

LYRICS—THE GREEN WORLD

THE GREEN WORLD

Music, Eddie Arkin/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

Everyone I know has been going a little crazy.
Everyone I know would like their life back, please.
One thing after another,
One thing after another.

Every time we meet I feel a little less crazy.
Every time we touch, I feel the same slow burn.
One day after another,
Tangled up in each other.

Light rain, starting in 15 minutes,
Stopping in 5 minutes,
Resuming in one minute,
Stopping in 5, starting in 5, stopping in 5, over.

Lonelier alone than in my saucy young womanhood,
Putting on the solitary bonhomie,
Same dream over and over,
Same dream over and over.

Snow turns into rain and the sugar maple trembles.
40 years of waiting; now the seeds take flight.
One seed after another,
Tangled up in each other.

Light rain, starting in 18 minutes,
Stopping in nine minutes,
Resuming in one minute,
Stopping in nine, starting in nine, stopping in nine, over.

I'm thinking we could take an overnight trip
In your well-worn CRV,
Leave this mid-sized city, you and me,
Drive all night,
Wake up to a softer light
In the green world.

Every time we meet I feel a little less crazy.
Every time we talk, I hear
A rising ripple of laughter, after.

Da da da da da da
Da da da da
Da da da da

Da da da da
Da da da da
Da da da da
Da da da da ...

When the music on the stream
Begins a waking dream,
And the sound we hear is less than melodious,
When the content we see
On the smart TV
Seems craven, and shabby, and odious,
We drive all night,
Wake up to a softer light,
In the green world.

Stopping in five, starting in five, stopping in five, over.

DISAPPEARING UNIVERSE
Music, Russell Ferrante/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

“ ‘How—how does the Universe end?’ said Billy.

‘We blow it up, experimenting with new fuels for our flying saucers. A Tralfamadorian test pilot presses a starter button, and the whole Universe disappears. So it goes.’

‘If you know this,’ said Billy, ‘isn’t there some way you can prevent it? Can’t you keep the pilot from pressing the button?’

‘He has always pressed it, and he always will. We always let him and we always will let him. The moment is structured that way.’”

—from *Slaughterhouse-Five* by Kurt Vonnegut

I will always fall in love with you.
I want to.
Always tell you, “You’re my everything,
No fooling,”
Though we bear a fatal flaw,
A la Shakespeare,
Doomed from bar one, my dear,
To end in a disappearing universe.

I’ll devour your first romantic words
(*Delicious*),
Drink my fill of your philosophy
(Lay it on me),
Be dead sure that you’re the one,
Rom-com-worthy,

Then, in the bright New Year,
Hear news of our disappearing universe.

From your land mass to mine,
With a breathtaking ease,
In the course of our
Paranormal activities,
We fashioned a life of our own.

Then our signal was lost,
And our currency spent.
We faced
An ungodly predicament.
Our world ended off in a moan.

*One year after our universe disappears I'll always tell my brother,
"I think I might be a little better but I'm not takin' it to the bank."*

Love can bear a fatal flaw,
A la Shakespeare,
Doomed from bar one, my dear,
To end in a disappearing universe.

My nervous reply wasn't meant to be brusque.
You poured out your heart in the garden at dusk,
Your hand on the trunk of a beech tree.
In truth, I was glad you were racing ahead.
I'm holding my breath till I hear what you said,
And this time I'm letting it reach me.

Darling, my darling, forsake me no more.
I swear I will love you like never before.
Darling, my darling,
No more.
I will love you.

La la la la la la la,
La la la la la,
La la la la la la la ...

UNLIKE MY EX-WIFE
Music, Shelly Berg/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

I've read profiles aplenty since being on this site,
Of men between 60 and 72,
Presenting their bona fides.
A partner for life is their vehement wish.
In their photos, they're hugging a grandchild in didies,

Or they're out on a sailboat,
Upholding a dirty martini,
Or a newly dead fish.

After age, height, weight, race,
Other details of note that might place them in space,
Comes their answer to the prompt,
"I'll know I've found the one when ..."

*Which is obviously a little device inviting you to finish the sentence,
but virtually nobody plays along. Instead,*

They describe their requirements
For the ultimate Her,
Not a few things to say,
Others I might infer.

"I want a woman who's tender and kind,
Thoughtful and cheerful, loyal and true.
She'll make me a promise and carry it through,
Unlike my ex-wife,
Unlike my ex-wife,
Unlike my awful ex-wife.

"Looks awesome in heels, has a logical mind,
Makes gluten-free pie and enough time for me.
Zero baggage, 100% drama-free,
Unlike my ex-wife,
Unlike my ex-wife,
Unlike my screeching ex-wife.

"I need a woman who loves the outdoors."
Hey, that's me, for God's sake!
All those people who'd rather stay indoors all day
Can go jump in a lake.

"I like a lady who's patient and sweet,
Shows me her cards, knows how to dress,
Always open, much like the Midtown CVS,

"Unlike my ex-wife,
Unlike my ex-wife.
You wouldn't believe the vile secrets she hid,
Though you'd like my ex-wife,
Like everyone did,
Like everyone did.

"Be unlike my ex-wife,
Unlike my ex-wife,

Unlike my cheating ex-wife,
My evil ex-wife,
My devious ex-wife,
The petulant shrew who despoiled my life,
More deadly than I-95 or a butterfly knife.
Be unlike my effing ex-wife.

“Don’t be crass or indecent.
Trust your photos are recent.
Also, no out-of-towners,
No Debbie Downers,
Like my ex-girlfriend,
Who might any day
Reappear on the scene.
Her name is Darlene,
Darlene,
Darlene.”

EVERYBODY HERE LOVES YOU
Music, Eddie Arkin/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather
For Shapiro

Comin’ up on 4 a.m.
In your high-rise room,
A world away.
We spoke via Zoom.
Your Android lay face up
Beside your coffee cup.

I saw the right side of your smile,
The shadow of your chin,
The ceiling fan above you
In melancholy spin.
You said you liked your adopted country,
The set-up in your place.
I know you’re copacetic,
But just in case,

Burned-out bridges, injured pride,
Sure no one saw your side,
Doesn’t matter, ‘cause it’s true,
In the end, my friend,
Everybody here loves you.

Feelin’ good as, one by one,
The gang appeared.
You read my words,
Joked “You’re so weird.”
Earth circles round and round.
We try to break new ground.

Life is exhausting and electric,

Unhappy and sublime.
We've got to stay eyes-forward,
Keep laying down the time.
You're tucked in a place of safety,
A stone's throw from the truth,
Thunderclouds amassing
Outside your isolation booth.

Don't give up. It's not too late.
I'll meet you at the gate.
Always something you can do.
Please come home, dear friend.
Everybody here loves you.

*One night when you were packing up, you said,
"This place doesn't work for everybody."
I thought you meant,
I thought you meant Los Angeles.*

We hit the club at Happy Hour,
Century and Vine.
The anecdotes were wicked,
Yet tenderly benign.
Stricken to the marrow,
Reality unreal,
We played a slow bolero.
I think you would have liked the feel.

Rising waters, driving rain.
Nobody knew your pain.
No one knows anyone's, it's true,
But in the end, my friend,
Believe we wanted to.
Past the end, my friend,
Everybody here loves you.

CANOE

Music, Eddie Arkin/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

Woo-oo woo,
Can you canoe?
Woo-oo woo
Can you canoe?

I peek into your bedroom and see a big stack of books on your bedside table. "What's that title on top?" I ask. "It's called The Thrill of the Paddle." "Uh okay." You go, "No, no, it's about extreme canoeing.

"Once I went whitewater canoeing in British Columbia, seven-night solo trip. I hadn't done it before and pff, man, it was pretty gnarly at first.

'First day, muscle overload.

Second day, you hit a wall.
Third day, recovery mode.
Last day
You blast past it all.
You're a canoeing monster ..."

The Michigan sky is frail and shy,
With clouds of vast vanilla,
Close to the mouth of the river
They call Godzilla.
Getting in, getting out
Are the hardest parts to learn.
Fancy thrills, likely spills
Wait at every turn.
Forgive my incompleteness.
Forget your trampled pride.
The question is, my sweetness,
Are you ready for a ride?

Can you canoe?

We'll explore the
Things we hold in high regard,
Things we think are hoey,
Hold our hearts and paddle hard
Toward a distant buoy.

We've talked nightly for a month or three,
Smitten and uncritical.
I say I'm never controlling.
You allege you're apolitical.
Getting up, winding down,
I am there and you are here.
Yesterday, heardja say,
"Please don't disappear."
The road ahead turns crystalline,
Proceeds to dance and leap.
Our cryptic conversations
Inundate my sleep.

Can we canoe?

Your eyes, your arms, your attitude
Get checks in the positive column.
Me and you, we're in the mood.
Ready, steady, slalom!

Woo-oo woo,
We can canoe.

Woo-oo woo,
We can canoe.

Yeah, so I landed in this town a few years ago, long sordid story. Something bad had gone down, real bad. I was shell-shocked for a while but I launched into the next chapter.

First year, trauma overload.
Second year, I hit a wall.
Third year, recovery mode.
These days, I blast past it all.

Getting up, winding down,
I hope you sleep/slept well.

Can you canoe?

Madly in love with the great outdoors,
Drowning in water metaphors ...

Are you ready for a ride?

WANTING

Music, Russell Ferrante/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

You and I caught fire.
We were on a city street
Awash in strangers.

It seemed so immense,
Us, ablaze in wonderment.
You shyly went first.

We had not yet kissed,
But you had taken my arm.
Inhaling slowly,

We start to follow
The winding river,
Fondly admire
The children on their swings,
The aged bridges,
The gleaming boats,
The absent people
Who made these things.

Sorrow and trouble
Are never far,
A girl forsaken,
A boy bereft,

A man unleashing, from the window of his car,
A homicidal diatribe at someone turning left,

But you and I rejoice,
Huddled on an iron bench,
Silenced by rapture.
I fear nothing,
Except the possibility
That you will find me wanting.

You tell me you were hoping I would find you,
You prayed that I would find you,
But now that I have found you,
You fear that I will find you wanting.

You and I at dawn.
Oh, the saturated sky!
It calls us upward.

We try making sense
Of the serendipity
That gave us this love.

You unlock my soul
As the wind opens a gate.
You know me—show me

Your depth of feeling,
Profound and humbling.
Here in my arms,
You say you are my own.
We stay entangled,
No sad farewell.
Today, my dearest,
We are not alone.

The birth of music,
The death of stars,
A fragile seashell,
The world inside,
A passing comment,
All at once revealing much,
The unexpected touch,
The drowsy eyes that open wide,

And you and I, held fast
By the passing grace of chance,
Laughing and crying.
The room trembles.

Our bliss appears beginningless,
Still underpinned with wanting.

Our fingers graze the pieces of a puzzle.
We circle round a riddle,
Knowing it is unlikely to be solved,
Even more ravishing for being unresolved.

ANOTHER LAYER OF NUANCE

Music, Eddie Arkin/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

We ran into some trouble
Late last night,
We hashed it out at breakfast.
I think we'll be all right.
We said that it was over,
Decide it's not,
Lookin' at what we've got.

We live on different planets,
Share no space.
A spirit from your vibe tribe
Can turn up anyplace.
We meet up at the corner
Of here and there,
Livin' this love affair.

Each and every hour,
I learn a little more about you.
Bit by curious bit,
I'm less inclined to be without you.
Day by night by day,
I find another layer of nuance,
Another layer of nuance.

You drive me up your mountain
Way up high,
Point out a charm of goldfinches
Dancing by,
Delight to see my spirit
Taking wing,
And say the sweetest thing.
You say

"Each and every hour,
I learn a little more about you.
Bit by curious bit,
I'm less inclined to be without you.
Day by night by day,

I find another layer of nuance,
Another layer of nuance.”

You see the hidden patterns in the chaos,
Possess a courtesy I thought was lost,
Make nothing of your attributes
And never count the cost.
You know how many constitutions France has had.
You know the way to soothe me when I feel bad.
My dear, how smart you are.
My own dear heart, you are.

When I cry, you go
“Honey ... honey ...”

You left an angry message
Late last night,
I stayed awake till sunrise
We might not be all right.
I feel as if it's over,
Or needs to be.
Oh my love, the misery.

I prized the tender gift
Of your consideration,
Was proud to light a flame
In your imagination.
Day by night by day,
I found another layer of nuance.

You'd go,
“Honey ... honey ...”

The way you fold a sweater,
The way we connect,
The soft endearments
In your regional dialect ...

THE SEAFLOOR

Music, Michael Valerio/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

Searching for hope,
We tumble down the continental slope
And reach the seafloor.
Far from sunlight,
We dark-adapt in love's uneasy night,
Here on the seafloor.

Small creatures cling,

Uncouple from the rocks without a cry,
Here on the seafloor.
One painful thing
Will never be unheard,
But now you cradle me
In a peaceful word.

We are not in the early days,
Brought low by tumultuous forces.
We are not in the bluebell field,
With our foreheads together like horses.
We are not in the sweet hotel,
Where nothing was untrue,
And I mourned the violence that was done to you.

And yet somehow,
You are more striking, more bewitching now,
Strolling the seafloor.
You say to me,
“I can’t be with you, but I need to be.”
I still adore you.

We are not at your bedroom window,
Observing the waddling crow.
We are here in this limpid kingdom,
Where everything is aglow.
We are not on the edge of fear—
I don’t care to remember when—
But we had to go there to come here,
Grow enchanted all over again,
Here on the seafloor.
Here on the seafloor,
Here on the seafloor,
Here on the seafloor ...

These underwater mountains
In this abyss of tears
Are more staggering than any seen on land.
You and I behold them, hand in hand.

SPLAT!

Music, Shelly Berg/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

It’s a mystifying happening that caught me unawares,
A funny feeling when I saw you on the stairs.
My knees were sorta shaky
And my heart was doin’ the pitter-pat.
You bid me a good evening
And I fell for you, splat!

A star, a stripe.
It's a Sousa march.
It's the rainy air.
It's apropos of nothing.
It's the absence of despair.
It's heat, it's health.
It's iced coffee in the commonwealth.

A flounce, a fail.
It's a lethargy.
It's a noisy gnat.
It's the seventh of December,
When I fell for you, splat!

It's a mystifying happening that caught me unawares,
A funny feeling when I saw you on the stairs.
My knees were sorta shaky
And my heart was doin' the pitter-pat.
You bid me a good evening
And I fell for you, splat!

Adrift, alone.
It's a mind whirring.
It's a silent purring.
It's being selected
To take a brief survey.
It's the sinking feeling
When some small item
Seems to have escaped the premises.

A quilt, a quote
Falsely attributed to Bruce Lee,
A twinkling,
An inkling of a you and me.

It was evening in Irondequoit.
I couldn't find the phone.
It started ringing, in your designated tone.
You sounded hot and bothered.
I was frozen where I sat
To hear you talk about
The crazy way you fell for me,
Splat!

It's a mystifying happening that caught me unawares,
A funny feeling when I saw you on the stairs.

My knees were sorta shaky and my heart was doin' the pitter-pat.
You bid me a good evening
And I fell for you, splat!

It's grand, it's great.
It's A Garbage Plate in the Empire State.
A bus, a boat,
It's a fabulous anecdote
For our Zoom wedding reception.

SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO
Music, Arturo O'Farrill/Lyrics, Lorraine Feather

Wrote you on your birthday,
The 21st of May.
Though I hadn't known you long,
I knew just what to say.
"Happiness is simple.
I wish it for you:
Someone to love,
Something to do,
Something to look forward to."

In our conversations,
We spoke about, we shared
The joy of having purpose,
Of doing as we dared.
Soon, our little mantra
Meant more than we knew:
Someone to love,
Something to do,
Something to look forward to.

The breaking of day
The advent of fall,
The tapping of paws
In a prance down the hall,
The busking soprano
At Broadway and Third,
The undreamt-of caress
In a casual word,
The breathtaking book
That lives by your bed,
The offbeat idea
That arrives in your head,
The day you discover
You still have a chance,
The slow, stately dance
Into aching romance.

Happiness is simple.
I wish it for you:
Someone to love,
Something to do,
Something to look forward to.

Our ancient chalet
Was in sight of the sea.
You stood by the window,
Reciting to me
A popular poem
I somehow had missed.
It ended "I love you.
I'm glad I exist."*

Your words fell softly,
They cooled my pain,
Slow and steady
Like a farmer's rain,
When fields turn green,
And then grow gold,
A tale of the soul,
Eternally told.

*from Wendy Cope's poem "The Orange"

"Happiness is pretty simple: someone to love, something to do, something to look forward to."
—Rita May Brown, feminist author and activist