

Pick of the Litter

Lyrics

This collection of tunes was recorded in the summer of 1988 at **Gregg Karukas's** studio, behind his house in North Hollywood, CA.

Gregg, a Bowie, MD native and I first met when he was playing with DC reedman, **Tim Eyermann** & the original **East Coast Offering** in 1976. I was performing with June Jones as a duo, next door at the Holiday Inn in Fairfax, VA.

When I became a solo act, I'd also started up a part time band, with the help of my first bass player (who became one of my very best friends), Frank Gruner, and built my **Cat's Concert** with some of the finest jazz players in the DC area. The core of the band was guitarist, Rick Whitehead; drummer, Dave Palomar; Frank on Elec. Bass, and me on my Telecaster and steel-string acoustic. This was augmented by Gregg or Marc Cohen (now Marc Copeland) on Keyboards.

What I learned, from listening to these guys interpret my repertoire, was vast. That band played with me, when schedules and funding was available, for nearly 4 years; right up until the last concert before I moved to the West Coast in 1982. That Concert, **The Footlong Extravaganza**, contained the sketches of the songs that ended up on Pick of the Litter...but the talent behind me on that show was formidable. Get this:

Tim Eyermann (...everybody)

Rick Whitehead (...everybody)

John Jennings (Mary Chapin Carpenter)

Wade Matthews (...everybody)

Gregg Karukas (Sergio Mendez, Rippingtons,...everybody)

Shannon Ford (Danny Gatton, Gatlin Bros., Paul Simon)

And vocalists,

Martha Sandefer (Trapezoid), Dusty Rose, & Vince Olds

....Man...that was a show.

Gregg had moved to California shortly after I, and was making his way into jazz circles; I was climbing up through ranks of comics. Along the way, I got to hang with great musicians and help Gregg mix several of his albums.

By '88 I was ready to lay down tracks, and he just gave me the keys to the studio. I would arrive at 6:30am to find the mixing board still hot (a couple of hours after he'd call it a night) and work until noon, when he'd be waking up.

After I had most of the tracks done, I flew my fine and very funny friend, Marybeth Gallagher, over from Phoenix for two days of vocals. She is a gifted vocalist and can nail any musical style...but...she is very funny.

Dan Higgins is a great player who brought a variety of saxes and came up with a great solo on "Suzette".

Without Gregg, Dan, & Marybeth, it just wouldn't have happened.

Stop That Man

I'm smooth, relaxed: I look good.
I've got chicks to the max and I should.
Some girls think I'm snobby
That's just the way I work.
Chicks are just a hobby.
They tell me I'm a jerk, but they can't...

STOP THAT MAN: and say I'm dangerous
STOP THAT MAN: I call it "style"
STOP THAT MAN: and they want to kill me.

Penthouse? Natch...with a view.
Have I got clothes? Lots, and they're all new.
I practice my axe in my hot tub.
I got talent drippin' outta my hands.
I go around town to the night clubs
and try to sit in with the bands...but they can't

STOP THAT MAN: They don't see me coming
STOP THAT MAN: I just show up
STOP THAT MAN: I think I'm hyperactive.
Watch me...

So I'm late all the time: I don't care.
I know the fun won't start 'til I'm there.
Would you like to meet the drummer
or the guy who plays the bass?
They're all real good friends of mine
'cause my daddy owns the place...
so they can't stop me, baby.

Maitre `Ds in haute cuisines,
legal threats, U.S. Marines
They all try,
but nothing seems to STOP THAT MAN.

Just Too Much

Way up here in the 49th state
but you know that I really love it.
There ain't no woman in the whole wide world
that can do it the way she does it.
Her kind of lovin's still new to me
but I'm lovin' the way she loves it.
but sometimes, my baby, she rub it too good...

That Eskimo's JUST TOO MUCH
That Eskimo's JUST TOO MUCH
That Eskimo's JUST TOO MUCH
That Eskimo's JUST TOO MUCH

Everything she does she does for me
and she don't mind a minute.
Lynin' and moanin' just ain't her style.
I can tell that her heart is in it.
There ain't no hurry. Got a lot of time.
Wanna make this last forever,
but sometimes, my baby gets to feelin' too good...

Never thought I'd be the kind inclined
to get into rubbin' noses,
but it's really pretty neat,
cause you can do it in the street
and you don't even mess up your clothes.
I remember back home; lovin' all night long.
I thought I was really something.
But nights up here last 2 or 3 months...

My baby, she's JUST TOO MUCH.
She's still hot when the tundra's froze
keepin' that frostbite off of my nose.
It's true, what they say, about Eskimos...

Good golly! I'm all runny
and sticky and she thinks it's funny.
Good nose: She gives it.
I love her love and the way she lives it.
Igloo. Baby seals.
I love her face and the way it feels.
Sometimes my baby gets me feelin' too good...

Folks up here like to chew the fat
An Eskimo knows where it's at....Shake it...

Lazy Bones

It's not like I don't know I've got things to do;
not like I don't even care...no.
I got this real bad case of gravity.
The signs are everywhere.

These LAZY BONES
I musta been short a few chromosomes
Lazy, LAZY BONES
I feel like Samson with a crewcut
Nuthin' to do but call up work and say "Sorry"
"Sorry, but I got LAZY BONES."

I musta got this from my Valentine.

She's a sleepyhead, through and through.
She stays tucked-in all day snoozin' overtime:
A Sandman rendezvous.

We're two LAZY BONES
piled on the bed like a load of clothes.
Lazy, LAZY BONES.
I was a fool to misjudge it.
Eating from the same budget was
how I musta got it...and I got it:
A bad thing of LAZY BONES.

We're two LAZY BONES
Send out for pizza in a monotone.
Lazy, LAZY BONES.
It's more than just chronic.
It's almost gotten Bubonic...relax, I'm just kidding.
I'm not kidding; it's a bad thing of LAZY BONES.
Doggone `em.
Doggone these LAZY BONES.

Suzette

SUZETTE, the night we met
you said more to me in a look
than all the words in a book
and a smile, like a river of stars, filled the night.
My world was torn apart
and you came knocking at my heart.
Lookout, SUZETTE, I work without a net.
So when I fall, it's more in love with you.
Yes, yes it's true.
And I'm far beyond the logical emotional
parameters I observe.
So pack-up all your things
and just move `em on into my dreams tonight.
SUZETTE, may I be more direct?

Get the drain clogged-up with hair,
have your cats tear up my chair.
I just need to know you're there,
SUZETTE.

And when I think of all those days that
ran together and meant nothing....I never dreamt that I'd
feel anything like this.
It's Carnival and Mardi Gras and
New Year's...all combined.
Mornings feel like Christmas;
afternoons like Valentine's.

Sweet, sweet, sweet SUZETTE,
have you got the picture yet?
Use my shaver on your legs,
mix ketchup in your eggs...
I'm not one whole usually begs,
but please...

Whisper Away

I've got a few things I'd like to say to you.
They're on my lips; let me put them on your ear.
(open your heart and hear)
Here is the stuff that makes this love for you
go on and on...
Every night I sing this song for you by heart.
In all of my dreams, you share in a harmony
just a WHISPER AWAY from me.

When you are dreams away,
I want you to always know
that it's me who's holding you tight and
never letting go.
Even the sandman would try to steal your heart,
but the morning would set you free
(and you'd open your eyes..)
just a WHISPER AWAY from me.

Every night I sing this song for you by heart
and all of my dreams come true
(when I open my eyes..)
just a WHISPER AWAY from you.

Holy Moly

Winding my way, seed unsewn,
I heard voices "Ah-ooing",
and they followed me all over town.
With the sun jumping rooftops,
leaving diamonds in the dew.
That's when I heard my call come through.

comin' up from the dashboard
came a story `bout the Israelites.
Gospel was singing from the radio,
when a voice from choir reached across the car
shook me and she wouldn't let go.
I sailed through the city on the angel's song.
The little church was an island
out floating in a sea of wrong.
Tremblin' and reelin' from the fire below,
I walked like a zombie to the front of the church;
there was something that I had to know:

Wo-wo-wo, tell me who, who, who's (who, who, who)
That singing in the choir, singing "...higher, higher.."
("...higher, higher..")
Fills my soul with Sweet Inspiration"
and the whole congregation's going "Wo-wo-wo" (Wo-wo)

Weakened, (ooo-ooo) as I watched her sway (ooo-ooo),

I felt like a bad last night (ooo-ooo);
She smiled like a sunny day, (Halleluia)
And singin' (ooo-ooo) like I'd never heard it sung before.
The Spirit overtook me when the church let out
and I think I lost all control...

(Chos)

Well, I asked her for a kiss
as she turned to her boyfriend
Who stared at me like a shotgun.
he had a fist like a chuck roast,
and I had to think quick...
"You know...I think I left my lights on; I'd better go check.
Hey, look, there's Elvis! Your shoe's untied. She said "No!"

(Chos)

...Split second thinking was my salvation,
`Cause something lifted me towards heaven
It was a Aqua Velva mountain. I said "Holy moly"
And I was prayerful, and he finally set me down...

Even in my dreams I can hear her say "No"

Still Looking Good

Some do for those who don't.
Some will for those who won't.
Some just don't have a clue.
Some'll have a rack of lamb.
Some'll have a can of Spam.
Some'll even eat the residue.

Some of my friends like to play the blues all night.
Some can't do no wrong.
Some can't get it right.
But I come back down after all this time
Of living up in Hollywood,
And all of my friends are Still Looking Good.

Some've got famous names.
Some got bones for brains.
Some live like residue.
Some believe in D'ja Vu
Some believe in D'ja Vu
Some believe in D'ja Vu.

Some of my friends like their rock `n roll real loud,
but not me.
Some of my friends'll have a little white wine,
and, some, some herbal tea.
Some just won't quit smoking...
Even though they really should...
But all of my friends are Still Looking Good.

Some are still tossing back shooters.
Some are still honkin' at hooters,
And some live just to disagree.
One met Doris Day.
Heck, I met Robert Goulet...
He's much taller than I thought he'd be.

Some of my friends like to blow their jazz real hot.
Some of my friends like to take their chances.
Some don't know when to stop.

But when times get tough and things get ugly
One thing is understood...
All of my friends are still looking good.
Yeah, all of my friends are still looking good.

How Are We Feeling Tonight?

Darling, I've been here 9 or 10 times,
each time I leave, I leave something behind.
This can't go on forever.
I don't believe in fate.
It's simply that I'm running
out of things to donate.
It's how you earn a living,
so don't think me a cynic,
but the only time we kiss
is when I'm checked into the clinic.
So..
hand me that jar and I'll give you a ration
Gurney me down in an orderly fashion.
put me on the table, give me anesthesia:
Darling, don't you know.
HOW ARE WE FEELING tonight?
We're looking well today
We could probably go home tomorrow.
I love it when I hear you say
"Can we get one more round in the bottle?"

I'm down every weekend, donating parts.
You're down in surgery,
stealing their hearts.
Stop by this evening, turn out the lights
and ask me HOW ARE WE FEELING tonight.

And later on, when the lights go down,
late shift's on
and your making your rounds,
slip on in we'll make the bedpans clatter.
With all the moanin' on the floor
they won't think anything's the matter.
Take my pulse, it only beats for you.
My blood pressure's jumping like a kangaroo.
When my insides are out,
and I'm sewn up tight,
ask me. HOW ARE WE FEELING tonight?
well..
all of me....Why not take all of me?
Come on, baby. Doctor, tell me
HOW ARE WE FEELING tonight?

Same Old Moon

Talking to the SAME OLD MOON,
wishing on the same old stars
wondering what you're doing,
wondering where you are.

When you're away from me,
we look into the sky and see
the SAME OLD MOON
hanging with the same old stars.

And though I sit and stare, it's not enough to
say
we share the SAME OLD MOON
or the same old stars.

The Blue Cross/Blue Shield Blues