

Songbook 60

SONGS 'N STORIES 'N LYRICALS

**60 Creations for Music or Reading,
including Ballads, Modern Country,
Folk, Blues, New Age Spiritual, Humor**

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ALPHABETICAL CONTENTS:

SONGS 'n STORIES 'n LYRICALS by Jim Cleveland

All Are Blessed — Romantic spiritual ballad with moderate tempo, extolling the virtues of having angels all around.

Backseat Children — Upbeat, humorous spiritual admonition to quit squabbling and enjoy life's trip together.

Backspin — Pure country romance, upbeat and breezy, from a lover who can't quite break it off, or deal with it either.

Blacktop State of Mind — This lover can't overcome his backroads wanderlust, much to the singer's upbeat chagrin. Country-western feel.

By Candlelight — Yearning for a gentle amberlight way to find spirit, free from man's harsh judgments, a poem.

Can't Trust Cupid — A whimsical, moderate tempo country love song.

Children of the One — Spiritual ballad affirming we're all God's children, no matter what path we choose.

Classroom of Material Experience — Uptempo good-time spiritual feel with a thoughtful message.

Face the Walls — Soulful lament about the hardship of loneliness and lost love.

The Father's Hand — Worshipful tribute to God's vast and fascinating creation.

Fly Me You — Upbeat lover's lament, with humor and maybe a little twang. His girl friend is a frequently absent airline hostess.

Free of WWII Blues — Remember Dylan's "Talkin' World War III Blues?" This one's a humorous talkin' blues remake for harmonica and guitar.

Funny Honey — Humorous, upbeat, with a country feel. How could he have been married to that woman anyway?

Gambler's Run — A dramatized reading and musical chorus, a tale of a western gambler and a high-stakes poker game, with the treacherous Crudup brothers and an under-

handed and quick-fingered senorita.

Give Love Again — Folk anthem with a spiritual message, like John Prine or early Bob Dylan.

God Brings Us Home — Anthem to the heavenly Father, urging us to find the loving spirit inside.

The Great I YAM — Humorous ode to the sweetpotato in epic doggerel.

Hard Days for Hire — An upbeat cowboy anthem, with a verse that adds words to the yodeling in “Cattle Call.”

Happy Because You Care — Romantic, altruistic ballad about the power of love to bring happiness.

Heaven’s Door — Homeless man’s lament, with poignant message laced in melancholia. Soup kitchen sad with wry societal commentary and spiritual hope.

His Light Remains — Spiritually affirming anthem of God’s enduring Heavenly light, with a dynamic tempo, similar to Mike and the Mechanics’ “The Living Years.”

Hold the Light — Spiritual ballad about holding our connection with God’s light in a troubled world.

Just the Same — Country love gone wrong, tears and beer variety. We’ve got to face up to this rotten marriage.

Living Moments — Stream of consciousness romance for ethereal new age sound; follows the day of lovers in anticipation and fruition.

Live My Days For You — Romantic ballad of the true love you’d do anything for.

Love Inside — Spiritual affirmation that God’s spirit lives within each of us. That’s where the answers are.

Love Instead — A gentle, cheery affirmation for choosing love over fear, and being happy in spiritual peace.

Love Is We — Spiritual anthem on the nature of love, which is sharing.

Love’s the Reason — Happy-sounding tribute to the power of love, upbeat, joyous.

Mountain Memories — Appalachian folk ballad lamenting the curse of city drudgery and glorifying the lost mountain home. Uptempo belies sad lyrics; a good tune for a bluegrass band.

Must Be Inside — A loving plea to look inside for the peace you seek, in your indwelling spirit of love.

Mystery Life — A lilting tribute to the wondrous adventure of life, which also explains why we're here. Evokes new age spiritual imagery, rhythmical flow.

Not A Moment Too Soon — Spiritual ballad about the hopeful coming of grace to our troubled world.

People Do — Morality spiritual anthem about the contradictions in what we say we believe and what we actually do.

The Perfect You — Spiritual affirmation of our ascension plan. Life's challenges move us relentlessly, albeit slowly, toward perfection, each one by one.

Please Why? — Fearful free-form verse about the pollution of our earth in a plea for higher environmental consciousness.

Questions of the Heart — Melancholy pop ballad of love slipping away. Can I accept that she's gone?

Rainbow of Man — Dynamic spiritual affirmation of the brotherhood of all mankind, uptempo with folksy, common man choir feel.

Risky Business — An old west drifter with a gun runs into a hanging rope in Juarez, but a barmaid aides his rescue and they shoot their way out of town. Apaches show up too. A lyrical western adventure of the pulp pop kind. Remember "El Paso?"

Road to Grace — Spiritual anthem on our challenge to "be ye perfect," the ageless cry of our growth in love.

Rodeo Roadies — A buoyantly uptempo road song for the rodeo circuit — hard riding, road running good timer.

Share Your Grace — Spiritual ballad in a natural setting, a prayer to feel more of God's grace.

Shining Through — A love song to a special woman companion.

Shut Up and Dance — Upbeat, bluesy, sassy and done up in good humor.

Songs of Life — A new day "American Pie" with a soaring and flowing lyrical script and upbeat drive that carries the listener from the rhythm and blues roots of rock and roll into the present-day, all in a loving tribute to the songs that make up our lives. There are over 50 musical acts referred to; how many can you name? This one can be a blockbuster!

Songwriter — Moderate tempo, guitar-plucking tribute to a particular country

songwriter, to be done with verve and good humor.

Soul Mates — Gentle, soulful lyrical poetry about our personal relationship with God.

Soul to Keep — Soulful lament of separated and uncertain lovers, lends itself to lush orchestration and the sound of waves upon the rocks.

Spirit Quest — Upbeat but melancholy love song of the girl who left him for city lights. But the country life is fine anyhow.

Stillness — A lyrical poem in tribute to the daily Stillness time with God.

Talkin' Apocalyptic Blues — Talkin' blues ala early Bob Dylan, with guitar and harp; a blackly humorous look at the failing insanities of modern society.

Them That Done It Is Known — Upbeat, humorous novelty song about college pranks and retaliatory campus cops.

The Time of Our Fears — Sad reflections of lives and loves gone wrong, and growing older too. More country, and make it a Bud this time.

To Soldiers and Their Widows — In tribute to war victims and their widows in protest of the folly of war, a dramatic reading.

Truth, Love and Beauty's Okay — Upbeat, affirmative spiritual song, with protagonist no longer embarrassed to say such words in public.

Two Lane Dreams — This barroom singer dreams of fame on the upbeat, a hit song to get him off these country byroads.

Visiting Clancy — An Irishman comes to the pub, his favorite place, in a free-form and smiley-faced verse.

When Worlds Collide — Melancholy ballad about the dichotomies that fill our confusing lives, and hope for redemption.

Wind and Wire — A lonely lover struggles through the snows of winter without the woman who walked away. Rhyming lament at moderate tempo.

Winter Without June — She left him on the cold Montana plains of winter and went South like the birds. Soulful singing by the lonely fireplace.

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SHARE FREELY

ALL ARE BLESSED

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

In the vast beyond there lives a God
A Father to you and me.
And if we will only take His hand
He'll help us come to see
All the lives we'll know as we ascend
To join the Heavenly home
And over all this time
In all this plan
We'll never be left alone.

(CHORUS)

Do you feel their presence?
Do they make you smile?
Do you know their innocence
Like a loving child
Can we share their faithfulness
To the Father's quest
To bring all His children home
For peace and rest? Yes
There are angels all around us.
All are blessed.

(2)

In the world we've made, a lot's gone wrong
And God won't set it right
Free wills have made it what it is
So we must join the fight.
If our faith and love will only grow
The Spirit will burn bright
Love it grows when there's no fear
And then we'll have things right.

(3)

In the Heaven up there, we'll stay the path
To the Father's brilliant light
Where all that's good that we do share
Lie precious in His sight.
It's a tough life here; it's a trial sometimes
Faith comes when you know the score
That the life down here is just a part
And the Heavens hold so much more.

BACKSEAT CHILDREN

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

We're all just children in the back seat
On a long, uncertain ride
And we're fussy and we're fightin'
from all our foolish pride
Don't know where it is we're goin'
And how long we'll be inside
If the end's just the end or lead
to peace on the other side.

(CHORUS)

Squabbling in the back seat
Makes the trip a whole lot rougher
When we contemplate
We gotta dominate
That we gotta be so much tougher
There's hell to pay
In every way
When we make the others suffer
Love's the way
Lights up the day
When we kiss and hug each other.

(2)

We're just backseat children looking out
As the world goes rolling by
As we contemplate the turns we'll make
As me, myself and I
We're not the drivers here, gotta know that now
Have faith in the voice inside
That the One who loves us, made us live
Will guide us from on high.

(3)

If we'll just get along, the trip will pass
by joyfully and serene
We will share our time in wonderment
And watch the passing scene
With the Father's way so firm in mind
Our guidance from Supreme
We can make the world a better place
Each day our spirits sing.

BACKSPIN

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

I'm mad at you and about you
at the same time.
You're like the words and thoughts behind them
I can't rhyme.
If I just knew which way you'd turn
and the lessons you could learn
I'd know if I had any chance
to make you mine

(CHORUS)

You're first a woman
and then a friend.
But I can't depend on you
until the end.
'Cause you're a restless soul.
You get a "10"
I get left so far behind
in your backspin.

(2)

You're the one I waited for,
I didn't stray
Thinkin' that you'd learn to love me
in every way.
It never happened by my plan.
You had your own,
I understand.
But I'd meet you in the middle
any day.

(3)

You've got to tell me if I'm wastin'
all my time.
Thinkin' about a home and kids
and love sublime.
If you're gonna run to win the race
and let the others all give chase,
I know that I will never be able
to walk that line.

BLACKTOP STATE OF MIND

by Jim Cleveland (11-5-95)

(1)

I never wanted to be the fault you'd find
If the things we planned unraveled over time
Because I really did love you
And I kinda love you still
It's just that my life is restless
All against my will
The road pulls at my heart and blacktop mind.

(2)

I never wanted to be anything but kind
Just couldn't play a song so out of rhyme
Though I thought that I must love you
And maybe I love you still
Settling down just keeps on runnin'
Up against my will
And the road pulls at my heart and blacktop mind

(3)

I thought I should slow the pace, quit runnin' lines
But I found out we were living under different signs
I know now that I love you
Forever, I'll love you still
But we can't live together
And live with our own free wills
So this road, it takes my heart and blacktop mind.

(CHORUS)

*See the lines they're white
But broken all the while
As I run the desert floor
With headlights bright
A rabbit's eyes shine
frozen in the light
Afraid to move
And I'm racin' out of sight
Two-lane blacktop mind
Chasin' night.*

BY CANDLELIGHT

Can I get there by candlelight?
I don't want that glaring electric stuff
that harshness of man
hellfire on the tongue
fear on the dank breath
judgment lament
attack and defend
to feed the ego,
bloated and burping.
Even sometimes in pews.

Can I get there by candlelight?
In gentle evening settled out of the cacophony
in sweet darkness with crickets
peace in the breeze
love in the whisper
tiny smile drifting inward
sleepily in her arms
that cling to me
giving and sharing
to feed the spirit
slender and soaring.
Sometimes shared exquisitely.

Can I get there by candlelight?
Frame my life in the amber glow of still energy
light shining within so deep
heart a'beat, spirit sweep
Wind surge, sent a'shimmering
Shivering, smile a'breaking.
Inward to mystic
to saving grace
that fills our crystal
feeling and knowing
how to reach the world
with just the candlelight.
Sometimes the light breaks free.

Can I get there to you?
 Can you get here to me?
 Can we go there together?

I think the light is strong enough.

It's just inside.

CAN'T TRUST CUPID
© 1995 by Jim Cleveland

I may be ignorant, but I ain't stupid.
I've been in love, but I don't trust Cupid.
Sends those arrows flyin' around
Grown men get stung, and brought right down.
'Cause their minds do slip to a lower place
where good reason's not in the race
May not know much, but I know some truth,
And I never had to call on Dr. Ruth.
I may be ignorant, but I ain't stupid
Know you just can't trust 'ol Cupid.
I fell in love all kinds of times
made some music, some silly rhymes
They're all gone now, scattered like the wind
Seems that love is just for lend.
There's a girl down at the bar
and her life's just one big scar.
And I got my own to hold me down
here on this lonesome side of town.
I may be older, but I'm a little bolder.
The world, it seems to just get colder.
Say what I think, say what I feel.
Bundle up and fight the chill.
A cold wind wails down the canyon wall
Sounds like them ghosts givin' me a call.
I had a love one time in Texas.
She walked away and I was helpless.
I may be ignorant but I know the score.
Don't count on happiness. She'll hit the door.
Just when you think you're a happy fool
She'll stop the game and change the rules.
I may be ignorant but I ain't stupid.
Let the young ones trust 'ol Cupid.

(CHORUS)

There's arrows in the sky flyin' high
Flyin' arrows, arrows flyin', whisperin' by.
She's the hottest-lookin' woman, my, oh my.
Her voice melts the ice cream on the pie
Those lips and eyes and hair of hearty red
Think that arrow drew some blood, feel like I'm led
and there's nothin' I'd rather do instead
than fall in love in one big silly bed.
But I worry, am I ignorant. Am I stupid?
Is this true love or just another wink from Cupid?

CHILDREN OF THE ONE

by Jim Cleveland (9-23-95)

(1)

Some of us choose the worldly life
Taste pleasures, dangers too
Some choose to withdraw into themselves
In monasteries to find what's true
Some choose to live in cities
Make the dollar, climb the roost
Some chuck it all to live in peace
in cabins, call life a truce.

(CHORUS)

*But we're all on the path that we choose
With the spirit there inside us, me and you
The spirit in your life guides you true
Tells you surely that your life is up to you.
But whichever way you decide to chase the sun
Always know we're all the children of the One*

(2)

Some of us stay the same rut and just try
Some take risks ... and die
Some want to save the world and speak
Some want to steal from you and retreat.
Some want to judge everybody, every day
Some are very troubled. They just pray.
We're all on the run, from sun to sun
Like busy little children of the One.

(CHORUS)

*We're all on the path that we choose
With the spirit there inside us, me and you
The spirit in your life guides you true
Tells you surely that your life is up to you.
But whichever way you decide to chase the sun
Always know we're all the children of the One*

CLASSROOM OF MATERIAL EXPERIENCE

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

These precious days on earth
Do you know just what they're worth?
Do you try make them matter, one by one?
Are you tuned in to the Source?
That's gonna take the world by force
With the love inside us bursting like the sun.

(CHORUS)

We're all in school
For the Golden Rule
And to learn that God's inside us is so cool.
When love's our preference
that's our deliverance
From this classroom of material experience.

(2)

It's for sure I'm Heaven bound
But I just wanna stick around
'Cause His glory shines much brighter, day by day
To feel it here and help it come
Greet his angels one by one
Makes me know that it's been worth it, every way.

(3)

There are many who need love
It's everyone I'm speaking of
Can you share a little with them as you pass
Just a smile, a friendly word
Radiate the Father's love
And we'll build this world on something that will last.

(4)

The moment in time is now
Angels coming everywhere
Talking to us when we open up our hearts
In the quiet times you will know
That their love around you glows
Makes you feel each moment is a brand new start.

FACE THE WALLS

by Jim Cleveland, 1995

I came from downtown on a bus full of broken dreams
The people just sat and stared at the passing scene.
Where they're bound, they can't tell. It casts no sheen
To guide them inward for the strength that they need.

There's a woman who is tired from head to feet
Waiting tables, raking tips. Her world just eats.
There's a man who scowls at every face he sees
Can't find a job. He is angry. Wants to be a thief.

(CHORUS)

*Everyday face the walls that hold me here
Everyday try to dull the longing fear
Everyday she's away there's a tear
Every way that I've tried just leaves me here.*

Just like them, I ride the bus and come home tired
Feeling just like that robot the company hired.
She used to be here with a smile but now she's gone
Left me here to face these lonesome walls alone.

Guess the country's where she really wants to be.
Guess this city job's not what I thought it'd be.
Guess I'll keep on looking for a way to see
These worlds together, peace of mind. Serenity.

[BRIDGE]

Face the walls
 they're always here
Face the walls
 hold in your fears
Face the walls
 hold back the tears
Face the walls
 you might disappear
But the walls will still be standing for another
Watching over all the ways that we struggle
To get beyond the walls of fear we give each other.
Face the walls. Get beyond. Love each other.

THE FATHER'S HAND

© Jim Cleveland

I walked along the path beside the stream,
knowing all too well this world is just a dream,
a twinkle in the Father's eye, in time and space,
a place to find our way to His full grace.
And each way I looked I saw the glorious plan
unfold in living forms of expression made by His hand.
There's mountain peaks and gentle creeks
and sea birds on the sand,
Clouds and breeze, and fruitful trees,
all from the Father's hand.

(CHORUS)

Did I hear the Father speak?
Yes, the breeze upon my cheek.
Did I hear the Spirit sigh?
Yes, the leaves rustled, way up high.
Did you know we're chosen ones,
here in this world to carry on?
An expression of the Father, one by one.

The trees, they fill the ground with all their fruit.
Furry creatures dash around and make it loot.
The birds acclaim their space with song and caw.
And there's a lesson there in everything you saw.
The squirrels they scurry up the great oak tree,
a home where they can stow away their treats.
The bees buzz in with life on pollinated feet,
spread flowers bright while hauling off the sweets.
It fits together on our Earth in unique new ways
from all the other worlds of life the Father gave
We have a glow, brighter as we grow in the harmony of His plan,
Each foretold, a special mold made by the Father's hand.

Each one of us is precious; each soul burns bright,
as we do our part to help us all reach light.
Respect each one for each one's spark and flair.
You'll find your way to peace each time you care.
There's an ascending plan for each who'll take it on.
We make beginnings here, the body's just on loan.
Be quiet each day, and reach His way.
You'll come to understand.
In a universe vast, you will last.
You came from our Father's hand.

FLY ME YOU

© Jim Cleveland

My love for you grows stronger
Day by day
My heart feels so much emptier
When you're away
The times we've shared are glorious
More than words can say
Thought we'd be together always
And things would be okay

But you leave me on the big bird
With the shining wings
And you smile at all the people
Bring 'em nice little things
Have you got no time to wonder
What heartache it brings
To your lonesome-hearted lover
Sittin' on your porch swing

(CHORUS)

But you're in the clouds, my darlin'
And darlin', I'm in the clouds too
You're west, southwest of JFK
I'm waitin' here with a beaujolais
For the skies to open up
And fly me you

They say it pays to be a nice guy
And I guess that's true
Never got much good from fightin'
And the casual screw
Now you've got me on the high road
I wanna come home to you
But you're way up in the ozone
Tryin' to get through

I'd like to be up there, my darlin'
Ridin' in the blue
And you'd be bringin' me hot coffee
Which I'd share with my crew
We'd call the automatic pilot
Make our rendezvous
There with the boxes and the suitcases
And a dog named Blue.

FREE OF WWII BLUES

by Jim Cleveland

Well I remember this folk singer from back in '63.
Talkin' blues worried about world war III.
Seems like in his dreams he'd just walk the world alone
Everyone else was just history, you know gone
All turned up dead.
Not red.
Which was said to be a worse thing instead.
So the nukes dropped in
An' did everybody else in.
Or at least he was havin' bad dreams about it.
Pickin' and blowin' and singin' and Worryin', I reckon.
That's back before this folk singer plugged in
and started singing: Everybody must get stoned.
Sounds like a remedy to me.

Anyway, I got to rememberin' how we was all paranoid back in the nuclear age.
Fallout shelters. Khrushchev.
A hairy guy down in Cuba wearing U.S. Army fatigues.
Rubbin' it in.
Kids scrambling under school desks.
Skinnin' their shins.
People jumpin' outta their skin.
Yep, there was lots of nasty nukes in the world
And nasty people at the buttons
And that was just in Washington
Don't ask me about them Russians
They don't believe in God, and that's all I wanna hear about 'em
I kinda like vodka, though.
I wondered if there'd be any potatoes left
After the big one.

(BRIDGE)

You know, things has changed a lot up here in the 1990's
I just saw the last bomb shelter in North America.
It's full of National Geographics.
Nobody's worried about the Russians any more
I hear they're all drunk, really got the habit.
Ain't funny though. Freedom can be a scary thing.
They're findin' there are other reasons to retreat into the bottle than just despair.
There's
Self-gratification.
Disposable income.
Insecurity.

The free market system.
All those Capitalists unleashed.
Hope there's plenty of potatoes.
Gonna be needin' french fries at McDonald's
With a Big Ivan and a double shot of Stoli's, maybe.
You know what they say When in Bucharest
Really get pissed!
They got hamburgers now
Reason to celebrate.

(CHORUS)

World War III.
I'm not sure you're a' comin'
And that's a real relief
At least to me.
But all the grief
We cause each other
Keeps on comin'
That's plain to see.
Live a little love today
Smile, wink and hug a tree
Just be glad that you're livin'
Free of WW III.

(2)

Well, they say the Chinese may be workin' on a bomb,
but they need more goods instead of that war stuff. That'd be dumb.
See how it bankrupted the Russians
They're gonna be as obsolete as Prussians
I think maybe peace is the rub.
A little commerce
Couldn't be the worse
Let the free market slip into the hub.
If you'll let me do my things, I won't bother you doin' your things
And if we like the same things, we'll do 'em up together.
Ain't no need fightin' about it.
Let's have some vodka A hot dog A bowl of rice maybe.
Some borscht Now that's real serious.
How about a cheeseburger With some green tea

A Barqs root beer.
Who needs war? We have business interests.
We have The Internet.
And war has kinda gone the way of Folksingers.
Talkin' blues singers in particular.

(Repeat chorus)

(3)

Well, after all them years and all them scenes,
People are still havin' them dreams.

About terrible things that could happen here.

But if we don't do 'em we got nothin' to fear

Gotta watch them schemes.

"We have nothing to fear but fear itself."

A man in a wheelchair said that.

"We have nothing to fear but fear of oneself"

I said that.

"You can scare some of the people all of the time
and most of the people some of the time.

But you can't scare everybody all the time

..... unless you keep doing it differently."

I think somebody in the Pentagon said that.

During the last budget battle.

The assault on Capitol Hill.

That's BBIII

(Repeat Chorus)

FUNNY HONEY

© Jim Cleveland

There's a time and place for everything.
That time is gettin' late.
There's right and wrong to every side.
that reason can relate.
If I can't see yours, and you see mine
we'll close the garden gate.
We both learned much, grew out of touch
then made our grand escape.

(CHORUS)

It's only time. It's only money
Some days are rain. Some days are sunny
I really think it's kinda funny
That you ever did call me honey.

We came from different sides of town, you know
not knowing what is true
With different styles and different eyes
and different points of view.
We found the bedroom action hot. It was.
But it certainly was not
What we needed to be ever-lovin'
true to what we've got.

I'd just as soon we took our freedom out
that big old heavy door
Since we're wiser and we really think
we really know the score.
There's a rhyme to all the reason now
we never had before.
A reason for those times so bad
they hurt us to the core.

Divorce is such a final word. It shivers deep inside.
But I know that it would be much worse if I just went for the ride.
There's a time and place when both of us must take it all in stride
Find someone new in some new place that hasn't yet been tried.

(Second version chorus)

But we spent some time. We spent some money.
We had some rain. Some days were sunny.
And I still think It's kinda funny
That you ever did call me honey.

GAMBLER'S RUN
© Jim Cleveland

A Dramatic Reading with Chorus

A handsome gambler came through swingin' doors with a squeak and slap,
And before long a working Senorita was on his lap,
While he smoked on a thin one and took whiskey by the hit,
At a green table of poker chips where four strangers sit.

He had a hand full of royalty, a nerve made of steel.
And the glint from his cold eyes sent a threatening chill.
And he carried on his hip a pearl-handled piece
With a belt of shiny bullets, and on the floor a valise.

That's where he had planned to stuff all the cash
That he'd win from these hombres for his personal stash.
But he kept a watchful eye for the slightest of hand
For there were aces a'boundin' somewhere at this stand.

Would his Kings and Jacks paired have the strength to prevail?
Would another across have a bluff they could sell?
Are the Aces a'gatherin'? Will they Ace him right out?
Or four deuces could nail him. Is there a straight or flush about?

The hand got so heavy, the Senorita slipped away.
He turned all his attention to the hands where they lay.
Seven cards they kept falling as the chips piled up high.
Two of them dropped out with a sigh.

It's comin' down heavy, this last blow-out stake
When he got that third King it looked like he'd rake.
But the fat man on the left, he tossed in a pile
And the other one bumped. Looked like the last mile.

You know it's the end when your hand sucks you along
Never giving you the best, always a second place song.
His eyes drilled the up cards, his mind told him that'd do.
A full house should win, but then who knows what's due?

When the Senorita winked at him and brought drinks their way
As she passed them around, he saw one hand reflected in her silver tray.
And when she spilled upon the other, he jerked his cards too.
His glance saw two dreaded Aces, overall now three of them & two two's.

So one of them was beaten, but the other was a cinch.
Estelita's unexpected favor, delivered without a flinch.
And now he faced that time to cut his losses and fold
And save the few last chips that lay there lonely and cold.

Instead, he raised and added greenbacks to the peak
So much money a'mountin' for that black leather valise.
It lay in front of them like a treasure, red, white and blue
Now his wry smile slipped out and came crinkling through.

He remembered seeing there, clearly in the silver tray
A pair of Aces in the left hand; that makes five counted any way.
Call them both out and they'll be exposed on the table
And he'll be drawing down on those hombres and taking what he's able.

Five Aces means that somebody's gonna look down a gun.
And the guilty has got to be he who has won.
The man on the right here, with grizzled face of deepest spite
That he'll face off with in a minute, that bogus Ace in sight.

But when their hands fell open on the other side of that pile
With his hand a'sweatin' upon that colt by his side
Aces over hit him at right, but on his left, no Ace in sight
Four makes four but don't make anything right.

They were in it together; he'd been set up, their dupe
The left, the right, and cards from somewhere to substitute
So he smiled and puffed a ring of smoke over their way
Said the hand was good but he'd take their money anyway.

He lifted up the colt, and clicked hard the hammer
As the room shook up and surged in dreadful clamor.
He called for each and every card to be turned on its face
So we could get to the bottom of the missing fifth Ace.

But when all their cards were face up, within view,
It was still clear that there was something else to do.
So he got them with their hands up to shake out their hats,
Shirrtails, sleeves, britches, boots, and where they sat.

Them stripped down men, they caused a laughin', hootin' scene
Then the marshall came bursting in, hollerin', What do you mean?
Why, it's the Crudup brothers from down in Abilene,
The cheatin'est rascals you ever have seen.

They work with a Mexican Senorita who's even bolder
That's when he turned to look right at her, by his shoulder.
Estelita winked and smiled slying to all their stares.
She blew them a kiss and laughed heartily as if she didn't care.

Then she called to him, 'Dear compadre, you've forgotten your own.'

What cards are in your hole? They lay there like stone.
And so as hushed breath fell on the transfixed saloon,
He turned over his full house — and a surprise Ace there to boot.

Guess that's the proof we need, he thought, and lied in a flash.
I had the fifth Ace all along, just wanted to see their naked ass.
So the Marshall took them out and dumped them on the edge of town.
Even though they never figured exactly how it had gone down.

He raked off the table, chips a'clatterin' in his black bag
Thinkin' about those pickpocketin' Señoritas on Mexico City's main drag
With flashin' fingers they lift your wallet, watch, maybe your socks
She had a lot of talent and she liked him, and what a sultry fox.

With a stuffed valise, he bought the whole place drinks
And Estelita stepped up to share with rosy cheeks.
She said, to create distraction with my breasts is no big trick
When it's worked out in advance, it's just so slick.

But the Crudup boys turned out to be slimy creeps
When I saw you walk in here, my heart just leaped.
And so I crossed them, gave you all the proof you'd need
To take that pot away by default and honest creed.

So they left together to have an adventure in San Miguel
Strange new flesh and exotic passion he could foretell
Then they set to working saloons on the California coast
A handsome gambler, a Señorita. To luck they'd toast.

But what is luck in life's so-dangerous spinning game?
Should we cheat to win or risk a bad luck reign?
And can he ever trust this brown-skinned saloon floor sweet?
No. If you don't trust anyone, you may be hard to beat.

Sure enough. Six weeks later, she stole his poke
Went scurrying out of a hotel window in San Diego.
And he smiled to think that she would leave him broke
But when she got some distance away, she knew his joke.

She dumped the contents upon the ground when she was alone
There, tucked between the few good coins, and some heavy stones
She saw the Ace he left her and remembered his wily smile.
He never really trusted her or anyone beyond a child.

A gambler's life means you've always got to be alert.
You could lose your life, your money, even your white lace shirt.
And never succumb to trust a barroom thief, though pretty.

If she'll do it to them, she'll do it to you. Yeah, life is shitty.

One day, he walked into another saloon near Escondido
And saw her there upon the stairs, that Senorita.
He tipped his hat and smiled as if the first time to greet her.
And they laughed and had a toast of gold tequila.

Life's a gamble, and a chance is always risk
There's hardly anyone to trust who can give assist
That's the way it is, so dress up and have some fun.
And for when your luck or wile runs out, pack a gun.
If you're gonna be a gambler on that wild west run.

(CHORUS)

Way out west there lived a gambler
He was a rolling stone, a rambler
Dressed to kill
He had killed
In his time.
Had the nerve to face 'em down
Could size 'em up, all around
Get the cards,
From who knows where
They were ever found
Lay 'em down with a steely stare
Rake the chips, buy all a beer
A gambler runnin'
Life keeps turnin'
On the western run.

GIVE LOVE AGAIN

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

The hard rain of experience has beaten our door
And left us all scarred and hurt to the core
But when the threshold is open, the sunlight will break
And show us a new day all free of mistakes.

We've got to seek out the stillness to lock out the war
Get ourselves centered to ride out the storm.
And share our good feelings with those that we love
And bring them inside us in the peace of the dove.

Lessons aren't learned until the timing is right
And we're ready to expand it and bring in more light
And still they're not learned 'til you teach them again
Let the heavenly spirit call the children within ...
Free from all sin

(CHORUS)

When our rudders go crazy
And our compasses spin
He will still us and calm us
Send us out there again
To show them his goodness
The love that's within
And the comfort that comes
When we give love again.

(2)

The TV keeps saying that the world's full of hate
The good news is subtle, says we've all had our bait.
There are signs that we're changin' when we flush out the worst.
We'll soon choose the better. It's putting God first.

It's a time to get ready, rise up from despair
Recitals of our troubles won't ever get us there.
There are signs of corrections. The Russians aren't red.
And peace talks are open where death was instead.

Faith is the answer, in God's holy love
Then share it around you, with help from above.
Feel the consciousness rising and get with the flow
Make the love swell inside you wherever you go
Wherever you glow

(3)

Look out the window that opens your soul
To your life in the heavens, the fruit of life's goal.
The first cleansing freedom in that heavenly sphere
Will be to seek those with whom you once suffered in fear

And you'll know, as we all will, there's never any fight
That your earthly confusions were much of the plight
That you're all heaven's children, spirits to shine
You can block out the darkness with love so sublime.

It's Lucifer's legacy, being unbridled free
To compete and to cheat with a capital C.
We've had capitalists, communists, cancer and clan
But what was lost now rests easy in the palm of God's hand ...
He forgives us again

GOD BRINGS US HOME
by Jim Cleveland (10-25-95)

There's a long way left to go
When we leave this dusty road
Say goodbye to the ones we got to know.
On Heaven's grass so green
In the light that shines serene
Leave this troubled life
to the seeds that we have sown.

Leave our kids to carry on
Sing their very special song
While we go to the many mansions Jesus told.
We'll have learned from the race we ran.
We won't pass this way again
We'll be climbing up sweet Heaven's golden stairs.

(Chorus — spoken)

*They say that in Heaven our bare feet will walk on gold
A lesson that tells us that all the earthly riches you could behold
Will be like pavement for our feet as we ascend Our spirits ascend
beyond mortal death in spirit reach to "Be ye perfect"
At least, try to be. That's all that God asks of me
Or asks of you either.
And he shows us the way on a path of gold
The finest riches you could ever behold
Your own inner faith that ...
You walk with God.*

Have a home out in the trees
Growing old just as I please
Listenin' to the hoot owl ask what I can't tell
Let me end my days in peace
Before my earthly heart does cease
Let me come your way with a smile upon my cheeks.

There'll still be strife here when I'm gone
and our children carry on
but if they take the Father's hand it'll be all right.
So teach your kids to reach inside
Find the Father's loving guide
To walk the path that many humans stumble on.
If we walk this path in faith
God brings you home.

The Great I YAM

(Ode to the sweetpotato in epic doggerel)

I think therefore I YAM
lowly potato spudded upon life
I think therefore I've risen
torn from the rooted earth
and cast upon the conveyors of life
to be sorted through,
often discarded
but some enduring ... surviving
only to be cast into giant ovens
roasting to bursting and globbed
and sent into the yawning, rumbling innards
of life itself
only to ferment and foment madly
in gaseous cloud, confined as we are
seeking escape
from the inner turmoils
that mark
our struggle
if only to be free
spewing forth in glorious sound and fury
all across and upon the bunkhouse
of hairy men
that are at once our ancestors
And as permeating permanence wafts upon this enclosure
nostrils flaring
gasping in whew!
eyes watering, fanning forth to flee outside
into the nothingness of the prairie moon
to breathe again, cursing not so silently
and nevermore they swore of the blending
of yams and the common bean
together sending mankind streaming outward
to places in the dark, regrouping, breathing freely again.
But then resigned
to common fate
they re-enter this room .. womb
but now with windows flung open and quilts upon their faces.
brave the cold wind of the prairie
in repugnance of the common YAM
that is me.
Vengeance is mine
sayeth the yam
but only in good humor through the ages

the gift of flatulence.
I stink, therefore I am
in the end, from the end
through mortal time
Even the lowly sweetpotato can say:
I have been here
I was rooted, nourished and grew
And in turn nourished and withdrew
The part that was left behind was only Phew!
I gave a few laughs too ...
while leaving you.
Gratified that together
We see it through.
Ominous Olfactory Omnipresence
the audacious
I YAM.

HAPPY BECAUSE YOU CARE

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

Do you know-oh-oh-oh what love means?
Do you know it's not always what it seems?
Do you know that it's sometimes just a dream,
floating freely toward that one big final scene?

Did you know from this feeling you can't hide,
when that sweet, firm grip lays claim to all inside?
Might as well lift off and take that ride,
Raise your heart up to the clouds, all misty-eyed.

(CHORUS)

Love's the strangest kind of brew.
Exciting spice that opens you.
Blows your feelings in the wind.
In her smile they come back again.
You'll receive just as you share.
So send your love out everywhere.
Tell the world that you're happy
Because you care.

(2)

Do you know-oh-oh-oh love's more than fun?
Do you know that it happens one-to-one?
Do you know that a daughter or a son,
More than having, takes much giving from sun to sun?

Did you find the one who'll open up your heart?
Will he nurture it, together you make a start?
Can you face this world together, each with a part?
Respect each other's path that they would chart?

HARD DAYS FOR HIRE

© Jim Cleveland

(VERSES)

He sat tall in the saddle
While the moon lit the cattle
Settlin' in with the dust of the day.
If that thunder starts to rattle,
Them cows'll all skedaddle
And he'll hightail it out on the bay.

In the saddle under the moon
A lonely cowboy can all too soon
Start to wonder what life could have been
Could it really be any better,
Got lots of movin', lots of weather
And the guys sleepin' here are my friends.

A cowboy's days are full of workin'
Lots'a lassoin' and a'jerkin'
Just listenin' for the chuckwagon's clang
Grab a hard tack and some beans
In a tin plate he wipes clean
Then he's back on the leather and the range.

At the campfire he heard a joke
Rolled a smoke, from his poke
As they listened to the sounds of the night
That coyote howl, it sounds so bleak
Where they bedded down by the creek
Let the crickets sing us on till morning light.

Them doggie's turn that fat to muscle
Every step from here to Tulsa
Gonna wind up on some rich man's hook
Who never rode a dusty trail
But had the money for what you'd sell
Without knowin' about the strugglin' it took.

Wipes the sweat with his bandana
Thinks about a girl named Anna
And the time they went upstairs for a ride.
Her laughter rang in that cantina
And he'd do anything to see her
But it's gonna be March 'fore he can try.

A cowboy's life ain't rootin' tootin'
And he ain't never done much shootin'
He's too busy tendin' doggies and wire.
Guess a story should have romance
That's not his life, his circumstance.
He's just living out his hard days for hire.

A cowboy's way is temporary
He knows that now, he thinks he's savvy
Wants to find his own piece of the land.
Grow a crop of corn and roots
And make a home, not substitutes
With a woman love to share in this plan.

(CHORUS)

(yodeling, traditional)

Love

It's the love

It's the love of the range.

Love

Love

It's the love of the range

Makes him ride

Ride

Ride

Every Day

He's a cowboy

Hard work

For short pay.

(LAST VERSE)

He sat tall in the saddle

While the moon played on the cattle.

Every working one of us has a dream

Of future days of love and thunder

On the green grass over yonder

From here to there, that's our life

Or so it seems.

In these hard days for hire

Chasin' dreams.

HEAVEN'S DOOR

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

I reached out my bowl for soup from the big tureen
This old shelter smells of grease and sweat and beans.
There's Jesus looking from the wall in a cast of light
And in that look of peace, maybe I'll sleep tonight.

There's no work down at the day camp. Pretty bleak
Haven't done a day for pay in about two weeks.
Good news. The unemployment paid last week was down.
But that dole has done run out for many. Look around.

If there were jobs, there'd be less crime and welfare strain
'Cause people would feel they could produce much more than shame.
Have the pride to know we're each God's child, unique
Can work, raise kids, and eat out maybe once a week.

But why complain? I eat out every day.
And there's people all around with stuff to say.
But the crackers for this soup have all gone stale
Like the lives that have no value they can sell.

We'll sleep together on cots that groan, and Simon's snore
And wonder when others knock if they'll open up the door.
I hear them laughin', cursin', spittin' out in the dark
While Jesus looks down upon us in this poor ark

All these lost and lonely people with laid-by dreams
Just weave a torn and tattered tapestry of daily schemes.
I'd like to tell them that we could all be so much more
If we could just find that smile of peace behind Heaven's door.

(CHORUS)

Heaven's Door let me in.
I don't know it if I've sinned.
Just know I suffered like the rest
And most times did my best.
Behind your door I could really get some rest
With all the others who asked for mercy and got blessed.
Heaven's Door, open, please, my last request.
A bowl of soup
A heavenly bed
In which to rest

(2)

This old flophouse is full tonight. I'll take the hall.
Better than outside when the cold winds squall.
In the morning light, I'll don my finest rags
Take my place among the drifters down on the drag.

Most anything is what I might do for bread.
And it's what they'd ask of me is what I dread.
But when my body one day lies in some poor grave
I'll say that every sorry job is what I gave.

God knows I fought to keep my pride out on the street
But the crumbs were always more at rich men's feet
And all the women that I would chance to meet
Were wounded birds with feathers torn, afraid of me.

When comes the time to lay my body into ground
I'll be there in misty blue, smilin' all around
I'll leave with angels who will know I can be more
With another chance behind sweet Heaven's door.

(3)

Went to meet a man named Louie down on Warehouse Street.
He said that I could earn a nickel, sell something sweet.
But I've seen them sweatin' people moan through their pain.
If I earned that money, I couldn't face myself again.

Guess I'll just keep hangin' around the day work place
There's dumpsters to search and the drive-bys just in case.
And the dressed up ones who go into that rich hotel
Might choose to share with me some jingle. Who can tell?

There at the iron wire gate, a fat man steps outside
And tells a few of us to climb on for a ride
Down dusty roads to the garbage mountain they steadily build
Flaunt before us all their crumbs upon this field.

People take like all their takin' is just a race
I'd like to ask them if we can't all just slow the pace.
I'd like to tell them they could love so very much more
Just take some advice that's there for free, behind Heaven's door.

HIS LIGHT REMAINS

© **Jim Cleveland**

Inside, each one of us is beautiful
We have the Father's holy light
And all he asks we do with it
Is shine it 'round us, oh so bright
To all his other children with us
On separate paths that lead back home
To the mansions of the Father
Where we will never be alone
Enraptured by the spirits
Who will embrace us
And lead us on.

(Chorus)

*We're all unique now, no two the same
A personality and our own name
And the free wills our Father gave
For our adventure from birth to grave
Then he will lift us up in Jesus' name
For deep inside us his light remains*

We are each of us a child now
True babies of the universe
On the first leg of our journey
Mortal life in a world so cursed
But there is guidance deep inside us
In the stillness he calls your name
And if you will only listen
He'll show you how to win the game
His love will give you peace now
Each day the same

So many souls are out there searching
Frustrated, angry, in despair
If they would only find the quietness
They would find a voice that cares
Far away from all the clamor
Selfish egos holding sway
Competing, fighting, lying
He will show you a better way
And you'll learn to live in love now
While he leads you there each day.

The Father's house has many mansions
For even lowly ones who fall

If we will only seek the brightness
That signals us the spirit's call
He forgives us as a Father
Every minute of the day
Only asking that in our hearts
With love, we rise above the clay
His example came as Jesus
Who lived with us
To show the way.

The Golden Rule is not so easy
We spend a lifetime in its quest
And it's hard to forgive the evil
The way that Jesus did it best
But God is proud of us for trying
He knows that mortals can't be pure
That we are just as he created us
We can be good enough to endure
And his arms will one day reach to us
In bright allure.

HOLD THE LIGHT
by Jim Cleveland (9-21-95)

(1)

You say I must know I'm worthy
But sometimes it's just not so
When I slip and fall upon the path
Where you would have me go.

You say I'm just not perfect
Should find the way the best I can
Without worry about the times I stray
Since I don't really know the plan.

But I can't help dreading the things I do
When I wallow in things so trite
Got to struggle to break the habits I hold
That don't help make things right.

CHORUS

*But I love the light you bring to the sky each morning
Love the birds that fly on high
The clouds of white
And I love the way you smile at me each morning
When your sunshine fills my heart
With heaven bright
I'll try another day to hold the light*

(2)

You say you're just like a father
From heaven's heart you come to me
If I will listen to your voice inside
It'll help my peace to be

But too much I feel that I have failed
When times get hard to bear
Through fault of mine and not of mine
Knowing well that life's not fair

Well, I'll just say I must find some way
To shine your love around
So you will know I want to take
My life from lost and found

CHORUS

Because I REPEAT CHORUS

JUST THE SAME

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

When I see you sit around and stare
I know there's gotta be some rain in there
I know you feel a little pain in there
I know we had a lot of pain to share

I don't wanna hear you sigh any more
Don't wanna hear you cry any more
Can't stand to hear you lie any more
And say we're happy
Just the same.

(CHORUS)

We're pretendin'
Too much defendin'
We gotta face it
Go on and break it
And quit sayin' that we're happy
Just the same.

(2)

I don't wanna try so hard to care
Don't wanna give you more to bear
I wanna do what's really fair
If we're honest, we can see it clear.

I wanna help you feel so free
Not have to make amends to me
We gotta teach our eyes to see
That we won't ever be
Just the same.

LIVE MY DAYS FOR YOU

by Jim Cleveland

(1)

They say men and women are from different planets
Can't orbit together true
That our songs are just sung different
Someone always out of tune
But I know I'd try to love you well
And smile the whole day through
If you'd just let me hold you tight
Just be there close to you.

(CHORUS)

They say the battle of the sexes
Beats us all. Bigger than Texas
But I don't think they're meanin' me and you.
My love's right there. How deep I care
And if you would feel you want me, dear
I'd always live my days just for you.

(2)

They say a man must be a man and
Do what a man must do
They say she's gonna do him back
After what he's done, he's due
But I don't think that fightin' over
What somebody else should do
Will mean so much if we let love grow
Then we'll always wanna be true

(3)

They say it's tough for man and woman to meet
Their minds in just one place
Thinking's not what their bodies do
in peaceful love embrace
But no matter who is right or wrong
We're here to run the race
The future lies right straight ahead
And the curves will thrill the chase.

LIVING MOMENTS

© Jim Cleveland

Morning broke gently in glistening spikes
of radiance and resonance,
oncoming light,
that flooded her doorstep
down through the pines
to the banks of the lake
where spirit light shines
in sparkles
and speckles
and seamless design,
rays that go dancing
altogether in time.

This love scene it opens her soul-searching day.
She sits on the deck
in the morning wash phase
The coffee smoke trickles
up in vaporous climb
to melt in the fabric
of this airy design
that wafts out its fragrances
each one in its time,
in-mingling the day's energizing sunshine.

She sat in its aura
and breathed in so fine,
and felt the light's warmth,
felt God's love inside,
as the day turned to noontime
and the late day sublime,
in amber light feasting
in golden-washed prime

The time it kept drifting,
with reading
and play
And sampling the stew
for his homecoming tray.
And she picked him a flower
for the table,
smelled its bloom
The lamplight is flickering
o'er the warm brown-washed room.

His light weaved the canyon
split the darkness
to her gate.
as her heart came up into her
so ecstatic
soul elate,
joyous, open
loving, grasping
melts within them
to vibrate
there together
wrapped in pleasure
at the gate.
Breathless,
heart pounding
Embrace.

Later by the fire, they laughed and shared
reminding one another that they cared.
Looking in their eyes
to synthesize
in sharing guise
the giving prize
with hearts that rise
passion that flies
they are suddenly
their eyes.
And they helplessly give in.
He kissed her once
and then again
for it had been all day
He had missed her
and missed her again,
and he kissed her
once again.

And now together with lamp in tow
and her sweet, soft hand
to promised land
they go.
Where softness reigns
in pillowed scent
in billowing groans
of released content
and softly settling
in quiet,

sleepy
stint.

The lamp finally flickers and dries away
In the darkness left behind
slips the end of day
but in the seamless plan
that makes it right
the moon shines oe'r the sky
carries on the bright.
And the moonglow settles
upon their flesh tonight
love in action
joyful traction
here at this site.

Now they lie in sleep awaiting
the next big say,
when the light comes bursting down
upon this place
and we happy souls who embrace it
renew the race,
as we learn and feel some more
where we're given space,
to bring it peace
and kind
and gentle,
love embrace
And this is true at every moment
of every day.
that if we live in that very moment
it has its say
Living moments
are the blessings
of the day.

LOVE INSIDE
© **Jim Cleveland**

He could not get beyond all the judgments of the day.
He would never find the time to feel the silence or to pray.
He could see the mass out raging on the streets he walked in fear.
He could see the evil purpose of greed and gain and dirt to smear.
And it only gave him sorrow, made him wish for love revealed
with peace and grace and sharing, things that people search for still,
but have lost in dreams so ravaged by all their judgments made in fear.
It is fear that nurtures evil, confronts our love with careless jeer.
Turns our lives into a struggle, turns our minds to think of pain.
Can we find that saving grace to make us pure and free again?
And learn to always find
His love inside.
And know it lives within
each child of God.

(CHORUS)

Don't judge. There's another who'll do that for you.
Father in Heaven will do that so true.
Forgive one another as Jesus forgave
Just give a kind word like the love that He gave
to your brothers and sisters who are still hungry now
For the love there inside you. Shine it about.
Shine love about
Shine love about.
Reach there inside you
And share love about.

He found a way to get beyond the foolish judgments of the day,
of things that hardly mattered except in ego games we play.
Put aside his talk of others, whether travail, trial or true.
to focus on his own real quest, the spirit that leads us through.
There's that spark of God inside us, can be expressed in me and you
if we can get beyond the judgments that feed the fears that are our dues.
It comes down to what we stand for, what we spread around each day.
Will we give some love to whoever comes by searching out our way?
The peace, it comes from knowing that we are each a child of light
and if we can only see this way, then God has set us right.
And we'll always know
His love inside.
We will always know
His love abides.
And all his children have
that love inside.

LOVE INSTEAD

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

When there is fear
Then life is sorrow
And there is dread
For each tomorrow.
But when love shines,
Fear is but shadow
That melts away
In light so hallow.

(2)

We're sure our Father
Knows how we struggle
To reign o'er fear
turmoil and trouble.
And he does love us
For our true fight
For all we do
To share his light.

(3)

Quit spreading fear
Give love instead
In all you do
In all that's said
Give fear no space
Fill hearts with love
Be rays of light
For your Father above.

(CHORUS)

In Heaven's womb
there is much room
for the human race.
When we've run our race
and take our place
beside His grace.
Turn your hearts His way
In loving days
And nights a'bed
With angels sleep
Your soul they'll keep
Give love instead.

LOVE IS WE

© Jim Cleveland

Love is such a grand idea
I don't understand it much
Like a butterfly, it flutters away
Each time I reach to touch.
And to give us something we could know
Its glories we have altered
Turned them to lust and things we'd own
And that is where we've faltered.

But love reigns far and worldly wide
In God's plan for mankind
The light is there; its pure and bright
For earnest hearts to find.
Though the clatter and noise of daily dues
Can tarnish all the shine
Unless we find His love within
Leave indulgences behind.

(CHORUS)

Inside you
Inside me
Inside a love
That makes us "we."
Inside search
Finds so much
That together
We can see.
Inside knowing
Inside growing
Inside we hold the key
To make our love
Bloom like the fields
Of flowers bursting free
Love brings us together.
Love is "We."

Love is cheapened when we turn it
Twist it, lower its view
So we can understand some way
That it works for me and you.
Its reality is too much to grasp
Till we know the Father's light
Understand that we're all the same

And precious in his sight.

The Father loves the sinners
While disdainning all the sin
And the Father tells us very well
To seek the truth within.
Expanded minds let in more light
Goodness, wisdom too.
So we can feel the holy spirit
Guide us ever-through.

Love is pure, the highest thought
That rules celestial spheres
But man has forced his finite view
Mixed it with all his fears
So its saving grace is still beyond
Our limited earthly reach
But the Father shows the way for all
In all His Son did teach.

Jesus spread the Father's love
Showed how to live and die
And the certainty that we'll live again
In the sweetest by and by
Rose up to give us another gift
The Spirit of Truth to guide
Took reign again o'er Heavenly mansions
Waits for us on high.

LOVE'S THE REASON

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

Breathe in deep
where the spirit sleeps
Wake up the beauty that's inside
the love you keep
Send love in the air
Everywhere
We've got to find the time to reach out
and share

(Chorus)

*Love's the reason
Any season
Its fruits are joys
And baby boys
And baby girls
Just like pearls
And friends out there
In the Everywhere
Love's the reason
Any season
For us to care.*

(2)

Where's all the hippies
when we need 'em
That love and peace stuff sounds so good
I'd like to seed 'em
Come to think of it
Some of them are us,
a little older, wiser, steadier,
without the fuss.

(3)

Love's on the rise
Grown up in size
As the angels come to embrace us,
change our lives.
Beam up your spirit
to the higher source
And the truth and faith you'll learn
will stay the course.

MOUNTAIN MEMORIES

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

There's a place in West Virginia
Where our love once set in bloom
Like a dew upon the green hills
Our precious spring was lost too soon

Now she stares out of the window
To the dead, gray streets below
Where the masses weave their sadness
Into all the lives they ever know.

(CHORUS)

Take me back to mountain memories
Wash me in the cooling flow
Take my soul up to the rocky top
And show my heart sweet heaven's glow

(2)

There's a whistle at the factory
It wails at me to earn my bread
And there's no life in this hard concrete
That hides the earth and makes it dead

And my Susanna's lost her sunshine
Her tear-stained cheeks so pale and cold
Soul adrift in this dark city
Where sirens mark the pain we've sowed.

(3)

Some day I'll count up all my savings
Fold it in my traveling clothes
Take my loved one in my arms again
Take her where the rivers flow

Make our home there in the mountains
With the laurel and the pine
Where our hearts are close to God's plan
When our bodies lie entwined.

MUST BE INSIDE
by Jim Cleveland, 1995

(1)

It's not out there. Must be inside
It's not out there. It's all been tried
It's not out there. I've looked in vain
Every moment just looked the same
Until I knew the love inside burns like a flame.

I kept looking in books and bars
Back seat dreams in stranded cars
I looked so hard but found no peace
Until I sat inside the quiet and found release.

Now when my troubles crawl up and swear
I have a friend who is right there.
By many names it's spirit true
Right there inside each one of you

(2)

Just know the love that helps you see
Is there inside and yours for free
But the only way to make it real
is to give it first. That is the key

This simple secret that I confide
Has been known through all the ages but rarely tried
Give love. Don't judge how the others ride
Just know to them, like us, the love's there deep inside.

(CHORUS)

*Tell the people to quit their searching far and wide
To find the thing they must bring forth from deep inside.
In the quiet time they'll discover and decide
That all this world is just a chase that will subside
When we realize that peace too seldom tried
Is always bathed in the love we have inside*

MYSTERY LIFE
by Jim Cleveland

The mystery of life comes round again
with every rising sun
Miracle comes in blinding light
that shines on every one.

The mystery grows as days grow long
and age it creeps upon
and clarity fades in compromises
forced on every one.

To cut to truth is such a task
when money makes its mark
upon the minds of mortal man
and values fall apart.

The mystery of life encircles all
who wonder how to be
to find the light from deep insight
truth as great decree

The mystery slips into the night
As dark as what we see
in this short life, but one day we will
learn God's mystery

For night it always turns to day
with time the means of change
and we will receive the love one day
exactly as we gave.

We'll know the mystery for what it was,
a stepping stone to grace.
When we know that all the love we give
reserves our heavenly place.

NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON

by Jim Cleveland (9-11-95)

(1)

In love and grace, we find our place in Father's plan.
Run our race with this mortal face by Father's plan.
It's peace we'll find in love sublime
brought by the Father's hand
We'll shine that love, peace of the dove
throughout this troubled land.
Respect the earth. It's full of worth
from sea to shining sands
Save her grace. Give God his place
His love will change this land.

(2)

In numbing pain, we stare our way through the news
Wondering why the people just choose to lose
The peace we'll find's from God inside
The way for me and you.
Talk to God each day and he will say
Love's the thing to choose.
Respect your birth, you'll full of worth
Your head, your heart, your hands
Share these gifts. Spirits will lift
All by the Father's plan.

(CHORUS)

The birds up in the sky all sing in tune
On this sunny day, this shady place in June
We'll give this place a smiling face
And soon ...
Grace will come to all
And not a moment too soon.

PEOPLE DO

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

People put their fences up
Cut their trees to make big stumps
Buy their guns with hard-earned money
Made at the mill
Choose up sides and say they're strange
Just because they're not the same
Lock their doors and go out lookin'
For a thrill.

People say they need a change
Then go out and do the same
New ways are laughed away
not being tried and true.
And the love that we all need
Is no thought for them to heed
'Cause they won't quit judging me
And judging you.

(CHORUS)

There's a hole in the brain
Where the mind goes
There's a darkness in our souls
We can't bring light
Unless we follow where Jesus shows
Open our hearts to one another
And make things right.
There's a curse from our past
We're gonna lay away
There's a light up ahead
Burning bright.
Helps us think again when we start to stray
Knowing we are all so precious
In his sight.

(2)

People rush to read the news
Gives no truth but only clues
Make their minds up in concrete
Stuck in a mold.
Give their children to the schools
Let their churches make the rules

While the businessmen keep gathering
All the gold.

People make their lives a strain
By living only in their brain
Obligations fill the best part
Of their days.
Round out their time with things so shallow
Without the peace from love so hallow
Get no help for they never think to
Ask God's way.

(3)
People talk the straight and narrow
Then they act in ways so callow
'Cause it's the differences that everywhere
They see
When we find the common ground
Then it's peace that we'll have found
For in essence I'm in you
And you're in me.

People have to take control
Live their lives in spirit bold
If we are to set our sails
For Heaven's shore.
Use the free wills Father gave
To shine his love right back again
To our brothers, sisters, those who
Need it more.

THE PERFECT YOU

© Jim Cleveland

Would the sunshine seem so warm without the rain?
Would the good times be so glad without some pain?
If our lives were not a question,
Could we easily find the direction
That would lead us back to the Father's house again?

Would coming home be sweet without some sense of loss?
Would all our victories be this good without a cost?
If answers came without a search
Would you prize them very much?
Would you try in life or just bear some dark cross?

(CHORUS)

*Life's a struggle. That is true. That's the Father's plan for you
But not in fear. It's love that's sure to bring you through
Without the fear and foolish pride it's a long and joyous ride
And your life keeps building up the perfect you.*

Would the power of love be known without some hate?
If there were no more poor would success be all that great?
If we travelled on easy roads,
And lived high in plush abodes,
Would a growth in strength and purpose be our fate?

Would the springtime seem so joyous without the cold?
Would a life without some challenge just get old?
Will we always have both sides,
To help us grow in all that's tried
As we watch our path to Heaven's gates unfold?

Would day and night just be as one without the change?
Could we find our true romance if all were same?
And is it true that life's no bore,
But such a chance to open doors
Can we smile and say we're happy with the game?

Would our faith be quite this great if we had proof?
Would our deaths be tragic loss without the truth?
And what kind of mortal life
Would we have without the strife?
Without this time and space could we see how much we grew?

PLEASE, WHY?

by Jim Cleveland (9-11-95)

I saw the smog, like heavy pillows of lead
Smother the sun,
Dim amber light instead.
The factories belched the sweat of labored souls
Filling the once blue sky with deadly dread
I said
Oh, God, keep them from poisoning the earth and sky
And the waters so vibrant, full of life.
Please, why
Can't we know we're part of all under sky
If we poison what we have we'll surely die.
In the not so sweet
by and by.

I saw the garbage skows floating out to sea
Will the circling buzzards get to feed?
They bold swoop in.
Like us, they eat with speed.
The skow chugs on to fill its appointed round.
The water off the bay is burying ground
For all the misbegotten filth we lay around.
And the earth once full of life stands in fear.
Can't we know we're here
Not to poison what we have. We'll disappear.
We'll surely die
in the not so sweet
by and by.
That's what I fear.

There were buffaloes one time upon the plain
Virgin forests filled the sky with towering spires
We will never see their likes again,
Turned into furry dinner coats
Little houses in a chain.
We have destroyed nature's beauty with our fires
Of careless matches, careless chainsaws, greed ingrained.
Please, why ...
Can't we see the earth as our mother, child and brother,
In life's great chain.
If we don't try,
We'll surely die
In the not so sweet
by and by.
Earth won't sustain.

QUESTIONS OF THE HEART

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

If you would go away and I would stay
Could I find the strength to make the day?
No answer.

If you say we're through, start something new
Could I break this bond holds me to you?
No answer

If you find new love, give ours a shove
Would my wounded pride fit like a glove?
No answer

If you do these things, reach for the rings
Can't really say what tomorrow'll bring
I hope to God it brings me
some answers

(CHORUS)

*I can't answer many questions of the heart
Don't think I have the strength to make a new false start.
Though I will search on for the key
that will keep you here with me
Your love that slips away pulls us apart.
I can't answer many questions of the heart.*

(2)

If you break the news, I'll have the blues
Feel bad I'm not the one you'd choose
Please answer.

If your closet's bare, no meals to share
I guess I'll sell your rocking chair
Please answer.

If the lonely pain drives me insane
I'll sit and play some sad refrain.
Please answer.

You left in May, my letters say
Why did you go away?
Please answer.

RAINBOW OF MAN

© Jim Cleveland

The world keeps changin' faster
Still I don't know what we're after
And I'm wishin' for a time to pause and see
If the direction that we're goin'
Will start the love a'flowin'
Between the people in the world's big family tree.

We come into this world as equals
All unique although we're sequels
And the love that's born within us shines so new
But in the times that are to follow
All that love just gets so hollow
'Cause we're blinded by the things that are not true.

(Chorus)

*Fathers and mothers,
Sisters and brothers,
All the colors
In the rainbow of man
From all the nations
We're all relations
With love and patience
We can understand.*

Yes, we choose the way we're livin'
We can bless the world by givin'
Just a little love around us every day
No more fear for what you don't know
Reach out to others; you will both grow
You will make the world much better in every way.

When the time comes to go home
We won't make that trip alone
There'll be angels who will keep us from all harm
Enfold us in their sweet embrace
We have finally won our race
They will take us home to Heaven in loving arms

RISKY BUSINESS

by Jim Cleveland (8-28-95)

Down in the Mexican town of Juarez
A stranger rode in as the amber light fell
A gun on his hip and the dust on his brow
To hit the tequila and take on some chow.
In the smoke of the saloon, he found all too soon
The trouble that followed him there
A man struck the barmaid and pulled down on him
He shot him twice. The man fell in that room.

But the federales, they knew that man well
A purveyor of pleasures to sell.
And they came in with force
With the law as their source
They handcuffed him and took him to jail
The hanging judge spoke mighty firm
A gallows would make him short term
When the morning light reached down in heat
A rope burn and dangling dead feet.
His heart would no longer beat.

(CHORUS)

*He was a rambler and a gambler, with a gun that spoke with speed
He had been in risky business many times.
A fighter, not compromiser, not a man of words but deeds
But he had fled from risky business many times.
And tonight that dark-haired barmaid was right on time.*

Locked in the dirty 'ol jail in Juarez
She looked up to his window to see
He looked down upon her, and blew her a kiss
She yearned for this stranger to be free.
Well, the deputies found Conchita quite a treat
Brought them whiskey, lots of laughs and things to eat
But when she slipped away, the keys were in hand
Threw them up to his window by her plan.

He slipped the door, eased a holster, strapped it on
Into the dark with a box of cartridges, a corn pone.
The last deputy lay back snoring by the door
And he made it out ... despite the creaking floor.
With two horses there in tow, he walked the street
Back down to Pablo's. The swinging doors let out a squeak.
She was there ... at the stairs in the crowded room
Burning eyes came together, she in a swoon

He stepped up to her, and up the stairs they strode.
A man called out to stop. He drew his load.
Firing once and then again, he cleared the room
And two men fell, with bleeding limbs. An air of doom.

*He was a rambler and a gambler, with a gun that spoke with speed
He had been in risky business many times.
A fighter, not compromiser, not a man of words but deeds
Shot his way out of risky business many times.
Swore he'd settle down if he got outta here this time.*

On panting horses they fled north from Juarez
With the federale army hot on their tails
Splashed into the Rio Grande
The federales made a stand
Bullets whizzed around them in a hail

Tired and weary, they limped onto the Texas plains
A bullet had struck him in that deadly rain
His blood dripped on the sand. They plodded on.
Till the horses fell upon their knees, began to groan.
The tepid water sloshed in their canteen
She cocked the hammer when she heard that cougar scream.
Held him to her in a dry ravine and wept
What a life they might have had. But now he slept.

Her cries of pain swept the desert. The coyotes wailed.
There came a stoic band of Apaches on the trail.
The old one made a pack of mud and herbs and straw.
Danced in the smoke and she just sat in awe
In one more day, he raised his head and scratched his beard
Saved by his old friends, the Apaches, where he was reared.
They rode off together, with a stash of corn
To build a homestead somewhere north, to plant that corn.

Settled down, he put his guns into the chest
He and Senorita, loving mate, found a place to rest
Watching sunrise and sunset on deep red hills
Knowing peace from the simple life is quite a thrill.

*He was a rambler and a gambler, with a gun that spoke with speed
He had been in risky business many times.
A fighter, not compromiser. not a man of words but deeds
Shot his way out of risky business many times.
Now he's left the wanderin' life for love sublime.
Put that risky business runnin' way behind.*

ROAD TO GRACE

by Jim Cleveland

(1)

The road is always there to go both ways,
can bring us all together, can take away.
Makes us long to wander freely some other day
when we're not so bound to here and feet of clay.
But I find the grip of have-to-do and be
seems to close the route my spirit planned for me.
Work the days, waste the nights. No ecstasy
in the everyday's the same monotony

(2)

The road is always right in front of you.
Up and down the country with a view.
Makes us want to break the chains, see what ensues.
Some other day when I'm not here and blue.
The ribbons run up north, south, west and east.
Guess I could just follow passing lines of geese.
But however we do chase our golden fleece
Know that spirit will lead you right and give the peace.

(CHORUS)

We are restless

Will we always be?

We are restless

Is that how we're made to be?

We are restless

We search here endlessly

So very restless

To find God gracefully.

When you look upon the roads that fill your lands

Think of all the places you can go. You really can.

Make your life shine all the light your spirit planned.

Go out and express your love. Yes, you can.

We are restless

To fly with spirit

We are restless

To find God's place

We are restless

But we're still just human

We are restless to find our cul-de-sac of Grace.

RODEO ROADIES

by Jim Cleveland

He felt his hair blow in the wind, rushing by
Swirling up in little ringlets on the fly.
On a bike that roars across the prairie
Bobbie with her arms around me
Keep on runnin' hard beneath the Western sky.

The highway rushed right past the changing scene
In a blur that felt of brown and red and green
He'll ride the rodeo in Cheyenne
In the bars they'll make a stand
Then it'll be time to pack and go to Abilene

(CHORUS)

*Who said the wild west is gone?
Not as long as we get crazy and sing a song.
Not as long as I can ride a wild-eyed bronc
And make a dollar or two sometimes ropin' stock
We got the wild west right here on hoofs and wheels
Traveling to make sure we get our fill
Runnin' wild is everything that's cool.
Ain't got Trigger
but I got this Harley
It's a runnin' fool.*

(2)

Well the Calgary Stampede has now subsided
And the season's nearing end, we're all confiding
Guess we'll rest a couple of months
Change the spark plugs, get new shocks
Come next year, we'll be ready to be ridin'

Got my saddle stashed away, the trailer too
Cleaned up all my stuff. All of it was due.
From the cold wind, we got the fire
But we won't ever get much higher
Than when the first event in Tucson hits in June.

SHARE YOUR GRACE

by Jim Cleveland (8-95)

(1)

I need you, Father
I need to feel you in the wind.
I hear you, Father
Blows 'round the canyon and back again.
I know you're here, Father.
When the moon shines down at twilight's end.
It's your grace, Father.
That rocks us into peace within.

(2)

I've seen you, Father
in the eyes of all of my best friends.
I share you, Father
in all the love that we can spend.
I found you, Father.
You're right inside me, closest friend.
The spirit that yearns to shine the love within.

(CHORUS)

Bring me to goodness
Bring me to love
Bring me the strength
Dear Father above.
Bring me your presence
In this mortal place
Each day can we please
Share your Grace.
Help us to run life's great race.

SHINING THROUGH

(To Suzanne)

by Jim Cleveland

(1)

Who brings the light of sunshine into every passing day?

She does.

Who brings a smile and gentle shrug when things don't go our way?

Her again.

Who lights the way for me to be what I try so hard to be?

My lady

Who is my friend and partner into all the rest of life?

She is..

(CHORUS)

Suzanne

Keep on smiling

You're a child

A woman too

Suzanne

You're everything

I need to carry through

Keep on smiling.

Keep on smiling,

I'll be grinning there with you.

Suzanne.

Love of my life

Keep shining through

(2)

There are times when all our troubles well up hard in her and me

Together

But her steady hand and comfort kiss are always there for free.

She kisses me.

And when I need someone to hold, she holds me close to her.

She does.

And in her arms in moonlight peace, all my thoughts concur.

She's the one.

(Repeat chorus)

SHUT UP AND DANCE

© 1995 by Jim Cleveland

It's always they that they say is always shootin' us down
They said they ain't gonna let us get up off the ground.
They're out there slippin' and slidin'
sometimes peepin' and a' hidin'
You ain't careful, baby, they gonna
Mess' your mind around.

Who they is, it just ain't clear. Ain't never been
They ain't never showed their faces since way back when.
Their friends are sneakin' up in your ear
with stuff you don' wanna hear
Say baby, quit tryin' to put people down
and then disappear.

They said they're steady talkin' about me down at the saloon
Said I really ain't much more than a buffoon.
And who was that woman I had been seen with at the pier?
Was that Conchita, whose heart is stenciled on my rear
That's her all right. She's hot. What's that to you?
Get your own somethin' goin'. Go get loose.
Them that can't help dabblin' in other people's brew
Have got no action of their own in which to do

And brother

When you go out there, be sure to take yo' lance.
Life ain't nothin' but one big chance
All wound up here in circumstance
Don't give a damn what they say.
Shut up and dance.

(Chorus)
Did you hear
Have you read
What they said?
Is it bad news
Is it sad news
For us to dread?
It's been inked
It's been spoke
We've been gettin' it
Till we choke
It ain't the truth.
Turn it loose
It's what people said.

SONGS OF LIFE

by Jim Cleveland

In my early years while I was learning to hear
There were crooners and pickers and do-wop appeared.
And rhythm and blues rode on to rock and roll
Big Joe ruled the stage, added shake, rattle and soul
And B.B. and Ray and the sexy Miss Peaches
Roll with me Henry. Gotta do it. Who'll teach us?
And Elvis hip-shaking for the Memphis Sun
With Jerry Lee, Johnny in black and the Blue Suede One.
Chuck doin' the duck walk, James beggin' please
Jackie crying Lonely Teardrops from his knees.
Fats, Bo, Little Willie John and Muddy's a Mannish Boy
Little Richard screamin' Tutti Fruitti. What a joy.
Then the Beatles and the Stones led a Brittany run.
Good guys, bad guys. Hold your hand. Under my thumb
All through the years of the American scene
Music is the stuff of American dreams.
We hear it through the years to shape each scene.

Through years of cake out in the rain and American Pie
Jethro's flute soared, he glinted the eye
And Janis was screamin' hard, lost a piece of her heart
And so did I, baby, when I saw her in the park.
Jerry and the live Dead played well
Always happy and smiley faced. The weed was swell.
The Mamas and the Papas in harmony and tune
Van the Man pouring his dance to the moon.
And Jimi was crackling with feedback and fire
and the Byrds were sure we could all get even higher.
Already, Pink is there on the dark side of old Lunar
Electric Light, flying right, may get there sooner.
The Cream was really rising at slowhand speed
While Neil wailed falsetto, with a ripsaw scream.
Songs of the changing American scene
Have carried us through all the years of our dreams.

Looking back over the years of American songs
Roy's tenor, Dylan's whine will linger long
Joanie singing for a cause, barefoot and high
And when the Who smashed all their gear. My, oh my.
Buddy's Crickets for two-dollar tickets, and soul to send
Joe's playing air guitar with a little help from friends.
We watched the Free Bird soar from Skynyrd strings
Duane and Jeff and Mick can pick those things
And you could walk that Stairway to Heaven inside

Lose your mind and heart in "Ride Captain Ride."
Willie and Waylon led an outlaw gang out west
Jackson urging everyman to do his best.
Raggae rifts of Cliff, Chuck's ding-a-ling.
In a honkytonk with Hank, fields of gold with Sting
From Sonny Boys to Blind Lemons and all between
American songs are the stuff of American dreams.
They carry us all through life like our dreams.

(CHORUS)

Listen in the air
There's a melody floating there.
Partly heard before
But fresh in your mind's door
Just pluck it from the wind
Give a new song back again.
Let us hear the songs of your life
Give us all your dreams and your strife
We'll feel it there with you
In songs of life

SONGWRITER

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

He is a man of his words
A man of his music
He's a man with the heart
To make 'em real.
He's a man who knows the score
That the songs are so much more
If they're part of all our lives
And things we feel.

(chorus)

Keep on searchin'
Keep on singin'
Keep their voices out there
A'ringin'
Keep that pencil on the page
And make it rhyme
Keep on pickin'
Keep on cookin'
Keep on walkin' around
Barefootin'
A million wrinkles
Are just crinkles
In the face of time.

(2)

He has looked hard for the answers
Tried to wrap them in a song
He's got the tempo and the meter
By his side
He's a man who's sometimes certain
He'll give voice to all the hurtin'
With the sentiments served up warm
And Southern style.

(3)

He likes heartbreaks 'cause that's feeling
He writes songs that help the healing
He's got help from Daphne sweet
Who's been right there.
He'll be writin' till he's gone
And the youngbloods carry on
'Cause what's life if it's not meant
For us to share.

SOUL MATES

© 1995 by Jim Cleveland

If God would experience, He would do so through you
If He were to love others, He'd do so through you
If He were to live where His children could call.
He'd live deep inside us and not let us fall.
We'd just need to love Him. Give thanks for the great ALL.
And this is the truth, child
He does abide in us all.

When we see the very many
Who've lost the golden thread
That leads to the Father
Then they've looked outward instead
And seen what they say is madness
And the suffering we've made.
Father offers us comfort
Living waters, a cool shade.
Look deep within to spirit
In the quiet times you can make
And these crystal light waters
Your restless thirst will slake
And this is the truth, child
God's within, your Soul Mate.

Yes, your Father is within you, suggesting goodness each day.
Listen with faith to get the guidance you crave.
In the stillness, the voice will lovingly say:
This is the truth, child
I'll show you a better way.

Listen
You are my child
I indwell you in faith
That you'll find my true comfort
In our place I have made.
My spirit shines within you
If you'll look to this light
That my Son showed you vividly
In your flesh to lift your sight.
We'll experience all together
You'll grow wise, strong and kind
And I will lead you to peace
in Heaven's light sublime.
And this is the truth, child,
We're soul mates through time.

SOUL TO KEEP

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

There is a question on your lips you will not speak
There is an answer all around us way down deep
If we can find the words to say
And work these things out in their way
Then that answer is the love we truly seek
We're only different 'cause we're each of us unique
Searching for the time to make that quantum leap
Give ourselves to one another and love so sweet
And I pray tonight
My soul to keep
And I pray tonight
For peaceful sleep

(2)

The foghorns on the harbor sound by bleak
I never heard them sound so mournful as this week
For my Angie's gone away
Just for awhile, she said today
And she said she just needs time away to think
I keep wondering if she'll find the love she seeks
In some new place, in someone's arms, in some new link
That takes her to the stormy coast to some dark brink
And I pray tonight
Her soul to keep
And I pray tonight
For peaceful sleep

(3)

There's a cold wind blowing in from north, northeast
I watch the cloudy skies and passing lines of geese
These silent pictures on the wall
Your raincoat hanging in the hall
Won't make the day that looms so heavy feel complete
The gap that lies between us now is so replete
With all the heartaches that we shared so bittersweet
And I pray tonight
Our souls to keep
And I pray tonight
For peaceful sleep

SPIRIT QUEST

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

There's a cold wind blowin' chill
On the hillside where I live
I turn my collar up
And walk the setting sun.
She went away and left me here
Without a word, a passing tear
She's a restless-hearted
Spirit on the run.

Thought she'd learn to love the land
Clean blue river with banks of sand
Thought the gentle breeze
Would calm her hungry heart
But city lights came flashing through
Lured her back to the laughing brew
Where they're all just chasing
Spirits in the dark.

(chorus1)

She's on the run
I watch the evening sun
She looks for fun
While I sit and ponder
The country's pure
Such clean allure
But not for a spirit
Running here and there and yonder.

(2)

Sittin' back on my porch swing
Creaky springs and crickets sing
And that old hoot owl
is blinking in the tree
She's gone away, but it's okay
She wasn't meant for the month of May
She's a fast-lane drivin'
Spirit runnin' free

The moon looks oh so sweet
Think I'll walk down to the spring
Drink that coolin' water
Ripplin' as it flows

Why do some wanna settle down
While some others do the town
Wouldn't trade moonlight walks
For all your fancy clothes

(bridge)

In the country, you can feel it
Smell it too
It's like the cool sweet touch of early
Morning dew.
And the air is full of knowing
What is true
That this place is just for me
And not for you.

(3)

Each one is different from the other
Jane and me and dad and mother
And the best thing that I do
Is work the land
And play my songs here by the fire
Know we can always get some higher
An' there's a girl down in Raton
With hair like sand.

One day I hope I'll hear from Jane
And know she's found some love again
And that searching heart has
finally found its rest
And I'll smile there at 'ol Pard
And take him out to run the yard
Like some laughing, dancing
Firefly spirit quest.

THE STILLNESS

by Jim Cleveland

The Stillness is like a breath of peace each day.
The Stillness brings an oasis of shade our way.
The Stillness gives us reunion with our oldest friend.
Heavenly Father shines his love from quiet within.

The Stillness hears the nudge of Angels whispering.
The Stillness draws our thoughts to brilliance, glistening.
The Stillness makes us smile in our gentle listening
For the living waters flowing through our minds, Christening.

The Stillness lifts our hearts and minds in resonance
Harmonizing our souls with silent sustenance
That fills our selves to higher levels of radiance
Upon the celestial, ethereal, actual planes of renaissance.

The Stillness energizes our thoughts and deeds
The Stillness gives light and confidence that we need
The Stillness fills our every pore with light.
The Stillness, God and I, together each night.

Enter lovingly.

TALKIN' APOCALYPTIC BLUES

by Jim Cleveland

Seems like everybody's talkin' about the Apocalypse
Make out like it's gonna be an awful bad trip
So I decided to go out and talk to everyman
At least the ones I could run up on and can.
See if we can get a grip!

Down on Main Street, I walked into a store full of guns
Said, glad to see you carryin' on for Attila the Hun
They got all angry, started talkin' about their rights
Said I was just after 'em for spite
They got peace on the run.

But while they were showin' me the door, I asked:
Hey, you heard about the Apocalypse?
He said:
For my money, you can't beat the AK-47.

Well, I walked on to the next window of the very next store
A line of TVs were shootin' violence to people behind doors
I turned around and watched it playin' live on the streets
Hard eyes and attitudes, the victims and the cheats.
Seems like everybody's kinda sore.
Monkey see
Monkey do some more.

I hollered to nobody in particular:
Hey, anybody ready for the Apocalypse?
A goofy-lookin' man staggered by with a grin and said,
Bring it on. It's gotta be better'n Ripple.

Then I ran up on a woman with a bleached head and a tight dress
Can't get no business she was bitchin' Under du-ress
Wants to know ain't she a bargain at twenty-five
Said, I dunno. But it's free when I use these five.
Maybe you oughta go take a rest.
Been too long on your back, get it off your chest.

And have you heard about the Apocalypse, and this ain't no test?
She said:
Can't be no worse than AIDS.

(CHORUS)

The end is comin'

The beginnin' too.
Gonna face up
To everything we do.
Try to make amends
To everybody we screwed
And the ones that let us have it
Will be lined up too.
A busy time in Heaven
Keep us busy bein' true
With the comin's and the goin's
Lotta huggin', kissin' too.
But I'm wonderin' if I gotta
Make up for all them trips
When we were crazy to be happy
In the middle of Apocalypse.

Well, I left and walked into the church house, don't matter which one
They all say they're the chosen one.
Got the Apocalyptic truth right here. We'll feed you if you come.
Every Sunday we'll tell you who you are, and what you can become,
If you'll give us money regular. We need a tidy sum.
We got things to buy and places to build to put the devil on the run.
You don't wanna burn in hell, do you?
I replied: Would that be the Apocalypse?
And can I be saved from that awful trip?
Reverend Bob said: Bingo!
And we got bingo, by the way.
Every Wednesday night at seven.
Win a trip to the Holy Land
And later on to Heaven.
I said: For how much?
He said: Ten percent would be nice.
I said: Then will you buy poor kids a bowl of rice?
He said: No, we need an educational building in order to suffice.
Maybe a bowling alley
With some stained glass.
Don't wanna be crass.
During an Apocalypse, you can't sit on your Ass-ets.

Then I went into the hospital and watched 'em movin' around the flesh
A billion-dollar business, all insured and intermeshed.
And the people with the money gettin' lots of surgery and plenty of tests
But the poor ones is gettin': Buy some aspirin, get some rest.
Come to think of it, everything seemed like a business in the Apocalypse
So I thought I'd go to the corporate headquarters.
Maybe get some business tips.
We own everything you could imagine, but we ain't talkin', they replied.

And we need all of the money for the politicians by our side.
It's just PAC money, mind you, not the money that's never missed.
That's over yonder with the Swiss.
Just pilin' up
to help us get us through the Apoca-lypse.
Well
Whaddya you make of the Apocalypse, Mr. Businessman?, I asked of him.
He said
Business as usual
It's us against them.
Well, I said
There's another way of lookin' at it.
You'll find peace in your mind
Not your bank account.

Well, I walked out of that high rise with the walnut walls
Realizin' that the Apocalypse is within our beck and call.
Manifestin' our free wills daily is what the present is and that's all.
In the mind you can find the signs, already installed.
So I'm prayin' for the Heavenly Father to really turn up the juice.
Let these crazy minds just turn loose
Of the ego that comes from fear of the things we choose.
And get rid of these
Apocalyptic Blues.

And I said to myself
What do I think about the Apocalypse?
WellIt's better than re-runs.

THEM THAT DONE IT IS KNOWED

© 1995 Jim Cleveland

They're flushing cherry bombs down the second floor john
And on the first floor, nobody's havin' any fun
The explosion rocked the walls just like a gun
Never seen such naked skin on the run.
Then they rounded up the janitors and the police
Who pronounced a crime had been committed on this scene
Scoured the room and filled a big valise.
Said it's just a matter of time 'fore we make the squeeze.

(Chorus)

They think they're smart. They think they're cute. And mighty bold
Just like this stupid shit is something to behold
But they're goin' down. The law's in town. They're gonna fold.
Cause Them that done it is knowed.

They're rolling toilet paper high up in the trees
Them naked freshmen in the woods are about to freeze
Whose underwear's out there flappin' in the breeze?
Got all kinds of contraband that could get seized.
Them juveniles in Felta Thigh blew all the commodes
Wild oats is sure the least of what they sowed.
But the cops are drawin' a circle for what is owed.
And the noose is growin' tighter. They is knowed.

The pop machines are crashing down the stairs.
Bubble gum is mucking up the reception chairs.
They're fornicating in sweaty, hot affairs
in bunks and backseats and on the frat house stairs
The General's bust is puffy with shaving cream
Kappa Alpha's lion is globbed with gooey green
The alumni tent is floating down the stream.
Sorority girls staggering out to flash the scene.

The dean jumped back, a flaming sack on his stoop
And when he stomped it out it left an awful poop
To such a depth of silly idiocy who could stoop?
To leave us here with this job that needs a scoop?
When we get the proof, we'll raise their roof, explode
We're gonna lay on every charge, a heavy load
They can think about the chance that they done blowed
Cause Them that done it is knowed.

THE TIME OF OUR FEARS

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

Lovers come and lovers go
First white and pure as a fresh winter's snow,
Only to gather the dirt of the street
And divert us to strangers we happen to meet.

Dreams they come and dreams they go
Remind us of pleasures we never will know
Because we never were faithful to what we thought true
Too many good times; our lessons were few.

(Chorus)

*It's so tiring at midnight
When they turn on the lights
Harsh bright and so painful
To our limited sight
And the one who sits with me
Just aged twenty years
And I saw our lives spinning
To this time of our fears.*

(2)

Seasons come and seasons go
The faces change, they never grow
And I find myself buried on a barstool at Ted's
It happens when your life ends and you do this instead.

Youth it comes, and youth it goes
In oldness and grayness, I now lie in repose
And wished I weren't sleeping in yesterday's beds
And could wake up my life that fell just like lead.

TO SOLDIERS AND THEIR WIDOWS

© Jim Cleveland

In the field that marks their slaughter
Came a mournful soldier's daughter
To shed a tear for every one
Her father always, now her only son.

It rained the day he rode away
For an iron bird that left from Fort McKay
To thrust him in an Asian squalor
Jungles deep, no tomorrow

His name is now here etched in stone
And on his cross where she stood alone.
A name upon an honored roll
Can give no peace, no love to hold.

Perhaps a time will come we'll know
That mankind's hearts have begun to grow
Will put this bloodlust urge to past
And build a peace to truly last.

But meantime, widows dress in black
And look for graves in white-lined tracks
So many slaving soldiers lost
Through all the years and all the costs.

What's lost is lost. No more to hold
Surely a waste we've always been told
Some would hope that we might see
That wars have never made us free.

TRUTH, LOVE AND BEAUTY'S OKAY

© Jim Cleveland

(1)

There is a spirit alive in this land
It flows through our days just like sand.
Shining crystal and bright
Reflecting mirrors of light
In ways that I don't understand.

(chorus)

Truth, love and beauty
Words we couldn't say
It wasn't cool to speak them
But there's a brand new day.
Love's the answer
There, I've said it
It's okay.
Truth, love and beauty's okay.

(2)

Our spirit inside shows the way
That's the Father's sweet presence each day
In the stillness you'll know
What the Angels would show
That his gift is much greater this way
When it's shared with each creature of clay
Truth, love and beauty's okay.

(3)

When you're feeling your consciousness rise
When you want to give love and you try
He'll shine his love back at you
The Father's love is so true
That you'll always have faith deep inside.
Get on that free-flowing spirit and ride.
Truth, love and beauty at your side.

(4)

The papers are filled up with troubles
Somebody bursting our bubbles
Showing us in the news
All the ways that we lose
When we turn the place we live into rubble.
Fires in L.A. and Chernobyl
We've got to live in the spirit to be noble
And know that truth, love and beauty's okay.

TWO-LANE DREAMS

by Jim Cleveland (11-5-95)

(1)

As a kid, he laid and looked up at the stars
Later he sang about it in honkytonks and bars
The dreamin' and the schemin'
tryin' to be a country star
A lot of time in minivans and cars
He keeps on movin'
On his two-lane road of dreams

(2)

On the back roads, he played the clubs and once a barn
Sang his lungs out while he fingered all the chords
The wailin' and the rockin'
Lots of blacktop stretchin' far
A lot of time chasin' greenbacks and country tarts
He keeps on tryin' every night
For a brand new start.
On a two-lane road of dreams
Trying to hit the charts

(CHORUS)

*Well, the road, it goes forever
Goes from Yuma to Abilene
Goes from Fairplay to Sedona
Past an ever-changing scene
And the stars are always up there
Like some light too far to be
And I guess we'll move forever
On this two-lane road of dreams.*

VISITING CLANCY

by Jim Cleveland

A ham sandwich, he ordered.
And on what bread he was asked
wryly.
Rye is fine, and a dab of mustard
he added
sourly
maybe a few slices of tom-AH-to
he wheezed puffily
haughty in the Irish way.
tomato-cheeked Irishman
coming in from against the chill.
And a tall mug of dark ale, my kitten
he intoned warmly
ripping at mittens
rubbing rough hands
Vigorously,
vigorously,
in freedom
Just a side of potatoes too
if you don't mind,
he chipped
Before her pencil slipped away.
Then sat himself down
unzipped
flung off coat
scarf
cap
Sighed and sipped
and said,
Home again at me favorite pub
To no one in particular
Ah! Four full hours to closing time
Hiya Bub.
Heard a snicker,
and then for a second thinking
of the missus curled at home
in flannel sweats,
The Movie of the Week
Full of suffering, I'll bet
Clancy, you AH-s' hole,
come over here.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

by Jim Cleveland

Every morning he slipped out into the night
Found the strength again to rejoin the fight.
Coffee cups and cigarettes and tokens for the ride
Acrid smells and sirens tell the tolls of city life.

Every morning she would greet the lonely light
Find the strength again to face these sights.
Empty walls echo the calls of souls that yearn to be
Free at last to wash the past away by love's decree

(CHORUS)

We cry out for the peace that seems to hide
We reach out for some love as worlds collide
Motives questioned, dreams sequestered, foolish pride.
Love's not out there, anywhere
Must be inside.

All the day we pass it off as what is real
Thinking all the while how tough it is to feel.
From restless days and restless nights it's time we kill
Never knowing that the moment is the thrill.

And when night falls we gather around the screen
Imagine things that cannot be or might have been.
There are good guys and there's bad guys on this ride
And we sit and watch forever worlds collide.

Every day the people say we've lost our way
Without reaching out to find some better way.
We're not as helpless as we sometimes fear to be
If we take our share of responsibility.

We are here to be our best and must confide
With one another through the love we feel inside
Hearts will grow if we'll show it's all inside
Strength to carry on with love when worlds collide.

WIND AND WIRE

by Jim Cleveland (11-1-95)

(1)

Yesterday, I walked in the cold wind
Watched the leaves blow away from me
Thinking about how you are gone
But still hanging in my memory.

Today, the winds are colder
I pulled out bundles I'd tucked away
Wondering if you have a coat so warm
Can smile at a wintery day.

(2)

Tomorrow, I'll dial you on the wire
that spans the endless sky just for hire
And be told you're not at home, or retired
Then go sit with the collie by the fire

Each night my sheets seem colder
I pull the covers over my face
Without you to have and hold tonight
Feel I've finally lost the race.

(CHORUS)

In the morning, I'll send red roses on the line
With a card that says, I miss you all the time
Watch ol' Sally scratch her ears there on the floor
Wish I'd see your smiling face at the door.
Won't you say there's still a chance we'll make
Our flames rise in the wind
Heat will rise in the cold tonight
With any hope you'd send.
On that wire that rides up high in the wind

WINTER WITHOUT JUNE

by Jim Cleveland (10-30-95)

(1)

I've got to find out where the birds they fly each winter
When they soar above these windy Dakota plains
I wanna go down to the place where they do gather
Hear their songs to help me take away my pain.

She ran South in that 'ol nineteen-eighty Chevy
While I worked for the man whose cattle walk these plains
Now I face the cold, dead whistling winds of winter
Hopin' love will give her reason to return again.

CHORUS

*Dakota winds blow cold
When there's no one here to hold
The dark birds all fly South
When winter comes
North winds wail, the cattle low
There's no where else to go
But to the fire
I'll sit and stare
When winter comes.*

(2)

We used to watch the lines of geese in patterns bending
Wondering if this flight of life is never-ending
If we are here to find a way to keep ascending
And reach there up beyond the clouds to a city gleaming.

Then she flew to the South in that nineteen-eighty Chevy
The one we used to take to the mountains to watch the moon
And I'm stuck here by the fire, stoke the kindling
Sparks struggle in the dark to reach the moon.
The birds have all flown South.
And so has June.