



Steve Earle
JERRY JEFF

Album Credits & Lyrics

There was a time in my life when I wanted to be Jerry Jeff Walker more than anything else in this world. Looking back, it must have been more than obvious that, having yet to find a voice or persona of my own, I was emulating my hero; the Jerry Jeff we had all come to know and love, the Gypsy Songman, who had arrived at the perfect moment to stand at the Austin epicenter of the latest chapter in the evolution of what was, then, referred to as Progressive Country. I had the hat, the old beat-up guitar, and I occasionally showed up at gigs a little more pre-lubricated than was necessary.

Truth is, I had known about Jerry Jeff Walker for what, at that point in my seventeen years, was a long time.

Before midterm of my freshman year in high school I was kicked out of every class I enrolled in except General Physical Science and Drama. The former was taught by George Chambers, who cut me a lot of slack because, by night, he fronted one of the best country bands in the San Antonio area and he knew exactly what he was looking at. That being said, it was my drama teacher, Vernon Carroll, who turned me on to Jerry Jeff's eponymous solo debut because he wanted me to sing MR BOJANGLES in a production of THE WORLD OF CARL SANDBURG we staged that year. That was in September of 1969.

A year and a half later I had dropped out of school and was playing any place that would let me (which because of my age meant mostly coffeehouses) and I learned that Jerry Jeff had passed through Texas on a semi-regular basis for years as he toured the continent by thumb and motorcycle. Legend had it that "Bojangles" was written in an apartment above Sand Mountain Coffee House in Houston that was occupied, at the time, by none other than Townes Van Zandt. By the time I played Sand Mountain in '73, there was a mural on the back wall featuring images of Jerry Jeff, Townes and Guy Clark, which I had an unobstructed view of as the room was often virtually empty for my performances.

So, this record completes the set, the work of my first-hand teachers, TOWNES, GUY, and JERRY JEFF, the heroes I was lucky enough to sit across the room from so I could listen and learn up close and personal as they say. The records were recorded and released in the order in which they left this world; but make no mistake - it was Jerry Jeff Walker who came first.

Steve Earle NYC

2/22

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1. Gettin' By
2. Gypsy Songman
3. Little Bird
4. I Makes Money (Money Don't Make Me)
5. Mr. Bojangles
6. Hill Country Rain
7. Charlie Dunn
8. My Old Man
9. Wheel
10. Old Road

The Dukes:

Steve Earle - Guitar, Mandolin, Octave Mandolin, Harmonica, and Vocal

Chris Masterson - Guitar, Mandolin, and Vocal

Eleanor Whitmore - Fiddle, Strings, Mandolin, and Vocal

Ricky Ray Jackson - Pedal Steel Guitar, Dobro, and Vocal

Jeff Hill - Acoustic and Electric Bass, Cello, and Vocal

Brad Pemberton - Drums, Percussion, and Vocal

And

Tony Leone - Drums and Vocals (Thanks for bailing us out.)

All songs written by Jerry Jeff Walker

Groper Music / Cotillion Music Inc. admin by Warner Chappell / Mijac Music admin by Sony/ATV (BMI)

Produced by Steve Earle

All songs recorded by Ray Kennedy at Electric Lady Studios in NYC

Assisted by Lauren Marquez and Adam Hong

All songs mixed and mastered by Ray Kennedy at Room & Board Studio in Nashville, TN

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Guitar Tech: Greg "Chief" Frahn
Cory Stone - Sonic Sidekick

A&R: Kim Buie

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Business Management: Butch Gage and Dan Goscombe at Cal Financial Group

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North America Booking: Lance Roberts for UTA

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Very Special Thanks To: Susan Walker, Django Walker, and Jessie Jane McLarty.

GETTIN' BY

OK buckaroos, Scamp Walker time again
I'm trying to slide one by you once more
Don't matter how you do it

Just do it like you know it
I've been down that road once or twice before
Just gettin' by on gettin' by my stock in trad
Living it day to day
Pickin' up the pieces wherever they fall
Just letting it roll, letting the high times carry the low
I'm just living my life easy come, easy go
Last week I was thinking, its record time again
And I could see Mike making those faces
Ah Mike, don't you worry, something's bound to come out
Besides, I've been down this road once or twice before
Income tax is overdue, I think she is too
Been busted and I'll probably get busted some more
But I'll catch it all later, can't let em stop me now
I've been down this road once or twice before

GYPSY SONGMAN

I'm Gypsy Songman yes sir you'd like to hear a song
Well I'll pick it for you now and play it all night long
If the blues is all you see this song is what you need
Gypsy Songman passing by

My whole life is a song and I'll share it with you now
Pickin' and a singin' I'll get by somehow
A dime would help me please a smile is all I need
Gypsy Songman passing by

Kids come a runnin' as I pass by they all want to see
Say "Hey Gypsy Songman, play a song for me"
Their eyes glued on the strings, dancin as I sing
Gypsy Songman passing by

I've got as stage on every corner got a hall on every street
My hat is my coin box this song is what you need
It's just a swapping time; this song is for your dime
Gypsy Songman passing by

So as I leave you now please remember me this time

I'm the man who sang the song for your nickels and your dimes
Today you saw me play as I stopped along the way
Gypsy Songman passing by

LITTLE BIRD

Little bird come sit upon my window sill
Sat there through the falling rain
I watched that little bird upon my window sill
Saw my thoughts of you go by again
Picture of my face
On the window pane
Is it tears I see or is it rain?
Yeah, I remember how we talked before we said goodbye
Too young to know this world outside our door
And how we laughed and said our love was free
Like birds that fly the winds
Well the rainy day made me think of you once more
Picture of my face
On the window pane
Is it tears I see or is it rain?
I have no regrets about the past, I see how young we were
When our world was love and life was but a thought
Many things go many ways and many times but once
Well our lives have passed and that love is but a thought
Picture of my face
On the window pane
Is it tears I see or is it rain?
So as the thoughts go tumbling back I wonder how you loved
Wonder if you've seen that little bird
I wonder if he's sat upon your window sill
I wonder if you'll ever hear these words
And the picture of my face
On the window pane
Is it tears I see or is it rain?

I MAKES MONEY (MONEY DON'T MAKE ME)

I makes money, money don't make me, that's the way I am and it's plain to see

Get right for yourself, they can't put you on a shelf
Live and let live, you know its plain enough
There ain't a dollar in the world can make me change my stuff

I met lots of men who told me when they finally make their first million
They're gonna live like kings, gonna try everything
They're gonna flatter pretty women
If they know how to do it, why not get to it, instead of waiting all your life
'Cause life is only doing, what you think is worth pursuing
Instead of waiting all the time

If you find yourself waiting and you know you're hesitating
Get your butt off the ground
It ain't your money or your honey, and you know it's kind of funny
When it's all boiled down
If you want to be the man, and you know you certainly can
Then do it, do it, do it, do it, do it
Clothes don't make the man, money won't help you stand
Any truer than you're doin'

So you'll never find the endin' of sittin' and pretending
You're gonna do it sometime
You keep knocking on wood, doing exactly what you should
Trying to save enough dimes

Build 'em up higher, so you can retire, to your castle in the blue
But you find it's all behind and it's probably slipped your mind
And you're too pooped to toot

MR. BOJANGLES

I knew a man, Bojangles and he danced for you
In worn out shoes
Silver hair, a ragged shirt and baggy pants
The old soft shoe
He jumped so high
He jumped so high
Then he'd lightly touch down
I met him in a cell in New Orleans, I was
Down and out

He looked to me to be the eyes of age
As he spoke right out
He talked of life
He talked of life
He laughed, clicked his heels and stepped
He said his name, Bojangles and he danced a lick
Across the cell
He grabbed his pants, a better stance
Oh, he jumped so high
Then he clicked his heels
He let go a laugh
He let go a laugh
Pushed back his clothes all around
Mr. Bojangles
Mr. Bojangles
Mr. Bojangles
Dance
He danced for those in minstrel shows and county fairs
Throughout the south
He spoke with tears of fifteen years how his dog and him
Traveled about
The dog up and died
He up and died
After twenty years he still grieves
He said I dance now at every chance in honky tonks
For drinks and tips
But most the time I spend behind these county bars
He said I drinks a bit
He shook his head
And as he shook his head
I heard someone ask him please
Please
Mr. Bojangles
Mr. Bojangles
Mr. Bojangles
Dance

HILL COUNTRY RAIN

Sometimes I just wake up hummin'

Feelin' like the world is right
Want to jump right up and run outside
And take in the morning light
And feel the music running through me
Makes me want to dance
Clap my hands and dance
Sometimes it just takes my lady
To smile and make my day complete
And when she's touching me
I feel free and easy to be me
Lucky to be alive
Feelin' alright
Take a walk outside
People they tell me now,
You're living too fast
Slow down now Jerry boy
Take it easy let some of life pass
But I don't know no other way
Got to live it day to day
But if I die before my time
When I leave I'm leaving nothing behind *Cause I got a feeling
Something that I can't explain
It's like dancing naked
In that high hill country rain
I ain't worried 'bout tomorrow
I'll get by best I can
Lovin' is my will to live
It makes me laugh
Want to sing and dance
Clap my hands, yeah!

CHARLIE DUNN

Well, if you're ever in Austin, Texas
A little run down on your sole
I'm gonna tell you the name of a man to see
I'm gonna tell you right where to go
He's working in Capitol Saddlery
And he's sewing in the back of the place
He's old Charlie Dunn, the little frail one

With the smilin' leathery face
Charlie Dunn, he's the one to see
Charlie done the boots that are on my feet
It makes Charlie real pleased to see me walkin' with ease
Charlie Dunn, he's the one to see
Charlie's been make boots over there
He says, about fifty some-odd years
And once you wear a pair of his hand-made boots
You know you'll never wear a store-bought pair
Charlie can tell what's wrong with your feet
Just by feeling them with his hand
And he can take a look at the boots you wear
And know a whole lot about you, man

Now, ol' Buck's up front, he's countin' his gold
Charlie's in the back patchin' up the soles
Of the people comin' in, smilin' at him
They all wonder how's ol' Charlie been
And ol' Buck's makin' change, he never sees no one
He never understood the good thing that Charlie done
Yeah, ol' Charlie never had his name on the sign
He never put a mark in his boots
He just hopes that you can remember him
The same way that he does you
He keeps your measurements in this little book
So you can order more boots later on
Well I'm writin' down some of Ol' Charlie's size
'Cause I'm makin' him up this song

Yeah, ol' Buck's makin' change, he never sees no one
And He never understood the good thing that Charlie done

MY OLD MAN

My old man had a rounder soul
He'd hear an ol' freight train and he'd have to go
Said he'd been blessed with a gypsy bone
And that's the reason I guess that he'd been cursed to roam
Came to town back before the war

Didn't even know what it was he was lookin' for
He carried a tattered bag for his violin
Full of lots of songs of the places he had been
He talked real easy and he smiled and waved
He could pass along to you when his fiddle played

Makin' people drop their cares and woes
And hum out loud the tunes that his fiddle bowed
Till the people there began to join that sound
And ev'ryone in town was laughin', ' singin', ' dancin' 'round
Like the Fiddler's tunes we all there heard that night
Like some dream that says all the world is right

The Fiddler's eye caught a beauty there
She had that rollin' flowin' golden kind of hair
He played for her as if she danced alone
He played his favorite songs, the ones he called his own
She alone was dancin' in the room
The only thing left movin' to that Fiddler's tune

He played until she was the last to go
The he stopped and packed his case, said he'd take her home
In all the nights that passed a child was born
In all the years that passed, love would keep them warm
And all their lives they'd share that dream come true
And all because she danced so well his fiddler tune

The train next mornin' blew a lonesome sound
As if she sang the blues of what she took from town
And all that I recall that was said when I was young
There's no one else could really sing those songs he sung

WHEEL

If I took a rollin' wheel
And rolled it ten times round
Would it travel far from here
Or would it just go round
Round and Round
As a young boy I helped the old man

Workin' in the fields
And everyday, we hauled the hay
To the rollin' of the wheels
'Til one day the tractor laid
The old man down to the ground
The tractor pitched him into a ditch and
Left a dusty sound
Of the wheel that kept spinnin' round
The wheel that kept spinnin' round
Rollin' wheel, rollin' on
Takin' us all on our way
Rollin' wheel, rollin' on
Takin' back all that they gave
Takin' us all on our way
Takin' back all that they save
I've never knew my father well
The war called him too soon
Said he was an officer
Saw some pictures in my room
The letter said he was reported dead
Near the front lines he'd been found
A mine blew his jeep into a twisted heap
And I still hear the sound
Of the wheel that kept spinnin' round.
Rollin' wheel, rollin' on
Takin' us all on our way
Rollin' wheels, rollin' on
Takin' us all to the grave
Takin' back all that they save
Takin' us all on our way
My brother chased a dream of wheels
His whole life geared for the race
As soon as he could, he drove off for good
His whole life was short, quick, and straight
He only lived to spin those wheels
And make that move over ground
'Til the steering failed and he crashed the rail
And he laid there still for the sounds
Of the wheel that kept spinning round.
Rollin' wheel, they're rollin' on
Takin' us all on our way

The rollin' wheels, rollin' on
Takin' back all that they gave
Takin' us all on our way
Takin' back all that they say
As for me, my life's too short
The wheel has carried my far
Around this world 100 times
By bus, truck, train, bike, or car (?)
And just like the rest I roll on to my death
On a country road far from town
I stare by the wheel just as sure as I feel
That there won't be but one sound
That's the wheel that keeps spinning round
Yeah the wheel that keeps spinning round
Rollin wheels, rollin' on
Takin us all on our way
The rollin' wheels, rollin' on
Takin' back all that they say
Takin us all on our way
Takin' us all on our way
The rollin' wheels, yeah rollin' on
Takin' back all that they gave
Takin' us all on our way

OLD ROAD

Old road she keeps callin' to me
Old road she keeps callin' to me
Travel on down
Travel on down
Travel on down and see

13 and 3-0-1
13 and 3-0-1
250 West
250 West
250 West to 9

Lonely, so cold and blue
Lonely, so cold and blue

Tired and hungry
Tired and hungry
Tired and hungry too

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