

Lyrics for the album **Caution to the Wind** by Paul Metsers

WRITER'S SONG

Sometimes the mind is blind and dumb
The words will hide - the tune won't come
Quicksilver slips through fingers numb
Like fickle daydreams by
To tears and streaks upon the pane
And bending limbs, the supple strain
And bushy wreath of mist and rain
To set me free to fly

To balance on unsteady rim
To push and pull the pendulum
To watch the flash and focus dim
That trivia erase
And then to wash in hazel sparks
The heart that listens in the dark
The hand that never fails to find
Its way through myth and maze

So, let it come, or let it go
Changing pale to indigo
Hasten not the to and fro
But grant it time and trial
In spite of being hardly there
Like winter's breath on autumn's air
The rhyme is right, the song is here
The wait was worth the while

PAUL: vocal and guitar, NIC JONES: guitar and harmony vocal

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LOSE MYSELF IN YOU

Though I may be sure of the places I have been
Or show no hesitation to the future sight unseen
Though I may seem certain of the ground on which I stand
Still I lose myself in you when you are close at hand

Yes I lose myself in you, every time I see you
And I lose myself in you, whenever you are near
And I lose myself in you, when in conversation
People mention you by name and I am close enough to hear
And it doesn't really matter that some of them will see
That I lose myself in you when you lose yourself in me

Memories will slip and fade, yet occasionally by chance
They may crowd and overcome me in a tumbling avalanche
But even when confusion seems to bury every plan
I can lose myself in you - you always understand

Let's take the path together, as far as we can go
The far horizon beckons, the winds of change do blow
You can steady my impatience, for you already know
That I'll lose myself in you, until you let me go

PAUL: vocal, guitar (EADGBC) and Appalachian dulcimer

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A THOUSAND YEARS TODAY

I visited a castle that the years had tried to crumble
Shouldering the seasons as the weather wore away
And as I gazed in wonder the towering walls did humble me
And, never growing weary, I walked a thousand years today

chorus:

The steps into the past were not so very far away
I walked a thousand years today (repeat)

The spiral stairs were hollowed, the lintels cracked and broken
Cold the iron rings set deep into the clay
As my footsteps echoed, who had stirred and woken
Or was risen up and watching as I trod the years away?

-chorus-

You may hear the shouting at the jousting in the grounds
Or the hammers of the masons who cut and carve the stone
Or the kings and queens and nobles in the banquet hall sat down
Or the prisoner in the dungeon who awaits his fate alone

-chorus-

To the lofty turrets from the grassy banks below
Childrens voices carry as blissfully they play
And I wonder if they wonder or will ever come to know
What it is like to walk a thousand years in just a summer's day

-chorus-

PAUL: vocal and guitar (EEBEBE), HELEN WATSON: clavinet,
NIC and HELEN: harmony vocals

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A SONG FOR YOU AT LAST

Here is a song for you
It's been a long time waking
Now that I've set it free
Who knows what road it's taking?
For the future, from the past
Here is a song for you at last

Here is a smile for you
That like the seed that's sown
Will not deny its birth
Will push aside the stone
Although its growth is seldom fast
Here is a song for you at last

Here is a hand for you
Its offer freely given
All failings understood
All frailties forgiven
The die of love is gently cast
Here is a song for you at last

PAUL: vocal and guitars (DGDGBD and DADGBE)

My partner and best friend for many years, Pauline, likes this song,
which is lucky, because I wrote it for her.

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THE HUNT

Put on the jacket red, my son
And mount the dapple grey
I am the lord of all around
And me you must obey
The hunt begins, the chase is on
So give your horse his head
We hunt the nimble fox today
To see his blood run red

chorus:

We'll hunt him down, we'll hunt him down
We'll run old Reynard to the ground
We'll hunt him down, we'll hunt him down
We'll run old Reynard to the ground

All through the silver air today
The huntsman's horn blows shrill
The hounds do bark their waiting bay
All thirsting for the kill
The day is cold, the time past noon
And soon the hounds they'll send
All ready for the chase to come
They'll follow to the end -cho-

Be faithful to this noble game
For sport it surely be
To hunt a single red fox down
With twenty men and three
With three and twenty huntsmen brave
And twenty swift hounds too
That fox we'll grant no greenwood grave
We'll hunt him fair and true -cho-

With Reynard's scent keen on the air
The hounds do seek their find
And twenty huntsmen without fear
Do follow close behind
The fox lies down among the green
His strength is almost done
The air is still and nature seems
To mourn another son -cho-

PAUL, NIC and HELEN: vocals

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FAREWELL TO THE GOLD

Shotover river, your gold it is waning
It's weeks since the colour I've seen
But it's no use just sitting and Lady Luck blaming
So I'll pack up and make the break clean

Chorus:

Farewell to the gold that never I found
Goodbye to the nuggets that somewhere abound
For it's only when dreaming that I see you gleaming
Down in the dark, deep underground

It's nearly two years since I left my old mother
For adventure and gold by the pound
With Jimmy the prospector - he was another
For the hills of Otago was bound -chorus-

We worked the Cardrona's dry valley all over
Old Jimmy Williams and me
But they were panning good dirt on the winding Shotover
So we headed down there just to see -chorus-

We sluiced and we cradled for day after day
Making hardly enough to get by
Til a terrible flood swept poor Jimmy away
During six stormy days in July -chorus-

PAUL: vocal and guitar, STEVE TURNER: treble and tenor treble concertinas,
NIC and HELEN: harmony vocals

I think the inspiration for this song, which I probably wrote in 1968, came from when, as a teacher, I took my music class on a trip down the west coast of New Zealand's South Island. Part of our adventure included a day on one of the old gold digging sites, where we all panned for, and found, small flecks of the alluvial treasure. Our bus took us down the steep road from high Cardrona to the Shotover River, now known for its excellent whitewater canoeing, where many of the strikes during NZ's goldrush era were found. The chorus of the song haunted me until I found a story to accompany it - the account of a flash flood which, in July, 1863, claimed the lives of hundreds of goldminers. The old prospector and the young hopeful, who teams up with him and survives to tell the tale, are fictitious. The Shotover and Cardrona valleys are both in the South Island's rugged and beautiful Central Otago.

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SANDY'S SONG

I once wrote you a letter
Silly now, it seems
To let you know you turned me so
That I shared your dreams
I almost mailed it to you
Brash and bold, I guess
Too much to say and, anyway
I couldn't find out your address

chorus:

Hey, Sandy, oh, Sandy
Where do you belong
The winds of foam and the birds of home
Carry me your song (repeat)

And we, who needs must linger
Upon the mortal earth
Transported are, and richer far
In songs you brought to birth
With words that never falter
And tunes that bell-like ring
Resounding strong, remembered long
I'm so glad I heard you sing -cho-

The swallow has already gone
On ancient-guided wings
The tree is left, of leaf bereft
To which it vainly clings
Somehow the golden autumn
Seems your best disguise
Times of change and birds that range
Across the morning skies -cho-

Paul: vocal and guitar; Helen: piano; Nic and Helen: harmony vocals

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DAY COMES SOON

Across the moody ocean
Dark flies the moon
Reaching for horizons
Day comes soon

She likes the wishing wind
Feathers to her face
But clasps the father's finger
Just in case
Dark and deep the eyes
Drinking what they see
Lovingly they look
Into me

In the arms of dreams
Fly on eerie wings
Speeding to the day
And what it brings
Some days to remember
Mostly though they fly
Round her little shoulder
They go rolling by

Evenly they gather
Now is quickly then
With willing fate I'll soon
Be home again

rep. 1st verse

PAUL: vocal and guitar (CGDGCD)

For my first daughter, Elizabeth. I wrote this in England when Liz was only 4.

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CROSSROADS

Well I came to the crossroads, They went many ways
And each one beckoned, And they fixed my gaze
And the one I chose - Must've been lucky
'Cause it brought me to you - And it kept you by me

chorus:

By me, by me
'Cause it brought me to you
And it kept you by me (repeat)

When the waves were high - And the seas did roar
And I found me stranded - On a foreign shore
I just didn't worry - I had no fear
It didn't seem to matter - With you by me -chorus-

When the street's full of strangers - All unconcerned
And I'm lost in the city - And I take a wrong turn
I know I'll find my way back home
Sooner or later - With you by me -chorus-

When I'm feeling restless, baby I know
If I have to run - I'll be free to go
But I just can't leave - All on my own
It wouldn't be the same - Without you by me -chorus-

PAUL: vocal and guitar (DADGBD); NIC: fiddles; NIC and HELEN: harmony vocals

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THE SEAL CHILDREN

White is the snow of the Newfoundland winter
Black is the blizzard, whiplash and slice
With the coming of Spring, the freeze starts to splinter
And the homes of the seals are the islands of ice
In government rooms, soft are the voices
Questions are asked, almost under the breath
But the agents stamping the permits make noises
Like the blows of the clubs beating young seals to death

Turn a blind eye as the killing continues
Children will ask, 'where have the seals gone?'
Smile and deny the chilling within you
The terrible question we must ponder upon

Winter is leaving the land of the North
Taking her cold, and her dark, endless night
The seal mothers labour, their young to bring forth
And the pups of the hood and the harp are pure white
The swift ships of Norway and Canada bring
Cargoes of men with money-mad eyes
Not for the beauty of the Newfoundland Spring
Their mission is murder - white pelt is their prize

But the cries of the victims, season on season
Come to be heard in the city and the land
And those who scorn slaughter for fashionable reason
Resolve to embark on a bold-hearted plan
Ahead of the hunters, they mean to go
Through treacherous seas, in the cold and the dark
And, reaching the herds on the ice floes
They'll spoil the white furs with indelible marks

But the weather's against them - in sorrow and gloom
They must wait while the storm wastes its fury away
Threehundred thousand seal children are doomed
As the hunters advance on their pitiful prey
White fur drapes the ladies at opera and ball
White fur warms the seal pups in water and wind
But the hands of the hunters, yes, the hands of us all
Will always be stained with the blood of their skins

PAUL: vocal and guitar (DGDDAD); MICK DOONAN: Uilleann pipes;
NIC and HELEN: backing and harmony vocals

In 1977 I think it was, Greenpeace planned to prevent the annual slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Hood and Harp seal pups by daubing their creamy white pelts with black dye. The audacious and risky plan was foiled by bad weather, but brought this commercial, fashion-

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oriented industry into the spotlight. Shamefully, although somewhat reduced, the barbaric clubbing and skinning of the pups in front of their mothers still continues in much greater numbers than meets the needs of the indigenous people of Newfoundland. I wrote this in 1979 in New Zealand in response to author Richard Adams' account of the cull.