



ORDINARY SEASONS

Lyrics and Liner Notes

1. Hills of Mexico

Traditional/Arrangement by Polecat Creek, Jacustica Music ASCAP, Pleasant Garden Music, ASCAP

There are so many versions of this song; this is our take on Roscoe Holcomb's. –L.&K.

When I was in Old Fort Worth in 18 and 83
Some old Mexican cowboy come stepping up to me
Said I'll hire you, young fella, how would you love to go
And to spend the season working in those hills of Mexico

Well having no employment back to him I did say
'Tis according to your wages, according to your pay
Said I'll pay you good wages, on a steamboat you will go
And you'll spend the season working in those hills of Mexico

Well he paid me my wages on a steamboat I did go
How the bells they did ring, the whistles they did blow
How the bells they did ring, the whistles they did blow
And I left my home and family for those hills of Mexico

2. Union in Heaven

Traditional/Arrangement by Polecat Creek, Jacustica Music ASCAP, Pleasant Garden Music, ASCAP

From Sister Lena Mae Perry, of the North Carolina gospel trio, The Branchettes: "I remember when I was young and we were going to church, there was this elderly lady used to sing it there. The elderly people, they would sing those songs at revival, and oh, you talk about a good time! They would get carried away and that little old lady...she just rared back and would sing and sing until she got enough of it." We can't get enough of it, and we are so glad to share it with you. –L.

There's a union in the heaven where I belong
There's a union in the heaven where I belong
There's a union in the heaven where I belong
Oh I belong to that union band

*Oh, Sisters, didn't I tell you so
Oh I belong to that union band
I've had hard trials down here below
Oh I belong to that union band*

There's a singing in the heaven where I belong
There's a singing in the heaven where I belong
There's a singing in the heaven where I belong
Oh I belong to that union band

*Oh, Children, didn't I tell you so
Oh I belong to that union band
I've had hard trials down here below
Oh I belong to that union band*

3. Wish I May

Dave Sickenberger/Kari Sickenberger, Jacustica Music, ASCAP

My brother is an artist and a poet and a great songwriter, too. He wrote this celebratory song in response to an ongoing family discussion about the afterlife. -K.

Wish I may, wish I might
Please just let me die tonight
I got a meeting on the other side
I heard the call I've seen the light
I'm coming, Lord, I leave tonight
Over Jordon to the other side

*To sing within my mother's arms
And see my daddy's eyes on the other side*

I ain't scared, I'm going to
The land of hope, it's all brand new
Waiting there on the other side
So give me one last kiss, don't cry
Say a little prayer and say good-bye
I'll wait for you on the other side

*To sing within my mother's arms
And see my daddy's eyes on the other side*

There's no turning back I know
It's one direction I must go
I got a home on the other side
I can't wait to spread my wings
And take off from these earthly things
I'm flying over to the other side

*To sing within my mother's arms
And see my daddy's eyes on the other side*

4. The Island

Laurelyn Dossett, Pleasant Garden Music, ASCAP

It was a beautiful spring morning; I was turning over some ideas about the nature of separation and betrayal, and thinking of John Donne's *No Man is An Island*. The White-Throated Sparrows were stopping by my garden on their way home to Canada; their melancholy song became the melody. -L.

I am the distant island
They say no man can be
A land of buried sorrow
Surrounded by the sea

*So sail away my darling
And cast my soul ashore
Put miles of open ocean
Between my cruel heart and yours*

Such secret sweet betrayals
Ten thousand tiny lies
You'll wonder when it crept in
That cloud behind my eyes

No tears or complications
No years of ties that bind
I'll leave your kind affections
Leave the continent behind

Chorus

I am the distant island
They say no man can be
A land of buried sorrow
Surrounded by the sea

5. Buckets of Blue

Kari Sickenberger, Jacustica Music, ASCAP

September 2004's Hurricane Frances threw us mountain people for a loop. It was the cause and companion of many tragedies and tears. My thanks go out to Cindy Castevens for her help in fixing up the chorus. -K.

The skies on the mountains, the eyes on me and you
Grey and getting ready for a big breakthrough
Heavy looking low looking worrisome true
Worrisome true

The skies and the eyes and my river too
Biting off more than they could chew
Bleeding over banks in buckets of blue
Buckets of blue

Frances, you took my river for a ride
(Cruel wind round an evil eye, You took my river for a ride)
Frances, you rise the tide
(Cruel wind round an evil eye, You took my river for a ride)
And when you took my river I cried
(Buckets of blue I cried, Buckets I cried and cried)
Buckets of blue I cried

My sweet Swannanoa lured out of control
Now you just bleed like a heart with a hole
A heart with a hole ain't got no gold
Ain't got no gold

Chilly, cheating river how do you dare
To crawl under doors and lift my chairs
I can't love a river that's climbing my stairs
Climbing my stairs

Chorus

6. Facing the Rain

Kari Sickenberger, Jacustica Music, ASCAP

This is a song about courage. It came out of an appreciation of that quality which is at once rare and ubiquitous. It's also an acknowledgement of how little I know about it, or anything else for that matter. –K.

Tiny tomcat facing the rain, facing the rain
You're scared of the rain
Dear dear girl facing a change, facing a change
You're scared of and facing a change

*Dancing with just a beer and a barstool
Close my thirsty desert eyes to
The one about how never no
He'll never do you wrong*

*Out on the street, shooting imaginary guns
What about that little bitty blond one
Listen at how he's talking, Daddy
Would that you were gone*

Baby child facing those eyes, facing those eyes
You're scared of and facing those eyes
Warrior man facing the fire, facing the fire
You're scared of the fire

*Socrates said he didn't know nothing
So how come I think I'm on to something
Ain't nothing but two places on a
Sunday I can go*

*Allow a piece of this confounded heart
To drag me into church or the Bodega bar
The rain I am facing on my way
Turns to snow*

Junk yard dog facing my hand, facing my hand
You're scared of and facing my hand
Tiny tomcat facing the rain, facing the rain,
You're scared of the rain

7. Midway Road

Laurelyn Dossett, Pleasant Garden Music, ASCAP

It was a cold midnight drive up I-81 through Virginia, knowing I can't go home again. –L.

Night highway, take me north toward home
And all along the Midway Road
The cedars line the fields of stone
And mark the moonlit miles I roam

I stand outside myself watching
As I wrap my heart in bits of string
Pieces of a broken thing
My heart wrapped up in bits of string

*And all along the Midway Road
A pair of lights will point to home
They'll part the sea of darkened air
And wake the secrets sleeping there
No yellow moon or starlight fair
All along the Midway Road,
All along the Midway Road*

Ten thousand things we'll never say
The bricks and wood get in the way
Home is just a price we pay
The past is buried there to stay

And then the final lot is cast
A storm of hurt and hearts unfast
The truest prophet is the past
Cause neither blood nor stone can last

8. On My Own

Kari Sickenberger, Jacustica Music, ASCAP

I feel strong pulls toward exotic places, extraordinary people, and solitude. Here is an attempt to celebrate both my singular style as well as the ultimate state of existence. –K.

I know the way no mind what they say
I know the way on my own
Thanks for the hand the together we stand
Thanks for the leaving alone

*On my own
I know my way home
Follow the light to the not quite right
Water the seeds that I've sown*

I'm going to stay today anyway
I'm going to stay on my own
I know strung along, I know wrung out wrong
I know chilled to the bone

*Stay on my own
I know my way home
Follow the light to the not quite right
Water the seeds that I've sown*

I'm going away, saddling up late today
I'm going away on my own
Way down south, work it off, work it out
I'm going down on my own

*Down on my own
I know my way home
Follow the light to the not quite right
Water the seeds that I've sown*

*Follow the light to the not quite right
Water the seeds that I've sown*

9. Sweet Nandina

Kari Sickenberger, Jacustica Music, ASCAP

Thanks to poet Kim Garcia for helping me move some random ideas into new places one rainy spring day in her cabin at the Hambidge Center for Creative Arts. The result was this song about a sad young girl named after a scruffy southern bush which presides over my Asheville, North Carolina yard. –K.

Needful things need anything
The grief's got a hold of her yet
You know you're alive when you're sad, Sweet Nandina
It's early days yet

Lonely for God kicking church dirt road
Turning over that function of the heart
There's nothing wrong with you yet, Sweet Nandina
Then he called her a work of art

*Said, Let's be something even if it's something wrong
My honeysuckle boredom's overgrown
I'm all for taking you and leaving home
Let's be something even if it's something wrong*

Inside the cage, the have-not world, Nandina
Outside the cage is their cage
Your daddy would bless us; let's break out, Nandina
Turn this dusty page

Bury the possum head eyes side down
So that he can't look around for you
If it's grief or nothing, choose grief, Nandina
His '65 Ford was wide sky blue

Chorus

10. Kiss Me Over the Garden Gate

Laurelyn Dossett, Pleasant Garden Music, ASCAP

Kiss Me Over the Garden Gate: the farmer's market vendor told me it was a vintage annual that had fallen out of favor because of its leggy and unruly nature. –L.

You know that April moon's a-shinin'
A silver crescent up above
It gets a good gal's heart a-pinin'
I got the fever 'comes from love

The nightingale is at my window
I'm down the trellis through the rose
For kisses sweet as wine, I'm tangled up in vines
I like my garden overgrown
I like my lovin overblown

*Come on and meet me round the back just after midnight
Don't be cruel and make me wait
Under the stars so bright, under the moon so white
Kiss Me Over the Garden Gate*

Sweet William tried to woo me
The Jack of Hearts said he'd be true
Those fellas never mattered to me
My Everlasting love's for you

So stay away from Black-eyed Susan
And keep your hands off Lily, too
If you and I should part, it'd break my Bleeding Heart
 I don't care what I been missing
 Cause it's you I been a-kissing

Chorus

*Under the midnight blue, under the April moon
Kiss Me Over the Garden Gate*

11. Cardinal Pair

Kari Sickenberger, Jacustica Music, ASCAP
This is just a true story. –K.

Seeing as I generally come by here
Seeing as they regularly do appear
Look here, they're drawing near
Long together red cardinal pair
Long together red pair

Ruby father well he knows
Her trusting call, her own rusty green glow
She, perched far enough and close
Dances, sings secrets through cold, cold air
Secrets through cold, cold air

Seeing as she's readying wings to go
Seeing as she's now flying low to the snow
He, as if missing and loving her so
Hastens wild after sweet lady fair
Wild after sweet lady fair

He presently lights on a bare dogwood bough
She, deep in holly tree comforted now
Her devotee, their eternal vows
Destiny bound to abide in care
Bound to abide in care

Seeing as I generally come by here
Seeing as they regularly do appear
This fine pair is my daily prayer
Ordinary, precious and rare,
Ordinary and rare

12. Back to the Garden

Laurelyn Dossett, Pleasant Garden Music, ASCAP

Just one answer to the question, "Mommy, why is there war?" –L.

His name is the tempter, the snake in the wood
He founded the battle of evil and good
Strong are his weapons, and weak is your will
Your soul is his target and he aims to kill

Bright objects he'll dangle, and fill you with greed
And make you want things that you never will need
You'll seek greatness and glory, and pleasures of pride
As your jealousy grows and compassion subsides

You'll think wicked is virtue, and think lies are true
He'll make you fear all who are different than you
And as your fear hardens, and turns into hate
He'll turn man against man and turn state against state

With your hatred a-burnin, your anger aflame
He'll make you to war over God's many names
He's the root of all evil, original sin
And you'll never get back to the garden again

13. Paz y Libertad

Jose-Luis Orozco, Arcoiris Records, Inc. ASCAP

I have been teaching this song to my elementary Spanish students for more than a decade.
Laurelyn and I thought it was time to share it with you. –K.

Para los niños de todo el mundo
Queremos paz y libertad
Para los niños de todo el mundo
Queremos paz y libertad

*Paz, queremos paz y libertad
En este mundo
Paz, queremos paz y libertad
En este mundo*

Ya no mas hambre, ya no mas guerra
Queremos paz y libertad
Ya no mas hambre, ya no mas guerra
Queremos paz y libertad

Chorus

For all the children of all the nations
We ask for peace and liberty
No more hunger, no more war
We ask for peace and liberty

Chorus

Made by Polecat Creek, June 2007

Engineered by Steven Heller, Upstream Productions, Asheville, NC

Mastered by David Glasser, Airshow Mastering, Boulder, CO

Designed by Deanne O'Connor

Cover photo by Bobby Amoroso

Band photo by Guillermo

The Ordinary Seasons Song by Rosa Sickenberger

The Paz Chorus: Riley, Natalya, Eric, Jeff, Steven Heller, Maggie Heller, Bobby Amoroso, Smith Carlson, John Miller

Thank you to Justin, Emilia, Rosalie, Sophie, Rosa, Bobby and our extended families for inspiration, support and love. Thanks to Natalya, Riley, Eric and Jeff for bringing the songs to life. Steven and Deanne – thank you for helping us make it all happen. And as always, we are so grateful for our friends and fans who continue to encourage and sustain us and our music.

For lyrics, concert dates, booking, and other information: www.polecatcreek.net

Laurelyn Dossett: vocals and guitar
Kari Sickenberger: vocals and guitar
Riley Baugus: banjo, guitar (3, 4, 8, 9, 10)
Jeff Hersk: bass
Eric Roberston: mandolin
Natalya Weinstein: fiddle