the disco  
With my shiny shirt all silvery  
I practiced my delivery  
Now I go where I go

I'm free  
Freedom's where you think what you please  
Nobody listening or threatening  
no eavesdropping no wiretapping  
Up from off of my knees  
I'm free, I'm free, free...

I'm free  
But it's the little things you hang on to

All else is sold it all must go  
I think I know what I'm 'bout to say to you

I'm free  
And I go where I want to go to  
Nobody doing this or saying that  
I'm out of here in nothing flat  
Am I bothering you? Am I bothering you?

I'm free, I'm free, free...  
I'm free, I'm free, free

Ooh, ooh, ooh, Selah, I'm free  
Ooh, ooh, ooh, Selah, Selah, Selah,  
I'm free, I'm free, free...

## ABOUT

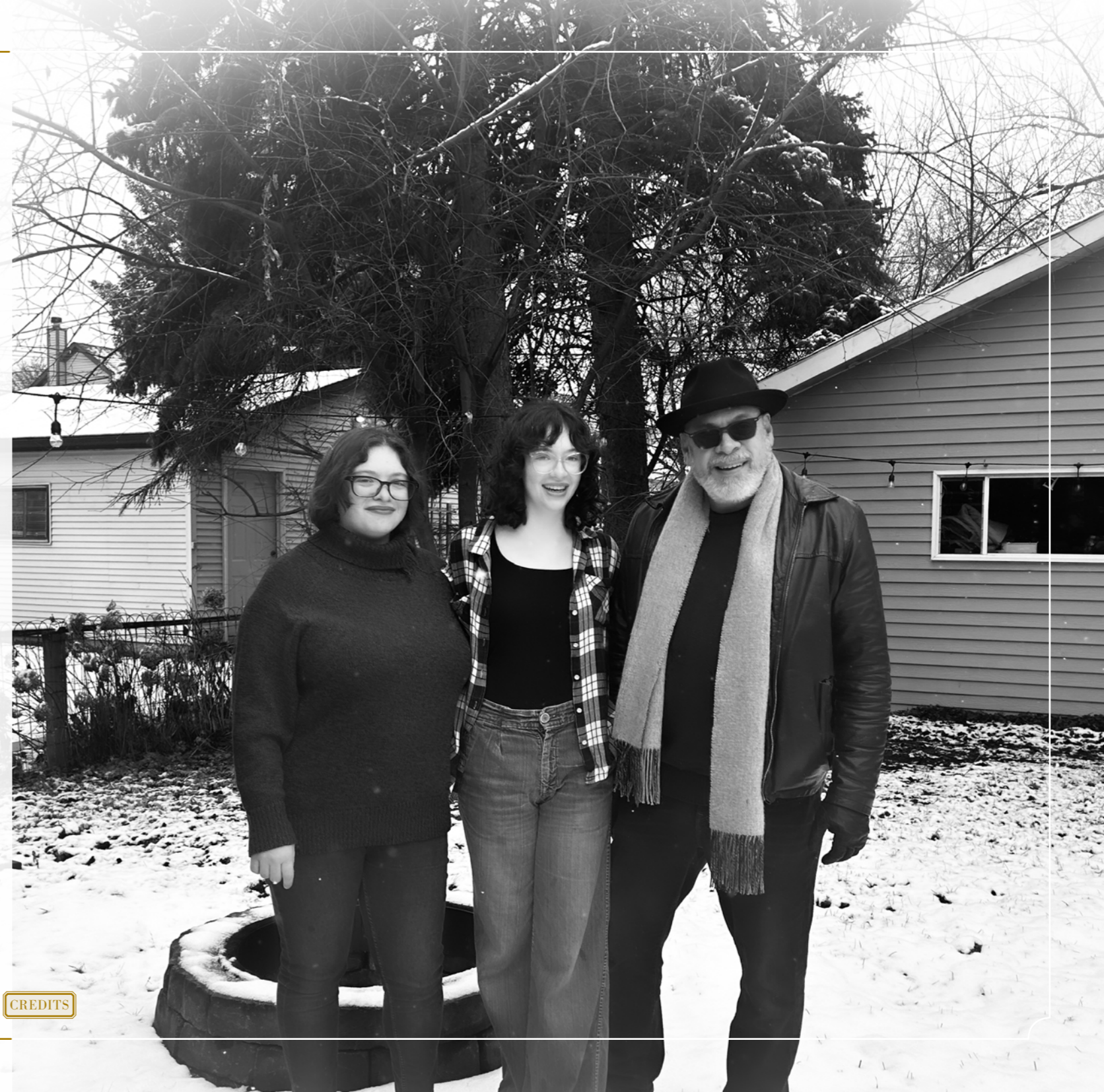
This is the only time I can recall waking up from a sound sleep with a full melody alive and breathing in my head. Usually I hunt around for a melody, but this one was already there with the first few lines as well. I got up early on a Sunday and jotted it down. Our initial recording session occurred in December of 2016 when Abi was eighteen.

## CREDITS

Guitar, drums and vocal: Marlon St. John

Vocal: Abigail St. John

Bass: Doug McBride



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## MY HONEYMOON

©1997 Marlon St. John/Work Song

Now, I'm not one to reminisce nostalgically  
my personal history, I save bits and pieces  
champagne for two, some wedding clothes  
a lamp with a reddish glow  
a small cottage, a September moon  
that was my honeymoon

We snuck away from family and friends  
on a night with rain and mist  
there was a threshold waiting there  
a stubborn lock, I was fumbling with my key  
with her in my arms all done up in lace  
her face could light up a room  
it's all as clear as yesterday like a fond, familiar tune  
that was my honeymoon

We didn't travel to Paris  
we didn't go to St. Croix  
it was only Indiana  
might as well been Illinois

I mostly keep my memories to my self  
'cause that's where they belong  
but one in every while  
one will rise to the surface

that bridal dress had so many buttons, yes  
all up and down to undo  
nineteen in all if I recall  
my honeymoon, that was my honeymoon

## ABOUT

This is another story as  
true as I can make it.

## CREDITS

Guitar and vocal: Marlon St. John

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## TWENTY-TWO

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Twenty-two, didn't know what to do  
'thought about striking out  
'heard about a plan to get a lotta men  
to build bridges in Australia

It got me up pacing 'round  
sounded pretty good to me..."  
Leave or stay is not the question  
where's my hat, where's my direction?

Then I heard they're going to build a replica  
of the Great Pyramid of Giza  
breaking ground in Memphis, Tennessee  
It was in the evening newspaper

I was working setting steel  
in Lafayette, Indiana  
On TV was Joe Isuzu  
Saying, if I'd lie, would I like to you, too?

In the summer of '87  
they were questioning the Colonel  
I was just knocking about  
I was keeping rhymes internal

I was leaving, heading out the door  
stopped and said, "What am I going there for?"  
—and do you know it is true...  
you can get Tangled Up In Blue

I was playing blues in a band  
called the Stabilizers  
Then we changed our name to King Wing  
'guess band names weren't our thing

The guitar player worked for Orville Redenbacher  
and he played like Albert King  
We sure could make the sheriff deputies  
come to turn the sound down

You get something if you give something  
if what you get ain't what you give  
'Tell the boss the envelope's light  
Then he'll pay you zero wrong or right

Coming home when you been nowhere  
Is like not coming home at all  
don't come 'round here cryin' to me  
Haven't a told you already?

(repeat 1st verse)

## ABOUT

This is a story song  
and the story is as  
true as I could make  
it. It is about being  
young and clueless  
which I was for a lot  
longer than I really  
needed to be.

## CREDITS

Guitar, bass, shaker and vocal:  
Marlon St. John

Vocal: Abigail St. John

Engineer: Jake McDonald

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# BROTHERS

©1993 Marlon St. John/Work Song

We belong in the afterlife  
we belong in the here and now  
we belong in the solid ground  
we belong in the empty sky

And we will know by beating heart  
speak it by its truest name  
we were once we will remain  
Brothers never far apart

Brothers never far apart  
brothers never far apart  
We were once we will remain  
brothers never far apart

We are blood, we are flesh and blood  
we are light rapped in shadows tight  
given hope, indemnified  
carried by a rushing flood

Brothers never far apart  
brothers never far apart  
We were once we will remain  
brothers never far apart

The power of unspoken thought  
will bridge the crevassed ground we share  
divisions shall all disappear  
in one tribe and circle we are brought

Brothers never far apart  
brothers never far apart  
We were once we will remain  
brothers never far apart

‘Cause we belong in the afterlife  
we belong in the here and now  
we belong in the solid ground  
we belong in the empty sky

And we will know by beating heart  
speak it by its truest name  
we were once we will remain  
brothers never far apart

(Repeat Chorus)

## ABOUT

I wrote this song in 1993 while living in Muncie, Indiana, and lo and behold a couple weeks later I was contacted by the mayor's office who asked if I had any songs about brotherhood as they were putting together a Brotherhood Day. I said sure, I had songs for every occasion. And that is how I got booked to play the City Council chambers for Brotherhood Day 1993 in Muncie, Indiana.

## CREDITS

Guitar and vocal: Marlon St. John  
Vocals: Abigail St. John, Ella St. John  
Fiddle: Rick Veras



# TRAVELIN'

©1986 Marlon St. John/Work Song

Well, the back roads offer nothing but long rides  
cornfields with low yields and pesticides  
this town should be a vague memory  
instead you're calling it home

And I believe I'll go traveling  
I believe I'll be on my way  
caught between the sea and the sycamore tree  
my future's about to begin

Well, no woman 'round here dreams about me  
and their ain't no reason I shouldn't be free  
no occupation shackles me down  
I could be just as lonely in another town

And I believe I'll go traveling  
I believe I'll be on my way  
caught between the sea and the sycamore tree  
my journey's about to begin

Well, I'm crossing the last familiar overpass  
and wondering how long winter's gonna last  
Well, they're talking about snow on the radio  
but the station's getting farther away

And I believe I'll go traveling  
I believe I'll shake loose my strings  
caught between the sea and the sycamore tree  
my journey's about to begin  
caught between the sea and the sycamore tree  
my journey's about to begin

## ABOUT

I'd written a few songs here and there before this, but this is the first song that made me feel like an actual songwriter. It may be kind of trite and some shopworn phrases, but it gave me a small two-fingered shove of confidence on my shoulder to pursue writing another one and then another. And that's pretty much how songwriters are made.

## CREDITS

Guitar and vocal: Marlon St. John  
Vocals: Abigail St. John, Ella St. John  
Fiddle: Rick Veras

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# LAST OF THE NIGHT

©1995 Marlon St. John/Work Song

Tagger played a tune on paper and comb  
Huntington was off again just skin and bones  
Logan gave a benediction, and then out he tooled  
Angel wished him well, but was nobody fooled

When the piano's played poorly and your money's run out  
and everybody's sayin', "Now, let me tell you about..."  
it's pride talking, serves you well, just as right  
you're always late leaving, the last of the night

You're always late leaving the last of the night  
just when you say you gotta get along  
your words have no bite  
someone says, 'here, have another'  
you don't put up much of a fight  
and you're always late leaving, the last of the night

Go on and smile at miss hairstyle she sees right through you  
you'll never win her heart end to end, through and through  
then again you might get lucky, with her you just might  
and you're always late leaving, the last of the night

You're always late leaving the last of the night  
just when you say you gotta get along your words have no bite  
someone says, 'here, have another'

you don't put up much of a fight  
and you're always late leaving, the last of the night

Well, those small hours were precious  
to you I'd have guessed  
when those high starts were rolling  
like they've been saving their best  
but they've all faded away and lost all their light  
and you're always late leaving, the last of the night

You're always late leaving the last of the night  
just when you say you gotta get along  
your words have no bite  
well, your full of good intentions,  
your intentions don't serve you right  
and you're always late leaving, the last of the night

you're always late leaving, the last of the night  
you're always late leaving, the last of the night

## ABOUT

I used to go to the open mic at the Abbey Pub  
and insist on going on last. That's just asking  
for trouble, but I got a tune out of it.

## CREDITS

Guitar, drums and vocal: Marlon St. John

Vocals: Abi and Ella St. John

Bass: Doug McBride

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## SOMETHING MORE

©1993 Marlon St. John/Work Song

I come home every evening  
To the place we shared together  
To the table to the lampshade  
To the bare, wooden floor  
And I stand inside the doorway  
Taking in the silence  
I wanted her, she wanted something more

And the train tracks run away from here  
In every direction  
And every night the engines blow  
There blue and lonely horns  
She's not a small town girl  
No one could ever keep her  
I wanted her, she wanted something more

There must be some small consolation in the end  
After all is said and done and I'm myself again

I settle for the traces  
She left behind for me  
The scattered remembrances  
Hold them tight and keep them warm  
And what it is she wanted  
She wouldn't come right out and say  
I wanted her, she wanted something more

## ABOUT

April 15, 1993 I had written three songs.  
There was still a bit of night left so I decided  
to write something more.

## CREDITS

Guitar: Marlon St. John

Vocals: Abigail St. John and Ella St. John

Bass: Jacque Harper

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Photos by Kristine Kuczora with Sceleton Clavis Productions



# CREDITS

Produced by Doug McBride and Marlon St. John

Tracked, mixed and mastered at Gravity Studios, Chicago, Illinois

All songs recorded, mixed and mastered by Doug McBride

Additional engineering by: Andrew Hawk, CJ Alexander, and Jacob McDonald

Cover art by Marlon St. John

Photos by Laura St. John except where noted

Layout and design by Work Song Productions

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