

HONEYWINE



*a desert
in bloom*

A Desert in Bloom

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

What I love is a desert in bloom
The stars at night, a motel room
Comrades in arms when the fighting is done
A winning hand where no one's won
What I love is peace of mind
Clear as day, hard to find
What I love is a desert in bloom,
A desert in bloom

What I love is a late-at-night start
An open road, a willing heart
The streetcar line under Louisiana Oaks
An oyster stew with artichokes
What I love is yet to come
A day away, a setting sun
What I love is a desert in bloom,
A desert in bloom

Barbara Allen died for love
'Cause Sweet William died for her
I'll take the pain and stick it out
I have no doubt
Not like some love-sick amateur

What I love is the moon on a wing
Not knowing what arrival might bring
A rumbling train with a sleeping berth
Treading lightly on this lovely Earth
What I love is in this tune
Hold it close, gone too soon
What I love is a desert in bloom,
A desert in bloom

Portland, Maine

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Widow's walk
Watch the waves
Sailors to an early grave

Southward spins
The weathervane
Pointing them to Portland, Maine

Snow upon
Moonless sea
Wind that tears the sails in three
Flickering lamp
A windowpane
Lighthouse down in Portland, Maine

Ocean blue
Dark and deep
Rocks you in eternal sleep
Whales above
Your cold remains
Thirty leagues from Portland, Maine

November howls
Mournful tune
Left too late
Gone too soon
Nevermore to sail again
From Halifax to Portland, Maine

A Village Needs a Villain

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

A village needs a villain
To shoulder all the blame
To remind the people living there
That the villain's not the same
It's better if the villain has a funny-sounding name
A village needs a villain
To shoulder all the blame

A village needs an idiot
To show them who they're not
Someone to talk down about
When he's out of earshot
It's harder when the idiot exposes all our rot
A village needs an idiot
To show us who we're not

When morning comes our dreams abide
Give form to what is deep inside
A loving friend, a lurking stranger
Open arms or impending danger

A village needs a heretic
To teach us how to pray
To show us what it really means
To really go astray
That the villain and the idiot live within us anyway
A village needs a heretic
To teach us how to pray

Sugar, Please

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

The phone just keeps on ringing, ringing off the hook
I watch the movie 'cause I can't finish the book
I clean up nice but never get a second look
I could use some sugar, please

Sugar, please
Can I get some sugar, please?
Sugar, please
I would love some sugar, please!
Sugar, please
Would you share that sugar, please?
Glory, hallelu!
I could use some sugar, please!

I know that I can be an awful lot to handle
When you need a match, I become a Roman candle
There's no time to gossip, I go straight for the scandal
I could use some sugar, please

Sugar, please
Can I get some sugar, please?
Sugar, please
I would love some sugar, please!
Sugar, please
Would you share that sugar, please?
Katy, bar the door!
I could use some sugar, please!

Spice is nice, Tabasco is hot
But just a second is all I've got

It seems that you and I are always running out the door
Life used to be a journey, now it's an errand and a chore
Please let me know I'm still the one that you adore
I could use some sugar, please

Sugar, please
Can I get some sugar, please?
Sugar, please
I would love some sugar, please!
Sugar, please
Would you share that sugar, please?
Let's burn down the barn!
I could use some sugar, please!

Sugar, please
Can I get some sugar, please?
Sugar, please
I would love some sugar, please!
Sugar, please
Would you share that sugar, please?
How 'bout me and you?
I could use some sugar, please!

Swimming Upstream (Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Come over here, my sweet child
Let the sunshine dry your tears
Rest with me by the riverbank
And let go of all your fears

Feel the breeze on your furrowed brow
Let it soothe your sorrow
Watch the clouds in the sky above
Drifting toward tomorrow

It's all a dream, it's all a dream
There's no need to swim upstream
It's all a dream, it's all a dream
There's no need, no need to swim upstream

Dragonflies with their rainbow wings
Dance above your drowsy head
The river runs, the summer ends
Now the leaves are turning red

And when the storms and the snow arrive
And turn the world cold
I'll hold you close and I'll sing of spring
And warm your weary soul

It's all a dream, it's all a dream
There's no need to swim upstream
It's all a dream, it's all a dream
There's no need, no need to swim upstream

Sassy (Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Florida can get awfully hot
For them that's got and for those that's not
But as you head south toward the Florida Keys
You can smell the cash, you can feel the ease
The blossoms from the mahogany trees
Blowing soft and gentle on the West Palm breeze

Sassy fled south when her name was still Jess
Her life a mess with a lot to confess
Sassy met the big man out on the town
The wife and the baby just brought him down
A kingpin with a cardboard crown
He made her take his tantrums and his temper lying down

He paraded the wife like she was on stage
With rouge and rage to hide her age
Sassy got the hand-me-downs and knew her place
A late-night julep with a rot-gut chase
An eye for detail while staring into space
A photo, a phone call, a receipt, just in case

See, there's only so much an old girl can take
No wedding cake, a heartless snake
The women at his mercy he would pop like a blister
On his thumb just to show them who was mister

The sneer on his face right after he kissed her
Sassy saw in his eyes what he'd done to her sisters

There was Juanita in the kitchen
The one he threatened to send back
Roxana by the driving range
On the greens when the night was black
There was Natasha and Petruska
And their children in the way
And me waiting in our bedroom
To hear his version of his day

The night Sassy snapped was sweltering and dark
Firefly spark, dead-eyed shark
Her pistol was shaky but she aimed her best
Right at the notch in his sweater vest
To soothe the fury of the women he'd distressed
And let his buddies know that they might be next

But there was no big bang when the big man died
I was outside, I do confide
My swing was true; I teed off a second later
But forgot to yell "fore" at that woman hater
A golf ball felled my tiny dictator
Sent him toppling like a teacup into the jaws of a gator

Sassy's in Savannah, now her name is Pearl
What a world. You go, girl!
I live in the mansion with his fortune vast
And Juanita and Natasha and the others he harassed
And when I'm asked if I miss him, my eyes become downcast
And I say, "I was his first lady, and I was also his last."

He really should have drained that swamp...

A Day with Robin Mae (Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Bob's her uncle, her mama's Suzy Q
Girls like Robin Mae are far between and few
Wake up in the morning when the sunshine is brand new
Got to get up early 'cause there's just so much to do

A day with Robin Mae, a day with Robin Mae!

Leapin' Lizards, time for Key lime pie
Some boys get real fussy but Robin doesn't cry
Others run for cover underneath a stormy sky
A couple silver raindrops won't leave Robbie high and dry

A day with Robin Mae, a day with Robin Mae!

She'll rob Peter to pay Paul
Then get a wink from Peter
Sweet tea couldn't be sweeter
Just wait 'til you meet her

A day with Robin Mae, a day with Robin Mae!

Flying fish for supper, hushpuppies by the bay
The train goes super slow but she'll take it anyway
Azaleas in the garden, amaryllis far away
What could be more special than a day with Robin Mae?

A day with Robin Mae, a day with Robin Mae!

One Explanation

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Daddy loved a woman
Before he met my mom
She broke his heart
She made him doubt
She taught him what love was all about
So when Daddy looked into my eyes
He let me know it would be unwise
To love another with all my heart
And that is how I got my start

Mama watched her mother
When Mom was just a girl
She saw the pain
The dreams denied
The need to hide her grief inside
So when Mama held me in her arms
Her grip was tight with false alarms

That taught me to embrace my fears
And when in doubt to disappear

Hush little baby in the branches above
Know that you were born from love
And when the thunder rocks your sleep
Know your roots spread wide and deep

Your life belongs to you, your spirit yours alone
You'll find your path, your own true north
Some pain, some love, some back and forth
So when my worries make you falter
My words a bit, my arms a halter
Please try the paths I could not take
And set me free for your own sake

Dealing with the Dead

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

It's four a.m., the lights are out
I'm lying here in bed
I know that I should get some sleep
But I'm dealing with the dead

The precious words I want to say
They now must go unsaid
'Cause all those words are wasted breath
When dealing with the dead

You took our secrets to the grave
Took the memories I could not save
Moonlight on an outbound wave
You're really, truly gone

I wish you were a real ghost
Who lived outside my head
But you're on my mind and out of reach
'Cause I'm dealing with the dead

You took our secrets to the grave
Took the memories I could not save
Moonlight on an outbound wave
You're really, truly gone

Two more hours and I'll get up
Be with the living instead
And hold them close, 'cause I know what it's like
To be dealing with the dead

Tell Me, David

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Tell me, David, how it felt to bring Goliath down
To slay the brute who laughed at God
And spit upon His holy crown
Tell me, David, tell me your story
What's it like to live in glory?
Tell me, David, how it felt to bring Goliath down

Tell me, David, of Bathsheba, the true love of your life
You made her yours in spite of God
She was another man's wife
Tell me, David, tell me your story
What's it like to fall from glory?
Tell me, David, of Bathsheba, the true love of your life

The chosen one will pay a price
Too dear to be believed
To worship Him who wields the knife
That leaves His lambs bereaved

Tell me, David, of Absalom and of the Father's plan
Of mercy lost, of justice gained
And of the reach of mortal man
Tell me, David, tell me your story
What's the cost to bear God's glory?
Tell me, David, of Absalom and of the Father's plan
Of Bathsheba, the true love of your life
How it felt to bring Goliath down

Poison

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

There's poison in the water
Of the rivers of this land

That makes us turn our backs
Upon our desperate fellow man
From the mighty Mississippi
To the mournful Rio Grande
There's poison in the water
Of the rivers of this land

There's poison in the raindrops
Falling from the clouds above
That fills the wells and kills the trees
And drowns the peaceful dove
That makes us worship power
And forsake the power of love
There's poison in the raindrops
Falling from the clouds above

We tell our children bedtime tales
Leave out the shameful parts
And pray the ghosts who haunt this place
Forgive our hardened hearts

There's poison in the bloodstream
Of the people we've become
So when we see injustice
We are blind, we're deaf, we're dumb
And where we should repent
We are indifferent and we're numb
There's poison in the bloodstream
Of the people we've become

There's poison in the premise
Of the stories that we tell:
The land of milk and honey
Was for some a living hell
Their bodies and their babies
Were just objects we could sell
There's poison in the premise
Of the stories that we tell

Jolie Lucie (Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Jolie Lucie, Sunday night

Watching in the candlelight
Shooting stars
A velvet sky
A lover's wish
Makes Lucie cry

Jolie Lucie calls a reel
Virginia step from toe to heel
Forward first
With both hands round
Clockwise goes
The fox and hound

Jolie Lucie, midnight stroll
Seule que pour la luciole
Spanish moss
Un coeur brisé
Un homme sans foi
So far away

Jolie Lucie *est au lit*
Dreams of how it used to be
Elle était
Jolie jeune fille
Qui devenait
Vieille et grise

Jolie Lucie floats away
In her hands a blue bouquet
Bayou Gauche
A cypress tree
Surveillez
Triste Ophélie

Almost as Hard as Being a Woman (Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

I'm lonely
But if I tell you that I'll only
Have to find the words to tell you how I feel
I'm needy
But to you I just seem greedy
A tongue-tied bandit who takes what he can steal

My silence is the price I pay
And all the games I have to play
Make it tough for me to say:

It's almost as hard as being a woman
You're not the only one who cries
Yes, it's almost as hard as being a woman
When being a man means wearing a disguise

Excuse me
If your excuses don't amuse me
When I'm the one who keeps our fire aflame
Forget it
If I unlock my heart I'll let it
Be the one to take on all of the blame
It seems I'm here to mother you
And be careful not to smother you
So let me drop the other shoe:

It's not quite as hard as being a woman
Believe me, I can sympathize
You say it's almost as hard as being a woman
But not half as hard as living with your disguise

A real man says, "I love you" once
After that it's all implied
Like his daddy he has learned
To keep it bottled up inside
A real woman knows when she's had enough
And then she says, "Goodbye"
She's better off living her life alone
Than living with a lie

Unmask me
All you ever had to do was ask me
And then I would show my real self to you
It's too late
To miss each other seems to be our fate
And I won't feel these feelings for two
You think your feelings make you wrong?
I've tried to tell you all along:
Sharing your heart will make you strong

Alma Triste

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Alma sat with others as their spirits slipped away
A true and silent witness to all they could not say
Her steady gaze, her loving heart
Alma brought them peace
She held their fears in her gentle hands
As they found release

Alma Triste, Alma Triste
A witness to the tears
The sorrows and the fears
Alma Triste, Alma Triste, Alma Triste
She holds a broken heart

Alma heard the questions that keep us tied down to this earth
Was I ever loved? Did I love enough? Tell me what I'm worth
She had no answers, none at all
They were not hers to give
Alma listened to the mystery
Of what it means to live

Alma Triste, Alma Triste
A witness to the tears
The sorrows and the fears
Alma Triste, Alma Triste, Alma Triste
She holds a broken heart

Called to come in the middle of the night
Quiet and calm by the bedside light
When comes the hour to give up the fight
She whispers, "It's all right. It's all right. It's all right."

An early snow delayed my flight the night I got the call
I knew I was too late when Alma met me in the hall
Strong arms around my broken back
There was nothing there to mend
Alma knew just what I needed:
A fellow traveler, a fleeting friend

Alma Triste, Alma Triste
A witness to the tears

The sorrows and the fears
Alma Triste, Alma Triste, Alma Triste
She holds a broken heart

Romance

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

A friend of mine remarked that romance
Is a word reserved for the young
Before the lies tangle their tongues
And love leaves them lost and lonely among
Those who have learned life's bitter creed
And I agreed

But I was wrong
I spoke too fast
I'd never known a love to last
I thought my future was my past
But you taught me that we live the lives we make
And to believe in romance is a wise mistake

And that words are just the things we say
That can't describe how day by day
You stole my beating heart away

Why Me?

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

Why me?
Why me?
A broken bowl
A dead-end clue
One who is unworthy of you
One who never could be half of two
Why me?

Why me?
Why me?
An empty vow
Another lie
When I can't look you in the eye

I turn my back instead of try
Why me?

You hold me tight
I slip away
Your loving arms
Can't make me stay

Why me?
Why me?
A wandering heart
A restless soul
You know that I just can't play this role
Can't give you back the love that I stole
Why me?

Night Sea Journey

(Jim Robinson/Dennis Curley)

One quick look around this room
There's nothing you can take
Your father's books
A golden ring
Not a single blessed thing
And the prayers you said out loud
To dull that lonely, lovelorn ache
Leave them behind
No need to sing
Your penance for a vengeful king

Untie your body from the mast
Ignore the sirens' wail
It's just the wind
That clips your ear
Your mutinous voice is all you'll hear
Shadows in the sea below
Just phantoms from your youthful dreams
You brought them here
To keep at hand
Demons from your life on land

So toss your map into the wake
You won't be going home

Beyond the fold
The fall is steep
Close your eyes and take the leap
The place you land might torment you
Stars above in disarray
Scales fall
No hopes to keep
Endless freedom, restless sleep

Snow upon
Moonless sea
Wind that tears the sails in three
Flickering lamp
A windowpane
Lighthouse down ...

HONEYWINE is:

Dorian Chalmers vocals
Dennis Curley vocals
Becky Schlegel vocals

Marc Bohn drums and percussion
Andy Carroll bass
Eric Christopher fiddle & mandolin
Mike Donley keyboards
Gary Rue guitars
Mark Stillman accordion

Additional musicians:

Rich Casey (bass on 2, 3, 7, 10 and 15)
Steve Kaul (guitar on 7; shruti box on 17)
David Robinson (banjo on 2, 3, 7, 10 and 15; mandolin on 3, 7, 10 and 15)



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www.wild-sound.com

Album photography by Jim Robinson.
Portrait of Dennis and Jim by Annemarie Bossert.
Needlepoint by Lois Clarke Robinson.

Producer: Dennis Curley
Executive Producer: Jim Robinson

This album is dedicated with love
to Jim Curley (1944-2022).



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- The background of the page is a light-colored fabric with a detailed embroidery. The central focus is a large, circular floral motif in shades of blue and white, with a yellow center. To its right, there are smaller, more delicate floral designs in white and pink. A prominent feature is a long, horizontal branch-like structure in blue and white, with several red, leaf-like shapes attached. The overall aesthetic is traditional and intricate.
1. **A Desert in Bloom** (3:12)
 2. **Portland, Maine** (3:14)
 3. **A Village Needs a Villain** (2:52)
 4. **Sugar, Please** (3:53)
 5. **Swimming Upstream** (3:46)
 6. **Sassy** (4:05)
 7. **A Day with Robin Mae** (3:24)
 8. **One Explanation** (3:00)
 9. **Dealing with the Dead** (4:34)
 10. **Tell Me, David** (2:52)
 11. **Poison** (3:41)
 12. **Jolie Lucie** (3:10)
 13. **Almost as Hard as Being a Woman** (7:14)
 14. **Alma Triste** (4:02)
 15. **Romance** (1:40)
 16. **Why Me?** (2:49)
 17. **Night Sea Journey** (4:21)

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