

JOSHUA SCOTT

BASED ON A TRUE STORY



BIRD ON YOUR SHOULDER

You'll have a bird on your shoulder
you'll have a mirror on your wall
you'll have things you always wanted
you'll make the angels crawl
you'll have no recollection of this misery
you may have your crowns of distinction, darlin'
but you won't have me

You'll see a profile in a window
you'll see a lion in the sky
you'll see the limits of a language
where every word means goodbye
you'll see a shadow kiss a shadow
on a balcony
you may see the world, my little darlin',
but you won't see me

You may win a silver locket
and lose the one you love
you may win your heart's desire
and still not have enough
you know that every crippled stallion
had its winning spree
you could win our every battle, darlin',
and still lose me

PALACE OF MIRRORS

Another night, another cool and restless night
traffic movies on the wall in black and white
and the only marquis is a northern star
every memory is a vast wilderness
and I'm standing on this dark precipice
I keep you with me
but I don't know where you are
I see you over there
I see you over here
everywhere I turn
in this palace of mirrors

I need the moon/I need a cool miracle
I reject the mundane for the lyrical
there's no reason to be standing still
we long for things that never change
we tire of things that stay the same
and it leaves a rift that we cannot fill
you see me over here
you see me over there
everywhere you turn in
this palace of mirrors

We were looking for a diamond in the rough
We were looking for kaleidoscopic love
so that even in the dark
we could see it everywhere
but the truth we could not then detect
we can see now in perfect retrospect
when the gods want to punish
they answer your prayers
I saw you over there
you saw me over here
everywhere we turned
in that palace of mirrors

BETRAYED

You could sleep with my rival
you could vanish tonight
you could dance with a stranger
in the grey moonlight
you could shuffle your life
like a cheap deck of cards
but when they come out the same every time
it's because
you will always, always be mine

You may be on the road in the dead of night
when you slow for a hitchhiker just out of sight
with your hand on the wheel, sweat on your knee
when you look at his face, you'll be looking at me
you will always, always be mine

Why it is, I can't say,
that we belong
to a love we both betray

They will fill the arena just to watch you move
they will plead for your favor from telephone booths
they may outlaw the moment you grow old
but when they walk through the halls of your soul
they will know
you will always, always be mine

A TARGET THAT MOVES

The targets are moving
they're not where they were anymore
so who are we fooling?
it's all changed
that's for sure
it wasn't the ending
that left such a bruise
it's the realization that love
is a target that moves

So you follow a shadow
you corner the beast
you think there's an angel inside
was a time when these streets
were not so well policed
when angels had places to hide
but now everything changes
so fast and for what?
Is there nothing that can't be construed
as a target that moves?

May you taxi the runways
worship the stars
and dance with the man in the mask
may you win all your battles
suffer no scars
and learn to abandon the past
let them say
we were the wild seed that the wind blew
we were the artists
we were targets that moved

BLESSING IN DISGUISE

What a lonesome time that was
what a barren stage we acted on
were those people really us
with their confidence and youth
and their version of the truth?
And from here they look so small
not so statuesque at all
just the two us (that's all)
and though it's you that I'm still missing
our failure was a blessing in disguise

What a gamble is a life
what a strange parade of love and fear
how the pendulum swings wide
up close living's demanding
but with distance comes understanding
And to say I knew you well
and loved you then is enough for me
facing sorrow is a skill
that we keep addressing
that so often is a blessing in disguise

What a premise we live on
how we cling to smoke and yearn to belong
On the streets of Avalon
will there still be something missing
or is the search itself a blessing
in disguise?

ELECTRA COMES ALIVE

We are walking through an orange grove
we are waltzing on the 44th floor
your red cape covers the moon
and I'm running like a bull at a matador
she's a handful of stars
that orbit in my palm
I watch her eyes turn the color of rain
when her gates of imagination
swing open wide
Electra comes alive

We are drifting through the hot bazaar
we plant a rose in a violin
the doorman glances askew
when a headlight illuminates her skin
she's a rosewood guitar
with the neck of a swan
I hold her face in the palms of my hands
when her gates of improvisation
swing open wide
Electra comes alive

I'm looking down on the boulevard
to the strains of "Clair de Lune"
that she plays with her eyes half closed
and I shiver when I see her across the room
she's a runaway bride in a factory world
she's a flood through the head of a pin
and when her gates of imagination
swing open wide
Electra comes alive

HALLMARKS

I was staring at the runway
I was thinking of your kiss
how we flew from the heat of New York City
to the heat of Los Angeles
how a young man approached you
and asked who you were with

It's true that we were over
it's true that we were done
it's true that neither one of us
belonged to anyone
I can still remember talking
we were sitting on your stairs
you said, "Our future may be over
but our past is always there"

It's the way we weathered each other
how our hands fit like a glove
it was you and me and no other
that was the hallmark of our love
these were the hallmarks of our love

Every time that I went walking
in that memory museum
it was like standing in the dark
in the middle of the Roman Coliseum
I swore I heard the echoes
of beautiful young ghosts
but it was just the rattle of the wind
off the pillars and the coast

And I finally understood, my love,
that nothing is forgiven
that we sacrifice the whole
so the parts can go on living

and what seemed so overwhelming then
in retrospect is gilded
with the luster of our innocence
and the faithlessness that killed it

Now I'm staring at your city from a 727
stranded in a jet stream
that blew out the lights of heaven
it's eerie how nostalgia
can turn fossils into diamonds
and give every clouded memory
a lacy, silver lining
how the voices of our youth
ricochet forever
penetrate our sanctuaries, influence our weather

When you said "The death of something dear to you
only keeps it living"
I never thought our legacy would be so unforgiving

It's the way we weathered each other
how our hands fit like a glove
it was you and me and no other
that was the hallmark of our love
these were the hallmarks
of our love

A GREAT WALL

They wandered through the burning rooms
of love and pleasure
they built a world around themselves
they could not measure
they used to crawl/they learned to fly
only to be confronted by
a great wall

It stands its ground/it makes no sound
it throws a shadow
across a thousand days and nights
it is not shallow
there would be nothing wrong at all
if not the undeniable
great wall

they climb every night
in their sleep toward the light
of the moon
and they fall from the peaks
of the great wall

The coronation of the King and Queen of Silence
was carried out without a trace of guilt or violence
and so they learned to live that way
accustomed to the dark cool shade
of the great wall

WRITTEN IN STONE

Everything's moving/nothing stands still
the rules keep changing
the rules always will
first you're up on a pedestal
then you're overthrown
nothing stays written in stone

Faith is a pistol we aim at the stars
love is a scalpel that leaves
a beautiful scar
we are the spirits made of dream and bone
this is the law
this is written in stone

the stars above will always guide us
and the ones we love will stand beside us

Meanwhile the winners go sailing
and the losers drown
the strong get stronger
and the weak go down
men with no vision move from throne to throne
these are the flaws that are written in stone

You must be aware of the powers that be
be creative with your destiny
public opinion is way overblown
nothing stays written in stone

FOR MYSELF

I did everything I could
to try to change myself around
I guess change was not the cure
for what's been shattered
I wish I knew what qualities
lie in the man you found
but it's hindsight for a fool
it doesn't matter
and it's only for myself now
that I'm asking
will you look back one day soon
and think how good it was?
I know now it may be too hard to tell
but I'm just asking for myself

I will not try and hold you
though the instinct may remain
as I'm left to play the part
of the graceful loser
friends will smile sadly
as if saying, don't explain
for so long you knew that one day
you would lose her...
As hard as I could ever try
I guess I'll never know
why there was such sadness
in your laughter
no, we didn't keep our promises
and now it's time to go
and I hope that he is everything you're after
and it's only for myself now that I'm asking
will you look back one day soon
and think how good it was?
though it may be too early yet to tell
still, I'm just asking for myself

END OF THE WORLD

She was standing up straight
with her fists clenched tight
and her eyes flush with love and hate
he was slouched in a chair
with his eyes obscured
and his fingers in his hair
she was talking in diamonds
he was talking in dust
to him, it was the end of a day
to her, it felt like it must
be the end of the world

Their worlds are eclipsed
and their silos open wide like parting lips
and words get launched
that cannot be brought back
once they're gone
she snuffs out a candle
he lights a cigarette
the silence crescendos
and everything is all you must forget
at the end of the world

Now he's standing up straight
and he reaches for her sleeve
but he's ten years late
and he finds her evoked
in the pages of a letter where she wrote
"Isn't it strange how
resilient we are?
Isn't it strange how
you and I came so far
from the end of the world?"

SMALL VICTORIES

A black Stetson hat
looks good on you like that
changes the mood I'm in
and living seems dangerous again
love, I hear,
can be a brief career
and to depend upon
something invariably here and gone
is a war against momentum
soldiers of fortune we must be
let's just thank God in heaven, darlin',
for small victories

Your best friend
will know just where you stand
whether you feel okay
or when you need losses explained away
unfortunately living is edit free
nowhere to cut or splice
and everything happens just once/not twice
and from a distance you could miss them
scattered like gems they're hard to see
but they will justify us, darlin',
these small victories

A Cheshire Cat
could always tell you that
an audience of one
without exception runs second to none
and now you know
that it's time to go
and so we travel light
with bundles of memory tied up tight
and nothing more sacred in times like these
than small victories

BROKEN MAN

Did I tell you
how much she meant to me
how hard it is to be
without her?
I was lucky
lucky to find that pearl
in such an imperfect world
I was lucky
a man can be fractured inside
and learn how to swallow his pride
you may hold a wand in your hand
but it takes more than magic
to fix a broken man

And for granted
I took her wilderness
I took a love like this
for granted
and I miss her
deep in the heart of me
she was a part of me
and I miss her

Can you tell me
how to erase that girl
how to embrace a world
without her?

COLORS

I'm a man of many colors
stark and lonely as a prayer
see the hues I have to offer
contradiction everywhere

Yellow is the love I harbor
red is all the rage I spend
blue the thoughts that I sleep under
black the time that will not come again

colors you see through
colors too young to try & tame
colors with no name

You and I were watercolors
bleeding from the very start
but those that bleed inside each other
they're the ones you call
a work of art

CARNIVAL OF SOULS

It's best in the dark, said the woman
with the barkers & sideshows & sounds
that swirl & distract you
repel & attract you
like tears that are pinned to a clown
and it's hard to decide
which pony to ride
at the carnival of souls

We pause for the midway magicians
we saunter the alley of dreams
where voices remind us
that no one can find us
unless we embrace the extreme
the end is concealed
the exits are sealed
at the carnival of souls

The artist, the tailor, the technician
the jester who straddles the moon
are performing together
in spite of the weather
like a field in perpetual bloom

Is it a witch or a bride?
you'll have to decide
at the carnival of souls

BLUE CAROUSEL

Maybe love is an anchor
maybe love is a sail
maybe love is the glimpsing
of a face through a veil
maybe love is a woman
who walks out on me
then comes back in a while
with roses & tea
take a ride on the ponies
drop a coin in a well
in the rain we'll go riding
on a blue carousel

It's a waltz in a courtyard
to strains of clarinets
where the girls bow and curtsy
and the gents pirouette
or a train with no headlight
no conductor, no brake
condemned by momentum
to a moonlit mistake

When there's rain on the runway
and the moon wears a mask
and happiness is a question
that you dare never ask
we'll go down to a clearing
to a place I know well
and ride away on the horses
from the blue carousel

GREAT BIG WORLD

You are wary of a good thing
you are driven by the rain
you only chat with satisfaction
but you confide in doubt and pain

you're a circle in a square
in the great big world out there

When you are moving through the spotlight
you inspire chivalry
when your devoted begin to gather
you are the charming absentee

and a girl like that is rare
in the great big world out there

TRACKS

I left pennies on the railroad tracks
gave to things that didn't give back shook off disappointment
no instinct did I lack
I saw those stars that shone like jewels
I touched the sun, I played the fool
I left myself to find myself
upon this road I'm on

I'm an older version of who I was
a traitor to some younger cause
with eyes that roam the highways just because...
I'm a cross between the give and take prone to error,
sad mistakes always
moving as if betrothed
unto this road I'm on

There were chances taken, chances lost
a paradise, a holocaust
a color from a rainbow a color from the frost
they brought me things I had to weigh,
to keep and some to throw away
and everything I am today
points to this road I'm on

I left memories on the railroad track
walked away and never looked back
realized forever
it didn't have to be so sad
but what became of younger men who
knew they couldn't go home again?
they left themselves to find themselves
upon this road I'm on