

LYRICS for THE BRIGHTNESS (2007)

YOUR FONDER HEART

come out, come on, come outside / don't you hide your handsome face from me
I want to see you half-lit in the half-light / laughing with the whites of your dark eyes shining
darkly

way over yonder I'm waiting and wondering / wither your fonder heart lies

come out, the streets are breathing / heaving green to red to green
come with your nicotine and wine / and tambourine keeping time
come and find me in the evening

way over yonder I'm waiting and wondering / wither your fonder heart lies
way over yonder I'm waiting and wondering / whether your fonder heart lies

come out, come inspired / you will not come to harm
if I cannot take you for a liar or a lover / I'll take you for my brother in arms

way over yonder I'm waiting and wondering / wither you fonder heart lies
way over yonder I'm waiting and wondering / whether your fonder heart lies

OF A FRIDAY NIGHT

just across from the hospital / still in sight of the red lights
a couple blocks from the orthodox church / that's where the old poet lived
in his eyeglasses and his necktie / at the window looking down
on the young men passing by / on the fullness of the town

full of them good time gamblers / full of their restless wives
full of them midnight writers / out in the quarter on a friday night
out in the brightness of a friday night

and the big horns blowed and the pianos played / and the music rose to the old man's ears
and I guess those were the olden days / I guess those were the golden years

and now the town is empty / empty as a mirror / empty as the harbor and the barber's chair
where did the old poet go? / I asked around / nobody knows

maybe I came too early / maybe I came too late
I'm waiting in the shadows of the scaffolds / of the old cafes where you told me to wait
and I've got a lingering feeling / it's like I've slipped between
the fingers of the century / I know you know what I mean

I'll be a good time gambler / I'll be a restless wife
I'll be a midnight writer / out in the quarter on a friday night
call me a good time gambler / call me a restless wife
call me a midnight writer / out in the quarter on a friday night
out in the brightness of a friday night / call me the brightness of a friday night

NAMESAKE

I have worn out all of your records / I have torn out page after page

I have lain with the shadows you threw / when you danced with the bright colored lights of the stage
hey and aren't you grateful? / hey and ain't you got fun?
being so good at what you do / doing it right in front of everyone

everybody knows you / I want to know you!

how you roll like the rolling waters / you rise like the bright morning stars
you go fast like the freight train going so fast / and I don't even know who you are
but I would not disappoint you / if you let me kiss your mouth
if you let me get to the bottom of you / if you let me find you out

everybody knows you / nobody knows you!
everybody knows you / I want to know you!

o, but I, in the name of my namesake / am a beautiful fly on the wall of
your four-chambered heart-break / a spy in the house of your love

SHENANDOAH

lord have mercy on my mind / mercy on my memory
I'm lying neath the same Virginia sky / where she lay beside me, biding time
trying to abide me

every night when the night was long / she was clinging to me
told me twice that her love was strong / stronger than the love in old love songs
she was singing to me

o, Shenandoah / cross the rolling water
o, Shenandoah / where's your restless daughter?

don't know what I gave them for / all my little lessons
how you start the peas before the corn / how you start before the air is warm
she was never listening

I could see it there in her sorry eyes / hear it in her breathing
didn't come to me like some surprise / didn't even ask her why
when she said I'm leaving

o, Shenandoah / cross the rolling water
o, Shenandoah / where's your willful daughter?

I brought in the winter squash / I brought in the melon
cortland, empire, macintosh / on the afternoon before the frost
I could feel it coming

I can see her now in her flowery clothes / all those things I bought her
trailing her perfume wherever she goes / cross the rolling water

Shenandoah / where's your reckless daughter?
Shenandoah / mercy on your daughter

CHANGER

if I can't keep it / at least let me call it by name
that was called falling / this is called pain
it's called love, what I'm losing / I know love is a stranger

I know that changes come / I know love is a changer

I'm gonna go quietly / you don't have to tell me to
just let me lie a little longer / next to you
I'm not trying to bother you / I'm just trying to breathe you in
and then I will leave you there / where you are sleeping

*but speaking of loving you, I do / I'm telling you stranger to stranger
whatever changes come to you / I'm telling you changer to changer*

out in the waking world / nobody understands
exactly how light it is / exactly how free I am
one minute I'm laughing / and the next one I'm lost
I'm watching the birds fly by / I'm watching the highways cross

*speaking of loving you, I do / I'm telling you stranger to stranger
whatever changes come to you / I'm telling you changer to changer*

if I can't keep it, at least let me call it by name

SONG OF THE MAGI

when we came / we came through the cold
we came bearing gifts of gold / and frankincense and myrrh
and there were trumpets playing / there were angels looking down
on a west bank town / and he so loved the world!

*wore we then our warmest capes / wore we then our walking shoes
opened wide the city gates / and let us through*

a child is born / born in Bethlehem
born in a cattle pen / a child is born on the killing floor
and still he no crying makes / still as the air is he
lying so prayerfully there / waiting for the war
welcome home, my child / your home is a checkpoint now
your home is a border town / welcome to the brawl
life ain't fair, my child / put your hands in the air, my child
slowly now, single file, now / up against the wall

*wear we now our warmest coats / wear we now our walking shoes
open wide the gates of hope / and let us through*

when we came / we came through the cold
we came bearing gifts of gold / and frankincense and myrrh
and there were shepherds praying / there were lions laying down
with the lambs in a west bank town / and he so loved the world!

HOBO'S LULLABY

o go to sleep you weary hobo / lay back, lay back and close your eyes
I know you've seen a lot of sorrow / I know you've heard a lot of lies

they said work hard and save your money / you were a worker all your life
and in the end who got the honey / but the hand that robbed the hive?
it's a hard bargain they drive

*goodbye, goodbye to main street / goodbye, company town
who can say how far away / this wayward train is bound?*

and though the hounds come round your doorway / and though the viper's at your heel
you can dream your rags to riches / on a stitch of gleaming steel
on a shining reel-to-reel

*goodbye, goodbye to state street / goodbye, capitol grounds
and who can say how far away / this wayward train is bound?*

o go to sleep you weary hobo / lay back, lay back and close your eyes
I know you've seen a lot of sorrow / I know you've heard a lot of lies

SANTA FE DREAM

if it should happen / if you should wake in the night
there in the city of faith / where your true love lies
asleep like a baby / with her hands at her head
and the moon in your window / sheds her light on the bed

if it should happen / if you should rise alone
and go sit staring in the shadows / of all that you own
there's a cloth on the table / there's a cable bill
you're too old to keep moving / you're too young to keep still

*and all the while the rambling stars / all the while the roving moon
all the while the railroad cars / keep passing by / passing by you*

if it should happen / if you should turn to see
the way that moon sheds her light / on your love where she sleeps
go lay down beside her / and wonder again
that such a small window / lets so much light in

OLD-FASHIONED HAT

summer went the way of spring / winter's waiting in the wings
and we haven't saved anything / but that's alright
'cause we already paid the rent / there's still some money we haven't spent
go put on something different / we're going out tonight

I have loved you for so long / even when I could only do you wrong
go see if they have our song / on the jukebox over there

a dollar gets you seven plays / I watch you through a smoky haze
a secret smile on your face / I'm sorry if I stare

*but you look like a stranger / in that old-fashioned hat
I've got a pocketful of change / and I don't wanna go home yet*

clearly I remember when / I used to scratch my poems
on the backs of other lovers in / the darkness of my mind
back before I made my home / in the marrow of your bones
now I know your figure like my own / even from behind

*but you look like a stranger / in that old-fashioned hat
and I've got a pocketful of change / and I don't wanna go home yet*

hey and we'll be married soon / we'll be dancing to this very tune
then we'll have a honeymoon / then we'll start to fight
bring the tonic and the gin / say what was your name again?
stick another quarter in / stay with me tonight

*you look like a stranger / in that old-fashioned hat
and I've got a pocketful of change / and I don't wanna go home yet*

HADES & PERSPEPHONE (from HADESTOWN ~ "HOW LONG?")

PERSEPHONE

Hades, my husband, Hades, my light
Hades, my darkness
if you had heard how he sang tonight
you'd pity poor Orpheus!

all of his sorrow won't fit in his chest
it just burns like a fire in the pit of his chest
and his heart is a bird on a spit in his chest
how long, how long, how long?

HADES

how long? just as long as Hades is king
nothing comes of wishing on stars
nothing comes of the songs people sing
however sorry they are

give them a piece and they'll take it all
show them the crack and they'll tear down the wall
lend them an ear and the kingdom will fall
the kingdom will fall for a song

PERSEPHONE

what does he care for the logic of kings?
the laws of your underworld?
it is only for love that he sings!
he sings for the love of a girl

HADES

you and your pity don't fit in my bed
you just burn like a fire in the pit of my bed
and I turn like a bird on a spit in my bed
how long, how long, how long?

PERSEPHONE

how long? Just as long as I am your wife
it's true the earth must die
but then the earth comes back to life
and the sun just goes on rising

BOTH

and how does the sun even fit in the sky?
it just burns like a fire in the pit of the sky
and the earth is a bird on a spit in the sky
how long, how long, how long?

OUT OF PAWN

hey uncle louie, I wrote you a song / I'm glad you got your heart out of pawn
I'm glad you got your king out of check / at least that's how things stood when I saw you last

it was new Orleans before the flood / you had just met a girl! you were falling in love!
she lived on the levee and knew the blues / and played harmonica better than you

in a neighborhood bar / in the middle of summer
shoulder-to-shoulder / setting like sister and brother
all of the sorrows you told each other / rose like smoke from the room

the heat and the bourbon was in your head / you were talking in tongues! you were back from
the dead!
and the girl and the city were one and the same / and last call never came

and I can see you swimming out into the street
I can hear you singing "when I die don't cry for me"

hey uncle louie, the city is spinning / she sure is pretty. you sure are grinning
she's leading you home from the heat of the bar / to lie on the levee and look at the stars

you can hold her hand / you can kiss her face
go slow if you can / cause the world is a very sad place
and when she leaves she'll leave no trace / and the world will still be there

the sky is colored in purple and yellow / and you lie on the levee with stones for pillows
and you and the girl and the city make love / with the harlequin sky up above