

Coming Around Again

Music and lyrics written and croaked out by Printer Bowler, except for Kootenai River written by Larry Cripe, and Be With Me performed by Liam Bowler. Recorded in Big Fork, Montana, in 1994 by Christie Dodson on a cassette tape. I ran into Christie recently (February, 2014) and she told me, "Hey, I found this tape of your songs we made a long time ago." It was a Wow! moment, especially since I thought I'd lost some of them forever and don't even remember recording them. She made me a copy that Kimi took to a musician friend named Jeff, who cleaned it up as much as possible and put everything on a CD.

My personal assessment of these recordings is: World class poetry, fine songwriting, marginal singing, semi-primitive guitar playing, recorded in the crudest form possible, a small boom-box with built-in mike. I dedicate the best of what's here to my darling Kimi and my two boys, Liam and Barley.

1 • Are You Looking for Me?

A simple song about the timeless impulse of love looking for love. Seems that's what we're all doing in some way or other.

2 • Martha's Garden

Martha lived in a lovely home on a hillside overlooking Big Fork Bay. She had created a beautiful flower garden spread throughout terraces that stepped down to the water's edge. Martha was a few decades older than I, but we hit it off when I first came to town in the early 70s and became great pals. We quaffed many a gin & tonic and I enjoyed the delicious breakfasts she often made, especially her incomparable bleu-cheese stuffed mushrooms. Days were mellow and life was good in Martha's Garden.

3 • Starlight

As this song came to me, I kept getting visions of gypsies who migrate around Eastern Europe with their soulful, sometimes melancholy music. I'd always felt a strong affinity for this kind of sound and it never fails to "take me home" to its origins. I thought it was time to do my own version and dedicate it to the wanderer in all of us.

4 • Wedding Song for a Friend

My good friend, Tom Tracey, master herbalist and medicine man living in Big Fork, was getting married and it seemed he and his new wife should have a song to celebrate the event. The music started rolling in early one morning when my two boys and I left Scobey just before sun-up, on our way back home. While the boys were asleep I was humming the tune and jotting down some lyrics as we sped across the prairies. Pretty much had it by the time we got home . . . but, for whatever reasons, I never got it finished enough to sing for them. I'll try to get them a copy of this for what now must be close to their 20th anniversary!

5 • Pure White Light

The predominant vision of my native home is in the middle of a dazzling ball of light where nothing but pure can abide. It's where everything is made right again, heaven if you like. I figure on returning there when I'm done running around this planet, back to headquarters to rest and refuel. I also try to touch in there every day especially after a bumpy experience or when life gets too whacky. This song reminds me that there's more to living than just chomping daily

bread and surviving. It's about making endless right decisions about what I see, think, do that keep me heading in the right direction . . . toward the pure white light.

6 • Portrait of Montana

I wrote this song for Terry Robinson and the Montana (formerly Mission Mountain) Band. In the mid-70s, Terry and the boys started their annual Fly Open golf tournament in Polson, where all the friends, pals and wannabes gathered every summer to whack the white orb, sing a few songs and celebrate another trip around the sun. I got him a copy of the song, but didn't really get to sing it for him, just before he and some of the band died in a plane crash near Lakeside that summer of 1986. Terry left a huge hole in our atmosphere and tons of great memories. Vaya con Dios as always, Terry.

7 • Deep Blue Sea

This one's a cousin of Pure White Light, but more about being here than where I've been or where I'm headed. The last verse is one of my favorites and pretty much nails it for me.

8 • Angels at My Door

Long ago I'd heard that angels are all over this planet in all kinds of disguises, helping people through their lives, often disguised as unkempt bums (think John the Baptist) or other unlikely personages. This has been confirmed for me countless times, and it usually reminds me to take a closer look at everyone I meet. Sometimes that "angel" can be hard to see, or may have a tough lesson to impart that may be lacking in warm fuzzies. It's a way of seeing that helps me replace judgments with curiosity and find something of value in everyone I meet.

9 • Hello Barley & Liam (this is my prayer for you)

Ah, my two little boys, now grown men. I was a Mr. Mom for several years of beautiful and often tough times raising and being raised by these guys that I soon recognized as very important teachers. It was great medicine for me to hang out and watch them gradually lose their innocence as they took on life's lessons in this crazy polarized world of up and down, good and bad, stop and go, love and hate, joy and sadness, and on and on. Welcome to Planet Earth, guys! This song came to me as a prayer for their safe journey through life, one I carry with me all the time.

10 • Johnny Sing a Song for Me

During my Mr. Mom years of taking care of my boys, I used to take a break at the Waterworks Bar in Big Fork a couple nights a week. Johnny Dunnigan, a good pal and a great entertainer, often played a few tunes there and sometimes hosted an open mike night. I always looked forward to catching Johnny's show. In my otherwise semi-shattered post-divorce world, he became an emotional anchor for me, something I could count on when just about everything else was up in the air. This one's for you, Johnny.

11 • Coming Around Again

If I have a personal anthem, this is it. Poetry and music have long been the best way I know to help me make sense out of this wild, fascinating trip. Going through the process of extracting a good, true poem from my atmosphere gives me an essential understanding or feeling I can count on. It's like taking an inventory of what's real in my life, from growing up in a little prairie town to standing here on this side of eternity. It's also about how life keeps repeating itself in so many different ways.

12 • Kootenai River (words and music by Larry Cripe)

Larry and I go way back to the University of Montana School of Journalism where our mentor, Nathaniel Blumberg, was the firecracker dean, JFK was president and life seemed pretty simple compare to now. Later we took off on many adventures during the revolutionary milieu of the late 60s in the San Francisco Bay Area. We spent a lot of time there, but always came back to Montana for psychic refueling and recuperation. Larry grew up in Troy, Montana, a cultural backwater of life in timber country and not much else. He wrote this song for his pal, Doug, a real down home wood tick if there ever was one. Larry always likes me to sing it, so here it is.

13 • Dinner at Uncle Mac's

My organic grain-growing partner and soul pal, Mac Schaffer, worked out with me in the 70s when my former wife, Jana, and I had the Bread Board Bakery in Big Fork. Mac and I spent several weeks each summer out in NE Montana where we grew the hard-red spring wheat. Mac lived in a little cabin out behind our bakery where he cooked up many a delicious dinner on his wood-fired cook stove. We had lots of good times making and eating the best food, learning how to grow things clean and strong, and just enjoying our freewheeling days of living the best dreams would could imagine. This rendition is a little choppy, but it does capture a bit of Mac's enthusiastic spirit.

14 • Be with Me

My darling Kimi inspired me to write many songs and this is one of my favorites. Liam sings this one mainly because he wanted to and because I had a little surgery recently that messed up my vocal chords. This one is a recent addition, recorded in February, 2014. I'm lining up some more singing tasks for him. I have about 25 or so more songs that want to be recorded and I'm hoping Liam and maybe Barley will chip in with their great voices.

That's it for now, folks!
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Missoula, Montana