

WE THE NIGHTHAWKS

KIMBERLY HAWKEY

SONGS BY MORRIS & RIVERS



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CREDITS

Vocals - **KIMBERLY HAWKEY**
Piano - **ASSAF GLEIZNER**
Drums - **JAMISON ROSS**
Drums - **JERRY MAROTTA** (track 7)
Bass - **DYLAN PERRILLO**
Alto Saxophone - **ADAM SIEGEL**
Trumpet - **RHYS TIVEY**
Clarinet - **JONATHAN GREENE**
Tabla - **ROB MEYSON**
Tenor Saxophone - **MARTY PETERS**
Violin 1 - **ADRIANNA MATEO**
Violin 2 - **TALLIE BRUNFELT**
Viola - **JOCELYN PAN**
Cello - **ANDREW NIELSON**
French Horn - **ERIN PAUL**
Bassoon - **MAYA STONE** (track 5)
Bassoon - **ANDREA CHUNG** (track 11)
Guitar - **JOEL BROWN**
Accordion - **ALBERT BEHAR**
Harp - **HANNAH COPE JOHNSON**

Songs by

MORRIS & RIVERS

Music by Lecco Morris
Lyrics by Justin K. Rivers
Produced by Joel Moss
Music Directed by Assaf Gleizner
Co-arranged by Lecco Morris, Assaf Gleizner
Orchestrated by Assaf Gleizner
Additional Orchestrations by Lecco Morris
Mixed and Mastered by Joel Moss
Production Assistant - Vincent Fazio
Engineered by Ariel Shafir, Jim Mastrianni
Recorded at Dreamland Studios in West Hurley, NY
Additional recording at Jim Mastrianni's Studio

Photography by Drew Bordeaux, Richard Lovrich

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*This project was
born from loss
and grew into
something filled
with deep hope.*

Some of these stories are quiet tragedies. Others, playful or joyous. In all of them, Kimberly's voice is the common thread bringing to life people and places both near and far.

From our first forays into songwriting to the filtered stained glass of Dreamland Studios, Lecco and I have sought to use old tools in new ways, to meld our experiences. Along the way, a devastating year unfolded, which saw us grapple with the fragility of life and the vulnerability of our loved ones, laying bare just how vital human connection is. How vital music still is, in all our lives.

I've already told the story of the night I finished the lyrics to Slow Cool Water. We were all at our darkest moments. Lecco had fled from the disease that ravaged his beloved New Orleans. I had seen my friends lose everything in an instant. The first pandemic deaths were upon us. What else could we do? Except to seek strength in those currents that flow safely underground.

We worked remotely. Lecco, quarantined in a borrowed house, recovering from the disease. Me, typing away at a green formica table as the world fell apart, cradled by a broken office chair with bare springs. I sent him words and he replied with music. A chance thought of his old childhood friend connected us to Kimberly, and with her, Assaf Gleizner. A phone call to another friend brought us the name of Joel Moss, perhaps the one person who had the breadth of musical imagination and experience to understand how to guide this project. A few more lucky chances and a lot of hard work, fueled by Lecco's tireless conviction and belief, brought us sponsors and patrons and investors who wanted to help make this thing real.

We do not need to remake the world. We need only to help it flow toward greater perfection. Here is our attempt, with our rough trade. The talents of great musicians and engineers, placed in holy spaces, overheard by the warm hum of vintage microphones, awaits.

Maybe we're getting a little carried away. It's just music, right? To quote another great songwriter: "If you don't go over the top, you don't get to see what's on the other side." We have mountains to climb.

JUSTIN K. RIVERS

March 2021
Cranesville, NY

A black and white photograph of a woman with long, dark, wavy hair. She is looking upwards and to the right with a slight smile. She is holding a dark, circular object, possibly a hat or a piece of fabric, in front of her. The background is dark and out of focus.

LYRICS

IVY TWINED

IVY TWINED IN THE SUNSTRUCK LANE
CLIMBING UP EACH OTHER IN THE LUSTY RAIN
EACH TENDRIL WRAPPED AROUND ME
IS DRIVING ME INSANE
IVY TWINED IN THE SUNSTRUCK LANE

I ONCE THOUGHT YOU WERE ABOVE ME
MY HANDS WERE MUCH TOO DIRTY
BUT WITH YOURS WE MATCHED
I ONCE THOUGHT YOU NEVER LOVED ME
TOO PROUD OR JUST TOO TENDER
FROM THE TIMES THAT SCRATCHED

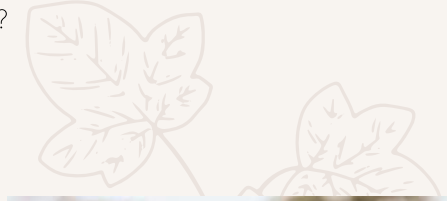
WE DISCARDED ALL OUR CLOTHING
AT THE LAKESHORE, BLUE AND FINE
SKIPPIN' IN PALE-GRAY WORKIN' WATERS
NAKED YET DIVINE

WE WERE...
IVY TWINED IN THE SUNSTRUCK LANE
TANGLED ON YOUR TRELLIS IN THE MORNING RAIN
YOUR MOUTH RETAINS THE FLAVOR
OF OUR SWEET CHAMPAGNE
IVY TWINED IN THE SUNSTRUCK LANE

NOW DOES THIS TAWNY SEASON LAST FOREVER?
MUST WE BE REPLANTED TO REGROW?
CAN WE FORM A SHELTER WITH OUR BODIES?
LET OUR STAMENS AND PETALS
SURVIVE THE COMING SNOW

THE SNOW...
CAUSE WE ARE...

IVY TWINED IN THE SUNSTRUCK LANE
LITTERING THE FROSTPACK
IN THE FREEZING RAIN
UNTIL A THAW IGNITES US
WE ARE ENTOMBED, ENGRAINED
IVY TWINED IN THE SUNSTRUCK LANE
IVY TWINED IN THE SUNSTRUCK LANE





CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

LIP-SYNCHED ARABELLA
PACKED HER STORY IN A CASE
FOLDED INTO QUARTERS
EDGED WITH BELGIAN LACE
BUT OUR FRAMES WERE ALL A-FLUTTER
WHAT'S ANOTHER REMAKE FOR?
SNIP THE B-PLOT, LET IT CURL
THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

AT A TABLE NEAR THE BALLROOM
WE FILMED A FAREWELL SCENE
THEN WE TURNED THE CAMERAS OFF
WE SMELLED OF ETHYLENE
FINGERS ON OUR TRIGGERS
IN A CONSTANT STATE OF WAR
PULLING FOCUSED MOMENTS OFF
THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

A DREAM OF GOLDEN STATUES
A WALTZING CARBON DOZE
MILLIMETER REELS THAT THREAD
THE NITRATE IN OUR CLOTHES
WE HAD A GRAND AFFAIR
BUT THE CAMERAS NEVER CAME
WE FUNDED THIS WITH NECTAR
BUT THE TASTE WAS ASPARTAME
THE FOOTAGE LIES IN BASKETS
I DON'T WANT IT ANYMORE
THE ARCHIVISTS CAN LEAVE IT ON
THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

LIP-SYNCHED ARABELLA
PACKED HER STORY IN A CASE
FOLDED INTO QUARTERS
EDGED WITH BELGIAN LACE
THE MATINEES WILL ONLY SEE
WHAT SHE UNDERSCORES
SHE LEFT A DIFFERENT MOVIE ON
THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR



BILL EVANS

SPEAK TO ME SILENT IVORY
WE MEET AGAIN ON THE BROKEN OLD STAGE
IN THE FLAME OF THE EVENING
WHEN LIMELIGHT BURNS QUICK
YOU COOL ME IN LIQUID
AND NEVER LET GO
BY THE SLENDEREST THREAD
JUST ONE MORE SHOW

TALKING TO GREMLINS AND THREE-QUARTER TONIC
AT THE END OF A STOOL WHERE THE DARKER THINGS HIDE
PUNCTURED IN TIME BY THE CLINK OF THE GLASSES
BLUE FROM THE WONDERLAND WAITING INSIDE

A CAR THAT HAD CRASHED ON A DESOLATE HIGHWAY
WITH CHORDS THAT CONFORM TO THE DISSONANT SOUND
OF A WORN CATSKILL LANEWAY THAT YEARNs FOR THE CITY
BUT WILL NEVER BE MORE THAN SOME APPLE-FARM TOWN

SPEAK TO ME SILENT IVORY
WHEREVER I GO YOU ARE READY TO FLY
IN JULY, IN THE HEAT AND THE FAMINE
THE JOHNSON GRASS FALLS, TURNS BROWN TILL IT DIES

HANDS THAT HELD MEMORIES IN BURN MARKS AND CALLUS
THE CHARRED-BOTTOM TEASPOONS IN STRINGS OF MOTELS
WHERE THE LOBBIES ARE SUTURED WITH DUST AND BAD WEATHER
AND THE CONCIERGE LEERS AT THE DAMP CLIENTELE

WHERE THE MAID IS A MARTYR, A SOFT-SPOKEN MOTHER
TURNING DOWN BEDS WITH AMMONIAC FUMES
FOLDING FRESH TOWELS AND DUMPING THE GARBAGE
FROM ONE EMPTY ROOM TO THE NEXT EMPTY ROOM

SPEAK TO ME SILENT IVORY
WE MEET AGAIN ON THE BROKEN OLD STAGE
IN THE FLAME OF THE EVENING
THAT BURNS OUT SO QUICK
YOU COOL ME IN LIQUID
YOU NEVER LET GO
THOUGH THE FINISH UNRAVELS
THE END OF THE SHOW





JUST LIKE SATURDAY

YOU'RE JUST LIKE SATURDAY
ALWAYS FAR AWAY
JUST LIKE SATURDAY
A DREAM IN THE SHOULDERS
OF THE WORKING BLUES

WAKE UP INSIDE A SUNDAY LEMONADE
LIVING IN A VALLEY OF MOUNTAIN SKIES
YOUR RIPPLING LAKE
IS MY MORNING TEACUP
REFLECTING BACK
IN MY SLEEPY EYES

YOU'RE JUST LIKE SATURDAY
ALWAYS FAR AWAY
JUST LIKE SATURDAY
A DREAM IN THE SHOULDERS
OF THE WORKING BLUES

COMMUTING ALONG
THE MONDAY WAGON TRAIN
A RUMBLING TRAIL
TO THE CITY HILLS
WHERE EVERY CAFE
IS FILLED WITH SMILING FRIENDS
AND COTTAGE DAISIES
FALL DOWN THE SILLS

TUESDAY IS JUST FOREVER
IT'S WEARING AN OLD-FASHIONED FROWN
WATCHING COYOTES ENCIRCLE
WHILE WEDNESDAY IS DRAGGING YOU DOWN

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY ARE WHAT I WISH TO BE
BUT FRANKLY I LIVE AS BROWN RUSSET JUNE
COOL IN THE MORNING BUT HOT IN THE SUN
BAKING THE NEXT AFTERNOON

YOU'RE JUST LIKE SATURDAY
ALWAYS FAR AWAY
JUST LIKE SATURDAY
A DREAM IN THE SHOULDERS
OF THE WORKING BLUES

YOU'RE JUST LIKE SATURDAY
ANOTHER LIFE AWAY
HOPING TO GROW INTO THE
BLOOM WE CHOOSE

ALONE IN THE DARK

SOUND FILTERS THROUGH HAIRLINES
OF FLOORBOARDS AND OF PANES
MOANS AND SIGHS THAT MANIFEST
ECSTATIC OR PROFANE
HEAR THE RATTLE OF THE HINGES
THE PERK OF LAZY TEA
THE THUMPING BASS OF BINGES
SITTING NEXT TO ME
ALONE IN THE DARK

THE MOAN COULD BE FROM CHOCOLATE
DIPPING BERRIES FROM THE PATCH
THE SIGH, YOUR FINGERS TOUCHING MINE
THE RATTLE, FROM YOUR LATCH
A CLOSET OF VANILLA
YOUR FAVORITE EVENING SMELL
THE THUMPING BASS YOUR SOUNDTRACK
I REMEMBER IT SO WELL
ALONE IN THE DARK

I THOUGHT WE WERE PERFECT MOMENTS
TIME HAD GRACED US WITH A GIFT
AND IF THE WORLD UNMOORED US
WE COULD STEER INSTEAD OF DRIFT

NOW YOU'RE IN THE NEW APARTMENT
MOUTHING SOMEONE'S WORDS
YOU LISTEN TO THE NOISES
LIKE THE ONES THAT I'VE JUST HEARD
AND YOU CANNOT SHAKE THE FEELING
FURNITURE'S OUT OF PLACE
THE GHOST OF WHAT IS MISSING
HOWLS AROUND YOUR FACE
ALONE IN THE DARK

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YOUR BLUE SKY FRIENDS HAVE FALLEN WAYSIDE
LOOK BEYOND THEM, KINDRED STAND REVEALED
ALL OF YOUR DREAMS THAT NOW SEEM STUPID
YOU'RE JUST EXHAUSTED, COME AND REST AFIELD

FALL ON YOUR KNEES
FEEL YOURSELF UNDONE
THIRST FOR SOMETHING
QUENCHING, FIND NO HOPE, NO SUN
TAKE IT DOWN TO THE LEDGE
WHERE THE HILLSIDE
LIKES TO SING
CUP YOUR HANDS AND MAY YOU DRINK
SLOW COOL WATER FROM THE ANCIENT SPRING
SLOW COOL WATER FROM THE ANCIENT SPRING

SLOW COOL WATER

SOME DAYS ENCHANTMENT SEEMED ILLUSION
BUT IT'S TRUE YOU'RE MAGIC EVERY TIME
ENEMIES BITTER BY YOUR CONFIDENCE
LET THEM GO NOW, THEY'RE ONLY PETTY CRIMES

COLD RAKES YOUR SKIN
AND YOU NEED TO FEEL AGAIN
THE MOSS 'NEATH YOUR FEET
IT'S TRUE, IT'S RICH AND THICK WITH LIFE
KNEELING DOWN AT THE LEDGE
WHERE THE HILLSIDE
LIKES TO SING
CUP YOUR HANDS AS YOU DRINK
SLOW COOL WATER FROM THE ANCIENT SPRING
SLOW COOL WATER FROM THE ANCIENT SPRING

RISE FROM YOUR KNEES
STAND BY MY SIDE
THIS PLACE WILL GROW
OUR WORK GOES ON
TIMBER AND FRAME
TENDER WE GUIDE
BUILDING THIS HOUSE WITH
RIVETS OF PRIDE

WE WILL GROW, WE WILL GROW
WE WILL GROW, WE WILL SING, DRINKING
SLOW COOL WATER FROM THE ANCIENT SPRING
SLOW COOL WATER FROM THE ANCIENT SPRING



ONE OF THESE DAYS (I'LL BE GONE)

I'M LOOKING FOR A LIFETIME
YOU'RE A ONE-NIGHT STAND
YOU'RE BEGGING FOR MANNA
I'M THE PROMISED LAND
I DON'T NEED YOUR CAR
I DON'T WANT YOUR ADVICE
I NEVER RIPPED THE TAG OFF
OF YOUR ASKING PRICE

I THINK THAT'S MY CUE
I THINK THAT'S THE DOOR
IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE
WALKING TO THE LIQUOR STORE
BUT TWILIGHT IS ENDING
THE DAY WILL BREAK FREE
SO GO BACK TO YOUR COFFIN
THERE AIN'T ROOM FOR ME

YOU SAY "ONE OF THESE DAYS" I'LL BE ITCHING FOR YOU
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," YOU'RE JUST WRONG
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," YOU'LL BE WAITING FOREVER WHILE
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," I'LL BE GONE

YOU SAY "ONE OF THESE DAYS" I'LL BE ITCHING FOR YOU
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," YOU'RE JUST WRONG
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," YOU'LL BE WAITING FOREVER WHILE
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," I'LL BE GONE

CAN YOU BUY ME A DRINK?
CAN WE MAKE THIS A DATE?
LET ME GRAB A TALLBOY
FILLED WITH GLYPHOSATE
CAN WE DINE AT THE CLUB?
CAN I SHOW YOU MY SKIN?
I GOT A BOILING POT TO
PUTTANESCA IN

YOU SAY "ONE OF THESE DAYS" I'LL BE ITCHING FOR YOU
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," YOU'RE JUST WRONG
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," YOU'LL BE WAITING FOREVER WHILE
"ONE OF THESE DAYS," I'LL BE GONE

I'M A DEBUTANT AT THE COTILLION
I'M THE QUEEN OF THE BOWLING LEAGUE PROM
MOST OF MY PALS ARE GETTING MARRIED BY NOW
IT'S SO WEIRD THAT YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH MY MOM





THE NIGHTHAWKS

WE ARE THE NIGHTHAWKS
BEHIND THE NEON SIGNS
BUNDLED INTO OVERCOATS
WITH WRINKLES LIKE DESIGNS
WE DRINK ALONE
WE WRITE OUR OWN
TOMBSTONES
WE THE NIGHTHAWKS
ALONE

WE ARE THE NIGHTHAWKS
WE BLISTER IN THE DAY
WHILE NEIGHBORS SLEEP
BEHIND THEIR WALLS
WE TRUNDLE ON OUR WAY
TO A PARK BENCH FOR THE WEARY
A BAR STOOL FOR THE WRECKED
WITH BRIGHT HALLUCINATIONS
WE ARE DESPERATE TO PROTECT

SALLY, OH SALLY
YOU BOUGHT A COTTON BIB
YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE
SPROUTS MISTLETOE
BENEATH, A LITTLE CRIB
THE PARCEL COUNTER'S WAITING
IT'S A MISTRESS, NOT A WIFE
IT DISCOUNTS DAILY VICTORIES
O'ER PETTY LITTLE LIFE

WIRED, RESTLESS NIGHTHAWKS
READING BY THE LAMP
OF ROMANCE AND OF MYSTERY
YOUR PAPERBACKS ARE DAMP
WILL THE SICKNESS FESTER?
THE DETECTIVE SOLVE THE CRIME?
WILL THEY FIND THE TREASURE?
WILL WE GET OUT IN TIME?

WE ARE THE NIGHTHAWKS
BEHIND THE NEON SIGNS
BUNDLED INTO OVERCOATS
WITH WRINKLES LIKE DESIGNS
WE DRINK ALONE
WE WRITE OUR OWN
TOMBSTONES
WE THE NIGHTHAWKS
ALONE

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SINCERE

I HAVE HATS GALORE FROM NIGHTCLUB ACTS
THEY STYLED ME INTO A LONG CAREER
AND I'M KNOWN TO SAW MY FRIENDS IN HALF
BUT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SINCERE

MY GRAMMAR SCHOOL, A GANG OF THIEVES
I RESCUED GOLD AND THEN I DISAPPEARED
AND I'M NOT EXACTLY ROBIN HOOD
BUT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SINCERE
DO YA HEAR?

I WAS MIXING GIN IN SAINT MARTIN
WHEN SCARFACE LENT ME HIS LITTLE EAR
AND I GOT AWAY AS NARCOS CREPT
BUT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SINCERE

THEN I FELL IN LOVE WITH A QUIET FRIEND
TRAVELING THE HEMISPHERE
I COULD HAVE HAD THAT QUIET LIFE
YOU WERE MY KINGDOM...
YOU WERE MY FEAR...
DO YOU HEAR?

AROUND THE WORLD I'VE SEEN IT ALL
MY AIRSHIP RAN AFOUL IN LANDING HERE
BUT INSURANCE IS A DARLING FRIEND
AND AT LEAST I WAS SINCERE

AND NOW, THE PARTY'S WINDING DOWN
MY LATEST GIG IS HUMBLE BALLADEER
HAVE I SCREWED THINGS UP?
HAVE I HURT YOUR HEART?
HAVE I MADE YOU DANCE?
WHY, YES. I HAVE.
SO FAULT ME FOR MY FUMBLES, FAIR
BUT ALL I EVER WANTED
WAS TO BRING YOU CHEER
'CAUSE I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SINCERE
'CAUSE I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SINCERE



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BERRY STAINED FINGERS

THE WEEDS OF SUMMER HIDE US IN THE THICKET, FROM AN
OLD MAN CUTTING HAY 'CROSS THE PASTURE LINE
ALONG THE SOAPSTONE LEADING TO THE GARDEN, ARE
BASKETS, BLANKETS AND CURVES OF YOUR SPINE

BERRY JUICE RUNS DOWN MY CHIN
AN UNTAMED TASTE INVITED IN
ON THE MOSS WE ARE IMMORTAL
WHERE THE MORNING WILL BEGIN
WITH BERRY-STAINED FINGERS AND DANDELIONS

PROTECTED FROM THE TRAFFIC BY THE WILLOWS
CANES OF BLACK RASPBERRIES WHIP OUR CHEEKS
IN THE SHADE THE AIR IS COOL AS CAVERNS
AS WE PICK THE FRUIT IT FALLS AND CRESTS IN DUSTY PEAKS

BERRY JUICE RUNS DOWN MY CHIN
AN UNTAMED TASTE INVITED IN
ON THE MOSS WE ARE IMMORTAL
WHERE THE MORNING WILL BEGIN
WITH BERRY-STAINED FINGERS AND DANDELIONS

IN THE HARVEST WHEN THE HONEYBEES ARE DROWSY
OUR TIRED LILAC HANDS REACH TO DIRTY TOES
NOTHING WILL BE LEFT TO MARK OUR PASSING
THE MATTED OUTLINES FADE WHERE WE LAY EXPOSED

BERRY JUICE RUNS DOWN MY CHIN
AN UNTAMED TASTE INVITED IN
ON THE MOSS WE ARE IMMORTAL
WHERE THE MORNING WILL BEGIN
WITH BERRY-STAINED FINGERS AND DANDELIONS

SEE YOU AGAIN IN PARIS

I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN IN RUE DU CHAT-QUI-PÊCHE
WHEN TABLES ARE LAID OUT AND WE'RE BOTH FREE
I'LL GIVE UP MY BUSINESS AND YOU'LL SETTLE DOWN
WE'LL KNOCK UP A FAMILY FOR US IN PARIS

I'LL SAY GOODBYE TO ALL OF MY FLINGS
GIVE UP MY TOYS, MY BOOZE
I WON'T HOUND YOUR FRIENDS AND I'LL STOP KEEPING TABS
AND OF COURSE I'LL BE FINE WITH WHATEVER YOU CHOOSE

BUT IF YOU SAY NO, I WILL NEVER FORGIVE
I'LL BURN DOWN YOUR MEMORY AS LONG AS I LIVE
I GET WHAT I WANT, I'M NOT WRONG
I'M MAKING IT EASY SO JUST PLAY ALONG

DIVORCE YOUR DRAB WIFE, GIVE HER THE SLIP
TAKE UP MY OFFER, A FULLY-PAID TRIP
I DREAM OF YOU HERE IN MY SUITE
THE GLASS AND THE STEEL, THEY FEEL INCOMPLETE

BELOW IN THE FRAY OF RUE DU CHAT-QUI-PÊCHE
ONIONS ARE FRYING AND BURGUNDY FLOWS
I MADE RESERVATIONS I HOPE THAT'S SWELL
AND ALSO I BOUGHT YOU A SET OF BRAND NEW CLOTHES

I CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR THE SOUND OF YOUR VOICE
OR TO WIRE YOU MONEY TO BRING YOU TO ME
YOU FOUND MY GLASS SLIPPER, NOW WHAT DO YOU SAY?
WHAT COULD GO WRONG FOR US IN PARIS?



12

BUNNY

THE BIRDS FLY DOWN AND GREET ME
THE BEES MAKE GOLDEN HONEY
THE PUPPIES BEG FOR BELLY RUBS
BUT I'M NOT SATISFIED
I WANT TO SEE A BUNNY

THE PEONIES SHAKE THEIR CRIMSON LIPS
THE BOBCAT SMILES SUNNY
THE SALMON RUN THE WATER WHEEL
BUT I'M NOT SATISFIED
I WANT TO SEE A BUNNY

I CANNOT GO TO A BUNNY SHOP
AND SEE A BUNNY HOP
THE THICKET IS A HOSTILE PLACE
TO THE FURLESS HUMAN RACE
DEEP WITHIN THE THORNY TWIGS
THE BUNNY LIVES IN COZY DIGS
FREE TO FEAST YOUR SUMMER SQUASH
BUT NOT FOR LONG
NOT FOR LONG

THE PARKING LOT PAVED 'OER THE FIELD
WITH GOOEY YUPPY MONEY
FROM CLOVER PATCH TO PANCAKE BRUNCH
IT'S FRESHLY SQUEEZED
I'M NOT APPEASED
I WANT TO SEE A BUNNY



13

WHO TUCKS YOU IN

WHO'S ON YOUR MIND
WHEN YOU ARE FAR
WHO'S AT THE WHEEL
WHEN YOU NAP IN THE CAR

WHO SCOOPS THE CONE
AND WIPES UP THE TEAR
WHO SINGS TO YOU
WHEN NO ONE CAN HEAR

WHO SIGNS THE CARDS
AND WHO FOLDS THE BILLS
WHO DOESN'T FLIP
WHEN FOUNTAIN INK SPILLS

WHO DABS THE STING
FROM THE SCAB OF A FIGHT
WHO TUCKS YOU IN AT NIGHT?

OOO-OOO-OOO-OOO, OOH, OOH, OOH
OOO-OOO-OOO-OOO, OOH, OOH, OOH

WHO SHAKES THE TREE
AND RAKES UP THE LEAVES
WHO CAN YOU TRUST
TO ALWAYS BELIEVE

WHO LISTENS CLOSE
TO WORDS THAT YOU SAY
TAKES THEM TO HEART
INVITES THEM TO STAY

WHEREVER YOU GO
A HARBOR ANEW
A TERMINAL GATE
ON THE AIRLINE YOU FLEW

WHO'S AT THE STAIRS
AT THE END OF THAT FLIGHT
WHO TUCKS YOU IN, YEAH
WHO TUCKS YOU IN
WHO TUCKS YOU IN AT NIGHT?



TRACK NOTES



IVY TWINED

Lecco: The tabla: its singing melodies, its earthen-bound, rollicking rhythms. Simultaneously familiar and exotic. Welcome to We the Nighthawks.

Early on in the process, our producer, Joel, and orchestrator and musical director, Assaf, couldn't wrap their ears around my insistence on this instrument to both open the album and our single, "Slow Cool Water." But I've played with Rob Meyson for years and know exactly the brand of magic he brings to the table.

And then, there's that boldly outlined C major chord opening this album – how could we encapsulate lustiness, intrigue, in that stark and strident musical gesture? Kimberly found it – and Joel leaned in.

Justin: I say "ivy" but I was really thinking Morning Glory, the burst of green and purple that tangle up the old slabwood shack or pour over the bricks of a backyard alley. This one might have started life as a Van Morrison jug stomper, but here Lecco prunes and controls the lilt, bringing its cadence in line with the seasons as they morph. Is there anything more universal than the uncertainty of weathering the seasons? Nature has patterns and courses, and so do relationships.

We open with this track for a number of reasons, one of which is that it feels like a morning song and Rob Meyson's tabla is like stepping out onto the terrace to catch the first rays. It probably helped that we wrote this one in the dead heat of summer.

The verb tense changes deliberately to reinforce the progression. This song is an important placement choice; where we want to end up informs how we begin.

CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

Lecco: I couldn't help but think of Brahms – the stories he left on the cutting room floor (or, ashen in his fireplace). How the stories we make are just brief alignments of focus – the endless who's and how's lost in disconnected, discarded snippets. I think of Cinema Paradiso: lost and found amongst the reels.

In various songs, Assaf is very nearly the sole driver of the orchestration (in others, I had a heavier hand). I remain blown away with what he did in the B section of this tune – with the only thing I provided being a D obstinato and chromatically rising block chords. This is why we collaborate.

Justin: The early days of cinema took place in the literal wild west. In the absence of tradition or structure, outcasts and rebels found jobs in the flickers. Women, barred from other careers, worked in a variety of integral positions on either side of the camera. Things changed when the industry matured and power structures solidified. Money tends to do that. And so the pioneering women of film found themselves pushed out, and the era of the Script Girl was born, an era that lasted far too long.

Here's to the unsung heroes, and to some of my favorite people – the editors. Using words or frames, they can build a new story out of a disaster, or take a masterpiece and make it a catastrophe.

Arabella's case probably contains a Steenbeck. One of the few true freedoms in the world is that, despite everything that might happen, we remain the authors of our own stories.

“

Using words or frames, they can build a new story out of a disaster, or take a masterpiece and make it a catastrophe.

BILL EVANS

Lecco: These lyrics were my introduction to Justin's lyrical universe – and our first song collaboration. A lifelong devotee of Bill Evans – "Love Theme from Spartacus" is something of an anthem for me – this perilous dive into his imagined psyche ripped me out of my isolation, quarantine and recovery.

At a moment of difficulty in my own life, I was forced to ask through these lyrics how intrinsic suffering is to making art. It's a cliché I've often railed at. Yet here I found myself, transmuting pain into beauty. It is endlessly frustrating that clichés contain truth.

Justin: I suppose this is my origin story. And our origin story, if we have to have one. An article in The New Yorker from August 13, 2001 set this song into motion. At the time, I was working crew on a show by Maria Riccio Bryce, who had written a beautiful oratorio about her home town. I noticed how her specificity of place and people could build something universal in meaning. It debuted just after September 11. Over the years, I tried to take what I learned from Maria and apply it to my own writing.

This song started off as a straight narrative of Bill Evan's concert album, Sunday at the Village Vanguard. It was a kind of biography, but I quickly realized that that wouldn't work. Over the next 19 years I worked on it sporadically, never finding the right way to photograph the man with the words I was using. Instead, it needed to be a sketch of those inner feelings, an indirect approach. I tried to put my own chords to this, but I'm too rudimentary a musician, so I sent them to Lecco, who I knew understood the jazz idiom. In front of the family piano, I watched him bring it to life on the spot. And the rest is...all of this.

JUST LIKE SATURDAY

Lecco: I have a confession to make that will (and has already) gotten me into trouble. I've never, ever liked the guitar (unless, for some reason, it's played by Sharon Isbin on Rodrigo's Concerto de Aranjuez). It always occurred to me that it serves the same function as a piano - just less well and less beautifully. I was lobbied by voices louder and more self-assured that the guitar was what was needed to set this plaintive, tender piece in the right context.

Which for me is my father's face when he talks about Coney Island. It's nostalgia. I have a strange intuition that nostalgia skips a generation - that what we're truly nostalgic about isn't our own childhood but the childhood our parents experienced. That's what this song is for me. That's Saturday.

Justin: Another song for the morning. I couldn't think of a metaphor that embodies longing and release more than that of Saturday. I spent a lot of work on the cadence of the words in order to get them to fall easy from the lips. I know I'm on the right track by the mouthfeel, it should stand

on the tongue like black currants. This is our most straightforward love song and where it came from I've no idea.

ALONE IN THE DARK

Lecco: I'm going to throw Joel under the bus here. My original concept for the instrument that surrounds Kimberly like a ghost throughout this piece was the oboe. Assaf and I were generally in agreement. Joel, however - in one of the few irreconcilable musical differences between us - maintained that the oboe sounds happy and joyous, not dark and mournful! He points to Peter and the Wolf but I still can't make hide nor hair of that interpretation.

That said: this needed to be a bassoon. I'm so glad we landed there. Why aren't bassoons doubled, tripled quadrupled, quintupled more often?

Justin: All apartment buildings are Rear Windows. The sounds creep up through your floor. I feel the weight of that darkness, stewing in loud silence. There's a bit of prosody in the thumping bass lines that I'm rather proud of. It's also a good example of the bridge taking a contrasting view, and that moment of exhale and release adds to the claustrophobia. I managed to sneak in an easter egg for all those Pete Atkin fans. I'm sure you can spot it. Years ago, I wrote an entirely different song with this title, and the title was the only thing I liked. Grateful for the delete button because it made space for this. I particularly enjoy how Lecco dramatizes the cinema of this movement. Movement in a song could be straight dramatic action. Or it could be thematic, based on different sets of abstract progressions. Here, the movement comes from inhabiting spaces, the space of someone listening and overhearing, zoomed into their thoughts, and then back out again.

SLOW COOL WATER

Lecco:

This has always felt like the spiritual center of the album. We plumb a lot of darkness on this record - but only because it reveals light. I hope this makes your heart soar, as it does mine.

Justin:

The story is true, the place is real. I don't know what else to say about this one, except that I imagined a gospel song and Lecco developed it into something that captured in melody what I could no longer say with words. I look at this as an emblem of the feelings that made this project happen. The pronouns are carefully chosen. We invite you to our house. We build it together. If we were following a star, this would be our North.

ONE OF THESE DAYS (I'LL BE GONE)

Lecco: I didn't know I had a straight 8ths, 50s rocker in me! "Chuck! Chuck, it's Marvin. Your cousin, Marvin Berry. You know that new sound you're looking for? Well, listen to this!"

Justin: This is for all the women who are forced to shop at skeezy liquor stores. Fortunately, some of the shops deliver now. The puttanesca line was garbled in my original - it was Lecco who saw the pun and tied it all together. Kimberly's colorations here are very delightful, like the pronunciation of "debutante." And she also had an interesting challenge, which I made worse, by giving her a chorus that was a quote that turns into dialogue and twists sarcastic. One of the ones that came quickly for both of us.

I am eternally grateful that Lecco shares my abhorrence for things that all sound the same. You know what I'm talking about – the albums where all the songs have the same tempo, same texture, same everything. You can get away with contrasting songs like these if you establish a pattern at the beginning, in the same way a movie requires the rules of the universe delivered in the first fifteen minutes, or it becomes a lie. I think I had Teenager in Love in mind when I was writing this. The meters on the sound board played smartly on Jerry Marotta's drums.



THE NIGHTHAWKS

Lecco: Of all the songs on this record, this brought me back to my compositional roots: classical music. German lieder, those thick harmonies and structural inversions I studied in composition school – the piano as intimate collaborator. Strauss's Ice Liebe Dich was swirling in me as I wrote this.

Those, too, were my truest days as a Nighthawk.

Justin: There was an all-night diner in my hometown. It had a long table of dusty Betty Boop memorabilia and mostly served truckers passing through. The owner was a physics teacher who later robbed some banks. Very nice guy. I suppose there's a romance in the Edward Hopper American Night, but a diner like that is mostly patronized by people who are tired. I thought the ooo vowels might fit that feeling of weariness, and yes there's probably a bit of Raymond Chandler in there, too, with the idea that we write our own epitaphs. I can't remember if the bridge was written as a bridge or we just decided to convert a verse. When we were trying to figure out a title, we kept coming back to the theme of the Nighthawks. Surrounded by people, we are somehow as lonely as ever.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SINCERE

Lecco: Watching Kimberly find this character was such a joy. Much less Sunset Boulevard and more Mae West after one too many, the moment this clicked in her voice as a character was such a revelation.

And I'll always hear Brad Mehldau's Blues and Ballads in the jazz-face inducing solo section with Assaf, Jamison and Dylan.

Justin: I started writing this in Los Angeles, a bit sunbaked and jaded, working in the porn industry, slogging up and down the valley. Only later did I realize that sometimes the sarcasm is just a shield to hide the secret tenderness. Only the title survives from that early version. The verses were written specifically with Kimberly in mind, and developed out of the question: "what would a live show need?" And the answer, I agree with Lecco, might be a Mae West tune. I love this character – she's my favorite. Hard to place, been everywhere, and her secret is...that it's all true. Every word.

BERRY STAINED FINGERS

Lecco: First love. Sensuality as it first approaches sexuality – before any tarnishing of purity by experience or by the world.

I see a face – a very particular person in my life. Don't you?

For the compositionally intrigued: those paired harp and piano lines were quite a discovery. Each line – the harp's and piano's – alternates between arpeggiating a pentatonic and a major seventh chord, while the other line alternates but in reverse. Each of the three iterations progress from different points of unity and in different directions.

The longing of the major seventh, the grounded simplicity of the pentatonic – your heart torn a little both ways. First love.

Justin: In Cranesville, the blackcaps appear in July. Picking them is a messy affair, but worth every scratch. To me they are what summer is, and they are never in the same place, popping up along the fence lines one year, somewhere else the next. Don't let your third grade teacher fool you – these are not blackberries. They are wild black raspberries. I've never had a domestic one taste half as good. The imagery is that of my home, the old farms slowly reclaimed by nature, the shady places to frolic, and...well, you know.





SEE YOU AGAIN IN PARIS

Lecco: Funny story: I was convinced that this tune opened with the clacking of a typewriter.

The score of the movie *Atonement* opens with a brilliant sequence of typewriter sounds gaining rhythmic power until they become the driver of the score musically, the carriage returns becoming glissandos and keystrokes like a military snare (congratulations, Dario Marionelli, for one of the most effective use of diegetic sounds in a score I've ever heard). It was so effective I wanted to steal it for this song.

Oh man did I push for that. But I fell in love with my cello line on the opening and was gently but continuously nudged away from the typewriter. Live to type another day.

Justin: The typewriter was indeed “nudged.”

The narrowest street in Paris is named for an ancient proverb that just happens to lend some meaning to the locale. We had an interesting discussion on how to end the song in terms of tone. What attitude do we

take toward this material? It is a dark and uncomfortable glimpse into the underbelly of power dynamics within relationships. We have an opinion on this, but the question we had to answer was how much of our opinion do we need to convey in order for it to work? I think we struck the right chord (Lecco knows which one it is) at the end. “A set of brand new clothes” was his addition and wow, what a creepiness wrung from the most benign of objects. I hear the chanson of Brel most in this piece. The film stars Jeanne Moreau.

“

*The feeling you
get when a dirt
road grows up.*

BUNNY

Lecco: We salvaged this tune – which started off more as a joke from Justin than a serious lyrical suggestion – in large part because, as I laughed at his (significantly goofier first version) lyrics, I realized: literally everyone wants to see a bunny. Who am I not to score a universal truth?

The incorporation of a NOLA second-line breakdown at the end – and the fading away, as if a hot sticky Sunday in the Treme – is an homage to the city I left at the beginning of the pandemic. The city to whom I owe so much life and so much learning (and our drummer, Jamison Ross!).

Justin: I remember the joy on the face of one of my friends when he began improvising a song about seeing a bunny, based on a prompt I had given him. These are not the melody or lyrics from that moment, but I hope the joy is the same. These lyrics were on the discard pile because I didn't think they were working, but Lecco and Kimberly saw it. The bridge is his instigation.

Underneath the brass there might be some melancholy. The story has bubbles but it's a tragedy, too. The feeling you get when a dirt road grows up.

WHO TUCKS YOU IN

Lecco: If time can teach anything, it's that love doesn't need – and often suffers from – the grand gestures in which it is so often packaged and sold. The gentleness of these lyrics – a love song from anyone, to anyone, for always – made the melody fall onto my fingertips (confession: I always, always write at the piano. And Assaf never, ever does!)

One of Joel's most magical moments occurred in the control room at Dreamland Studios on this tune. In the score, Kimberly sings the stepwise descending line – from one octave to the next – in the middle of the tune, with the alto sax contributing harmonies. Joel looked at me and said: “I don't hear the magic when Kimberly is in the lower octave. What if the alto sax and vocal line switched the second time?” We asked them to switch; they did. That re-blending of textures and the lushness of those traded lines sends chills down my spine each time.

Leave it to Joel to find magic in all places it can be found.

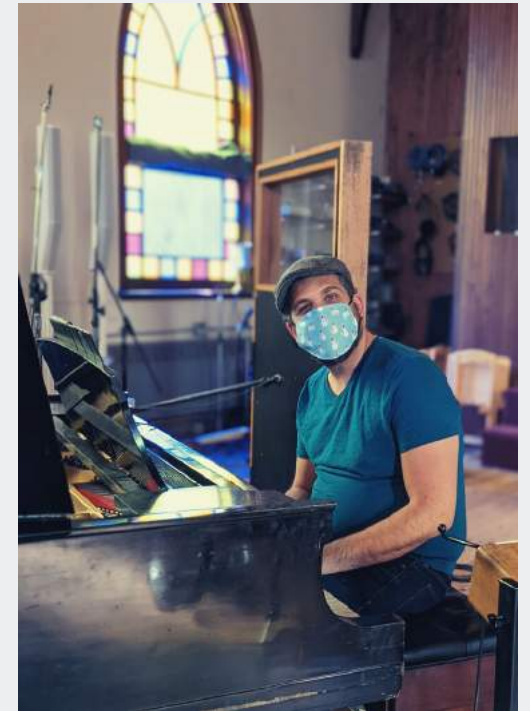
Justin: I thought I had failed with this one, and was about to junk it but I decided to send it to Lecco instead, just in case. I'm glad I did. He found a beautiful lullaby in those vowels and I don't know how I couldn't see it. I like how he can make a melody feel inevitable. We did a good job here in not being too specific. As much as I like specificity, this song works better with some space. To me, it's that feeling of walking down the jet bridge and seeing the calm round windows of the airport terminal, and at the far end there's a familiar face waiting for me.

Time for a confession. There's no such thing as "fountain ink." It's something that exists in the little world we've created. But when I hear Kimberly sing those words, I feel it on my fingertips, dripping down onto these white pages.

I said earlier that where we want to end up informs how we begin, so the next track after this last one must, in fact, lead us back to the beginning. As we drift off to sleep, safe with caring arms enfolding us, perhaps it was all a dream after all. The proof lies in what happens the next morning when we wake up in a sunstruck lane.

Thank you for listening along with us. Thank you, and good night.





Clockwise from top left: Kimberly Hawkey, Chandler, Ariel Shafir, Joel Moss, Assaf Gleizner, Lecco Morris, Justin K. Rivers

BEHIND THE MIXING DESK



JOEL MOSS ON PRODUCING WE THE NIGHTHAWKS

Joel is a legend in the recording industry. His detailed, nuanced approach earned him seven Grammys, working with some of the finest artists in the world. From Lin Manuel Miranda to Bill Charlap, from Stephen Sondheim to Ray Charles, Joel's career has taken him from Detroit to Los Angeles to New York City, with stints at The Record Plant and Paramount Studios along the way. Here, Joel reflects on his approach to production and his work on We the Nighthawks.

ORIGINS

We the Nighthawks just appeared one day, a connection from a brilliant musician friend. My first listening of these Morris & Rivers compositions was a simple piano/vocal demo. The fact that its simplicity featured the virtuosic playing of Assaf Gleizner and the angelic voice of Kimberly Hawkey was not wasted on my ready-to-be-unexcited ears. I was immediately captivated, and rather than quickly scanning, tune to tune, I listened intently, top to bottom...twice. There's no pigeonhole for this music. It's merely smart, lyrical and emotionally engaging - if any of that can ever be mere. I feel privileged to have been invited to participate in the honing, orchestrating, recording and now release of such a unique musical experience.



FINDING THE SOUND

I approach every project differently. For *We the Nighthawks*, we had preliminary stages of rehearsal and orchestration where I was able to collaborate with Assaf and Lecco. Once the orchestrations were set, I spent several days with the score, getting the picture in my head and making notes of things to be wary of or variations to try out. Once that preparation was done, it was off to Dreamland.

Usually, I'm both engineer and producer. For this album, I knew that in order to shepherd the sessions in the most expedient way for the tight timeline, I would need to keep my attention focused. I had worked with Ariel Shafir at Dreamland in the past and was confident of relying on his engineering skill. I created a diagram for placement of the players as well as a list of microphones, and Ariel worked the board so I could focus on the music itself.

Dreamland is one of my favorite studios. It's a great choice for any recording project. In the midst of the pandemic, it provided a unique set of criteria based on our recording protocol. It is large and properly ventilated, enough to provide comfortable, safe distancing. In addition, it is a resident studio, allowing us to create a pod of pre-tested individuals who arrived COVID free and remained, in recording quarantine, until their work was complete.

There are not a lot of choices for making an acoustic recording, in a lovely sounding space, with a locker full of premium microphones routed through pristine, class-A recording equipment. It was our good fortune that Dreamland was available and right in our backyard.



JOEL MOSS ON PRODUCING WE THE NIGHTHAWKS CONT'D



SHAPING THE MIX

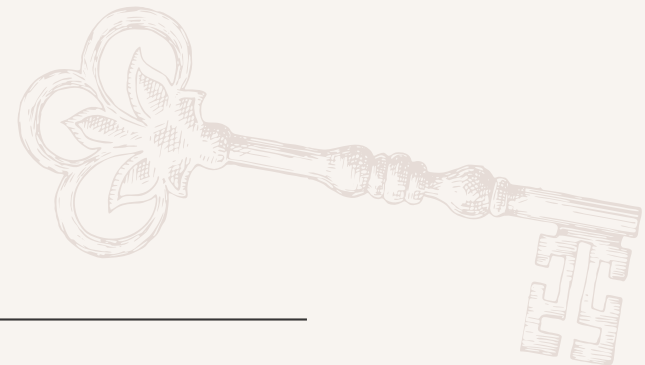
In a project like this, where I have been intimately involved from top to bottom, I have a pretty clear picture of the relationships of the musical and vocal elements. The digital tools for editing and mixing are limitless, but I try to minimize the technology and immerse myself within the music. For me, it's like working with clay, poking, prodding and molding until I feel like I've exposed the most goosebumps in the most authentic way.

Authenticity, honesty...they're the key to all true art. For the orchestra, I'm always looking for that no-net take where all of the players seem to be breathing the same, (non-COVID), air. A great vocal for me is that perfect blend of musicality and truth that great singers, like Kimberly, deliver without pretense or hesitation.

In a perfect world, free of budgetary and viral limitations, it would have been ideal to have tripled the size of the strings. But the orchestrations on paper translated seamlessly to the studio.

WHAT MAKES IT ALL WORK?

This is a piano/vocal project. The magic of the artistry of Assaf's depth as a pianist, Kimberly's beguiling vocal ability and the vocabulary they've established is all you'd ever need to know this music. Orchestrating the songs specifically to enhance and support that synergy gave me a clear thread to stitch them all together. There is no disconnect. From the simplicity of the Nighthawks to the more orchestrated See You Again in Paris, it is a seamless, authentic whole.





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