

THE
WORTHLESS SON-IN-LAWS
№ 8 WIRE





ALL YOUR MIGHT

(J. Davidson)

For Vivian

Put on your red stocking cap
You don't want to get shot at
Walk the Horton-ShIPLEY line
And stitch together that blue sky...

And sing with all your might

Conquer kings and queens and rooks
Dig down deep into your books
Know what's right, write what you know
And make them prove what they say is so...

And learn with all your might

Help your mama make the bread
And help her plant the flowerbeds
Gather the eggs and thank the hens
Speak your mind, but love your friends
Listen to and love your friends

And love them withal
Love them with all your might

Don't worry about heaven
Or the old prevailing tide
Don't worry yourself with worrying
Just live your life
With all your might.



*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer
Electric guitar: Rob Brown
Vocals / acoustic guitar / piano: Jimmy Davidson*

NOT THAT FAR

(J. Davidson)

Well, I've been to the top of the mountain
I was duped by the youth ministers
And I attended to all of those meetings
But I was mostly there for the girls
And that turned out to be a pretty good reason.

I've been arrested for a misunderstanding
I've been busted for telling the truth
I've done worse that I never got caught for
I almost got away with wasting my youth
Trying to keep all my options open.

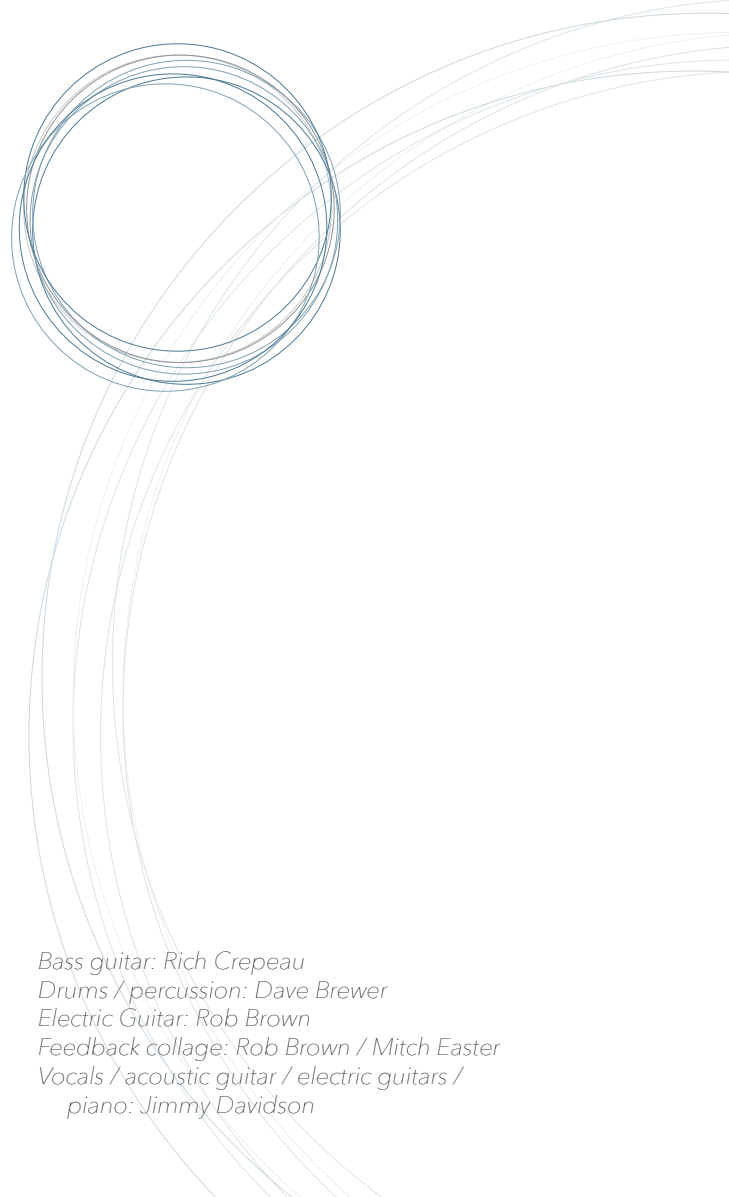
It's not that far, it's not that far
From the case to the crush.
It's not that far, not that far,
From the look to the lust...

I've climbed the towers of the ancient cathedrals
I have walked along the Great Wall
And seen the ruins of the old Roman forum
I've marked how the mighty fall
And how they leave mostly rocks behind.

I've spent hours in the libraries
I've pored over the old documents
And translated the faded handwriting
And I haven't been back there since
I started feeling like the end of the line.

It's not that far, it's not that far
From the forge to the rust
Not that far, not that far
From the core to the cusp
Only one small surgery
Between the boom and the bust
Barely one slight century
From the dust to the dust...

Just one singular sliver,
Just one tiny taste
Of this one sweet second.
Where there's no second place.



*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer
Electric Guitar: Rob Brown
Feedback collage: Rob Brown / Mitch Easter
Vocals / acoustic guitar / electric guitars /
piano: Jimmy Davidson*

AND NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS

(J. Davidson)

In the fading of the evening light
In the middle of an uncertain life
With the seven hours gone
Working the wheel, the wire, the hammer, the hill, and the stone,
With the coaching and the talismans,
And still
You are wet to the bone

The bodyguards of the breakneck pace
Kicked you out of their crew
Here's your chance
To stand up straight
And embrace
This good news

You're sleeping
To compress the time
You're leveled out
And glassy-eyed

The bodyguards...

Here's to the misfits and the loners,
The comediennes and the stoners.
Love to the lost philosophers,
Love to the maidens of honor.
I honor you.
Oh, how I would lift you up
And carry you home.

C'mon, let's go home.

*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer
Electric Guitar: Rob Brown
Vocals / acoustic guitar: Jimmy Davidson*

THINGS YOU SAY

(R. Brown)

I write myself a note to speak less and try to hear
When talking turns to feeling my words aren't very clear
I analyze the things I say, I turn myself to stone
The words I say are useless now like plastic beads they throw

Sometimes I drive real slow, I take the curves with care
forget about the mirror's light I contemplate what's fair
I ask you what I ought to know, I'm feeling guilty all the time
You're in this thing and close to me
I hope everything is fine

And it happens all the time
and it wont be pushed away
I feel it down within my chest
I don't mind the things you say

The idea dawned on me last week or was it twenty years ago
Careless laughs are tossed right off and weeds of anger grow
My friends are all around me now, no attacks from the rear
So take it easy take it slow
I think the coast is clear

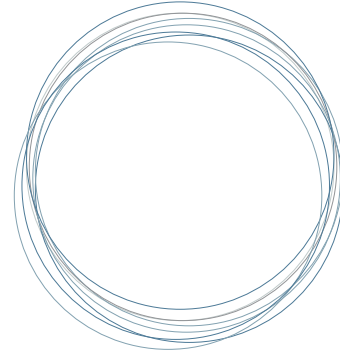
And it happens all the time...

*Acoustic guitar / piano / harmony vocals: Jimmy Davidson
Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion / harmony vocals: Dave Brewer
Vocals / electric guitar: Rob Brown*

THE LUDDITE

(J. Davidson)

Dozers and loaders and shovels erase the terrain
They carve out the coal and remake of a mountain a waste
Where the machines have spoken
Digging the devil's token
What the machines have stolen
Won't be growing back
The water ran black from the tap into his great-grandmother's sink
No one came to explain
No one paid
No one fixed anything
The blasting and rude repacking
The walls in the basement cracking
Then when the flood came rolling
It all went down
When the last bale was piled on
He covered his head in nylon
Put all of his blackest clothes on
And stuffed his pack
As he shouldered his fireworks through rubble and mud
His red light split the night into shadow and blood
He set the tubes, lit the fuse, and flew staggering away
When they blew, how they blew
And the new dark became his new day
The plans of the malefactors
Didn't count on the counteractor
Backlit by the burning tractors
Returning medicine
Leaving the land he grew in
At the end of his great undoing
Ruin begetting ruin
One battle down
And he made up his mind to kick out all the teeth
Of the beast and its priests and their wretched
Machines
Until...
All the machines are broken...



*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer
Electric guitar / harmony vocals: Rob Brown
Sound effects: Jimmy Davidson / Mitch Easter
Vocals / acoustic guitar: Jimmy Davidson*

ORIGIN

(J. Davidson)

The silent sun climbs up the morning
It warms the air and primes the sea
Its light is life that even fuels by night
The auroras' fine fireworkery

The color still within the thin magnolia leaves
The flightless flies inside the golden amber beads

Make clear the crystalline endeavor
Through fleeting windows in the earth
To stitch and staple all the world together
And to launch the living matter from the dirt

The holy rollers flinch and fight with their own shadows
Those frozen lives residing somewhere after now
But out in the wider world of sediment and sparrow
The bleaching bones promote the flowering of doubt

Without
The feral fears
That paralyze and faze
Orchid and amaranth
Still easily amaze

All those threads parallel
Twisting and splitting
The mighty minuscule hands
Ever ticking...ticking...ticking....

*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion / noises: Dave Brewer
Electric guitar: Rob Brown
Vocals / acoustic guitar: Jimmy Davidson*

NEW YORK TIMES

(J. Davidson)

They work hard in Lyttelton Harbour
Where container ships roll in their berths
And the diesel smoke flows from the tunnel
He supposes it could have been worse

He thought he might see seven wonders
But mostly he saw seven seas
And the bottom of the bunk above him
And maps marked with depths and degrees

In the evening, he leaned on the railing
And watched the world move beneath him unchanged

He made friends with Russians in Sydney
He danced with Brazilians in Rome
He fell in love once in Dublin for most of a week
When anywhere was more or less home

He scrawled on the pages of sketchbooks
Where he graphed out his Grand Unified
But one warm night out on the Pacific expanse
He dumped them all over the side

He lived such that nobody noticed too much
Kept to his place in the line
But one day he sent off a letter
That got published in the New York Times

The New York Times...

*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion / harmony vocals: Dave Brewer
Electric guitar: Rob Brown
Violin: Melissa Reaves
Vocals / acoustic guitar / piano: Jimmy Davidson*

FRANCESCA, THE FIELD OF FLOWERS IN OUR HOUSE

(J. Davidson)

The sun gets up, but we can wait—
Morning glory wants to sleep a little late.
After an hour, it will be time
To wake my pretty, procrastinating columbine.
You're as full of life as they come
My joyful peppermint geranium
Calm and kind, what a spirit you've got,
I'm in awe—you are a true forget-me-not.

It's Saturday, in field and arbor,
In the greening garden—all over.

You're pulling flats in an antique wagon
Painted poppies following my fine snapdragon
And there's a smile—I hope you know
I want you to be my only heirloom rose.

In the yard, new leaves,
Slow honeybees, drunk with spring.

And I am buzzing with that sense of purpose,
I am dizzy, doing circles in the doorway
I'm homing in on a favorite—
It's you, it's you, it's you—and I will have no other.

If we take a walk around Cedar Lake
I always want to travel in your jasmine wake;
If we're on the couch, I take a look:
I see a delicate delphinium, pressed into a book.
Folding up the evening hours
With my sweet south-of-the-border sunflower,
You're my comfort, you're my love,
You're my shooting star, my lily, my foxglove

In the air, vines climbing;
Roots intertwining underground.

And I just want to put you in my pocket,
Pick you up and dance you down the hallway;
I'm holding on to a favorite—
It's you, it's you, it's you—and I will have no other.
Every moment, every hue, fully saturated
You're the field of flowers growing in our house.

Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau

Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer

Electric guitar: Rob Brown

Vocals / acoustic guitar / piano: Jimmy Davidson

STILL LIFE WITH CAKE

(J. Davidson)

The class clown is out of practice
All his lines come a minute too late
The journalist is out of questions
She is shocked to be in such a foreign state

The rate of change changes just enough
It's hard to say where it all sped up.

The photographers hide out in the corners
Finding and freezing their fractions profound
The storyteller sweats in the spotlight
Even though she is purely background.

Sidelined and superfluous—
The special guest is a total bust.

Down in flames.

There is no finer way to go.

The interpreter who once was golden
Quickly recognizes his mistake;
He sees the awkward interloper
Hunkering down on his piece of chocolate cake.

The cool command is Kill, kill, kill!
There's no reward for standing still.

Beat the clock...to a pulp.

There is no mercy to mete out.

There is no favor; your luck's run out.
There is no later; there's only now.



*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer
Electric guitar / harmony vocals: Rob Brown
Vocals / acoustic guitar / piano: Jimmy Davidson*

WAFFLE JOINT

(R. Brown)

With apologies to Ernest Hemingway and Robbie Robertson

He walked into the waffle joint
Cigarettes and coffee his only point
A pretty young waitress, she knew him quite well
A four-top table and some stories to tell

He's never hungry when he claims his space
He needs a clean well lighted place
They let him smoke every one in the pack
At that formica table over there in the back

When he was gone too few would pray
His funeral too far away
It would have been better if they'd laid him down,
At the waffle joint outside of town

He didn't live too long, born in '38
New York Town but the South would wait
Two years in Georgia and a girl from the city
She's never happy, but she's always pretty

He drew her in with some charm to spare
The whole thing built on truth and a dare
He drives too fast and she hides his keys
He's street legal now and his four barrel breathes

When he was gone...

She was gone like time down a stream
His new woman now is a drunkard's dream
The waffle joint was his play's last act
He nailed that role, kept the scene on track

Your coffee's cold, can I warm it for you
You're falling in love but your mind's askew
He's 59 and she's 22
She waits on him in a way that's blue

When he was gone...

*Acoustic guitar / harmony vocals: Jimmy Davidson
Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer
Vocals / electric guitar: Rob Brown*

LAST JULY

(J. Davidson)

I got your letter
It's been a year
I know I shouldn't have
But I read it fifteen times
Usually, I frown on superstition
But here I am, giving heavy weight
To your every little move

Valentine awakened
Puncturing my armor of regret

So count me in
For another late night
With lightning hours

Will you accept
My backwards invitation
To extend
Last July?



*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion: Dave Brewer
Electric guitar / harmony vocals: Rob Brown
Vocals / acoustic guitar / piano: Jimmy Davidson*

MY POCKETKNIFE SAYS LIFE IS STRANGE...

(J. Davidson)

All the basic needs are met.
If I could only stop window-shopping, I'd be set.
Chemical delivery, aching electricity on the wire;
Old magnetic resonance relegating common sense to the fire.

Somewhat civilized,
But animal inside.

Forgot my hat again, and it's cold on my poor bald head.
Up one little hill, and then two and three, up to the fence-line hickory on the ridge.

A privilege to stand
At the finest spot in the land.

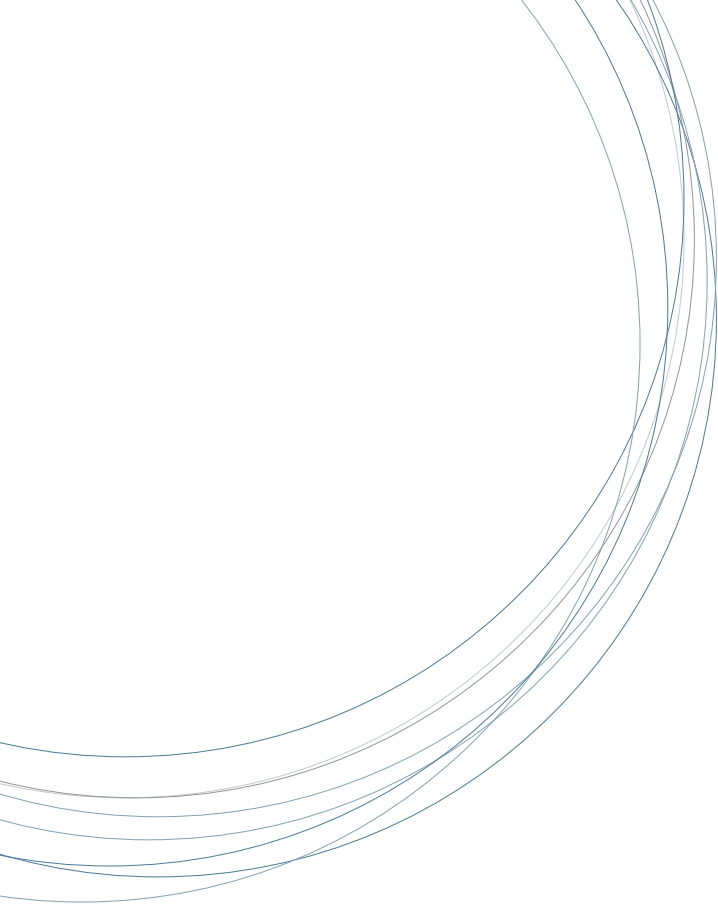
Etched on my pocketknife
Opposite the name
Time-worn and elliptical
The words Life is Strange...

Isn't it curious how it all tends to go astray?
But sometimes the design dissolves in such a lovely way
Destinies and best-laid plans handed off to the idle hands of the Fates
Histories of missing years whisper into willing ears: No, it's never too late.

And vital
In the void:
The unexpected joy.

Etched on my pocketknife...

*Bass guitar: Rich Crepeau
Drums / percussion / harmony vocals: Dave Brewer
Electric guitar: Rob Brown
Electric guitar: Mitch Easter
Vocals / acoustic guitar: Jimmy Davidson*



The Worthless Son-in-Laws are:

David Brewer: drums, additional percussion, harmonies, noises,
rude comments, porch, music trivia

Rich Crepeau: bass guitar, chips, candy, mod-art practice room

Rob Brown: electric guitar, vocals, gear fetish, roots

Jimmy Davidson: vocals, acoustic guitar, piano, sound effects,
insatiable appetite, pacing, staring off into space a lot

Additional musicians:

Electric guitar on 12 by Mitch Easter (mitcheaster.com)

Rolling sea of violins on 7 by Melissa Reaves (melissareaves.com)

1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 ©2013 James M. Davidson

4, 10 ©2013 Robert N. Brown

With deep gratitude to our families (including in-laws) and friends; Amy & Vivian; Kathy, Christopher, & Andrew; Laurel Crepeau; Katie Boyette, Drew Boyette, & Sophia Park; Mary Charles & Larry; Don & Marguerite; Vikki & Bruce; Andi & Ryan; Mike & Misty; Will & Caroline; Kathy & John; Jacob & Sandy; Austin & Brittany; John Buckner; Damon Bryant; Gary Walker; Peter Smith; Scott Culbertson; Scott Taylor; Michael Johnston; Steve Huber; Tina Chesnutt; Robbie & Denton; Liz Durrett; Sue & Dale; Melissa Reaves; Stephanie Gwinn; Keith Joyner; Mitch Easter; Amanda Lindsey; Haven & Natalie; Rennie, Philippa, & Robbie; Tim Kelleher; Lois Cowan; Katy Graves; Jennifer Nelson; Kim Allen; Jay Silverman; Tracy Adkins; Larry Tenner; J.D. Hollingsworth; Lauren Smith; Morgan Neely; Victor Flake; the Bel Jean contingent; Moby Childs; Valerie Wycoff; Ted & Ece; Wendy & Nick; Shaun Pardi; Jack & Elizabeth; Forrest & CD; Paul & Cheryl; Jeff & Ingrid; Susan Graham; the Katzlows; Joe & Peg; the Bathantis; the Shipleys; Aaron & Dayna; Sam & Gabe; Ruth Ferguson; Justine Zimmer; Diane Goodney; Scott Nicholson; Valerie Boles; Chris Warner; Councilman Scherlen; Robert Lee Boyd, Jr.; Mark Freed; Marc Oppy; Kim Clark; the Mikell contingent; New Zealand; Gail & Bud; Narl & Edi; Phil, Katie, Megan, & Matthew; Pete & Tracy; Laura, Rebecca, & Alex; Anne & Hanna Grace; McCall, Chris, & Meredith; Gabrielle Guyton-Edmiston; Claire Armbruster; WNCW; Boone Saloon; Valle Crucis Park; Scott Craggs; Dave Desmelik; Big Chief Monk Boudreaux; Possum Jenkins; Naked Gods; Lambchop; The Eastern (NZ); Suttree (the cat); people who come to our shows; and of course all the people who we will realize are missing from this list as soon as we see it in print. Not to mention our fans—both of y'all are the shizzizzizzle. Special thanks to Phil and Pete. And many thanks to you, dear listener.

In memoriam: James Victor Chesnutt.

Play loud. Rinse. Repeat.

More info and stuff at soninlaws.com





- 1 All Your Might
- 2 Not That Far
- 3 And Now for the Good News
- 4 Things You Say
- 5 The Luddite
- 6 Origin
- 7 New York Times
- ⑧ Francesca, the Field of Flowers in Our House
- 9 Still Life With Cake
- 10 Waffle Joint
- 11 Last July
- 12 My Pocketknife Says "Life is Strange..."

Recorded at the Fidelitorium, Kernersville, NC
Additional tracking at Lazy Limbertwig Farm, Vilas, NC
and at The House in the Hollar, Fox Cove, NC
Engineered by Mitch Easter / Bob Engel / Worthless Son-in-Laws
Produced by Mitch Easter / Worthless Son-in-Laws
Mastered by Scott Craggs, Old Colony Mastering
Photography: Worthless Son-in-Laws
Art/Design: J. Davidson
soninlaws.com

Orchard Hill Media #OHM0002