DON WRIGHT

Dreams of the Barbed Wire

---- RHYTHM IN THE WORD ----

VOLUME 2

HOME RECORDINGS – 2014

DREAMS OF THE BARBED WIRE Copyright 2014 - DON WRIGHT
Lyrics and music for all songs by DON WRIGHT
Vocals, guitars, harmonica, mandolin – DON WRIGHT
Backup vocals, shakers, tambourine – Carmelita DeLaO Madrid-Wright
All recording & sound mixing done en la casita de Doña Ana, New Mexico

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…" Watch out for the Bogeyman"

Sometimes I wonder how any of us ever make it through this life more than a year or two. Vulnerable. Unprotected. Alone. Well, a lot of us don't of course. Everybody needs somebody. Everybody needs to be thankful if they have somebody. And thankful for every little bit of comfort that we're afforded.

I see wide open spaces. I see people huddled together two by two. Hold on tight.

KEEP HOLDIN' ON Copyright 1996 by Don Wright

Well here we go again
Right out in the open
Take me by the hand
Watch out for the Bogeyman
And keep holdin' on
Yeah keep holdin' on

We had a long ride on the water
Now bring that big boat around
Take me down to the city
Oh I got to get my feet on the ground
And keep holdin' on
Yeah keep holdin' on
Keep holdin' on now
Keep holdin' on

I get a feelin' that comes over me
Early in the mornin'
Sometimes it brings me down to my knees
And I start prayin' for everything
Well do you love me baby
I just want to get simplified
Drink my wine at the table
Get warm in bed at night
And keep holdin' on
Yeah keep holdin' on

Well here we go again
Right out in the open
Take me by the hand
Watch out for the Bogeyman
And keep holdin' on
Yeah keep holdin' on
Keep holdin' on
Oh keep holdin' on

…" The wind was blowing tumbleweeds from Texas to L.A."

Wooden crosses dot the roadside, marking the lives of the poor souls who didn't make it. They came up from Mexico150 years ago, looking for a life free from terror and violence. They survived the Chihuahua desert. They crossed the Rio Grande. They lived on jackrabbits and cactus juice. And hope. Hope for a future in America. Mexicans, Indians, Spaniards, Americans. Who's who? Eventually it's conquistadores y el conquistado, no mas. *Someone drew a line at the river and said, "This is mine, that's yours" and neighbors became enemies.*

In most ways since, not much has changed.

NIGHT IN LAS CRUCES Copyright 1996 by Don Wright

There was a light in the window
I was looking through
Clouds were rolling violently
There was a ring around the moon
You and I were holding hands
And wondering what to do
Someone was playing the radio so loud
We thought we knew there was life
Out there... there was life

'Cross the street was a hotel, a dark and lonely place
I could feel the rainy neon cool upon my face
The wind was blowing tumbleweeds from Texas to L.A.
We both were beginning to question
What the hell would make us say there was hope
Somewhere ... there was hope

I don't know how we got here
I can't believe it's real
There're still a lot of cards on the table
That have not been revealed
I don't know what makes sense anymore
I just know what I feel
What you gonna do when the devil
Comes around makin' deals in the night
Down here... in the night

Oh if only I could leave here for an hour or two
I'm sure that I could find the faith to pull us through

I saw a man in the doorway
He wore a cross of wood
I got the urge to talk to him
But I didn't think I should
"How you doin' now?" was the question I asked
He said, "Not too good"
Man I just wanted to take him in my arms
As he stood in the rain
He turned around / I knew his name

Oh if only I could leave here for an hour or two
I'm sure that I could find the faith to pull us through

…" Down the coast like the wind we would ride
To save this land for the King of Light"

El Camino Real. Six hundred miles, twenty-one missions. Some simple, some ornate. All built with mud. And blood. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Y entierran a cuantos Indios alli? *More than can be counted.*

IN THE MISSION Copyright 1992 by Don Wright

There were times we were just holding on
By the faith that we had so strong
Was it really enough, they say
There's the proof to be seen to this day
In the mission of our love

See the places we slept every night
And the blankets we kept from sight
On and on we would seek new worlds
Taking all that we needed but no more
In the mission of our love

In the sacred heart of these cold adobe walls
Lives so torn apart, side by side after all

Down the coast like the wind we would ride
To save this land for the King of Light
And the blood that was shed near and far
Knowing we'd be received with open arms
In the mission of our love

Secrets of the past lie behind a wooden door
Raise the iron latch, you'll not want anymore

Where were you when the first block was laid
Where was I when you hid so afraid
All the promise we find in everyone
Is the fruit of the right
And the wrong that we've done
In the mission of our love

…"there is a road that rolls through an endless land"

The image of the barbed wire fence crossing the open plain. And of a star finally dying and falling from the sky. The infinite sadness at the center of our souls. And the boundaries that we build for ourselves. The beauty of clear, blue sky and everything open before us and still… those little, man-made thistles, pulled tight, pressing against the skin.

DREAMS OF THE BARBED WIRE Copyright 1995 by Don Wright

There were times I would have died for you
There were days I think I wanted to
Oh but we're still alive, you and I

Came the sun into a world of black
We must run, now there's no turning back
Our lives lay open now before us

Still I have dreams of the barbed wire

There were tears, oh more than just a few
There were lies - I told them all for you
Though sweet is the song of love, finally
Still I have dreams of the barbed wire

We are like the stars, shining for all to see
We fall as they do, into eternity
We pull the heavens in around us
Still I have dreams of the barbed wire

There is a dust that settles on every man
And there is a road that rolls through an endless land
I can see clearly now the distant horizon
Still I have dreams of the barbed wire

Still I have dreams of the barbed wire

…" I was born in a red room in a thunderstorm
Outside was a blue moon and a '51 Ford"

The providence of birth.

If there's a soul that lives on after we cash in, was it already there, waiting to be born somewhere? I don't think so – and if you're born some other place, to some other people, well that's not you. Are our lives pre-determined by fate or decided by our own decisions as we struggle along? Quien sabe? *Sure as hell, not us. We get a place to start. We make our choices. Once you get to the end of the road, doesn't really matter how you got there.*

THE OTHER SIDE Copyright 1997 by Don Wright

Had a little trouble now on the other side
Took a little walk on the water the other night
Thought I wanted to be with you all my life
But I had a little trouble on the other side

There seems to be some confusion here in my mind
I'm sort of lost without you but I'll keep on tryin'
I took the dream a little serious too many times
Now I got to put my head down and walk in a line

Had a little trouble now on the other side
Took a little walk on the water the other night
Thought I wanted to be with you all my life
But I had a little trouble on the other side

I always thought I was solid rock but I'll tell you what
I think your lovin's gonna break me down more and more
I ain't gettin' by on raw emotion from here on in
I got to get my lesson learned and try it again

Had a little trouble now on the other side
Took a little walk on the water the other night
Thought I wanted to be with you all my life
But I had a little trouble on the other side

I was born in a red room in a thunderstorm
Outside was a blue moon and a '51 Ford
I had a mama who held me tight but not for long
I been runnin' on my own time since I was one

I got blood religion / I got a piece of ground
I got a picture of my daddy and me that I carry around
I want to tell you what the poor man said as he waved goodbye
"Just give it all you can boy, don't you run and hide"

Had a little trouble now on the other side
Took a little walk on the water the other night
Thought I wanted to be with you all my life
But I had a little trouble on the other side

…" En tu cara veo la verdad y es todo lo que se"

I dreamed you. I knew you. Then I found you. And now you are mine. Love imagined. Come to life. Love incarnate.

MEXICAN GIRL Copyright 2001 by Don Wright

There's a dream in my heart
There's a picture of heaven
Of a girl with a smile on her lips
Only for me
Quiet magic brown eyes
Hair the color of midnight
Cada dia mas cerca a la vida
Solo por ti

Oh Mexican girl, light of this dark lonely world
Every which way that you turn, you look so fine
Oh Mexican girl, *tu vives en mi corazon*
Oh Mexican girl, I wish you were mine

By the cool Rio Grande
There's a little adobe
And in the shade of the mulberry trees
She sings her song
La Paloma Blanca y Dos Arbolitos
Sus palabras me calmen
Su voz me caricia

Oh Mexican girl, light of this dark lonely world
Every which way that you turn, you look so fine
Oh Mexican girl, *tu vives en mi corazon*
Oh Mexican girl, I wish you were mine

Now in the quiet blue dawn
In the dusty sad evening
I will wait for the wind or the tide
To bring her to me
Never knowing for sure
Oh but always believing
En tu cara veo la verdad
Y es todo lo que se

Oh Mexican girl, light of this dark lonely world
Every which way that you turn, you look so fine
Oh Mexican girl, *tu vives en mi corazon*
Oh Mexican girl, I wish you were mine

…" When I roll down my window
I'm never too sure that I won't just blow away"

Sacrifice and excess pass each other daily on the street. A young person begins to look within and grow healthy in mind and spirit as a result of the cruel disparities of high school society. Deserts are turned into massage parlor sideshows with all-you-can-eat buffets. 'Gotta get connected'… streetlight.. touchtone.. thermostat.. modem.

If you get far enough out on the plains, away from the houses, from people... from the road. Where things get quiet – I mean really *quiet – you can't* hear *anything. No distant cars or planes, no wind, no birds… no* sound. *Nothing. Well, that's where you can really listen… and learn.*

OUT ON THE PLAINS Copyright 1997 by Don Wright

They say the grass grows tall
Livin' on your side of the world
Well that doesn't thrill me at all
I've seen the rivers runnin' full while the mountains burn
I've been lookin' for the ghost of 2000 years
They say he wanders through this desert still
But all I can see is a D-8 Cat
Slowly cuttin' off the top of that hill

I've had your wine and your women
Did you really think that would make me stay
When I roll down my window
I'm never too sure that I won't just blow away
You know we take ourselves for granted
Maybe we could take the time to look inside for awhile
I want to lay down and look around
Get to know the feel and the sound of my mind

Out on the windswept plains
Out on the wide open plains
Out on the cold and lonely plains
Out on the great American plains

They say the water's so sweet
You can drink from the cup that the Pharaohs filled
Nothing's gone... nothing's ruined... nothing's changed
And I don't think that it ever will
But a sight still clouds my vision
And it troubles me to think that it would come to this
And I feel the blow as I'm fallin' down
Hard in the dust of the pyramids

Out on the windswept plains
Out on the wide open plains
Out on the cold and lonely plains
Out on the great American plains

Rhythm in the Word

It's so hot in the daytime
So cold in the icy moonlit night
I think I'm somewhere around Nebraska
Between Las Vegas and the Birth of Christ
There's some who think that it's so simple
There's some who know that it's impossible
To just come and go
Well me I know there is no reason
How we know there is a reason
That we don't need to know

Out on the windswept plains
Out on the wide open plains
Out on the cold and lonely plains
Out on the great American plains

…"The quiet whistle of the dove's wings
The sadness of the coyote's call"

A tribute to the astounding, miraculous beauty of simplicity, and what is commonly perceived as ordinary. *From a cabin on the Santa Margarita ranch to a solitary mission in the Jolon valley, to Father Serra's quarters at Carmel de Borromeo. This is how I imagine my home – a table, a cup, a bed, dusk, and the love of a woman .*

So plain. So rare.

NEW JOLON Copyright 1999 by Don Wright

You'll smell the sweetness of the wild sage on the evening wind
A little breeze they call *susurro dulce*
From high above you'll see the gentle rolling river
That lines the chaparral
The quiet whistle of the dove's wings
The sadness of the coyote's call
The only music that you'll hear as you lay dreaming
Behind these Spanish walls
When you arrive in New Jolon
You'll leave your troubles at the door
Take off your coat / Pour out some wine
You can stay awhile and talk with me tonight

Behold the beauty of a simple wooden table
Washed in the candlelight that dances 'round the wall
Beyond the garden in the field where the deer lay
The moon begins to fall
Night's just the prelude to a new day
Bringing the promise of the dawn
You're always welcome *en mi humilde hacienda*
No matter where you've gone
When you return to New Jolon
Time slips away but who would know
Your smile lights up the darkest hours
And breathes life into these rooms empty 'till now

Look out the window at the world that God has made us
Pull back the cloth and lay your hand upon this beating heart
Maybe the smallest of the things we take for granted
Should be the place we start
Your body warm beneath the blanket
The linen soft against your skin
The shadows movin' 'cross your doorstep
As the sunlight melts the morning chill
When you wake up in New Jolon
You'll have a blessing all your own
Feel heaven's breath... the taste of love
In each moment that you hold here in your heart

…" Like a heart still beating in the ground"

Some say dreams have great meaning. I can't deny that they do, guess it's just awful hard to figure out what that meaning is most of the time. Seems a lot like it's just your brain trying to think without you. But then, is the world, and this life, really and wholly something of its own, or, at least partly, what we perceive it to be? Don't think we'll ever know.

And what will the world be like without us? Can't imagine that either.

LIVING DREAMS Copyright 2007 by Don Wright

In the middle of the night I wake up alone
Feelin' like a stranger in my bed
Shakin' off dreams of feathers and stones
And cold blue light bleeding into red

Well this friend of mine
He says he ain't worried
Oh what a white little lie
My imagination uh-huh, runs away with me
Movin' like a prairie wind on fire

Dreams where there once was flesh and bone
Dreams that walk beside me day and night
Deep as a river down where it meets the sea
Clear as a vision so real
Living dreams, living dreams

Now I hear someone at my door
Who I don't know
They're wailing and they're movin' around
I got a funny feeling in my mind
Something waits for me
Like a heart still beating in the ground

Dreams where there once was flesh and bone
Dreams that walk beside me day and night
Deep as a river down where it meets the sea
Clear as a vision so real
Living dreams, living dreams

Oh I want to be free, show me the way
Of the earth and the sky above
Oh when I'm layin' still here beside you
There's never time enough
I see the people movin' now, 'cross to the other side
Where the water is high oh whoa
All in a circle of love with the fallin' rain
And the fire burnin' down below

Dreams where there once was flesh and bone
Dreams that walk beside me day and night
Deep as a river down where it meets the sea
Clear as a vision so real
Living dreams, living dreams

…" We leave our homes and move like shadows out here on the ground"

Even a blind squirrel finds a nut once in a while. So they say. Friend of mine told me once, "You can make all the plans you want but you never know what's going to happen." People talk about fate, luck, destiny. I'll tell you this – whatever brought me to where I am right now – well, I'm thankful for it. Even though I may not have enjoyed a hell of a lot of it.

And the other thing – all this talk about how relationships are hard work? I don't buy it. When it's right, it comes easy. You won't even know what hit you.

SOMETIMES WE GET IT RIGHT Copyright 2011 by Don Wright

I see the leaves blow away
All I can tell you is tomorrow'll be another day
The sun climbs high
And burns a hole into this crazy blue October sky
And the world turns around
We leave our homes and move like shadows out here on the ground
It is a dream of mine
That you are here across this room
And we are looking eye to eye

I guess sometimes we get it right
Even though we don't know how
Our roads may have cross a thousand times
'till we ended up here in this town
I got this feeling that I knew you, it hit me hard one night
I fell in love, it all came so easy
I guess sometimes we get it right

There is a trail of tears
One we leave behind, the same one that brings us here
I only found my way
Because I think He watches over each one of us every day
And though I keep falling down
There was a reason to stand up every time I hit the ground
You are the light of day
That comes with the morning to surround me
When the darkness goes away

I guess sometimes we get it right
Even though we don't know how
Our roads may have cross a thousand times
'till we ended up here in this town
I got this feeling that I knew you, it hit me hard one night
I fell in love, it all came so easy
Sometimes we get it right

…" Out where the red-rock turns to sand
and the law is just the wind and the sun"

I knew a girl once, she was hard. Man she was tough. I mean, she could handle herself in situations that set me on edge. But she was soft on the inside – kinda like me. 'Course I liked both sides of her, but she always needed a lot scarier action than I was up for and, after we drifted apart, I always hoped she might grow tired of running that desperate road. Show up at my door one day. Smile that soft smile.

Probably never crossed her mind.

KATARINA GARZA (The Outlaw) Copyright 1994 by Don Wright

It's hard to explain, hard to understand
Hard to just get by
It's hard to stay but it's harder to go
Harder to even say why

How many rivers did you cross
To be lying in the sun all day
He saddled up and he rode off
But he never even knew you anyway
Who's gonna water your pony now
Who's gonna set your line
How will it feel when you're all alone baby
I don't know but I think you'll find

It's hard to explain, hard to understand
Hard to just get by
It's hard to stay but it's harder to go
Harder to even say why

Out on the *Llano Estacado*
I was there, I didn't see you at all
I heard that you fell in with a bad crowd
I saw the writing on the wall
All this time I was hopin' for a sign
That you were happy in yourself
Why don't you ride up here where the grass grows tall
Throw your money down the deepest well

Out where the red-rock turns to sand
And the law is just the wind and the sun
You ruled a world of dangerous men
With the eyes of an angel and a savage gun
You were always one to know the line
That you shouldn't cross
So why would you lay down with a hunted man
When you owned the heart of an honest one

It's hard to explain, hard to understand
Hard to just get by
It's hard to stay but it's harder to go
Harder to even say why

…" Movin' through streets like a shark in the water"

I lived this. My dear friend, Bob Deweese, he lived it with me. Even then, we were just trying to get down here to the Southwest and live our vision of a life fulfilled. Took a few detours. Ran into some trouble along the way. Landed in jail. Landed back where we started. Moved on and never looked back.

Well, guess I'm looking back now. Bobby's gone, drowned in a river in Oregon, doing what he loved – trying to get somewhere new. That was forty-some years ago, I still miss him. I'm a couple miles from the big river right now. Guess I'll head down there, see if there's any water running. Adios King.

ROLLIN' DICE Copyright 199O by Don Wright

I took a right at Bakersfield, turned into the sun
Headed down to New Mexico, a young man on the run
I guess I was lost and it frightened me so
I knew where I was
But I didn't know how to get home
Oh to be livin' on that Rio Grande line
Layin' down in the heart of a river
Instead of rollin' these dice

I met a man in Santa Fe, he ran a betting line
His eyes were filled with water and smoke
He poisoned up my mind
And I knew it was wrong but I didn't know why
I'd pour salt in the wound just to stay for awhile
I could be livin' on that Rio Grande line
Layin' down in the heart of a river
Instead of rollin' these dice

I lived outside your social world, I see that plainly now
A little room was all that I needed
As I moved from town to town
Takin' the law right into my hands
Writin' my own rules down in the sand
Just like I was livin' on that Rio Grande line
Layin' down in the heart of a river
Instead of rollin' these dice

We got a car and we drove across the Colorado line
Rolled into the Five Points of Denver on a road of solid ice
Lookin' just to sleep somewhere out of the cold
Hanging out in the alleys and the stairs, oh but still in my soul
I was livin' on that Rio Grande line
Layin' down in the heart of a river
Instead of rollin' these dice

We cruised around in a Cadillac, a 1963
Movin' through streets like a shark in the water
My new friends and me
The dope it was everywhere, man we were gone
I didn't really care, I was just going along
Livin' in my memory of that Rio Grande line
Layin' down in the heart of a river
Instead of rollin' these dice

The midwest moon was shinin' bright
In my window downtown
I looked back into the tenement hall
Pulled the oily shade down
And listened to Elvis sing 'In the Ghetto' again
I could see how it all had turned
And just how it would end
God I wish I was livin’ on that Rio Grande line
Layin' down in the heart of a river
Instead of rollin’ these dice

Now every time I turn around
There's someone standin' there
I'm buried alive I'm tellin' you baby
Can't get a breath of air
You see this tattered photograph
Well it's my reason to live
One of these days I'm ‘gonna wind up on your doorstep
When I get ‘outta here
I'm layin' on a bed of steel in a concrete room
Waitin' for my next meal, sleepin' 'till noon
Dreamin' that I'm livin'on that Rio Grande line
Layin' down in the heart of a river
Instead of rollin’ these dice

In my dream I rode out of the hills through a shallow draw under a heavy cover of oak trees. Stepping around star thistle and shale outcroppings and out onto a wide and gently downward-sloping meadow maybe two hundred yards across and six or seven hundred yards long. I rode past a little muddy-bottomed creek, choked over with willows and into tall dry grasses and wild oats standing motionless in the evening sun.

At the foot of the hill I followed the creek bed to where it opened up and dried out. About wide enough to jump across and maybe only two feet deep, it wandered out of line only enough to avoid the slight rolls of the base of the hill where they met the canyon floor. I had been on horseback but now was on foot. I was wearing moccasins. Tall ones up to just below the knee with beadwork of gold, cherry red and cerulean blue and silver conchos that closed up the sides. As I moved along the top of the bank I looked to where the creek emptied out at the lower end of the canyon and saw a bright white object lying in the flat dusty bottom amid the smooth washed-down rocks.

I kept heading in that direction. It kept moving farther away like it was getting sucked back into a tunnel. After what seemed way too long a time to get there, I finally could make out what it was - an animal skull. A cow's head, bleached chalky white with mottled black and brown horns turned down in the dust. I stepped down off the straight-cut bank and kneeled down to turn the head over.

Filling up the eye sockets were two large turquoise stones and from the base of each horn dripped blood of such a deep bright red that it appeared artificial as it rolled down and around the hooded eye shrouds. The head began to rise on its own and I sensed now that it was attached to a body. Steam breathed out of the nose holes as if in cool morning air. But it was warm in the canyon and the sunset was turning everything – grass, hills, trees and rocks – an enveloping gold. The skull seemed to grow in size as it floated well above me and the body it was attached to was two, three times that of any cow.

And then it spoke.

They called him Johnny Five Diamonds. I never knew his real name and I only got to know him for a short while, when he was about 50 and headed in the wrong direction of a battle with cancer in too many organs to make it much of a contest. He was a little guy – Spanish, Indian, French, all mixed up in a wiry body that vibrated with nervous energy. Talked with an accent somewhere between Cajun and Texan, sprinkled with Spanish. Told me stories of his life in what he called a "fool's paradise".

Seems he got his name one night in a roadhouse, playing poker. Guy across the table bet up a big pot with a full house – Aces over Queens. Johnny had three Diamonds showing – the Seven, the Ten and the Jack – but had the Eight and Nine sittin' in the hole. Five Diamonds, all in a row, like money in the bank. Guy didn't take it too well, having a beautiful hand like that, thinking he was sucking a guy in with a Diamond Flush for an easy couple thousand.

In the parking lot outside the roadhouse, the guy and two of his friends came at Johnny. One of 'em had a knife and opened up Johnny's face between the lower lip and his chin, clear through so he could stick his tongue out the opening. But the little Mestizo had a piece in the pocket of his sport coat. And he used it. Mr. Full House didn't make it. Johnny did 6½ years in San Quentin. He always wished it had happened a day earlier 'cause it would have saved him from doing so much time – y' see, that night was his 18th birthday.

He wasn't particularly pleasant to be around. He was hard. Still volatile and unpredictable. And still more than a little scary, even in his condition. Most of the time, I was uncomfortable in his presence. I liked the stories and I was glad they weren't *my* stories.

But he did have a daughter.

Rhythm in the Word

.....Songs.....

1. KEEP HOLDING ON.....5:06
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3. IN THE MISSION.....5:09
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10. KATARINA GARZA (The Outlaw).....5:45
11. SOMETIMES WE GET IT RIGHT.....4:20
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