

Unconscious
Don Wright



rhythm in the word — volume 7

home recordings — 2017

Unconscious

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Lyrics and music for all songs by DON WRIGHT

Vocals, guitars, harmonica, keyboards & mandolin – DON WRIGHT

Backup vocals, shakers, tambourine – Carmelita DeLaO Madrid-Wright

All recording and sound mixing done en la casita de Doña Ana, New Mexico

Track

- 1 carry me
- 2 two sisters
- 3 won't you stay now
- 4 in the realm of dreams
- 5 a night like this
- 6 how it used to be

Track

- 7 don't know what love is
- 8 the girl in the valley
- 9 marlene
- 10 i found you
- 11 woman on the road
- 12 fade away

highway

i've driven down this road before
the familiar roll of the land
out into the western night
is my cradle
the uncoiled layer of asphalt
warm and silent and never ending
hauling in beneath me
and falling away behind
is my lifeline
the dreams that come and go
the memories that rise
then vanish once again
carry for me the promise
of salvation



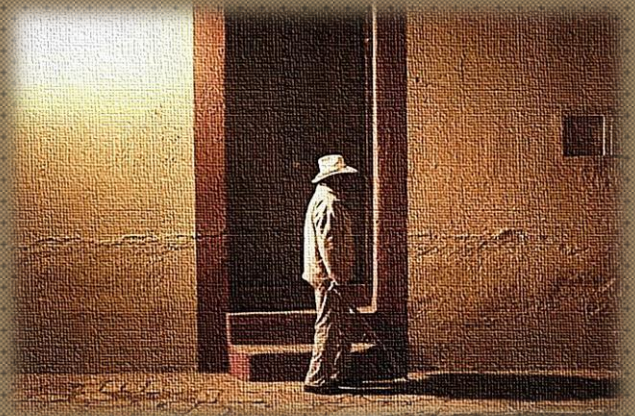
town

four blocks down, four blocks back
took a walk to the drugstore
passed by the broke-down house
of a man named itchy stover
crossed over where the judge used to live
and looked beyond the riverbank
to the scattered *jacales* on the outskirts
one in particular, farthest one out
her fire still burns from long ago
en la casa de la paz
in the town of *jolon*



man

he fell in step alongside me
and was already in conversation
part-way through a story of a boy
who he said i looked like
he spoke only in Spanish
and never looked at me directly
his jacket didn't fit right
and he limped badly
once again,
like all the other times
i told him i knew the boy
and i knew what he was
"en español por favor"
"espíritu"





Adler, The Judge, Uncle Rudy, Pop and Peaches – 1941, Santa Margarita, California

SONG LIST

1. carry me.....	3:42
2. two sisters.....	3:29
3. won't you stay now.....	5:19
4. in the realm of dreams.....	4:38
5. a night like this	3:41
6. how it used to be	5:54
7. don't know what love is	3:58
8. the girl in the valley.....	4:56
9. marlene.....	5:26
10.i found you.....	4:04
11. woman on the road.....	4:02
12. fade away.....	7:16

...” when I’m all alone I wonder
If I am worthy of my life”

Knowledge is overrated. Doesn’t do much good to find out why we’re here - what would we do with the information? And how often have you not done something because you knew it was bad for you? I know I’m probably going to die (well, most likely I guess) but that doesn’t keep me from living like I ain’t. I look before I leap... but then I generally leap anyway.

CARRY ME

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Hey look at the sun setting on this ocean
Can you feel that rain falling down
How about this old ’55 rolling down the road
And what in the hell keeps this world turning ‘round

I see a lot of gifts that we take for granted
Like every breath we take and the sky above
I want to stop and feel it all but instead it keeps slippin’ away
Everything is all we got my God and it still ain’t enough

Way up on the mountain
Way down in the sea
The chariot is waitng
To carry me, carry me, carry me

They say all you gotta do is get up in the morning
Get your work done and get into bed at night
Somewhere in between you’re gonna wonder what it’s all about
And that’s where the trouble begins to rise

Maybe the light of day will blind you
Maybe you surrender to the lure and the lies of the night
Either way we get left alone down on the killin’ floor
Raise your hands, praise the Lord y’all, testify

Way up on the mountain
Way down in the sea
The chariot is waitng
To carry me, carry me, carry me

Yes when I’m all alone I wonder
If I am worthy of my life
And I’m not sure why I still got a leg to stand on
But I’ll get to heaven bye and bye

Way up on the mountain
Way down in the sea
The chariot is waitng
To carry me, carry me, carry me

..." Like two paper flowers on a sheet of glass"

I'm told that blood is thicker than water. Never having had any brothers or sisters, it took me awhile to fully come to grips with that one. I don't think we learn anything important by just being told, only by doing. I've always had to do something wrong before I could do it right. Even if I did it right the first time, I had to do it wrong at some point to realize that the other time was the right way. Yep.

Anyway, never come between family.

TWO SISTERS

Copyright 1981 by Don Wright

Two sisters standing close together
Two sisters circling alone
One wanting flight from the faithless night
One wanting guidance and longing for a home

And they leave their destinies
To the sounds of their sweet loving hearts
And the men they meet

Two sisters, silhouettes in the hallway
As they grow in their solitude
Carrying lies into paradise
Oh but the line of their lives is true

And they light a cigarette
And then hurry out into the night
That they both forget

Two sisters standing close together
Two sisters circling alone
One wanting flight from the faithless night
One wanting guidance and longing for a home

Two sisters wading in the water
With their skirts pulled up high above
Like two paper flowers on a sheet of glass
Floating through worlds they know nothing of

For a while they seem to laugh
Are they one and the same
Or the same but not one at last

Two sisters standing close together
Two sisters circling alone
One wanting flight from the faithless night
One wanting guidance and longing for a home

..."But is the truth ever enough"

My father took care of himself until he was 89 years old. But when he fell down one day and broke his hip and was lying in the hospital bed, looking at the work it would take to rehabilitate and get back home, he saw his way out. He just lay there and waited. He let something take over. At first, I wanted him to have the will to get better, get back on his feet. Come home. Then, I found myself wanting him to at least just stay, even that way, a little longer. People say that loved ones never really leave you, because you always have the memory of them.

But leave you they do. And having them is all you've ever known.

WON'T YOU STAY NOW

Copyright 1994 by Don Wright

Daddy's in the home now
In a race with the one who put him here
Who wants to take him back
And lay him down gently without fear
Turning 'round with the fever in his bed now
There's no running from either
What's ahead or behind

Oh I remember how it was
With every line and every note
Drowning in memories
And feeling like never letting go
There is an ocean of mystery here in between us
The simple life that we used to know
Never seemed so far away

Won't you stay now
Just this way somehow
When the changes come
You won't be the only one who's lost

There were times I lied to you
But it wasn't meant to cause you pain
It's sort of like the love we hide
We'd do it all differently again
I never wanted to let you down, not for nothin'
It took a long time to come around
But is the truth ever enough

Won't you stay now
Just this way somehow
When the changes come
You won't be the only one who's lost

..."I'd like to tell you that my thoughts have straightened out
But that ain't the way it is"

We don't live life in a straight line do we? Not hardly. Round in circles I'd say is more like it. I don't know how many times I've looked out the driver-side window at something and said to myself, "Hey didn't I already pass that 'bout a hundred miles back?" Have you known that you've been somewhere before, even though you know you haven't? Have you been awake in a dream? Or have you dreamed when you're not sleeping?

As I bounce back and forth between reality and whatever that other thing is, I do wonder if there's really any difference, or even which is which. At some point, I think we're going to find out... that it doesn't matter.

IN THE REALM OF DREAMS

Copyright 2015 by Don Wright

I was still asleep in my bed
When trouble came knocking at my door
There was something in the middle of my yard
Like I never seen
I know it wasn't there before

I just need some time to clear my head
Shake these cobwebs from my dreams
I guess I had a choice that I could hide
But there wasn't no place to go
Here without a paddle in the deep blue sea

I took my shotgun from the dresser drawer
My heart it rattled in my chest
And I walked out into the darkness of the morning
With every intention to do my best

The door slammed shut behind me, the lock was driven home
Every light lit up inside my house
I heard laughter, I heard crying from each room
As I rose up and blew away
Passing out above the clouds

I landed here one sunny day so long ago
I don't remember how I did
And I'd like to tell you that my thoughts have straightened out
But that ain't the way it is

Visions rise before me
When they're least expected still
I've gotten used to them I guess
But somewhere in the shadows
Of some long-forgotten time
There's a shepherd waiting for me
Just around the bend

They talk about a judgement time
I'm told there comes a day
When every man must stand alone
Turns out there's not much difference though
In what we expect to find
And what we already know

So I smile. I wait.
I'm lost and I'm found
I leave my troubles at my door
And with each day I let this world turn 'round
And I dream with eyes wide open

I dream with eyes wide open



..." See that lovers' moon shining over the land"

When the ground is still warm at night and there is nothing to cover you but a blanket of stars, well, what else would you think about?

A NIGHT LIKE THIS

Copyright 2017 by Don Wright

Tell me now
Oh I bet you knew that I would come around
I ain't about to be missing out
On a chance for a kiss
On a night like this

Hold my hand
See that lovers' moon shining over the land
Meant for you and me don't you understand
How everyone lives
For a night like this

Oh so many times
Days they come and then go right on by
Only a fool could fail to realize
The heavenly gift
Of a night like this

Stars may fall from the sky
Mountains rise from the sea
Through it all I promise I will be
I will be

There with you
Believe me there's nothing that I wouldn't do
To find the love I've always wanted to
That is my wish
On a night like this

God surely blessed
A night like this

..." make the flood of time stand still"

What do we have once we've left one place for another? How much can you take with you? Pictures. Memories. A house still standing. I'm reminded of Arthur Miller's introduction to "Death of a Salesman" when he talks about "strangers sitting in the seats of the mighty." What once was our entire known world, turns out to be a floor, some walls and a roof, sitting on a plot of ground. The long, untroubled days of a child are gone. Time compresses, speeds up. The warmth and safety of a home that we took for granted as children turns out to be a dream... that cannot be recaptured.

HOW IT USED TO BE

Copyright 1995 by Don Wright

On the street where I've been livin'
There's a house that I do know
I was once a child inside these walls
It doesn't seem that long ago
I wander by there frequently
And I stand out in the street
I want to go inside
I want to lay down
Say my prayers and go to sleep

It's not enough to just remember
I need to touch those plaster walls
I need to feel too old and oversized
As I walk down the hall
And stand above the furnace
In the early morning chill
I want to go back 'cross the threshold
And make the flood of time stand still

Oh... feel the footsteps
Of the treasured years gone by

I laid under the bridge
With the sound of angels over my head
Dreaming in the cold moonlight
Visions rolling by on a lonesome wind
Of how it used to be
How it used to be

If you've ever left your hometown
And then missed it like a friend
You think that comin' back might fill you up
And feel like you're that child again
Well you can sit there in the middle
Of the room where you were raised
Staring blankly at the window
Seeing nothin' but the shade

In every word that you hear spoken
There's an element of truth
In every moment that you've taken breath
There's a moment that you're goin' to lose
And it stays gone forever
You can't relive it or return
You got to roll on 'cross the water
Taking nothing from this world

Oh... feel the footsteps
Of the treasured years gone by

I laid under the bridge
With the sound of angels over my head
Dreaming in the cold moonlight
Visions rolling by on a lonesome wind
Of how it used to be
How it used to be



Harry, Lucille and Me, 1953

..." Pull away another layer of the mystery"

So we're generally first attracted to someone because of the way they look – which doesn't really tell us much about them. Then, at some point, if we find out there are some compatibility issues, well we think we can make it work because we're so crazy about each other. But after a while, the attraction fades. And the differences don't. Love just doesn't fix everything.

I have found it best to work from the inside out and I couldn't be happier with the results. Love lives here in my house. I see it and feel it every day... but I still don't know what the hell it is.

DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE IS

Copyright 1998 by Don Wright

We got a world to lose, heaven to gain
And we try to find love along the way
We take what comes but don't take too much
They always told me that you can't take it with you
Where you're gonna end up
You don't get a lot for your trouble here
Good times come and then they go
We're livin' in a world we cannot understand

I know how you feel
And I know what we said
I sure know what I want
But I don't know what love is

She's got money that talks and looks that kill
I've been in love or so I thought until
You came along and blew my mind
Now we lay in the afterglow that feels so right
I feel the blood a poundin' all around my heart
As I touch the simple beauty of your skin
Pull away another layer of the mystery

I might know who you are
And I know how love begins
I see love so clear tonight
But I don't know what love is

I feel the blood a poundin' all around my heart
As I touch the simple beauty of your skin
Pull away another layer of the mystery

These are the things I know
Love starts and love ends
I know I love you
I just don't know what love is

..." Adrift on streets in pale moonlight
Left still warm from her touch"

Somewhere in a field of tall grasses that rises slowly out of the San Joaquin valley and into the foothills, there is a handful of rubble, left from a stone foundation, of a little house. The family that lived there, I suppose a hundred and fifty years or so ago, was originally from Indiana. The man and his wife came out to California with a small group of other settlers, following his service in the Union army, after the Civil war. He built the house but died not long after, leaving his wife and a child to manage for themselves - hard times those.

Four generations later, she walked me out there to her family's ruins. We lay there in the grass. We had a lunch and looked down on the little town below in the distance. Last I remember of her was that day and I left her to manage for herself.

THE GIRL IN THE VALLEY

Copyright 2016 by Don Wright

I walked on the high road
Climbed every trail in these hills
Sat on this mountain and watched
Suns come up, suns go down
I felt the world rollin' 'round
I squandered and wasted my time
But there's a girl in the valley and she is mine

With every step that's been taken by
My left foot and my right
And every mile on this road that I've driven I knew
The wind would blow and the clouds would part
And carry me back somehow
To this girl in the valley who said she was mine

Adrift on streets in pale moonlight
Left still warm from her touch
Hiding then reappearing and then simply gone
She is day and she is night, she is troubled and true
The girl in the valley who once was mine

Well I've been bound and I've been free
Raised up and broken down
I was the son of an honest man, a fool and a thief
Which one of those that left her here I don't think I can say
Oh that girl in the valley who used to be mine

Down the hill, fallin' in the rain
I come with blood on my hands
Searching for ghosts in alleyways on knees of a penitent I
Lying encircled by ribbons of water
Cold as the moon is her gaze
This girl in the valley, she was mine
There's a girl in the valley and she is mine
..." I followed you into the darkness"

In those days when I was riding motorcycles, I stopped in a bar late one afternoon along Highway 49, in what they call the Gold Country - northeastern California. Met a guy in there and he started talking about a woman who he said had screwed up his life. He talked for some time and I got the impression he was always on the lookout for her but knew he was better off not finding her. Even so, he couldn't stop looking. Best I can recall, he said her name was Marlene.

Didn't I put some food on your table
Didn't I lay treasures at your door
Didn't I forgive you when you wrecked my health
With that stuff you made me smoke

I followed you into the darkness
I couldn't tell you what I saw
I just held on until the morning came
And the light poured through these walls

Marlene, Marlene
Oh Marlene

Sometimes a song comes on the radio
And I feel your restless eyes looking down
And I remember every road we traveled
Such a long time gone

You were the one I always leaned on
I was the one that fanned your flame
Oh I'd walk and I would crawl a thousand miles
If I knew that I might see you once again

Marlene, Marlene
Oh Marlene

Now as I gather up some raindrops
And these fallen leaves all scattered 'round
How I do wonder what becomes of us
Between heaven and the world we know

And if all roads lead to Paradise
Come and take me home

Marlene, Marlene
Oh Marlene

..."She led me down to the ocean
Out in the deepest part"

The kitchen door is open and there's a warm breeze blowing in from the fields. Through the screen I can see little coins of sunlight dancing on top of the water as it moves slowly down the Acequia Madre. Adobe walls around me, wooden floor beneath my feet, Mexican brandy in a jelly-jar glass, frioles and green chile, hot on the stove. A sudden remolino kicks up some dust and dies in the mesquite bushes outside. Y en tus ojos yo puedo ver donde nace el amor.

Carmelita, when I found you, I found myself.

I FOUND YOU

Copyright 2004 by Don Wright

I went to the top of the mountain
No one was there
I looked into the heart of the city
I saw pleasure everywhere
I found myself a lover, so warm and fine
She was like no other I ever thought I'd find

She picks me up when I've fallen down
And let myself get played for a fool
I thank God above for the hour and the day
And the wonder that I found you

She led me down to the ocean
Out in the deepest part
She said she could tell my fortune
In matters of the heart
I've got to drown this fire
I can't believe the pain
It's like I'm sittin' on a wire
I don't even know my name

She picks me up when I've fallen down
And let myself get played for a fool
I thank God above for the hour and the day
And the wonder that I found you

They say we all got to run this highway
There's no other road
But I've been down a few in my day
No one should go
Oh you got to step so surely
There's trouble every mile
I know what's mine
I don't cross the line
That's all behind me now

She picks me up when I've fallen down
And let myself get played for a fool
I thank God above for the hour and the day
And the wonder that I found you



with Carmelita, 2004

...” Something tells me I should run and hide”

Man sits on a lawn chair in his backyard with a cold drink in his hand. A songbird (el chonté) lands in the tree above and starts up a conversation. ‘Course it sounds like just a bunch of chirping and whistling, but el chonté knows what he’s saying. The man likes the sound of it, that’s all he knows, has no idea the bird has a problem that he can’t get anyone to listen to. Goes on like that for a while. The bird flies away, the man finishes his drink and heads in for another, none the wiser.

Some Native American teachings say that Man and the other animals used to be able to communicate with each other, until the animals got so pissed off at the way Man behaved that they stopped talking. Some say that we’re all connected. Some say we’re each of us in our own little world. Such is life.

WOMAN ON THE ROAD

Copyright 2017 by Don Wright

There’s a woman on the road
Where did she come from, I don’t know
Carrying a suitcase full of trouble and hope
Oh oh oh

I been waiting down here by the crossroad
With nothing but some bread and this bottle of wine
Just watching *remolinos* dance ‘cross this riverbed
And waitin’ on a friend of mine

There’s a woman on the road
And the closer she comes
I feel like I’ve seen her face before
Swollen eyes, walking in a straight line
Right up to my door

Something tells me I should run and hide
Just don’t let her in
Something tells me that a bad situation
Could only get worse if I did

There’s a man in a Cadillac rolling down the highway
Just one hand on the wheel
Driving like there just ain’t enough time
And never will be

Two wild-eyed ragged *jovencitos*
Dragging something I can’t tell
Want someone to intercede on their behalf
Well, well, well

There’s a woman on the road
Where did she come from, I don’t know
Carrying a suitcase full of trouble and hope
Oh oh oh
... I’d love to know what happens when that sun goes down”

When my old man was getting along in years, he would often bring up the subject. I never wanted to talk about it and I told myself that, when I got to be a certain age (old), I wasn’t going to do that. Well I guess I’m getting there and it looks like I’m starting to write songs about it. I don’t know if I’m trying to define it or expose it or just hold it off with words. But there’s no avoiding the thought of it, just like there’s no avoiding the actual event. He used

to tell me he didn't want any kind of a service either. "I don't want a bunch of 'mumbo-jumbo'. Just cremate me, pour yourself a drink and get back to what you were doing." Well, Salud Pop. And I'll see you on the other side.

FADE AWAY

Copyright 2016 by Don Wright

Ain't it something to think about the years gone by
All that time when we were young and how the days just fly
Should have saved it all in a box, every tear and every sigh
Fleeting visions of the highs and the lows
Sunny days and nights so long
Friends and lovers who were so close to you and now they're gone
If I only knew what I know now, that's what they always say
You can hold on tight. But try as you might
They all fade away

I rode a thunderstorm down from Kansas City to L.A.
I crossed the border into Mexico
On a peyote wind out of Santa Fe
I watched the sparks fly up on Whittier Boulevard
From the back seat of a slammed-down Chevrolet
Spent a few nights in the County hotel
Drifted in and out of dreams I couldn't tell
Somewhere in the middle of it all I lost everything I owned
And found myself
You better have your head screwed on right
When the truth comes out to play
It's a funny kind of world
You might get it right on the last turn
Then you fade away

When you first came in here alone
Seeking refuge, on the run
From a cold and bitter country
North of nowhere, east of the sun
There was nothing I could've said to you
To ease your mind or earn your trust
Time just had to roll on by
Until it rolled around to you and I
Oh what we could have done if things were different
But that's not ours to decide
Walk down any street and you'll see someone kneeling down to pray
Faith and hopelessness, deliver us
And fade away

High up on the outskirts of this city
Where it drops off to the sea
There lies a sheltered and secluded spot
Where all the pretty weeds grow wild and free
There was a time we were accepted there without question
Like anyone would be
The ghosts who drive this highway up and down
And the shadows that still follow us around
Once were just visions cast from our imagination, but not now
I'd love to know what happens when that sun goes down
But I don't think I can stay
I got my shoes spit-shined

I'm dressed to the nines
I'm gonna fade away

And though you're as perfect as you can be
You can't come with me
I got to fade away

