

Dar Anne,

The Dutchman was written in West Hollywood, California in 1968, a time of space odysseys and magical mystery tours. The air was perfumed with flowers, you could see Laugh-In stars with shopping carts at the supermarket, and Strawberry Fields was on the jukebox at the Italian restaurant. It was going to be about my sister Margaret, but the song went its own way as songs from a happy time will do.

Stranded In The Moonlight starts when you are going south on Sheridan and thinking of turning onto Lake Shore Drive. One night late I did this and all the streetlights were out, the wind was blowing, the lake was stormy and the waves were high. I thought of this Nat Cole song that had seemed so poignant to me when I was ten, and still does: "...corner to corner, losing my mind..."

Disappearing Heart is about someone you can't forget, not although seasons change, but because seasons change. It took a long time to get finished, but now with new verses by you it seems new to me. you Anne said: how do you like the verses, and I said: I love them, while thinking; ah, it's still about Kate.

Rose Of Sharon was written after hearing Lois Smith, as Ma Joad, say the words so beautifully in The Grapes Of Wrath. I was the composer and musical director for the show, and we played Chicago, La Jolla, London, and New York City. I loved seeing The Grapes Of Wrath, spelled in lights, blinking across the Thames.

Paterson Summer is for my high school friend Tony Borrego, who was killed in Vietnam. Tony used to show me songs on the guitar, the summer we were sixteen. He was a wonderful player and had a soul full of love. We used to sing at orphanages and insane asylums together. Our big number was Bye Bye Love.

Woman In The Mirror is a dream of Jacksonville Beach. It's September, the sand is deserted, the sky is bigger than Montana, the stars are bright and indifferent, I am tape recording the waves and the rain comes in for a chorus. Or it is a song for the lost pines of Pasa Grille...

Sister Clarissa is from a revue, The Women In My Life, that I did with Bob Gibson in Chicago in 1986. Sister Clarissa taught at Our Lady Of The Valley in Orange, New Jersey, in the fifties, a time of many peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, commies under the bed and endless rainy afternoons.

Three Monkeys is a meditation on the beautiful chord E Minor, the chord of Segovia, of the Alhambra and of the Moor...the chord of the velvet doublet, of Somerset Maugham, of Ramon Espina and Ybor City...the chord of The Innocents and of Fred Neil and Romance D'Amour. All songs in the key of E Minor live in Coconut Grove, Florida, behind high vine covered walls.

Starfisher was written for Malcolm Hale, who played beautiful guitar with Spanky And Our Gang. Like The Dutchman, it went its own way and I followed. I was under the spell of the White Album and its mysteries when I wrote this, a song for an old friend and for me, at the Heart O' Chicago in 1968.

Rondi's Birthday was a birthday present for Rondi Reed of Steppenwolf during the first months of Grapes in Chicago. It was written in the key of B Minor, the key of autumn, of red leaves, of little guitar studies, of the wind off the Lake. The first time it was recorded was by some of the cast of Grapes in the bathroom at the Royal George Theater. Is it all right if I like ^{your} ~~this~~ version better?

Love & Thanks
Michael