

JOHN MELLENCAMP



LIFE
DEATH
LOVE
AND
FREEDOM

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PRODUCED BY T BONE BURNETT
ALL SONGS WRITTEN BY JOHN MELLENCAMP

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LONGEST DAYS

It seems like once upon a time ago
I was where I was supposed to be
My vision was true and my heart was too
There was no end to what I could dream
I walked like a hero into the setting sun
Everyone called out my name
Death to me was just a mystery
I was too busy raisin up Cain

But nothing lasts forever
Your best efforts don't always pay
Sometimes you get sick
And you don't get better
That's when life is short
Even in its longest days

So you pretend not to notice
That everything has changed
The way that you look
And the friends you once had
So you keep on acting the same
But deep down in your soul
You know you got no flame
And who knows then which way to go
Life is short even in its longest days

All I got here
Is a rear view mirror
Reflections of where I've been
So you tell yourself I'll be back up on top some day
But you know there's nothing waiting up there
for you anyway

Nothing lasts forever
And your best efforts don't always pay
Sometimes you get sick
And you don't get better
That's when life is short
Even in its longest days
Life is short
Even in its longest days

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals, Acoustic Guitar
Andy York – Acoustic Guitar
Troy Kinnett – Melodica

MY SWEET LOVE

Sweet love standing at my gate
Oh my sweet love
It sure would feel good to feel good again
Oh my sweet love

You say that you need me
You'll always believe me
Oh my sweet love
That our love is forever
We'll always be together
Oh my sweet love

You say you'll always come through
There's nothing that you won't do
Oh my sweet love
But I've heard it all before
I can't beg you anymore
Oh my sweet love

You're the woman who knows exactly what she's doing
You're the girl who ate the apple off the tree
When you're good you're just crazy, when you're bad
you're too much

You say you'd never hurt me
You'll never desert me
Oh my sweet love
That your words are always true
I can depend on you
Oh my sweet love

When you get in the wind
And all the storms begin
Oh my sweet love
When you're sad and dismantled
And all your senses rattled
Oh my sweet love

You're the woman who knows exactly what she's doing
You're the girl who ate the apple off the tree
When you're good you're just crazy, when
you're bad you're too much

Sweet love standing at my gate
Oh my sweet love
It sure would feel good to feel good again
Oh my sweet love

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Andy York – Electric Guitar
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitars
Dennis Crouch – Upright Bass
Dane Clark – Drums
Mike Piersante – Shaker
Troy Kinnett – Piano
Karen Fairchild – Background Vocals

IF I DIE SUDDEN

If I die sudden
Please don't tell anyone
There ain't nobody needs to know
That I'm gone
Just put me in a pine box
Six feet underground
Don't be callin no minister
I don't need one around

Well my grandma, she told me
She'd be waiting at the gate
She said that the fix was in
And that she's already prayed
And the rest of my family
Will be waiting there for me too
They'd already taken care of my sins
And there was nothing for me to do

So if I die sudden
Please don't tell anyone
There ain't nobody needs to know
That I'm gone
Just put me in a pine box
Six feet underground
Don't be callin no minister
I don't need one around
I don't need no preacher around

I got a little bit of money
Some papers you might want to see
I got a house down in Georgia
But let's keep this brief
I'm not afraid of dying
This life's been right to me
I got a whole bunch more than I deserve
Now I will be free
Yeah, now I will be free

So if I die sudden
Please don't tell anyone
There ain't nobody needs to know
That I'm gone
Just put me in a pine box
Six feet underground
And don't be callin no minister
I don't need one around
I don't need no preacher around

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals, Acoustic Guitar
Andy York – Electric Guitar, Background Vocals, Percussion
Dane Clark – Drums
Mike Wanchic – Background Vocals
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitar, Bass
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Troy Kinnett – Field Organ, Percussion

TROUBLED LAND

Well there's a pain in my side
But I keep travelin on
Bring peace to this troubled land
It's dark out here
I can't read those signs
Bring peace to the troubled land
Hurricane on the horizon
Judgment getting closer all the time
I can't find tomorrow
Bring peace to this troubled land

Well there's two men a walkin
Down the same dirty road
Bring peace to this troubled land
They stand shoulder to shoulder
Carrying the same heavy load
Bring peace to this troubled land
One man's eyes are full of sorrow
The other man's belly full of unbearable pain
They keep getting closer
Bring peace to this troubled land

I've got many screamin children
Ten million rows to hoe
Bring peace to this troubled land
Deader than a hammer
But I can't let it go

Bring peace to this troubled land
The eyes of heaven are upon you
But so is the soul from down below
They'll cut off your fingers
To bring peace to this troubled land

Well you can stand up and holler
You can lay down and die
Bring peace to this troubled land
We can turn up our collars
And never even try
To bring peace to this troubled land
Beware of those who want to harm you
And drag you down to a lower game
Just know the truth is coming
To bring peace to this troubled land

I got a pain in my side
But I keep travelin on

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Andy York – Acoustic and Electric Guitars
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitars, 6-String Bass
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Dane Clark – Drums, Maracas
Troy Kinnett – B-3
Mike Wanchic – Background Vocals
Janas Hoyt – Background Vocals

YOUNG WITHOUT LOVERS

Better take a look
At my circle
Better take a look around
Tell all my friends
Better take a look
At the colors of the people
Young without lovers
Old without friends

Better say a prayer
For the poor and unhealthy
Better sing a song
For those who don't care
Let the people have the right
To be different
Young without lovers
Old without friends

Life is an abstraction
And it tries to fool us all
And it's working so far it seems
Brother against brother
This world is such a mess
Behind the drawn curtains
So our thoughts could not be seen

Better shake the hand
Of the hated
Better hear the words
That don't seem clear
Better take a look around
At what we're doing
Young without lovers
Old without friends

Better take a look
At my circle
Better take a look around
Tell all of my friends
Let the people have the right
To be different
Young without lovers
Old without friends

Young without lovers
Old without friends
Young without lovers
Old without friends

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals, Acoustic Guitar
Andy York – Resonator Guitar
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitars
Troye Kinnett – Organ, Piano

JOHN COCKERS

I don't accommodate nobody
I just take care of myself
Gotta house down on a dusty road
I don't need nobody else
I gotta wife and some kids
I don't know where they're at
I know many many people
But I ain't got no friends

Well I used to have some values
Now they just make me laugh
I used think things would work out fine
But they never did do that
All these bosses and the rules
It's hard for me to fit in
Must be ten million people
But I ain't got no friends

Well I'm a little isolated
Live most days in my head
And when I go to sleep at night
I got no sheets on my bed
I'm a little hard headed
I can't wait for this to end
I see people comin and goin
But I ain't got no friends

I look out of my window
Into the darkness of night
My head gets to spinnin
So I shut out the light
I don't care if I see tomorrow
If I had a reason I'd pretend
I know one thing for certain
I ain't a got no friends

Well one of these days my anger
Get the best of my soul
In one desperate moment
I'm gonna dig me a hole
I'm gonna lie down in it
And let be what will be
And when the morning sun rises
There'll be no one to mourn for me

And when the morning sun rises
There'll be no one to mourn for me

I don't accommodate nobody
Just take care of myself
Gotta little house on a dusty road
I don't need nobody else
I gotta wife and some kids
I don't know where they're at
I know many many people
But I ain't got no friends

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Andy York – Acoustic Guitar
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitars
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Dane Clark – Suitcase & Tabla, Hi Hat, Shaker
Troye Kinnett – Accordion
Miriam Sturm – Violin

DON'T NEED THIS BODY

This getting older
Ain't for cowards
This getting older
Is a lot to go through
Ain't gonna need this body
Much longer
Ain't gonna need this body
Much more

I can't see much
Like I used to
And I can't run like the wind
I don't sleep more
Than just a few hours
I can't remember where I've been

Ain't gonna need this body much longer
Ain't gonna need this body much more
I put in ten million hours
Washed up and worn out for sure

All my friends are
Sick or dyin
And I'm here all by myself
All I got left
Is a headful of memories
And a thought of my upcoming death

Ain't gonna need this body much longer
Ain't gonna need this body much more
I put in ten million hours
Washed up and worn out for sure

Well I know one thing
I'd die easy
And I know my life
Is not in vain
Because I loved
And I fought with many
And the people, they loved me
Just the same

Ain't gonna need this body much longer
Ain't gonna need this body much more
I put in ten million hours
Washed up and worn out
Washed up and worn out for sure

This getting older
Well it ain't for cowards
This getting older
Is a lot to go through

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals, Acoustic Guitar
Karen Fairchild – Background Vocals
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitars
John Gunnell – Upright Bass

A RIDE BACK HOME

Hey Jesus can you get me a ride back home
I've been out here in this world too long on my own
I won't bother you no more
If you can just get me in the door
Hey Jesus can you get me a ride back home

When I started out I was so young and so strong
I just let it roll off my back when things went wrong
Now it's starting to get to me
All of this inhumanity
Hey Jesus can you get me a ride back home

You wouldn't know it by looking at me now
But I was showin some promise once upon a time
But it's gone now
And it ain't comin back
My time's come and gone
It's as simple as that

Hey Jesus this world is too troublesome for me
I try to fight off all these devils but I'm just too weak
When I'm out here walking alone
I feel like taking my life but I won't
Too big a coward, can you get me a ride back home
Hey Jesus can you get me a ride back home
Hey Jesus can you get me a ride back home

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Karen Fairchild – Vocal Duet
Andy York – Acoustic Guitar
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitars, Bari Guitar
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Dane Clark – Drums
Troye Kinnett – Piano

WITHOUT A SHOT

Put your guns out on the table
Throw your bullets on the floor
This weary old house can't take it anymore
From the ovens in the kitchen
To the chains out in the dirt
Rope hanging in the bedroom
That's some of our dirty work

The distant sleeping shadows
That lie out in the yard
The wind that distorts the meaning
Of who we really are
Saluting of ourselves
As we pass by our mirrors
This show of phony adulation
Just masquerades all our fears

So we open our eyes at midnight
See the setting of the sun
Foundation is crumbling
The inner structure's gone
Used up by corruption
And the passage of time
We hope we got some fight left
Cause our children, our children are dying

So we think that forgiveness
Is a God given right
And equality for all
Is just a waste of our time
With our nickel-plated Jesus
Chained around our necks
Handing out verses of scripture
Like we wrote it down ourselves

Respect that we once had
Went up the water spout
Tried to keep it secret
But the secret was found out
Got to thinking high and mighty
Like everything was a lock
Some now say this house
Can be taken without a shot

So the hole gets dug deeper
With every wedding bell
And we sell each other down the road
Til there's nothing left to sell
And slowly but surely
We disappear without a trace
We point our fingers at each other
Say what the hell happened to this place

Without a shot
Without a shot
Without a shot

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Andy York – Electric Guitars, Mandolin
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Troye Kinnett – Field Organ
Dane Clark – Tambourine

JENA

An all white jury hides the executioner's face
See how we are me and you
Everyone here needs to know their place
Let's keep this blackbird hidden in the flue

Oh oh oh Jena
Oh oh oh Jena
Oh oh oh Jena
Take your nooses down

So what becomes of boys that cannot think straight
Particularly those with paper bag skin
Yes sir, no sir we'll wipe that smile right off your face
We got our rules here and you must fit in

Oh oh oh Jena
Oh oh oh Jena
Oh oh oh Jena
Take your nooses down

Some day some way sanity will prevail
But who knows when that day might come
A shot in the dark, well it just might find its way
To the hearts of those that hold the keys to
kingdom come

Oh oh oh Jena
Oh oh oh Jena
Oh oh oh Jena
Take those nooses down

Oh oh hey Jena
Oh oh Jena
Oh oh Jena
Take your nooses down

Take those nooses all down

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals, Acoustic Guitar
Andy York – Electric Guitar, Acoustic Guitar, Background
Vocals
Mike Wanchic – Background Vocals
T Bone Burnett – Bass, Electric Guitar
Dane Clark – Drums
Troye Kinnett – Field Organ

MEAN

I'm not following your frame of mind
Complaining about this life all the time
Surely something good here as the world spins by
Could you please stop being so mean

This will never work out, that's what you say
It's the end of the world again yesterday
When I see you coming at me I'm gonna walk away
You need to stop being so mean

Your outlook is haunting us all
Like the ghost of our love down at the dark end of the hall
If you can't say nothing good then don't say nothing at all
And you need to stop being so mean

Your road seems so narrow to me
You're a big boat up the river blowing off steam
My head is spinning from your company
Could you please stop being so mean

I'm not following your frame of mind
Complaining about this life all the time
Surely something good here as the world spins by
Could you please stop being so mean

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Andy York – Acoustic Guitar
T Bone Burnett – Acoustic Guitar, Electric Guitars
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Troye Kinnett – Piano, Field Organ, B-3

COUNTY FAIR

Well the County Fair left quite a mess
In the county yard
Kids with eyes as big as dollars
Rode all the rides
Strip artists and con artists
Put on quite a show
They made some money
Then left town
Where they went I don't know

Hey all you suckers
I heard a fat woman say
Come on in for fifty cents
You can stay in here all day
So I took a chance
I went inside
Wasn't much there to see
So I asked her for my money back
And she just smiled at me

Saw Princess Tonyika takin off all her clothes

I rode some rides and played some games
Rode some rides and played some games
Saw the Wild Man from Borneo
There was a black man playin the blues
Talked to some friends I hadn't seen in a while
Threw a football through a hoop

Well I saw them loading up the trucks
Taking down the rides
Folding up all the tents
There was a full moon in the sky
Some were laughin and some were cussin
As they worked
Saw one of them making love
To a local girl

I was minding my own business
It was quarter after two
When a fella walked up and said
Hey man, I remember you
And then he shoved me
And pulled out his knife
Stuck me three times in the chest
And I died that night

For the life of me I can't remember
Who he was
And why he'd put a knife in me
In that dusty parking lot
Everybody said
What a shame it was
But he knew better than staying out
Past twelve o'clock

Some people put no value
On a human life
And there are places that we all go
That just ain't safe at night
If somebody'd do this to me
They might do it to you
So be careful where you go
And what you say and do

Well the County Fair left quite a mess
In the county yard

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Andy York – Electric Guitar, Acoustic Guitar
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitar, 6-String Bass
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Dane Clark – Drums
Troye Kinnett – B-3

FOR THE CHILDREN

I wish I could give you an answer
As to when life really begins
I wish I could tell you where we went
When our days here come to an end
Wish I could see the future
The same way I see the past
I wish I could draw a conclusion
Why nothing here seems to last

I can't even make a guess
Or an uneducated thought
All I can do here is my best
And be thankful for what we've got

Why do so many suffer
Oppressed to the end of time
Why does freedom move so slowly
Unable to speak its mind
Some say it's a circle
Others think we live on the wing
Why are promises broken
And some think life don't mean a thing

I can't even make a guess
Or an uneducated thought
All I can do here is my best
And be thankful for what we've got

I hope you can be a child of life
With big dreams for everyone
And know that dying's as natural as birth
And our troubles here, they don't last long
I have worried about many things
Most of which did not come to pass
I hope you find someone to give you love
And that your love will last

I can't even make a guess
Or an uneducated thought
All I can do here is my best
And be thankful for what we've got
We've got

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Karen Fairchild – Vocal Duet
Andy York – Bass
T Bone Burnett – Acoustic Guitar, Electric Guitars

A BRAND NEW SONG

Sweet belly of the moment
You've realized you've changed
And everything you are after
Has gone down the drain
You're nothing more than just a drifter
As you walk down your road
Not exactly the picture
You thought you'd be sending home

All these places mean nothing
It's the people we count on
Here without a purpose
Gone without a song

Yesterday seemed so sudden
Today seems to have no end
So you button up the buttons
Say goodbye to what has been
Those black and white pictures
That file through your veins
That's the trouble with the future
It always stays the same

And your pride's been shaken
And those people you count on
Here without a purpose
And gone without a song
Without a song

In the uncertainty of a new day
Opportunity may howl
You hear the voice in a new way
In the past you didn't know how
You're old enough to know the difference
Between an enemy and a friend
With the eyes of knowledge upon you
You're able to stand up again

Life is always in motion
And there's new people to count on
Here you may find a purpose
And sing a brand new song

Life is always in motion
New people to count on
Here we find a purpose
To sing a brand new song
Brand new song
Sing a brand new song

MUSICIANS

John Mellencamp – Vocals
Andy York – Acoustic Guitar, Electric Guitar
T Bone Burnett – Electric Guitars
John Gunnell – Upright Bass
Troye Kinnett – Piano, Melodica, Field Organ



ALL SONGS WRITTEN BY JOHN MELLENCAMP
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Recorded and Mixed by Mike Piersante

Recorded at Belmont Mall, Nashville, TN and Electro Magnetic Studios, Los Angeles, CA

Additional Recording on "My Sweet Love" by Matt Andrews at Sound Emporium Studios, Nashville, TN and Paul Mahern & Michael Stucker at Belmont Mall, Nashville, TN

Additional Recording on "Don't Need This Body" by Emile Kelman at Electro Magnetic Studios, Los Angeles, CA

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