

sparkbird

LYDIAN MUSIC STUDIOS

29 JANUARY 2023



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ON THE EPA CONSENT DECREE
THREATENING O'AHU'S DRINKING WATER
BY FEBRUARY 6TH

SONGS

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- RAINBOW CONNECTION
- BLUE JAY
- VARIED THRUSH [MUSIC VIDEO]

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I AM NOT A STRANGER HERE

I don't know this town
But it's your town
So it's my town too

I don't know that girl
But she knows you
So she's my friend too

I don't know my way
But I can count on you
To show it to me
I am not a stranger
When I'm with you
When I'm with you
(D-d-do do do do do)

Your mother seems to like me
And you tell me
That it's true

Your cousin makes me food
That I have only ever
Dreamed of trying

I can tell that I
Could be so happy here
With you forever
I am not a stranger
When I'm with you
When I'm with you
(D-d-do do do do d-d-do)

Your room is a cave
That offers shelter
From the stormy weather
And beneath a pile of blankets
We can hide away together, we can
Hide away together, we can
Hide away together, we can
Hide away together, we can

When it's time for me
To up and leave
There's a part of me
I can't make follow

All day long
I'm longing for you
And the tears are
So hard to swallow

After knowing
Life with you
Life without you
Leaves me hollow
(Oh oh oh)

I don't know my way
But I can count on you
To show it to me
I am not a stranger
When I'm with you,
When I'm with you

I don't know this road
But I can count on you
To lead me down it
I am not a stranger
When I'm with
You, when I'm with
You, when I'm with
You, when I'm with
You

LEAD & TIN

I thought I had been shot—
Been shot a thousand times—
It's not a shocking way to die
In the fields this side of
The enemy lines.

But I've fired my fair share of guns,
And I know full well that bullets
Don't just fall down from the sky—
So I opened up my eyes.

I saw a flash of light—
I saw it through the black—whoa!
I saw the flooded track—
I felt the hail upon my back—oh,
I saw the start of the foggy maze—
I couldn't see for several days—
But then a sunbreak finally
Burned away the haze.

(You know I'd kiss you if I could—ah,
But my lips are made of wood,
And it wouldn't do to splinter you
In an unfamiliar neighborhood.)

I dodged a ball of flames
Fueled by the dust the sun'd kicked up
A stone's throw from the tonsil crypt
I eschewed the beaten path
On a SUP.

Tight-lipped and planing through
The murky millrace surface—
These flavescent leaves,
Crispy teardrops
Shed from crying trees—
Murmurations—
"Tis autumn?"
"No, only fallout,"
Sighed beside
A chemical breeze.

Oh, stratocumulus
Oh, circumbendibus
I saw and ceased to push
I'd seen and heard too much
My oar became a crutch
I sculled into a reef
It sawed the board in half
I saw my former single fin
I soldered lead and tin
I sauntered out
I saw interred my kith and kin

(You know I'd hold this post a while
If I could only learn to smile
But by the time I earn the privilege
Only grimaces will be in style.)

Surf Scoter on the pond
Coyote on the fescue

Siroccos on the flesh
Globe lightning to the rescue

An earthly comet rolling by
A stoic guide toward a new clear era
No shadows on the sterile mind
No leks distract the prairie-chickens from
their terror

I found a brand new clearing
Next to the old new clearing
A welcome change
From the adjacent older new old clearing
I didn't feel at peace but
I didn't feel at war—
A welcome change.

(You know, I went to your old home
You know, the site of your new grave
You know, I'd pay my last respects
But the respects I have I'd better save.)

GREY & GREEN

Land in my mind
Crawling through the sound
I found it
Now I recognize it
Everywhere
Everywhere it's aground

Swimming up a concrete river
Paddling through pine and pavement
I melted
Blent in and then
Recemented

Inside an unprotected
Hostel suite
Astride a bicycle
Defrosting wheat
Atop a tower with an
Unrevolving view
Of illuminated sails

Grey and green
Grey and green
The brightest blue could
Never come between
Grey and green and
Amber

Rowing toward a lowered drawbridge
Clambering onto the Seawall
Confecting cloud-covered cinnamon rolls
Wowed by crowds of
Glaucous-winged Gulls

See?
No sea.
Look at the harlequins!
—I wish you'd said to me.
Over a decade I discerned
A path
My passport went defunct
Now that junket's out of reach

Grey and green
Grey and green
The reddest flags
Forever come between
Grey and green and
Amber

Everybody's body sways
In unfamiliar funny ways
Traveling on rainbow
Wheels of color down below
The crows pecking suet-surfaced streets
The subway sounds resounding beats
Beckoning me to retreat
On the heels of mighty feet!

But where there's a will
There's a way
And I will
Every day
Until I dry
Every day until I dry—

Wait
Wait
Don't tell me
Blare the Heritage Horns
But I won't leave

I haven't heard firstear
The 9 o'clock gun
Or the steam chimes

I've yet to feel firstfoot
The boom of the Sooty Grouse
In the mountain woods

I have more notes to take
On the colors of the
Land in my mind

I have a wish
To blow through the mist
Of the dandelion fountain

I have a truth
To seek in the xeriscape
Of the hill on the hill

I have
a past, a present, and a future
In this city

Maybe no more than moments
But there's still a possibility.

ENVY

Rough time of year
Does it get to you too
When it rains and it rains
And your shoes never dry

I stay inside with my
Veins full of glue
And I stick to a screen
Till my battery dies

I don't need to be rich
Only so wealthy as to pay for my food
I don't need to be huge
Only so big as to ever be noticed

Rough time of year
Do you sit through it too
With that envy so strong
That you can't even move

I must confess
An embarrassing truth
Almost nothing can hurt me
Like thinking of you

You've got a beautiful home
Bestselling novel and effortless style
You enchant the people around you
They swoon when you show even the hint of a smile

Rough time of year
Does it darken the doors
To the lofty salons
Of the luminaries?

I wouldn't know. I wouldn't know. I only know
Weeks of godawful overcast days
Abstinence from sun on the skin
Drifting deeper and deeper into quarantine
Till my own company begins to wear thin

OVERWINTERED

Teeth chatter
Automatically
A beat clicking double-time
To the crunch of snow
An animal
Licks a beater
A Northern Flicker
Clucks a whimper
A beep goes off inside—
Is it time
— or just a timer?

Decalomania
Ironed on our hides by the
Scarlet fever-stricken
Two-bit hypocritical
Neo-Puritans
Turning on a dime.

What are they?
A little more than kin
And less than kind
We live in the same
But we run on
Different time.

You are safe
You are sound
You are safe
You are sound

I feel your frequency
Resonate at my core
Enkindle my extremities
Echo through my bones
Hiccup out its tones
[...]

We face apocalypses every day
And fumble stricken phrases
We ball up to play:

When we feel forlorn
Just keep peeling those little oranges
They keep stealing, we keep peeling
Stuck on an uneven keeling
Every Great and Snowy Egret's
Speaking of my evening grossness
Every Evening Grosbeak's
Speaking of my great and snowy egress
Even if we deviate
Even if we deviate
The ice rink's set to counterclockwise
There's no exit till we skate

I lurch along the verge
A strawberryless frozen biscuit
My flimsy figure zero traps
A miraculous lemniscate
When the intercom comes through
I think I've lost my refund calling
Oh, Winter Tanager
You help me walk but you leave me crawling.
You are a cardinal
You are a cardinal
And I should be so lucky
As to be a part of you at all

You are safe
You are sound
You are safe
You are sound
[...]

You bring the tropics to these chilly parts
The contrast shocks my system
Chilblains swell upon my heart.

DISEMBODIED MIND

I am
In trouble with myself again
I am
In trouble trouble trouble trouble
I am
In trouble with myself again
I am
In trouble trouble trouble

But I do believe
There's beauty within
That's why I can't stop
Picking my skin
Digging for a buried treasure
Digging for a way for me to

Say goodbye
To the stranger on the other side
Say hello
To the bliss of a
Disembodied mind

I am
In trouble with myself again
I am
In trouble trouble trouble trouble
I am
In trouble with myself again
I am
In trouble trouble trouble

But I do believe
There's a reason to live
That is why I'm gonna go
To sea in a sieve
Get me soaked and squeeze me through
Till there's nothing left to do but

Say goodbye
To the stranger on the other side
Say hello
To the bliss of a
Disembodied mind

I am
In trouble with myself again
I am
In trouble trouble trouble trouble
I am
In trouble with myself again
I am
In trouble trouble trouble

And I don't believe
We could ever agree
That's why I'll do anything
To keep myself away from me
Maybe when I'm out of sight
I'll see me in a better light

Eyes shut tight
Better get this right
Every word of the spell
To rip the soul from its shell

Say goodbye
To the stranger on the other side
Say hello
To the bliss of a
Disembodied mind

I am
in trouble with myself again
I am
in trouble trouble trouble trouble
I am
in trouble with myself again
I am
in trouble

WHITE APPETITES

gray after gray
prey after prey
morning to morning
day after day

let's let
bygones be bygones
blackening the skies
in the bygone style
of soon-to-be-gone
monarch butterflies—
climb up the butte
stare at the sun-drenched river
clench your lids
hurry
carry the sight
to the boardwalk
lift your chin up
open your eyes
see a shadow
watch as it lightens and dies.
see a shadow
watch as it lightens and dies.
see a shadow
watch as it lightens and dies.

how can I love someone I've
only seen in a painting?
how can I love a voice I've
only heard described?
how, on the other hand
can you kill somebody who's
right in front of
you seem to have
no trouble at all doing it
you seem to have
no trouble at all

straw after straw
back after back
mourning to mourning
caulking the cracks

let's let
bygones be tattooed
upon our eyes
let's let
the truths
be louder than the lies
I feel so ashamed to think
I used to say
it wasn't your land
and I didn't take it away
it wasn't your land
and I didn't take it away
it wasn't your land
and I didn't take it away

white appetites
killed the passenger pigeon
white fashion
killed the Carolina parakeet
white silence
kills people of color
white power
will kill the very current it ignited
my own white power
will kill a current too
if I'm not prepared to fight it

see a pipeline
run along the oil-drenched river
see us promise
changes that we don't deliver
see a sacred place
watch us colonize
the boardwalk
see a fallen cup
someone carried that cup
when it was full
it must have taken
every ounce of strength
to pour the liquid
down their gullet
yet a cis hetero white man
emptying his gun
seems to have
no trouble at all carrying it
for a future bullet
seems to have
no trouble at all

SILENT FILM

I am living in the eye of the storm
Winded and unwound
Down on the floor
Trying to find the door
Trying to find the door
Trying to find the door

I can't see for all the dust in the air
Could wave it away
But I wouldn't dare
Some of it might be you
Some of it might be you
Some of it might be you

Every day and every night
You were the
Soundtrack of my life
And now it's all a
Silent film
Every cloudy afternoon
Your voice rang out and
Lit the room
But now it's always
Dark and
Oh so quiet

I don't even know where to begin
I don't even know where to begin
Sometimes the days were long
Sometimes the days were long
Sometimes the days were long
But the years were so short

I am living in the shell of a home
Never dreamed I'd feel so
Sad and alone again
Didn't we have more time?
I thought we had more time.
Couldn't we have more time?

Every day and every night
You were the
Soundtrack of my life
And now it's all a
Silent film
Every cloudy afternoon
Your voice rang out and
Lit the room
But now it's always
Dark and
Oh so quiet

I don't even know where to begin
I don't even know where to begin
Trying to find the door
Trying to find the door
Trying to find the door

SPARKBIRD

Sparks fly
Every time I
Identify a species
I have hitherto never
Seen in the field
Seen in the feather
Sparkbird
Destiny
Drew us together
Every smile line on my face
Can be retraced
Down to the split second
Down to the split place

Is it magical thinking
Or is it magical realism
Or is it neither
Here nor there?
Every time I check my wrist
It's another brand new freckle
Past another brand new hair
I'm growing up, up, up
Against my will, will
Will you finally resurrect
The time I've killed?
Will you finally resurrect
The time I've killed, killed, killed?

Sparks fly
Every time I
Visit this park
I envision
The phantom
Of a giddy little cartoon me
Jittering on
The electrifying
Cusp of discovery
Before and after the storm
All I wanted was
To be seen
And to see

Some signs of a world still
Turning, turning, turning
Some signs of a world still
Forming, forming, forming
Rebirth of a dream still
Burning, burning, burning

Is it magical thinking
Or is it magical realism
Or is it neither
Here nor there?
Every time I check my wrist
It's another brand new freckle
Past another brand new hair
I'm growing up, up, up
Against my will, will
Will you finally resurrect
The time I've killed?
Will you finally resurrect
The time I've killed, killed, killed?

Sparkbird
Sparkbird

MINOR HOLIDAY

Wake up and look out the window
Half the yard is burning and
The other half is covered in snow

Is it Arbor Day?
Is it Boxing Day?
I'm sure today must be a
Minor holiday

Season's grievings to us, one and all
Once we get the hang of it
We'll forget to get upset

Bearing each unsettling new pall
So adaptable
We're so adaptable

So adaptable
We're so adaptable
As the world is ending
We can keep pretending

That none of this will matter in an hour
First we lose the polar bears
Now we lose the flowers

Not a summer's day
Not a winter's day
Not a summer's day
Not a winter's day
Shall I compare thee to
The Judgment Day?

Is it All Saints' Day?
Is it All Souls' Day?
Is it All Fools' Day?
Is it All Saints' Day?
Is It All Souls' Day?
Is it All Fools' Day?

Is it Arbor Day?
Is it Boxing Day?
I'm sure today must be a
Minor holiday

And the world is ending
And we keep pretending
That none of this will matter in an hour

METROPOLIS OF EDEN

A city in ruin
But only for the blink of an eye
A pitiful tune
But only for a moment in time
In the long run

We came back to these old streets
When the barriers had all gotten
Buried at sea
And when these buildings all
Turned green
We agreed
It's better than it used to be

How long has it been
Since we last felt fear
Of the sun and the wind
And how long will it be
Till we feel
The Metropolis of Eden
We live in is real?

A city in bloom
A city with that adapts to survive
A little more room
For underdogs and misfits to thrive

In the rooftop gardens
The Purple Finches are
Pecking out the eyes
Of the wild yellow sunflowers
Smiling at vanilla skies
And you and I are finally free
To do the things we like
Be it making art or making out
And stargazing every night, and oh
How sweet would it be
If an Eastern Phoebe nested
On the balcony, and oh
How sweet to begin
Seeing life as a gift,
Not a contest to win

We came back to these old streets
When the barriers had all gotten
Buried at sea
And when these buildings all
Turned green
We agreed
It's better than it used to be

How long has it been
Since we last felt fear
Of the sun and the wind
And how long will it be
Till we feel
The Metropolis of Eden
We live in is real?
Oh

How long has it been
Since we last felt fear
Of the sun and the wind
And how long will it be
Till we feel
The Metropolis of Eden
We live in is real?

A city in bloom
(We can do the things we like)
A city in bloom
(We can do the things we like)
A city in bloom
(We can do the things we like)
A city in bloom

RAINBOW CONNECTION

Why are there so many songs about rainbows
And what's on the other side?
Rainbows are visions, but only illusions
And rainbows have nothing to hide

So we've been told, and some choose to believe it
I know they're wrong, wait and see

Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me

Who said that every wish would be heard and answered
When wished on the morning star?
Somebody thought of that, and someone believed it
Look what it's done so far

What's so amazing that keeps us stargazing
And what do we think we might see?

Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me

All of us under its spell
We know that it's probably magic

Have you been half asleep, and have you heard voices?
I've heard them calling my name
Is this the sweet sound that calls the young sailors?
The voice might be one and the same

I've heard it too many times to ignore it
It's something that I'm s'posed to be

Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me
La da da di da da ooh
La da da da la di da ooh

BLUE JAY

Ta-da!
Today
The headache finally goes away
The headache finally goes
Ta-da!
Today
I feel the harmony between
My heart and body and my brain
Everything will be okay

And if you ask what bird I want to be
I'll say a blue jay
If you ask what time I want to leave
I'll change the conversation
If you lean in close and kiss me
I won't mind
I'll probably respond in kind

Ta-da!
Today
I find the energy to play
I find the energy
Ta-da!
Today
I hear a friendly melody
In every enemy refrain
Everything will be okay
Everything will be okay

Ta-da!
Today
I see the light across the bay
Ta-da!
Today
A sudden symphony
is somewhere out there trumpeting my name
Everything will be okay

And if you ask what bird I want to be
I'll say a blue jay
If you ask what time I want to leave
I'll change the conversation
If you lean in close and kiss me
I won't mind
I'll probably respond in kind
I'll probably respond in kind
I'll probably respond in kind
I'll probably respond in kind.

VARIED THRUSH

Hush, hush
Listen to the Varied Thrush
The freezing rain has
Pushed them down into the valley
With the rest of us
Flushed
From the comfortably lush
Forest floor
They draw their bows across
Serrated edges of
Musical saws and crush
The frigid, sharply pointed hearts
Of icicles like us

Crush, crush, crush
Crush, crush, crush
Crush, crush, crush
Crush, crush, crush
Crush, crush, crush
Crush, crush, crush
Crush, crush, crush

Swish, swish,
The Osprey hovers seeking fish
The glassy pond
Displays the menu
But won't serve the dish
To birds who wish
To linger when
The air turns cold
Defying pressure
To defer to Cackling Geese
And Western

Gulls, wish, wish
Wish, wish, wish
Wish, wish, wish
Wish, wish, wish
Wish, wish, wish
Wish, wish, wish
Wish, wish, wish

Who doesn't wish they could
Begin to leave?
Who doesn't wish they could
Believe in letting something end?
We have these wishes
But we're hung up
On a superstitious
Focus on the family
We see in Collared Doves
With love much stronger
Than we probably
Should ever hope
For ours to be

Are we a "we are" today?
Will we be a "we will be" tomorrow?
Were we a "we were" already long ago?
We don't know what price
Makes sense to pay
So we settle for indebted sorrow
Never knowing we could dine and
Dash into that nullifying snow.

Thrash, thrash,
The so-called trash birds
Taking baths
Betray their cuteness
In the recklessness
With which they lash
Their lustrous feathers
Petroleum with flecks of ash
In an unseasonable puddle
Glaciating fast

Splash, splash, splash
Splash, splash, splash
Splash, splash, freeze
Splash, splash, splash
Freeze, splash, splash
Splash, splash, splash
Splash, splash, freeze
Splash, splash, splash

Hush, hush
Listen to the Varied Thrush
Hush, hush
Hush, hush
Listen to the Varied Thrush
Hush, hush
Hush, hush
Hush, hush
Hush, hush