



Tracks

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1. Self-Pity Party

Do you remember, do you remember when you said you
would follow me to the end of the earth?
Am I mistaken, am I mistaken to recall you said you'd
never ever let me walk alone?

Well, wouldn't you know what a difference twenty years
can make
Sitting at our kitchen table I can still smell the bread you
used to bake
And, by the way, you left your Mother's pearls upstairs, in
that little box where you keep all your treasures and the
stuff for which you care

Was there a reason, was there a reason that you went? I
try to wrap my head around it but I can't.
We were so happy, we were so happy even when
sometimes we bickered like a rooster and a hen

But here I am just a ghost in a house that once was our
home, wondering what on earth I did to deserve ending
up like this all alone
And no goodbye, not a word, not a note, not even a call.
You're the one who left but I'm the one who feels like he
never existed at all

I bought you flowers, I bought you flowers yesterday, I
thought you might still care about our anniversary
I brought them over, I brought them over to your place, ...

I saw a squirrel jump over the names of your new friends,
and with all the balloons it looked like you guys down
there are still having so much fun
But then I went back home with myself and nobody else,
sitting at our kitchen table I thought I could still hear our
wedding bells

2. Love, Market and Morality

She waived at me through the window,
crossword puzzle on the floor
She smiled at me through her lipstick, and I
walked in the door
Up close, life's wear and tear's cruel toll, two
jobs, three kids and maybe more
She needed the make-up after all, you get
what you pay for

It ain't no sin to buy some loving
Ain't no transgression to sell affection
Shouldn't be lawless to trade in tenderness
But sure is a crime to miss a rhyme

We sell our bodies through our labor, she sold
hers through the night
She'd hoped for better, I don't blame her,
loved but commodified
Free trade ordained our weekly trysts, my
demand her supply
Still I loved her like a therapist, been blue
since she retired

It ain't no sin to buy some loving
Ain't no transgression to sell affection
Two willing bodies can't be wrong
I thought I'd put it in a song.

3. I Wish I Could Sing Like Freddie Mercury

I know what you think, that I can hardly,
hardly sing to save my life, and you might
be up to something, but how I wish you
weren't right
For what is a man to do if his voice won't
carry a tune but he's got songs coming out
the wazoo, and the shower just won't do?

I wish I could sing like Freddie Mercury
Hit all those high notes and always be in
the right key
I'd skip the unitards, they're not flattering
on me
But, boy, I would be so happy
I'd sing you songs all night, all day and in
between
You'd dance and laugh and look at me
lovingly

We'd harmonize and live in harmony
Oh, we would be so happy

You don't like my voice but you don't have
a choice, you're married to me,
and I fancy myself quite the *artiste* as I
work on my future hits
But I want to sing for you, get down on
one knee and serenade you, and I don't
want you to cringe when I do, that's why I
wish I could sing like who?

4. The Ficus in the Lobby

Do you remember, do you remember when you said you
would follow me to the end of the earth?
Am I mistaken, am I mistaken to recall you said you'd never
ever let me walk alone?

Well, wouldn't you know what a difference twenty years can
make
Sitting at our kitchen table I can still smell the bread you used
to bake
And, by the way, you left your Mother's pearls upstairs, in that
little box where you keep all your treasures and the stuff for
which you care

Was there a reason, was there a reason that you went? I try
to wrap my head around it but I can't.
We were so happy, we were so happy even when sometimes
we bickered like a rooster and a hen

But here I am just a ghost in a house that once was our home,
wondering what on earth I did to deserve ending up like this
all alone
And no goodbye, not a word, not a note, not even a call.
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I saw a squirrel jump over the names of your new friends, and
with all the balloons it looked like you guys down there are
still having so much fun
But then I went back home with myself and nobody else,
sitting at our kitchen table I thought I could still hear our
wedding bells.

5. I Count the Days

I count the days 'till you come home,
one of these days it won't be long
I count the days 'till you come back
and we are made whole once again
Monday, Tuesday go by slowly
Wednesday, Thursday, I turn giddy
I count the days 'till you come home at
long last, we'll have such a blast

I'm on my way to LAX, I am the
carpool lane express
I'm on my way to pick you up and
bring you back where you belong
You're back home and we're all
cheerful,
Gosh you've grown, we stare and
marvel
You tell your stories and we're so
thrilled and we wish time could stand
still

You sleep all day and smoke all night,
the house reeks of your pot
You drink my booze like it's going out

of style, my bar's a vacant lot
You drive my car but never fill it up
with gas
You wear those ear buds we yell, we
yell, and you can't hear us

I count the days 'till you go home, one
of these days it won't be long
I count the days 'till you go back and
all is quiet here once again
Monday, Tuesday go by slowly
Wednesday, Thursday I turn giddy
I count the days 'till you go home at
long last, we'll have such a blast

I take you back to LAX, I am the
carpool lane express
I take you back to put you on a plane
to somewhere else
It's been lovely having you home,
But now we're just a place where
you're from
I take you back where you belong, to
the life that is now your own

TSA Pre and then you're gone, now I
feel all alone
I miss your antics you're so fun to hang
out with at home
You can drink my wine, I don't care, it's
there for all of us
Home for Thanksgiving, I hope, my
dear, and maybe Christmas?

I count the days 'till you come home,
one of these days it won't be long
I count the days 'till you come back
and we are made whole once again
Monday, Tuesday go by slowly
Wednesday, Thursday, I turn giddy
I count the days 'till you come home at
long last, we'll have such a blast

6. When Carson Palmer Lived with Us

Out of the blue, Carson Palmer moved in one night, put his trophy on the mantle

I swear it's true, he said he would stay a while, as we sat at the kitchen table

Next day we hung out, took some snaps and took a nap
Then we played on the slip-and-slide

Oh, what a ball, when Carson lived with us and went to preschool with his friends

When he'd come home, we practiced in the yard, he let me win every now and then

Then we read books and played with blocks, and when she called

We would tell Mom about it all

That's all it was, a slice of life that wouldn't last

Back then I didn't quite see it would engrave inside of me

It blows my mind that after all this time I can still hear him

It goes to show, that after highs and lows, I must still love him

Out of my life, Carson Palmer walked out one day, left his trophy on the mantle

And there are times I wish he'd be here again, there's not a day that I don't miss him

We didn't know our luck when Carson lived with us
And then he left without a fuss

7. Helmut Kohl and Mitterrand

I don't know which one of them first
reached out to the other
Next thing you know, they were
holding hands like brothers
And all the tears that were shed by
these men's wives and mothers
Well, they were drying up, under the
pale sun of September

For all we knew then, progress would
go on forever
We held for true then our union would
only get closer

I don't know why it is we ended up not
doing better
We got together, but took our eyes off
the prize we were after
We were still in those trenches while
the world was changing around us
Can you be one now without keeping
out millions of others?

What do you want now? Is there still a
dream you can have together?
And who are you now? Not those
white dudes on the picture
They are both gone now...

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall, and
you know you can't put it back
together

You need a new plan now, one in
which yesterday is over
The future's in your head now, do you
think you can let go of the dead men?
To keep moving ahead now, you've
got to reinvent being European



8. Zoloft™ Lullaby

If there's no way your eyes will ever dry
And you could hardly make it through
the night, adrift and paralyzed, I'll take
your hand and hold it tight
And if you dug a hole inside of you, hid
it from all until you fell right through, I'd
find you where you're at, I'd pull you out
and bring you back

And if you fear I won't be strong
enough,
That I'll be swept aside, that my love
won't abide
I say, my child, have faith, I say it loud:
There's nowhere you can be that I won't
help you out

When once again you're just a helpless
child, befuddled days followed by
restless nights, don't you cry, love, don't
you cry, rock-a-bye baby, rock-a-bye
For when you stare into the end of time,
won't fight the pull of the receding tide,
that hand you feel in yours will not let go
for ever more

And if you say my words are full of it, if
you say I'm only trying to sugarcoat it,
I say, my love, believe with all your
might, I'll always be with you, here and
on the other side

“Well,” © 2020.

Not a Moment too Soon

All songs by Pierre Englebert © 2020. Cover picture: detail of untitled painting by Natalia Z (2018). Picture of François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl from Iconicphotos.wordpress.com. The strings arrangements on Zoloft Lullaby benefitted from Tom Flaherty’s suggestions. Thanks to Ray McNamara who contributed rhythm patterns on “I Wish I Could Sing Like Freddie Mercury.” Despite its shortcomings, for which they bear no responsibility, this album owes much to the musical instruction I received from Tom Flaherty, Eric Lindholm, Ursula Kleinecke, Mike Krevis, and Ashlyn Wilson, to all of whom I am very grateful. The kitchen table shows up twice, I know. It is what it is.